November 2026

Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton-upon-Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey

Pumpkin fundraising at Pitlands Farm

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Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial team. *Teme Triangle* is not responsible for goods and services advertised. Contributions may be edited at the discretion of the Editor.

Front cover picture:

Lucie Cooper and Helena Mann with some of the pumpkins raising money for the Midlands Air Ambulance at Pitlands Farm.

PITLANDS PUMPKINS AND CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

Pitlands Farm has once again grown its own pumpkins to create a charity pumpkin pile, inviting visitors to make a donation rather than pay for their pumpkins. This year's chosen charity is the Midlands Air Ambulance.

The farm will also be holding a special Christmas charity event on **Tuesday 22 December, from 9am to 3pm,** featuring Christmas crafts, a children's clay modelling workshop, carol singing by *GRV111 Men in Harmony*, a visit from Father Christmas and festive food and drink from the Bloom Café. A Christmas-themed children's garden trail will run throughout the day.

During December, the café will be offering three-course festive lunches, together with special evening dining experiences on Saturdays 5, 12 and 19 December. Advance booking is essential.

Christmas opening hours: Normal hours until 20 December; 21–22 December, 9am–3pm; 23–24 December, 9am–2pm (Christmas Eve breakfasts by advance booking only); closed Christmas Day and Boxing Day; 27–31 December, 9am–2pm; closed New Year's Day. The café will then close for January.

For further details and bookings, visit www.thebloomcafe.co.uk or telephone 01886 812431.

CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP

Get into the festive spirit with a Christmas Wreath Workshop at Clifton Village Hall on **Saturday 5 December, from 10am to 12 noon.**

Create your own beautiful Christmas wreath on a willow ring, with all materials provided. Beginners and experienced crafters alike are welcome. Festive treats and Baileys coffee or hot chocolate will add to the seasonal cheer!

The cost is £35 per person. Please bring scissors or secateurs. Places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. Contact Dot Millward on 07980 295269 to reserve your place.

SHELSLEYS VILLAGE HALL AUTUMN AND WINTER EVENTS

The Shelsleys Village Hall has a busy programme of events lined up for the coming months, with something for everyone to enjoy.

The highlight of November will be the **Fireworks Extravaganza on Saturday 7 November,** with the bar opening at 6.30pm, food available from 7pm and the fireworks display beginning at 8pm. Admission is free.

Looking ahead to Christmas, the Village Hall will be holding a **Christmas Fayre on Saturday 5 December, from 12 noon to 5pm**, featuring crafts, food vans and plenty of gift ideas, along with mulled wine and mince pies.

The Village Hall bar will also be open at 7pm on Fridays: 16 October, 20 November, 4 December and 18 December, offering a chance to meet friends and neighbours for a drink.

Make a note of the dates and come along to support your Village Hall!

STANFORD CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Once again, we are holding our fabulous Christmas Tree Festival in Stanford Church in December. This is our seventh year of the festival – raising money for the church and for local charities. This year we are sharing the proceeds with Abberley and Great Witley Guides and Brownies.

With over 20 trees, more than half of which will have been decorated by children from local schools, nurseries and clubs, lights round the tower, activities for the children and our now ‘infamous’ arch in the porchway, it’s lovely to see the church twinkling away and looking so festive.

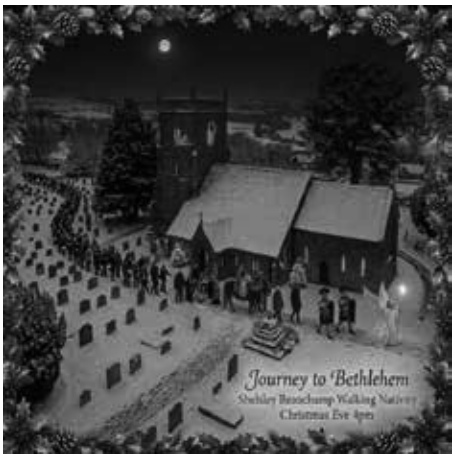
This year we are holding the festival on **Saturday, 5 December and Sunday, 6 December from 10am to 4pm each day** with free entry, mulled wine, fruit juice and mince pies (all free!). We just ask for donations which we then share with our chosen charity.

We’ll have carol singing on the Saturday from 4pm to 5pm in the church – and as it becomes dark, it’s the perfect time to see the trees at their best, decorations and lights twinkling away.

It’ll be great to see as many parents, grandparents and everyone else from the family, come along to see the children's efforts. There is a 'peoples vote' where you can choose the best tree - so if you want your child’s tree to win – you know what to do! https://tinyurl.com/ymrs8z5y

John Curtis

CHRISTMAS EVE WALKING NATIVITY IN THE SHELSLEYS



All Saints Church, Shelsley Beauchamp, invites the local community to experience the magic of the nativity in a unique and interactive way this Christmas Eve. **On Thursday, 24 December,** the village will come alive with a special 'Walking and Singing Nativity', an immersive journey where participants walk and sing carols alongside the traditional Christmas story rather than simply watching it from a pew.

Beginning inside All Saints Church at 4pm, families and churchgoers will follow a scenic nativity trail through the village, pausing at key stops to re-enact Mary and Joseph's search for shelter, sing Christmas carols, and celebrate the heart of the festive season under the evening sky.

The walking nativity offers a joyful, engaging tradition for all ages, bridging the gap between historical story and community party. The trail culminates at the village hall, the 'Bethlehem Inn', where participants can gaze on the nativity's grand finale from a warm seat! We conclude with festive Christmas Eve drinks, light refreshments, and plenty of Christmas cheer.

Whether you are looking to start a new Christmas Eve family tradition, enjoy a cosy short winter walk with neighbours, or simply pause to reflect on the meaning of Christ's birth, All Saints Church warmly welcomes you to join us for this memorable evening.

Holly Perks, Churchwarden

CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT SHELSLEY WALSH

Get into the festive spirit with Christmas Lunch at The Courtyard, Shelsley Walsh, on **Saturday, 12 December or Sunday, 13 Decembe**r.

Guests are invited to arrive from 1pm, with lunch served at 1.30pm. The afternoon includes a three-course Christmas lunch, warm mince pies, a traditional game of bingo and a festive Christmas quiz. The Courtyard Bar will also be open.

Tickets cost £45 per person. To book, email info@courtyardshelsley.com, giving your preferred date, party size, food choices and details of any allergies or dietary requirements. The organisers will then be in touch to arrange payment. Spaces are limited, so early booking is recommended.

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LOWER SAPEY NEWS

The days are flying by which is quite frightening, but at least this means the winter weather should be over in a flash! We still don't know when, or if we will be affected by El Nino, so in the meantime I have checked the log burner, located the camping stove, gathered torches and candles ready for any power cuts. Such a pity that Openreach have taken away my useful landline just at this time. We have suffered two long power cuts here recently due to falling trees. The power company checked my trees about two years ago, but say I am on the list for removing these in April 2027. Let's hope they stay standing that long. We also seem to have another surge in road closures in the area so I hope the roads will be improved as a result.

The farmers are going ahead with their autumn plans. The nearby apple orchards have been cleared of their crop, which unfortunately is not as good as last years because of the dry summer. Maybe the price of cider will go up. Christmas fayres are being advertised and brochures are arriving for Christmas charity cards. We have a selection available of special St Bartholomew's cards in our church.

We held the memorial service for Marion West recently and this was a beautiful tribute to a very popular lady. Her family had gathered here from all over the world and spoke lovingly of her life. Her grandchildren, Natasha and Stefan told us about all her interests; the riding school, the London nightclub, living in USA, her passion for Pink Floyd and turning down an appearance of the Beatles, all before settling quietly here. I think this information shocked some of us as she was a devoted follower of our church and worked so hard to maintain it.

Our Harvest Service was in early October and, although not very well attended, was a lovely service followed by a Sharing Lunch which went very well. The church looked beautiful. November brings the annual Service of Remembrance on 8 November. This will be a short service near the flag, starting at 10.45am. While on this subject, I would like to say what a wonderful day Clifton Friendship Group enjoyed at the National Memorial Arboretum. Every time I visit, there is more to see and the little train is a terrific addition.

NOTICES

Services: Sunday 8 November - Service of Remembrance 10.45am
Sunday 22 November - Circle service 10.30am.
Housekeeping: November. Beryl Dursley. We now have a cleaner early in the month to help out our volunteers.
Mobile Library will call on Friday 20 November at 10.20 and 10.40am.
Ladies Bible Group will meet at The Hatt on Tuesday, 10 November at 2pm. We will be starting a new book on 'Ruth'. All welcome.

Margaret Griffiths

CLIFTON BOWLING GREEN LATEST

Clifton Parish Councillors have agreed to take over maintenance of the bowling green in the village as the Bowling Club membership has been declining to a point where it can no longer do so itself.

Earlier this year, the Bowling Club Captain, Tony Wilson, reported to the PC that membership had declined from just over 20 to less than 10 and that increasing age and decreasing fitness of the current members meant they were no longer able to carry out the level of maintenance required to sustain a playable surface. The Parish Council has since agreed to take over the bowling green for two years and allocated £800 to re-seed it and maintain it to an acceptable 'lawn' standard in the hope that the Club can revive. Parish Council Chairman, John Bowden, said: "We should respect the legacy. The bowling green was built by the Clifton Playing Field Association before giving it to the Parish Council. We'll give the Bowling Club two years to decide what should happen to it".

Meanwhile, the remaining Club members have continued to play short-mat bowling once a week in the village hall and occasionally playing with fellow bowlers from Lower Broadheath in their village hall and outside at Cripplegate. "We are very pleased to have welcomed two new members this year and would love a few more," said Tony Wilson. "Bowls is a very social team activity requiring few skills beyond the ability to roll a ball along an intended line with sufficient strength to reach close to a target or knock another bowl towards or away from that target. Anybody interested in finding out more is welcome to come to the Village Hall on a Monday afternoon at 2.30 to watch and try bowling. We really want to increase our playing members but would also welcome anyone that just wants to help look after the bowling green, maintain the equipment or just feed us more tea and cakes."

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Minutes of Clifton Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 1 October 2026 at 7.40pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs J. Bowden; S. Haywood; A. Griffiths; R. Neave; D. Crawshaw & P. Brooks. District Cllr P. Cumming & County Cllr J. Bowen. Three members of the public.

Approval of Previous Minutes: Approved: Proposed by Cllr Brooks and seconded Cllr Neave.
Parish Clerk Correspondence: Litter bins and bin bags at the Pavilion: Bin bags are placed near the litter bin by the Lengthsman when they empty the litter bins located in the park (fortnightly). The bags are usually removed on black bin collection day. This did not occur on several occasions. The district council has been informed. The bags were subsequently collected.
Concerns were raised regarding illegal dumping of rubbish and vandalism and the possibility of CCTV cameras on the Pavilion. Action: Replacement black bin to be requested from District Council. Action: Cllr Crawshaw to investigate legal position of CCTV camera covering Pavilion and Park.
Old Road traffic Concerns: Discussed in County Cllr Report.

Housing Register Income Threshold: Cllrs have read the correspondence regarding the income threshold and are now aware of the issue. It was also noted that relevant District and County Councillors have been notified including Dwayne Hubbard (District Cllr, Tenbury). It has been raised with housing officers.

Planning Notifications and Correspondence: M/26/01184/CLE - Steps Farm / Lawfulness of occupation: Approved.

Parish and County Councilors' Reports: District Cllr P. Cumming's report: District council reorganization has been paused. Elections will occur next year. District council's role in planning matters has been reduced. A single planning committee has been proposed.
County Cllr Bowen's written report has been circulated. Cllr Bowen provided the following verbal update: Local Government Review – North / South Worcestershire decision met some, but not all of the set criteria, hence the pause.
Rochford land slip – A new team has taken on the project and progress should be made. Geo-tech studies have now been completed. Report on findings should be ready in early October. Design can then commence. The county has been allocated £5million for Rochford and Malvern land slip work.
Old Road speeding concerns. Cllr Bowen has conducted a site visit on Old Road. He has asked for a speed survey; this will inform what, if any, measures should be implemented such as repeater signs, etc.

Cllr Bowden raised the issue of the Shelsey Walsh junction near Ham Bridge. Action: Parish Council to contact Cllr Bowen outlining concerns regarding Shelsey Walsh turning and requesting a site visit.
Issue raised by Cllr Brooks concerning school bus drop off and recent accident regarding a school aged child. Action: Parish Council to email District Cllr Bowen regarding possibility of installing a footpath outside the village hall and relocating the school bus stop to the Village Hall.
Grants of up to £3,000 to help support health and wellbeing schemes. Charities, public interest groups or schools.

Financial and Governance Matters: Consideration of upcoming expenditure. Invoice to be received for Noticeboard and Pavilion door.
Urgent Business Between Meetings Policy v0.4 - Amendments suggested by Cllr Neave added. Approved by all councillors.
External Auditor response to AGAR received 30th Sept 2026 (circulated). Noted.
Parish Matters and Updates: Update on the noticeboard (Cllr Neave). Installed and completed. Wooden tractor update from Cllr Bowden. Installation date yet to be confirmed but construction has started. Bowling Green/Bowling Club update (MoA/invoice to send to club – details required). No work has commenced yet. Cllr Brooks raised the possibility of installing outside gym equipment.

Pavilion Update: Section 106 funding v1.0 Sept Submitted. No reply yet. Chaser email sent to Mark Hammond. Lottery Funding update. Application submitted to gain access to funding from the Lottery. Contingency plan is that if no match funding is obtained an extension will be added to existing building. 1st tranche of S106 runs out in November 2028. 2nd tranche of S106 runs out in 2033.

Highway Matters: Door closures on wooden gates to be installed.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 5 November 2026

CLIFTON PLAYGOUND DAMAGE

Damage to the wooden fence protecting the children's playground in Clifton has resulted in the Parish Council considering installing CCTV cameras in the area in a bid to deter future vandalism. Chairman John Bowden reported that some of the wooden slats preventing dogs from entering the playground area had been removed or broken. "I feel we have to do something," he said. "It is disgraceful to damage a well-used public amenity."

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT, OCTOBER

Rochford Landslip

Highways have confirmed that Geotech studies have now been completed both on the highway and surrounding land. The information obtained is being prepared as a Findings Report which is due to be completed imminently. The Findings Report will then be used by the Design Team to draw up plans to repair the road. However, there is presently no timescale for when the plans will be ready or how long it will take to repair the road. I am in contact with officers and the Cabinet Member for Highways and will provide on-going updates as I receive them.

Additionally, I was informed by Cabinet in September that initial funding for repair of the landslip has been secured from government. The funding is a share of a £5 million grant received to support repair of the landslips in Rochford and Malvern.

Speeding Traffic

Speeding traffic continues to affect our area, and this is being exacerbated by the road closure at Rochford, which has resulted in various roads being used as alternative routes. I have been liaising with Parish Councils and Highways both in reviewing signage and obtaining Speed Surveys to inform decision making on how to address the issue.

So far this year, traffic calming measures have been installed in a number of locations across the division, including improved signage, Vehicle Activated Signs, and additional road markings. Speed Surveys have either been carried out or are due to be carried out in further locations, including Clifton upon Teme. Once the results of the surveys are known, I will then liaise with Highways and Town & Parish Councils to explore options for reducing traffic speeds through our area.

Justin Bowen

TEME VALLEY CHOIR ADVENT SERVICE

A wonderful way to begin the Christmas season! All Saints Church, Shelsley Beauchamp, will host a traditional candlelit Advent service on **Sunday 29 November at 4pm.**

Entitled *From Darkness to Light,* this atmospheric service will mark the beginning of Advent, with music and songs performed by the magnificent Teme Valley Choir.

Everyone is warmly invited to come along and enjoy this special occasion, with seasonal refreshments served afterwards.

The Pet Service held at St Kenelm's Church, Clifton

The Bishop of Worcester, the Right Rev. Hugh Nelson, at St Kenelm's Church, with (left to right) Rev. Jen Jones, Ruth Wilson and Rev. Julia Curtis.

SHELSLEY HARVEST CELEBRATIONS

Sunday, 11 October saw the Shelsley community come together to celebrate Harvest, firstly with a packed-out church service held at All Saints and led by Revd Jen Jones. Many thanks, as always, to all the ladies who contributed to preparing the church before the service, whether it be cleaning, preparing the service itself, or decorating the windows with their beautiful flower displays. The congregation (and a few more!) then headed back to the Village Hall for the traditional Harvest supper, which for the first time, had actually sold out (at 70 tickets!) two weeks before the event!

The evening was a huge success, with delicious food and wine, a pudding selection to die for and most importantly, much conversation and laughter with good neighbours and friends. A magnificent £1,250 was raised, which will help fund the maintenance of our beautiful church buildings. A special mention must go to all the new Shelsley residents who attended (15 of you!) – hopefully you weren't too embarrassed being introduced on the night - welcome!

It never ceases to amaze us how willing people are to help – the evening consisted of a team of 26 people! (Too many to mention everyone individually here, but all names were read out and thanked on the night). Roles included decorating the hall, making pies, making puddings, supplying flowers for the tables, sponsoring the endless supply of wine, or simply donating even though they could not attend. Barry and Irene Hodgetts again very generously donated the raffle hamper, which in itself raised a huge £235.

It is, always, a team effort – and what a great team it is. The community spirit in our special little valley is truly remarkable. Thank you.

Louise Hutton

A few of the huge volunteer team for the Shelsley Harvest celebrations. (From L to R): Alexandra Winnington, Carole Warren, Louise Hutton, Jan Speyer, Alice Timmis, Rebecca Perry, Rachel Wright, Laura Taylor, Beryl Robson, Michelle Whitefoot.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE

Once again this year, the Shelsley Christmas cards are for sale. Painted by the hugely talented artist Diana Pollock, who painted the wonderful 'Shelsleys Jubilee Parish Map' (on display in the Village Hall and prints available to buy), the two beautiful wintry scenes (*above*) are of St Andrew's, Shelsley Walsh and All Saints, Shelsley Beauchamp.

The A6 size cards are individual and not in packs, so any number of either design can be ordered. Cards are priced at £1.50 each.

Contact Louise Hutton on 07803 614 078 or email louise@stroyd-hutton.com to place your order.

DEANERY AWARDS HONOUR LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

Two members of the Shelsleys community, Louise Hutton and Beryl Robson have been recognised for their outstanding contributions to local church and community life.

The pair received awards at the 2026 Kidderminster and Stourport Deanery Awards ceremony, held at Rowberry Garden Centre in Chaddesley Corbett on 30 September.

The awards celebrate the dedication of individuals nominated by their churches for their exceptional service. Each recipient was presented with a certificate and pin badge by Area Dean Tim Williams, Deanery Lay Chair Clare Stockford and the Revd Julia Curtis.

Louise (pictured on the left, above, with the Rev. Julia Curtis) and Beryl were honoured for their enthusiasm, commitment and the constant, invaluable contributions they make to their churches and the wider community. Louise will also be familiar to readers as one of the editors of *Teme Triangle*.

Warm congratulations to them both on this well-deserved recognition!

Bridget Francis

CLIFTON FUN DOG SHOW

What a fabulous day we all had at the Fun Dog show last month at the Old Vicarage in Clifton. We were so lucky that the sun shone brightly all day, as friends and neighbours from the local villages came with their furry friends and took part in the show. (One lovely man travelled form Birmingham!) It was such a great atmosphere as people chatted and dogs barked (quietly!)- a very relaxing way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

There was plenty of tea and cake, a bottle tombola, raffle, book and jigsaw stall, kindly run by Clifton WI, and a local animal artist displaying his talent. A fantastic £855.70 was raised so thank you to all of you who came and donated. The money is being split between St Kenelm's church to go towards the Tower Appeal – a very big project in itself - and Child of Hope Uganda (www.childofhopeuganda.org) a charity very close to Rachel Austin's heart and where she has volunteered for the last three years. The money will be well spent in both cases.

A big thank you to all the helpers on the day and the cake bakers – too many to mention! A special note of thanks though to Bloom Café, Jess (Hair by Jess), the Lion Inn and the Mason's Arms for their generous raffle prizes and also to Martley Village Stores for the Doggy Ice cream. Your support was really appreciated. There are photos of all the winners and some other dogs - please contact ruth.wilson38@btinternet.com if you would like any copies. Roll on next year!!

Ruth Wilson

Best in Show winners with judge Alison Seall

The Clifton dog show, in aid of the cost of repairs to St Kenelm's church tower and the Child of Hope Uganda charity, held at The Old Vicarage.

Jackie Gilbert, Rachel Austin and Jennie Holmes at the Clifton Dog Show

DOG SHOW JUDGE'S REPORT

What a lovely Saturday afternoon for a dog show! A few fluffy white clouds scudding across blue skies, and sunshine throughout! Clive and Rachel's garden was the perfect setting, with a lovely large show ring. There was plenty for everyone … the WI's book and jigsaw stall, a welcome tea and cakes stand, the bottle tombola, name the knitted doll competition and the fabulous pet portraits stand. Visitors and exhibitors and their dogs had plenty of tables and chairs and lots of space to sit and relax in the sun or shade.

I had hoped to enter Tamar this year, as she wasn't up to strutting her stuff last year, but sadly that was not to be. So it was a real pleasure to see so many of Tamar's furry friends from the village, as well as quite a few from further afield.

What a fantastic entry for the show! I had the pleasure of meeting 19 handsome dogs and 19 pretty girls and a few more lovely dogs entered in the other six classes … there were well over 40 dogs entered. A rather smart Wire Fox Terrier called Tintin was my Most Handsome Dog winner and a foxy little lady named Vixen was my Prettiest Girl winner.

I have a soft spot for our ‘golden oldies’ and it was lovely to see so many in the Veteran class, ranging from eight to 14 years old, enjoying their day out. I was slightly dreading the ‘Best Sausage Catcher’ class, wondering whether my aim might be so bad that several dogs would go for the same sausage! However, the dogs were all very well-mannered and took it in turns nicely. Tony’s boy, Barney has now won the title of Best Sausage Catcher for two consecutive years … goodness, is he good! It was a very close call for second and third place with some great sausage-catching skills from one of Bernard’s Labs and Maggie’s Captain! Well done!

I loved meeting all the puppies … all of them gundogs! They were such happy and confident pups! Spaniels ruled in the Waggiest Tail class … they not only wagged their tails but their whole bodies! It was heartwarming to hear all the stories about the Best Rescue dogs … thank you to all the owners who have given these dogs their forever homes and lots of love. The last class of the day was Junior Handlers. There were some quite large dogs and some very fidgety dogs in the class, but they were all handled with confidence by their young owners. Well done to you all!

Best in Show was Tintin from the Most Handsome Dog class. Reserve Best in Show was Barney the amazing Best Sausage Catcher. And the Best Junior Handler, with his big German Shorthaired Pointer won a third prize rosette.

I’d like to say a big thank you to all the organisers for a wonderful afternoon, and to Tracey for taking all the entries; to my steward Pippa for keeping everything running smoothly, and to Andy and his megaphone for calling all the classes! And finally, ‘Thank you very much’ to all the lovely dogs and their owners who supported this event! I really enjoyed having a little ‘chat’ with each and every one of your lovely dogs. *Alison Seall*

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TEME VALLEY WILDLIFE

I've recently been reading about a countryman who spent his whole life working in the woods of the Teme valley and who died not long after the turn of the millennium. I was struck by his observation that there are perhaps two weeks each year when the new unfurling leaves of trees and plants display a multitude of differing hues of green. This mosaic effect is only brief because the leaves rapidly darken, all tending to a more uniform colour in maturity. It was during this period in spring that my eye was drawn to some leaves of unusual shape and tint on the edge of my local wood. I reached up to a branch to look more closely and knew that I didn't know what they were.

I went to check on them a week or two later, when a loose cluster of flower buds had appeared, but I was still none the wiser. Patience is a virtue, so I waited for the buds to open into single white flowers, then photographed both leaves and flowers to compare with some pictures in my botany books. To my surprise and delight the tree proved to be an uncommon native species called the wild service tree. Better still, it reliably signifies that the site on which it grows is ancient woodland.

By the time the flowers were in bloom May had arrived, so I set off on my annual walking challenge at the Malvern Walking Festival. Our route took us through Haugh Wood, a Forestry England site close to Woolhope in the Wye Valley. The wood is designated a site of special scientific interest and is particularly

renowned for hosting more than 600 different species of moth and butterfly. The rare wood white butterfly and drab looper moth can be found here. Armed with my new knowledge, I was able to recognise abundant wild service tree flowers as we passed through, and I later learned that the wood is the best place in Herefordshire to see them.

Wild service trees are members of the sorbus family, their commonest relative being the rowan, also called the mountain ash tree. They prefer clay soils, propagate by suckering and provide a good display of autumn leaf colour, turning an attractive red as temperatures fall. The open white flowers develop into small brown fruits which carry the common name of chequers. Chequers are round, speckled berries 1 to 2 centimetres in diameter and if left to soften, or "blet", become edible, although their texture is said to be somewhat gritty. In earlier times, they were sometimes gathered and threaded onto strings to ripen indoors, then eaten like sweets when soft. Their unusual flavour is said to resemble a cross between dried apricot and tamarind. Unfortunately, I shall have to wait until next year to verify this because this year's heat and dryness caused the berries to shrivel up.

The berries have also been associated with traditional inns named "The Chequers", although that association is unclear. Trees might have grown nearby, or perhaps some type of drink was prepared from the fruits, although the evidence for that is somewhat sparse. Regardless, it appears that the tree once had much more of a public use and presence than it does today. I wonder why?

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7:30pm on Thursday November 12 2026 at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall, WR15 8RR. We welcome Nigel Woodall whose talk is called "Deer of the Wyre Forest and Beyond". Members and friends are welcome, it is just £3 on the door.

For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, please visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, newsletter and bird survey are all available on the website www.teme-valley-wildlife.org. We hold meetings on the second Thursday of the month from January to November. All are welcome.

Stephanie Mocroft

LITTLE WITLEY FILM

The film *The North* is being screened at Little Witley village hall on Saturday, 21 November. It's a gentle, humorous and thoughtful film about two friends sharing a spectacular 600 kilometres walk through the Scottish highlands to reconnect with each other, nature and parts of themselves they've lost. Doors open at 6pm, film begins at 7.30pm.

Church Matters

by Rev. Jen Jones

There is something about the months of November and December that invites us to slow down.

The year seems to draw in upon itself. The evenings arrive earlier, the trees become bare, and the familiar rhythms of the countryside take on a quieter character. In the life of the Church, too, these weeks carry a particular depth as we move from the season of Remembrance, through Advent, towards the celebration of Christmas.

November begins with remembering. On All Saints' and All Souls' Days we give thanks for those whose lives have touched our own, and we hold before God those whom we have loved and lost. Then, in Remembrance, we remember those who have died in war and those who continue to bear the wounds of conflict. Our village war memorials, churchyards and acts of remembrance connect us with generations who have gone before us.

Remembering can be painful, but it can also be an act of love. We remember because people matter. We remember names, stories, sacrifices and lives which might otherwise fade from view. And we remember in the presence of God, trusting that those whom we cannot hold on earth are held securely in God's love. Remembrance points us towards the kingdom of God. We are called to be kingdom people: people who live now in the light of the hope of heaven.

Then from Remembrance we move into Advent.

Advent is sometimes described simply as a time of preparation for Christmas, and certainly there are plenty of practical preparations to be made! There are cards to write, presents to buy, trees to decorate and services to organise. Yet the Church gives us a rather different kind of preparation. Advent asks us to make room—not simply in our homes, but in our hearts.

In the Advent readings we hear about waiting, watching and being ready. We are reminded that God's purposes are larger than our own immediate concerns. In the darkness of winter, we look for the light.

That feels particularly appropriate this year. We all know something of uncertainty and change. We may carry our own worries about family, health, finances or the future; our communities and our world have their own burdens

too. Advent does not pretend that darkness isn't there. Instead, it gives us a promise: the darkness will not have the last word.

And then comes Christmas. The extraordinary Christian claim is that God does not remain distant from the messiness and fragility of human life. In Jesus, God comes among us. Not in grandeur or spectacle, but as a baby, born into an ordinary family, in an ordinary place, surrounded by the vulnerability and uncertainty that belong to human life.

Perhaps that is why Christmas continues to speak so powerfully to us. Beneath all the decorations and celebrations is a simple message: God comes to be with us. With us in joy and in sorrow. With us when life feels full of hope, and with us when we are struggling to see the way ahead. With us in our families and friendships, and with us when we feel lonely. With us in the church, in our homes and in the quiet places where we may hardly notice his presence.

As we move through these coming weeks, I hope we might allow ourselves to receive that gift. Let us remember with gratitude those who have gone before us. Let us wait patiently and hopefully through Advent. And when Christmas comes, let us rejoice that the light of Christ has come into the world—a light which, as John's gospel reminds us, the darkness cannot overcome.

May God bless you, your families and our whole parish communities this Advent and Christmas. And may we discover afresh, amid all the busyness and beauty of this season, the wonderful truth at its heart: God is with us.

May our remembering lead us to gratitude for the past, hope for the future, and lives that help heaven touch earth today. A very happy and peaceful Christmas to you all.

ADVENT A TO Z - A COMPANION FOR THE ADVENT JOURNEY

Prepare for Christmas with Advent from A to Z, a collection of 24 daily reflections by Imogen Ball, Philip North and Andrew Zihni.

Each day explores a different letter of the alphabet, with a short Bible reading, reflection, prayer and opportunity to respond. Beautiful illustrations and discussion questions make it ideal for personal or group use. Whether Advent is new to you or a well-loved tradition, this book offers a fresh way to discover the people, places, traditions and symbols of the season — and to prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

If you would like to buy a copy of the book to follow or join others from across the area for a weekly discussion on zoom do get in touch with Rev. Julia Curtis by emailing revjuliacurtisi@gmail.com.

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ST KENELM'S NEWS

The dog show, in aid of the church repairs and Child of Hope, and the Murder Mystery evening were both very successful and well attended, raising approximately £1,000 towards the Restore and Renew Appeal to repair the church tower. The fund has been further boosted by a grant from Droitwich Preservation Society of £10,000. Sadly, we are still awaiting approval from the planning bodies involved.

The dog show was followed by a Pet Service which had to be held indoors due to poor weather. This year we were joined by a few dogs and Henny, a very well-loved chicken. It provided a real focus on the importance of our pets and the companionship they provide.

The Bishop of Worcester, Bishop Hugh, visited St Kenelm's to share his vision of what 'Kingdom People' means, a term used widely in the Diocese of Worcester for many years but which he felt many of those using it did not really understand. The evening was well attended from across the diocese. Bishop Hugh's message was that 'The kingdom is heaven on earth, the world as God intended it to be not as it is with suffering and injustice….the mission is to bring heaven to earth. The bible tells the story of that mission and how in Jesus everyone comes to be invited to join in. Jesus is 'heaven in a human being and wherever he is, heaven is close.' Hence Kingdom People. He stressed the importance of the church community and looking for God at work in our communities and the world around us and our practical role in this, stressing Faith, Hope and Love as the culture we all need to develop. Love he described as 'treating every person as someone of infinite worth to God, because they are!' A very interesting evening, Bishop Hugh has a very practical outlook and easy to listen to! Summing up the discussion as 'Kingdom People: Joining Jesus in bringing heaven to earth, in communities of faith, hope and love.'

The Warm Welcome returns this month to its weekly spot on Thursday mornings in Clifton Village Hall. It will be open from 11am to 1pm providing a hot lunch at 12 noon, free to all. It has provided a place to meet new people and some good friendships have developed as a result. There has been a toddler/baby group in the past but this stopped as they went to nursery etc. However this can be restarted if there is a need. Jigsaws and books are also available to borrow and games are available in the hall to use. I am currently looking at who is available to help and donations of food are always welcome. If you would like to join a very cheerful team, have any suggestions for how to improve the morning or help in any way, please contact me.

Ruth Wilson, Churchwarden
ruth.wilson38@btinternet.com

CHURCH SERVICES IN CLIFTON, THE SHELSLEYS AND LOWER SAPEY (HARPLEY)

November 2026

Sunday 1 November
10.30am: Holy Communion, St Kenelm's, Clifton
3.00pm: All Souls Service, St Kenelm's, Clifton

Sunday 8 November
10.45am: Service of Remembrance, All Saints, Shelsley Beauchamp
10.45am: Outdoor Act of Remembrance, St Bartholomew's, Harpley
10.45am: Clifton Parade and Service of Remembrance, St Kenelm's, Clifton

Wednesday 11 November
10.45am: Clifton Village Green Observance of Armistice Day, Clifton

Sunday 15 November:
10.00am: Praise 4 All and Family Communion, St Kenelm's, Clifton
6.30pm: Evensong, St Kenelm's, Clifton

Wednesday 18 November
10.30am: Holy Communion, St Andrews, Shelsley Walsh

Sunday 22 November
10.30 pm: Circle Service, St Bartholomew's, Harpley

Saturday 28 November
6.30pm: Big Sing, Mince pies and mulled wine, St Kenelm's, Clifton

Sunday 29 November
4.00 pm: Advent Darkness to Light with Choir Service, All Saints, Shelsley Beauchamp

ST KENELM'S BIG SING

Start the Christmas Season by joining everyone for this year's Big Sing at St. Kenelm's Church on **Saturday 28 November at 6pm.** Come and enjoy your first mince pie and learn some of the background to a few of our favourite Christmas songs and carols.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

3 Shelsleys Parish Council meeting, VH 7pm
5 Clifton Parish Council meeting, VH 7.40pm
7 Shelsleys Fireworks Spectacular, VH from 6pm
7 Evening of Sherry, Clifton VH, 7.30pm
11 Armistice Day Remembrance, Clifton village green 10.45am
12 Teme Valley Wildlife Group meeting, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH 7.30pm
21 Northern Soul, Clifton VH 7.30pm
21 The North film, Little Witley VH, 7pm
28 St Kenelm's Big Sing, Clifton 6pm
29 Teme Valley Choir Advent service, Shelsley Beauchamp 4pm

DECEMBER

5 Christmas Wreath Workshop, Clifton VH 10am-12noon
5 Stanford Church Christmas Tree Festival 10am-4pm
5 Shelsleys Christmas Fayre, VH 12noon-5pm
6 Christmas Fayre, Clifton VH 10am-1pm
6 Stanford Church Christmas Tree Festival 10am-4pm
12 Christmas Lunch, The Courtyard, Shelsley Walsh 1pm
13 Christmas Lunch, The Courtyard, Shelsley Walsh 1pm
22 Pitlands Farm charity event for Midlands Air Ambulance 9am-3pm

MAC 125 ANNIVERSARY AT SHELSLEY WALSH

The Midland Automobile Club based at Shelsley Walsh celebrated their 125th anniversary with a sell-out event in September. Over 100 members and their guests completed a 125th Anniversary Road Tour, arriving at Shelsley where they enjoyed a BBQ and live music followed by a special cake being cut by club President Nick Harrison and Chairman Campbell Deas. As Nick said, "Here's to the next 125 years!"

CHURCH CONTACTS

Oversight Minister: Rev Julia Curtis 01886 853286 revjuliacurtis@gmail.com

Christenings, Weddings, Funerals: Rev Jen Denniston 07783 432017 jendenniston@gmail.com

Jill Smith 01886 853311 Pat Snelling (Clifton) 01886 812443

All Saints, Shelsley Beauchamp / St Andrew's, Shelsley Walsh Church Wardens:

Kate Hurst 01886 812184 kathrynhurst@btopenworld.com
Holly Perks 01886 812369 hollyperks@me.com

St Kenelm's, Clifton:

Ruth Wilson (Church Warden, incl. Warm Space) ruth.wilson38@btinternet.com
Jackie Gilbert

St Bartholomew's, Lower Sapey (Harpley) Church Wardens:

David Richards / Liz Younge lowersapeychurchwarden@gmail.com

MURDER MYSTERY EVENING

The cast of the very successful Murder Mystery evening held in Clifton Village Hall. Back row left to right: David Warmington, David Simmons, Sue Warmington. Front row left to right: Rachel Austin, Liz Davis, William Evans, Tony Davis.

AN EVENING OF SHERRY

An evening of sherry tasting will take place at Clifton upon Teme Village Hall on Saturday 7 November, starting at 7.30pm.

Guests will have the opportunity to sample eight different sherries, accompanied by a selection of snacks.

Tickets cost £15 per person, including all tastings and refreshments, and are available from Mandy Henry on 01886 812238 or 07765 460249, or by email at amandajhenry1970@gmail.com.

Contributions for the December 2026 edition by Friday 13 November please, to: editortemetriangle@gmail.com

Printed by Orphans Press of Leominster Tel: 01568 612460