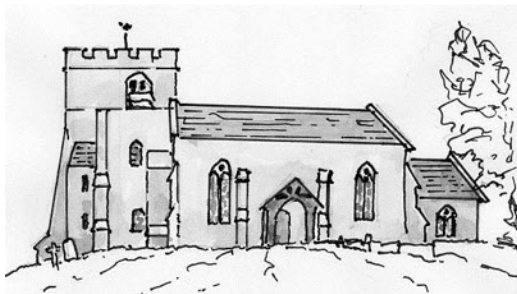


FROME VALLEY NEWS

The Parish Magazine for Acton Beauchamp, Bishops Frome, Castle Frome,
Evesbatch, Fromes Hill, Much Cowarne, Ocle Pychard & Stanford Bishop.



FEBRUARY 2021



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Editorial:

If you lose your paper copy of the newsletter It's always available on the website where it can be seen in full colour. It can also be emailed to you.

Stay safe and here's to vaccinations and freedom

I always acknowledge receipt of emails - if I don't please send to Parish office as I have had some email issues.

e-mail: fromevalley@icloud.com

www.fromevalleychurches.org.uk
Sarah (oldholbans@hotmail.com)

FROME VALLEY NEWS COLLECTION DAY FOR THE

March 2021 ISSUE

Could volunteers from all churches kindly collect their new batch of issues from the Parish Office during the morning of **TBC**

If this time is not convenient please contact Eleanor at the office to arrange an alternative time.

This advertising space could be yours!

Contact Sarah Sevastopulo
Tel: 01885 490896 email:
oldholbans@hotmail.com

Rates per issue:
£3.00 eighth page, £6.00 quarter page,
£10.00 half page,
£20.00 whole page

HELP IS STILL AT HAND

There is a Bromyard Support Group number -
07824 660480

is there to help anyone who is isolating or just feel like some support during these exceptional times.

Childline:	0800 1111
Samaritans	116 123
Domestic Violence Hotline:	0808 2000 247
Mind	0300 123 3393
Age UK	0800 169 6565

Dear Everyone

It goes without saying that with the effects of Covid, lockdown, Brexit and winter, life is a real challenge at the moment and there is no way to sugar the pill; this is a real test of us all. I have at the front of my mind those households, families and individuals who have contracted Covid, but also all those who have sheltered and adhered to the Government's warnings and guidelines to the letter. For those who have contracted Covid I pray that the after effects are not too serious and that you have been able to make a full recovery; however, I know only too well that this has not been the case for us all.



I pray for light and comfort for those people who have sheltered and taken every possible precaution with the inevitable loss of normal human contact. We should also remember that our scientists and doctors are increasingly discovering more and more effective drugs to treat those who have already been infected, and we should not forget the dedicated work of all our medical staff and carers as they continue to work through this crisis and look after any of us who fall ill. It will be only too easy to forget all that the NHS has done once this crisis is over; let us hope our politicians will turn their gratitude into more investment in our health system by safeguarding us in the future.

And of course there has been your fortitude - the willingness to go without, be that the company of friends and family or many of the pleasures of our pre Covid lifestyle and also your willingness to abide by the rules (even when they have seemed confusing) and most importantly of all, your kindness in looking out for others; loving our neighbours has never been more relevant. Christ's love for us shines through in many of your selfless actions and it is there (and in the vaccine) that we find hope.

As I write all of our churches in the Benefice are currently closed but Steven and I will continue to put on line services out every Sunday using either YouTube or Zoom. This situation will hopefully change so keep an eye out for any changes. Finally do remember that the Benefice has an active Pastoral Group, so if you would like to speak to any of us about matters that may be concerning you then please do not hesitate to call, our numbers can be found in the magazine.

God bless you all

Richard

What is Lent?

Lent 2021
begins 17 February
ends 3 April

Lent is a period of fasting, moderation, and self-denial traditionally observed by Catholics and some Protestant denominations. It begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with Easter Sunday.

LEGGES OF BROMYARD

We are now offering free local delivery (within 10 miles) of our shops and free nationwide delivery on all orders over £20 (UK mainland only)

We have made up some weekly hampers, to make life a little easier, during these strange times.

We are delivering. If you would rather stay at home just give us a call. Homemade pies, sausages, bacon, eggs, butter, cheese, potatoes, ham, spatchcock chicken

Just call the shop 01885 482417 to place your order

Order online www.leggesofbromyard.com
or call 01885 482417

During the COVID-19 pandemic Bromyard Community Transport are remaining open.

Transport for Covid Vaccinations

Cathy Marsh (Manager) Bromyard
Community Transport Tel: 01885 488452

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We'll be supplying all of our usual stockists in the following areas:

- Bromyard

- Colwall

- Hereford

- Ledbury

-Malvern

Please check with your local stockist for more details.

Also Order Online for your own delivery - <https://www.petercooksbread.co.uk/shop-1>

MIDWAY STORES AT FROMES HILL OPEN

7am to 8pm Mon - Sat

&

9am to 4pm Sundays

The Wheatsheaf at Fromes Hill

Order by Phone:01531 640600

Also see their FB page for Friday Takeaways

Careline - Help at the push of a button

Careline can give you or your loved ones the reassurance and peace of mind that if you require help, it is not far away! Careline is a 24-hour personal emergency response service, based in Hereford, which is connected to your home through an alarm unit linked to your telephone line. **In times of need, help is just the push of a button away!**

For more information please speak to our Careline team on 01432 384100. Herefordshire Careline is run by the Independence Trust, part of the Herefordshire Housing Group.

Hop Pocket

All the shops are closed for at least

January / into February

Plant Centre will stay open

Tuesday to Saturday 10 till 4, Sunday 11 to 3

Contact Tel 01531 640121

Frome Valley Pastoral Group

The Pastoral Group are all very actively engaged in emailing and telephoning people through out this difficult time. If you have any concerns or would just like to speak to someone please call one of the group;

Rev'd Steven Baggs 01885 490582
stevenbaggs@me.com

Rev'd Richard Allaway 07969 699270
rja5204572fco@gmail.com

Mrs Judy Orgee 01531 640525

Bishops Frome Community Shop

Open as Usual - See page 21

Ocle Pychard Ramblings

Welcome to 2021! Let's hope that this year will be better than last year. It started on a positive note with the vaccines beginning to be rolled out across the country but then the third lockdown arrived so I hope that you are all managing to stay well and stay. This time Herefordshire does not appear to have escaped the virus as there are confirmed cases very close to home so we must all be especially vigilant with our social distancing etc.

As a result of the latest lockdown all services at Ocle Pychard Church have been suspended until further notice but the church will remain open for private prayer and contemplation.

We look forward to brighter days ahead, to spring flowers, sunshine and possible social gatherings once we are all vaccinated. Stay strong and positive. We will all get through this dark time and emerge from the experience much wiser.

Look after yourselves and your families. Stay safe.
Ocle Pychard PCC

Instone Court, HR7 4JS - Farm Vending

We realise this is a difficult and very scary time for many with some of our customers concerned with visiting busy supermarkets on a regular basis. With this in mind, is there any produce you would like to see stocked in the vending machines? This week we have introduced butter. Vegetable stew packs and bake at home baguettes will be stocked by the weekend. Blue paper and disinfectant is available in the shed along with sanitiser for your use

We would just like to thank all of our customers over these trying months, we really appreciate your business.

Now taking contactless card payments and cash!! Take away curry - Friday and Saturday nights. Cakes and Bakes from Taynton Farm. **Other Produce:** Free range eggs, free range whole and semi milk, crisps, organic potatoes, veg, apples, cobnuts, walnuts, cream, Wallers meat (bacon, sausages, pork pies and more) tomatoes, jams and chutney

Simon and Elaine

ST. MARY'S CHURCH MUCH COWARNE

It was good to be able to have our Advent Matins and Christmas Day Communion services in Church despite the fact that we were beginning to hear warning of the rise in numbers of Covid infections in Herefordshire. Those who attended these services particularly appreciated the opportunity to sing a carol in the churchyard, one in the rain and one on a beautiful bright Christmas morning, after each service. However, after confirmation of cases in this and adjacent parishes, discussion with the clergy and wishing to make all possible efforts to safeguard parishioners and visitors, the Churchwardens decided to close St Mary's Church and suspend all services from January 9th until Easter week, or until the current lockdown conditions are relaxed and it is felt safe to reopen the Church. The church will obviously not now be open even for private prayer but it is planned to hold Zoom services every Sunday at 10.00am and the links for these can be obtained from the Churchwardens and Clergy.

The final service before this lockdown was the funeral of Sue Thornbury who passed away after a short and courageous battle with leukaemia on December 21st aged 61 and having been cared for during the last few weeks at her daughter's home in Northamptonshire. Hopes were high after a bone marrow transplant in August but the cancer took hold again and spread rapidly. The funeral took place in St Mary's Church on January 8 and was a beautiful service, carefully planned by her daughter Abi, allowing us to reflect on the tragically short life of a kind, generous and gentle neighbour who moved with her family to Much Cowarne from Wolverhampton 14 years ago. She will be remembered by many here for her involvement with Guides, the Burley Gate Shop, Whist Drives and so many other events in village and church life. Sue was laid to rest in the graveyard here with her late husband John, whom she lost to cancer 6 years ago.

GIVE TO YOUR LOCAL PARISH

IN THREE SIMPLE WAYS



① GIVE ONLINE

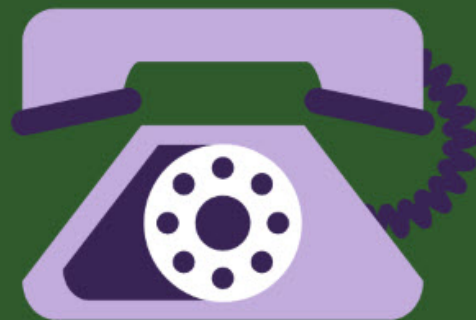
A few quick and easy steps to set-up regular giving on our website:

www.parishgiving.org.uk

② GIVE BY TELEPHONE

Between Monday and Friday,
9am - 5pm, you can give to your local
parish by calling the PGS team on:

0333 002 1271



③ GIVE BY A GIFT FORM

You can pick up a gift form from your PGS
parish representative. Simply fill in the details
and we'll do the rest.

Parish Giving Scheme Update NEW EASY & SECURE GIVING

One of the really important ways that each of us lives our faith and participates in the mission of the Church is through the act of giving.

While there is joy in the spontaneity of a one-off gift when the Spirit moves us, it is regular giving that offers a prayerful expression of faith in action. Regular giving sustains our churches and helps us to plan for the future. That is why many of our churches are members of the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS).

The team at PGS makes it safe and easy for you to give, and just as safe and easy for your church to receive. Every pound you donate goes to the church of your choice along with any gift aid claimed on behalf of taxpayers. The system is free from time-consuming admin for church staff and volunteers. There's also an option for you to increase your gift annually to keep pace with the rising cost of living, with the peace of mind that you can adjust your donation at any time if your circumstances change.

Now, with the addition of a simple and secure online process, there are three easy ways to donate to your church through the PGS; you can set up your Direct Debit online, by telephone, or you can fill in a gift form at church.

Donors in the parishes of Acton Beauchamp, Bishops Frome, Evesbatch, Fromes Hill, Much Cowarne and Ocle Pychard are among the first in the country to be making use of the new online service from PGS, as part of a pilot project. To get started, simply visit parishgiving.org.uk, find your church using the easy search tool, and follow a few simple steps to set up your donation securely. It couldn't be easier.

Alternatively, you can set up your regular gift by telephoning the PGS team on 0333 002 1271, Monday to Friday, 9-5.

The PGS has proved an invaluable lifeline to many of our parishes throughout this very difficult time where many churches that have traditionally relied on cash donations and fundraising, and have received virtually no income. Please consider joining the scheme today and supporting your parish church. Even a small gift will make a difference.

St Giles, Acton Beauchamp <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/acton-beauchamp-st-giles-hereford/>

St. Andrews, Evesbatch <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/evesbatch-st-andrew-worcester/>

St Marys, Bishops Frome <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/bishops-frome-st-mary-hereford/>

St Matthews, Fromes Hill <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/fromes-hill-st-matthew-hereford/>

St James, Ocle Pychard <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/ocle-pychard-st-james-hereford/>

St Marys, Much Cowarne <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/much-cowarne-st-mary-hereford/>



Communion Service

Sunday 14th February
8.30am
To Be Confirmed ...



Family Service

Sunday 28th February
10.00am
To be Confirmed ...

This is a reverent and informal service for the family of the Church. All are welcome. Coffee, tea and squash served at the close of the service, offering a time to socialise.



Castle Frome Feb 21 News, Views & Muse

Hilary's Nature Diary



A squirrel dilemma

I love to watch the antics of garden birds on my feeders - and winter feeding can make a real difference to a small bird's chances of survival. But then along will come a grey squirrel, leaping effortlessly on to my feeding stations, despite an arsenal of greasy poles and squirrel guards, and callously scattering the innocent tits and finches. I know that for the greater good this alien species must be eradicated, not least for the impact it has on our truly adorable red squirrels, but I do find myself in awe of his acrobatic display. I just wish it hadn't found my daffodil bulbs.



The New Year has arrived and sadly we are still in Lockdown, this time Lockdown 3, but there is hope on the horizon with the release of the new vaccines.

I am sure we are glad to see the back of 2020. It has affected us in all in so many different ways. My daughter, Chloe, has had to reschedule her wedding, My husband, Jo and I have worked all through it. Some have been able to work from home. Some have had to go to hospital appointments without the support of loved ones. Grocery shopping has become more like a military operation! As long as we all follow the rules, have the vaccine when it is offered to us, we shall see the end of this terrible pandemic. Being on the "Front-Line", Jo and I have had our first Vaccine, it could be what's classed as a "perk of the job" !!

Please stay safe, follow the rules and have the vaccine.



Photographs courtesy of Hilary MacMillan



Community Resilience Plan

I have been asked to produce a Community Resilience plan for our area. To do this I need your help.

Anyone in Bishops Frome and Fromes Hill that is able to help or has skills that would help in an emergency could they let me know their contact details in order that we can compile a register that could be used in any emergency. John Pudge john@thehoppocket.com or 01531 640323 (leave a message)

Why do we need a Community Resilience Plan?

Emergencies happen. Local emergency responders will always have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency, especially where life is in danger. There will be times when you may be affected by an emergency but your life is not in immediate danger. During this time, you need to know how to help yourself and those around you. By becoming more resilient, our community can complement the work of the local emergency responders and reduce the impact of an emergency on our community both in the short and long term.

Identifying existing local relationships and getting people involved

Community Resilience is something we in our area already do. It is not about creating or identifying a new community network, or a one-off response to an incident, but rather an ongoing process of using and enhancing existing relationships, existing local community networks and groups within our community e.g. Parish Council, Village Centre groups, Church groups etc.

Collecting information

Using local knowledge and identifying vulnerable people

It is important to ensure that isolated and vulnerable people are contacted to see if they need assistance during an emergency. I know many of you look out for your neighbours and have vital information of who needs help and when.

Organisations and individuals such as Herefordshire Council's Resilience Team and Social Care have systems and resources to help people to respond to, and recover from, emergencies. These groups cannot always determine exactly what individuals want or need, nor can they always identify who in our community may be vulnerable in a crisis, particularly those who may not previously have received support.

This requires local knowledge and your help.

Identifying and preparing for risks

Emergencies can make anyone vulnerable and make life more difficult for people who are already vulnerable. Our local emergency responders will need to help those in most need first and who might be vulnerable in an emergency and where they live.

It is important to be aware of the risks that could affect our community and to understand how we could be affected by them in order to improve our community's resilience. We as individuals and communities should prepare for any risk, we feel are relevant to our area.

Other aspects to consider when assessing the impact of an incident on our local area could include:

Social risks

Are there any known vulnerable people/groups in the area?

Examples may include:

- people who have recently had an operation/broken a limb;
- people without access to transport;
- people with limited mobility;
- groups that might find it difficult to understand emergency information; and
- transient groups such as holiday makers or travelling communities

Environment risks

- are there any particular sites/areas that flood regularly?
- are there any sites of environmental or historic importance, such as sites of special scientific interest, which may be affected?

This just the start of a process that could help to save lives in our area please think about any potential risks and problems we have in our area and how we can prepare for these emergencies.

Please contact me with your suggestions and any help you may be able to provide.

John Pudge

ST. GILES' CHURCH

On Christmas Day we held our usual family communion service.

It was lovely to see a congregation, although smaller than usual, gathering at St. Giles' Church.

It has been sad to see the lack of services at our Church, but hopefully not for much longer.

At present St. Giles' Church remains closed.

As soon as we are able we will be organising our fund raising events.

Acton Beauchamp PCC would like to wish everyone A Happy New Year.

Hopefully, as the vaccine rolls out, life will regain some normality.

Stanford Bishop News

Dear All,

We are now into the second month of the New Year; the weather is improving minute by minute starting to reveal more day light. As the temperature begins to rise frogs spawn can be seen populating ponds as frogs wake from hibernation. Songbirds become active, thrushes with their wistful drifting phrases of song, nuthatches with their exotic vocal range awakens the countryside.

Groves of snowdrops are a welcome bloom; hazel's golden catkins begin to open along with glossy green ferns. In the garden Daphne, sarcocca and mahonia fill the air with scent. February lambing is taking place while others are preparing for march lambing.



Our wonderful countryside is starting to emerge with life.

Cancelled – Due to the current situation our event has been cancelled

Saturday 6th February 2021 - Snowdrops & Soup at Stanford Bishop.

Take Care all

LIFE IS WHAT HAPPENS TO US WHEN WE ARE MAKING OTHER PLANS

Now I don't know about you but planning has not been one of my strengths and I am constantly reminded of my shortfall whenever I forget to do anything. I can however claim some redemption from my lack of preparedness as recent events have proved. For instance, last March, when planned trips and visits to friends got shelved as the country went into lockdown. Then during the summer when short breaks and family gatherings, were cancelled or changed at the last minute to meet new and changing regulations. And recently there were tier two plans made for the lead up to Christmas and then joy, Hereford went into tier one and a new round of planning was soon frustrated when we arrived again in tier two. What next I wonder?

You will now understand that if I had been strong on planning it actually wouldn't have done much good. I had little control on the ever-changing conditions. I might not be a good planner but at least I'm adaptable.

Now I will come to the point. There is a strange mystery afoot. Things do happen for the best and there is some order to our lives, even if things appear chaotic.

Community Support. Following the initial idea of a Bishops Frome Support Group, the village mobilised and medicines and food were delivered to vulnerable people within our village and benefice and new friendships made to tackle isolation. Lots of help was suddenly volunteered. If anyone still needs assistance please get in touch and I am sure I can muster help.

A Drive in Carol Service. A crazy idea devised at short notice but it worked. Held in Bishops Frome car park with between sixty and seventy people singing along to carols broadcast over the radio in a covid safe environment.

Midnight Mass at Bishops Frome. The choir prepared for this but it was found too risky to keep socially distanced so were unable to sing. It was thought the congregation numbers could be an issue too in our new covid world and what about the floods. All was well and it was a really fitting service with a small congregation and carols beautifully sung by James and his wife and Duncan accompanying on the organ. A really special service at a really special time.

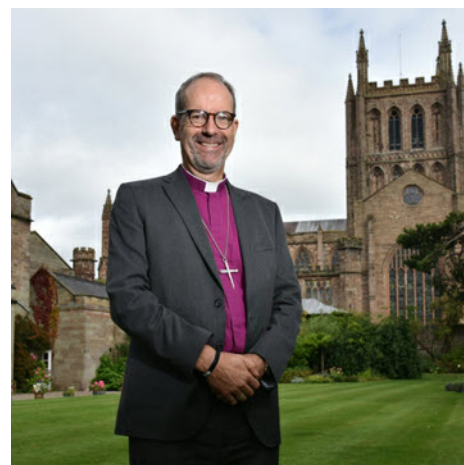
I know that things have been hard for many people and will continue to be so in the near future and some have experienced personal tragedies. I also know that there has been a growth of care and concern within our community and a willingness to keep life as normal as possible. Our church still gets decorated during advent and Christmas and we have a tree of lights to remember those we have lost. So thank you to everyone who care, support and do the practical things that keep our church and community alive, shining and hopeful during these challenging times.

On reflection, these things may not happen by accident after all, so perhaps there is a plan but it's all beyond me.

Tony Davis

From Bishop Richard

The great Spanish saint, Teresa of Avila, was both witty and wise. On being thrown out of a carriage into the mud during a long journey, she records her conversation with God beginning, "If this is how you treat your friends, its no surprise you have so few!" Some of her thinking is surprisingly contemporary and relevant. She once said that most problems in leadership stem from a lack of self-knowledge. Recent events in America certainly bear this out.



As we continue through this second lock-down, a more mindful understanding of what is going on inside us could be a great help in fostering good relationships. Current circumstances put us all under a great deal of stress. If we're unaware of what is really going on inside us, that stress can emerge in unhelpful and relationship destroying ways. Even within the church, I have encountered people who are delightful and caring in normal circumstances, but when under stress can erupt in explosive anger. The strength of that has surprised even themselves, never mind the bruised recipient of the outburst.

Voices from the past, even voices long since dead, can still echo in our present experience. The child who was never good enough for their parents, can get into the habit of justifying their existence through driven activity. The child who was only praised for good performance can feel hugely threatened if they don't meet their own standards. I think that was what was going on in the anger I spoke of earlier. But these habitual patterns of coping and doing life are ultimately destructive.



This month, we begin the journey of Lent. Traditionally this is a period of spiritual examination. It may be that lockdown affords the opportunity for greater self-scrutiny this year. Perhaps a meditation on the words God spoke over Jesus at his baptism could kick us off. "This is my child, the beloved, in him I am well pleased". As people 'in Christ' these are words God speaks over us as well. These are words to counter the narrative of inadequacy, or being valued only for what we can achieve. They are words that affirm God's unconditional love. They are words that transform and renew. May we hear those words rather than the unhelpful ones this Lent.

Local Online Therapy - with Dr David Best

I provide local professional help for mental distress and difficulties, even more prevalent in these unusual times. To have an experienced therapist to talk to, who has helped others in similar circumstances, can help to resolve the mental distress of a range of relationship and mental health issues.

This help is available either on-line or in person with appropriate social distancing.

Please look at web site; www.localonlinetherapy.co.uk, for information and details of the services he offers, the approach he uses, and *how to contact me*.

In particular, he offers support for:

- Depression
- Couples therapy
- Relationship counselling
- Employment difficulties
- Parenting challenges
- Stress and Trauma
- Anxiety



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BREAD-MILK-EGGS-NEWSPAPERS-PAYZONE

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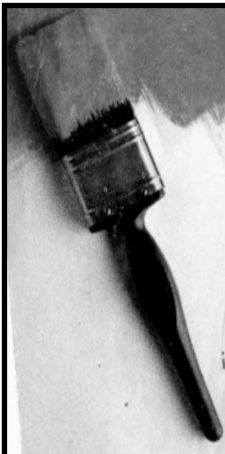
SUNDAY - 9am-4pm



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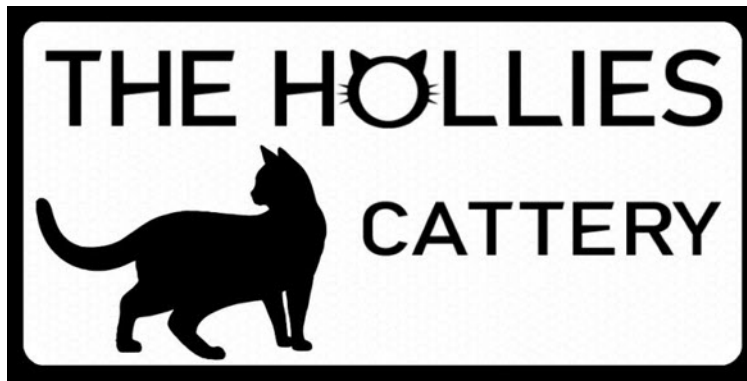
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www.theholliescattery.com



Sean Kelly

M: 07510400705

E: contact@skplumbingsolutions.com

W: skplumbingsolutions.com

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NO CALL OUT CHARGE**



The Green Dragon at Bishop's Frome

Thanks all its friends for their loyalty and support.

Publishing deadlines mean that we are writing this message at the bleakest time, the darkest days of the lockdown. By the time it comes out in the Frome Valley News, let's hope the future will be brighter and the end will be in sight, with the vaccine stuffing the virus and those terrible graphs heading South. Before Christmas, Tier One gave us a chance to show off the best the Dragon has to offer. Not surprisingly, people came from miles around ... and as a result within days we had reached Tier Three and had to close again.



You understood why we had to. We're proud to have many NHS frontliners among our regulars, and we know what has to be done. But we've missed you, and we know you've missed us – the companionship, the laughter, the warmth of our log fires, and our great food and drink.

You have always been there for us, because you know the pub is the heart of the community. And, when this is over, we'll be there for you.

It'll be one hell of a party.

The Green Dragon

Bishop's Frome

WR6 5BP 01885 490607

"It's what all village pubs should be like"



Check our Facebook Page for updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Green-Dragon-of-Bishops-Frome-101666974700054>

And also John has a new Instagram account for the Green Dragon its:
thegreendragonbishopsfrome

Aerial photography by Drone

Crop Walking
and Building Photography
Aerial photography of Woodland
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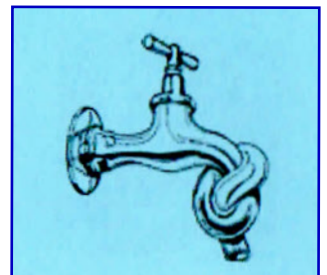
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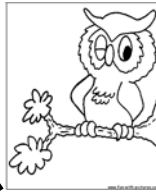
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TUESDAYS	9.45am	Beginners Tap Dance
	10.30am	Tap Dance
	11.30am	'FitSteps Fab'
	1.45pm	Silver Swans Ballet/over 55's
	3pm	Belly Dance
	6.45pm	Advanced non syllabus Ballet
WEDNESDAYS	9.30am	Modern Jazz Dance
	10.30am	Ballet
	11.45am	'FitSteps'
	2pm	Ballet
THURSDAYS	10am	'FitSteps Fab'
	11.15am	Silver Swans Ballet/over 55's
	12.15pm	Ballet
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*Wishing you
good health &
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Here's hoping the
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better times for
everyone. With
all best wishes,
Ellie.*

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Please get in touch if you have any comments or questions
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For my video review of 2020 please visit my Facebook page.

Dear all

Well – it's not been the start to the New Year that we had hoped for, has it? I imagine that for many of us this current lockdown may be even harder than the challenges we faced last year. January is often a challenging time of year anyway, being cold and dark... I really hope that everyone reading this has what they need to keep warm and well. Please do let me know if you're aware of anyone who needs some extra support, and I will do all I can to connect them with people who can help (my contact details are below).



I was actually planning to deliver a new year postcard to everyone – but lockdown #3 hit before that was possible, so I've asked the newsletter editor to kindly publish it instead. I hope you find the phone numbers and links helpful. I hope to be back knocking on your door, saying hello and delivering newsletters as soon as possible when restrictions are lifted!

In the meantime I thought I'd write a slightly different sort of column this month, given that it's traditionally the time for New Year Resolutions! In general I'm not a big fan of over-ambitious goals to be 'good' that make me feel guilty when I inevitably fail 😊, but I confess I have started Couch to 5k (again!), am doing Dry January, and have renewed my Giving What We Can pledge... I've also been trying a new sort of resolution, based on the idea of CLANGERS – no, not the 1970s kids TV characters, but the NHS acronym for the key 'ways to wellbeing'. It stands for: Connect, Learn, be Active, Notice, Give back, Eat well, Relax, and Sleep. I try to do something small under at least one of these headings every day. I highly recommend it!

I've got some council-related New Year Resolutions too. (In fact, I've got task lists as long as your arm!) My absolute top priority this year in terms of ward work is to make progress on road safety. I'm determined to get more action on traffic calming in key sites, especially at Fromes Hill, and also in Munderfield and Cradley. And I've got lots of other things on my high-priority list too, including drainage, potholes, and planning issues – if one of these is affecting you, I promise you I am on the case!

For the council as a whole – well, 2020 was quite challenging, and 2021 is unfortunately looking pretty similar so far. We're facing serious financial pressures, and the light at the end of the Covid tunnel is still quite a way off. But on the plus side we've made some real progress in 2020, including on really practical things like providing more community support, help for struggling families, reducing homelessness, and pothole-fixing. We've also taken some important strategic decisions, setting the council's direction for the future.

One of the things I am most excited about is our decision to start building council houses for the first time in a generation in Herefordshire. Our county has a really big housing affordability problem – houses cost 9.3 times the average wage here, which is the worst ratio in the whole of the West Midlands. No wonder many of our young people leave... So we are going to tackle this directly by building net-zero-carbon affordable homes. It's the best possible time to do this – the market has failed to fix the problem, public sector borrowing costs are at a historic low so the finances add up – AND we will be creating jobs as well as high-quality homes! The first site will be at Merton Meadow in Hereford, and we aim to build 2500 homes county-wide in the next ten years.

Another big decision we've made is to adopt a future-focused transport policy. The old administration wanted to spend £200 million on building a bypass to the west of Hereford – destroying a swathe of precious landscape in the process. But we've reviewed all the data and

found that a) only 7% of journeys in Hereford are through traffic – most of it is internal to the city so a bypass won't help; and b) we can get the same degree of congestion reduction as a bypass would provide (14%) at a fraction of the cost (£57 million), by investing properly in walking, cycling and buses. It's obvious that sustainable travel is by far the best value for money – and it can also be done immediately, rather than taking 10 years. We've already got new cycle paths in the pipeline.

In my portfolio, Environment, Economy and Skills, my top priorities this year are: 1) to catalyse new climate action countywide, including through a new housing retrofit programme to tackle emissions and fuel poverty at the same time; 2) to help businesses bounce back from the Covid; and 3) to help young people in particular get the skills they need to succeed in life, through things like the Kickstart jobs programme, new apprenticeships, and the new Youth Opportunities Hub we'll be opening soon.

It's an incredibly challenging time to be involved in local politics – so much to do, such limited resources – but the council is full of committed and hard-working people, officers and councillors alike, trying to do their very best despite everything the times throw at us all – flooding, Covid, Avian flu, etc. If we sometimes don't quite succeed, please do tell us so that we can try to do better. (And if we do succeed, please tell us that too!)

I wish you, your families and friends all the VERY best for 2021. Let's all hang on in there a little bit longer, together, being kind to ourselves and others. The vaccines mean there is light at the end of the tunnel - but we have to grit our teeth, wash our hands, wear our masks and keep our distance for a little while longer still.

Keep warm and keep well, and please do get in touch if I can help with anything.

All the best, Ellie

Ellie.chowns@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01531 670729 / 07950 714947

Facebook.com/CllrEllieChowns

Are you fed-up with doing the same old walks?

[Walking in Herefordshire www.walkinginengland.co.uk/hereford](http://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/hereford) is the website for you!

With hundreds of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, contact details for all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

John said 'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Herefordshire (part of the Walking in England suite of websites (www.walkinginengland.co.uk) – one for each county in England) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris

www.walkinginengland.co.uk

email: john@walkinginengland.co.uk

Hereford Diocese sets out environmental plan to become carbon neutral by 2030

Over 90 church leaders and environmental activists came together online in late November 2020 across Herefordshire and South Shropshire to lay out an ambitious environmental policy to obtain Eco Diocese status by the end of 2021. This followed the Church of England announcement, endorsed by Hereford Diocese to work towards net zero carbon by 2030.

Andy Atkins, Chief Executive of A Rocha UK, an environmental Christian charity said: "Covid has been terrible, but climate change will make the pandemic look like a blip." His comments during were made during his opening address to the online conference delegates. He stressed the importance of encouraging more people to act now, reminding people that there was no time to waste and that re-building post Covid-19 "provides a real chance to make changes to the economy that will lessen the impact of climate change."

The Rt Revd Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford who also addressed the online conference, emphasised the point adding: "We can look at the issue of climate change and feel utterly paralysed by it, but people taking leadership and direction in local communities can really begin to turn things around. The cumulative effect of every action makes a significant difference to the overall impact."

To the north of Hereford Diocese, St Laurence's Church in Church Stretton is one of the early leaders in the Diocese. The church achieved its Silver Eco Church award in December 2020. Churchwarden Marion Shuttleworth explains: "The award is a real encouragement for our church family who have embraced the environmental challenge with practical action. We have used builders and renovators to restore and upgrade parts of the church so that the building is more energy efficient. Our children's leaders have been engaging younger people in our local community and schools, helping them to learn about caring for God's creation through our Muddy Church events and we have a monthly prayer climate group who meet to pray about environmental matters in our church and for the world. In recent years, our music team have led worship themed around creation - all of which complements the preaching and teaching we've received as a church. It really is God's family in action."

The Diocese of Hereford is working with organisations and local authorities such as the South Shropshire Climate Action Group, the Herefordshire Green Network, Farm Herefordshire and the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership to encourage and resource Church of England parishes in the Diocese of Hereford to care for creation and respond locally to the global climate crisis.

The Church has a biblical basis for caring for the Earth, which God made for his glory and his people's enjoyment. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the Earth and its people today, and will impact on every aspect of human life and the natural environment.

Since setting out plans to become an Eco Diocese in September 2019, 33 churches across Herefordshire and South Shropshire have signed up as Eco Churches with 8 gaining Bronze awards and two silver awards. The conference gave a further boost with eight more churches signed up to the programme. The Diocese is on target to achieve its Bronze award by the end of 2021.

The Frome Valley Group

February 2021

	7 th	14 th	21 st	28 th	7 th March
	2 before Lent Green Proverbs 8.1,22-31 Psalm 104.26-37 John 1.1-14	Sunday before Lent Green 2 Kings 2.1-12 Psalm 50.1-6 Mark 9.2-9	Lent 1 Purple Genesis 9.8-17 Psalm 25.1-9 Mark 1.9-15	Lent 2 Purple Genesis 17.1-7,15,16 Psalm 22.23-31 Mark 8.31-38	Lent 3 Purple Exodus 20.1-17 Psalm 19 John 2.13-22

At time of going to press, due to the ongoing National Lockdown and the current Covid 19 situation within the Benefice all Church Services have been suspended. We hope to resume Services as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Parish Office is currently open on Thursday mornings 10am to 12 midday for telephone calls only on 01885 490229.

Outside these times and in case of emergency please contact

Rev Steven Baggs 01885 490582

Rev Richard Allaway 07969 699270

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals

The Funeral of Susan Joy Thornbury who died on 21st December 2020, aged 61, took place on 8th January 2021 at St Mary the Virgin, Much Cowarne.

The Cremation of Rosemary Price who died on 21st December 2020, aged 75, took place on 7th January 2021.

May They Rest in Peace.

BISHOPS FROME VILLAGE CENTRE



Back in Lockdown! but looking forward to our vaccinations.

The Bishops Frome Support Group is back in operation to help people who are vulnerable or shielding with prescriptions from Bromyard & Cradley, and with shopping. The number to call is 07764 578410. See the Covid-19 Local Support tab on our website for more information

bishopsfromecentre.co.uk

for much more information and hiring charges

In the Centre, there will be some full day hires by the NHS taking place and the Post Office will remain open.

We will continue to follow **Covid-19 Secure** guidelines, especially hand sanitising, control on numbers, distancing and face coverings at all times.

Guidelines change so if you are thinking of booking for the future, please email for the latest version of the Special Conditions of Hire.



To arrange to have a look, when we are open, or to book, contact Wendy Roberts on 01885 490327 or email

bishfromecentre@aol.com

census 2021

Plans are going ahead for the Village Centre to be a support centre for the **Census 2021**, which will be digital. We hope to be helping the Good Things Foundation to provide support to ensure that those without digital skills or internet access can participate.



The census takes place every 10 years in the UK - and the next Census day is Sunday 21 March, but the support will be available over a longer period. The Census is a compulsory survey that gives the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. The information collected from the census helps inform local authorities and government about demands for vital public services such as school places, hospital and GP services and social care provision.



Family historians of the future will also be grateful that we completed the Census.



Andy is there with the Post Office Outreach Services in the small office by the main entrance

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Tuesday	13.00 to 14.30
Wednesday	9.00 to 12.00
Thursday	9.00 to 12.00

VICAR

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e-mail: stevenbaggs@me.com

PLEASE NOTE: Monday is Steven's day off.

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