

May 2026



# Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton-upon-Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey



*Full house at the Shelsley PCC 'Pie, Pud & Pint' night*

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## In this edition

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- Celebrating 25 years of *Teme Triangle*
- Latest farming news from the valley
- All your Church news
- Many fun events to look forward to....

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Visit the website

[www.temetriangle.net](http://www.temetriangle.net)

FREE to Residents



Jerry Johns presenting '25 Years of *Teme Triangle*' at the Clifton Friendship Group meeting. Pictured here with Dot Millward.

### YOUR TEME TRIANGLE TEAM

#### MAIN EDITORIAL MAILBOX

editortemetriangle@gmail.com

#### EDITOR THIS ISSUE

**Louise Hutton**

#### CLIFTON NEWS / WEBSITE

Jerry Johns: 01886 812304  
crown.house@polperropress.co.uk

#### SHELSLEYS NEWS

Louise Hutton: 07803 614078  
louise@stroyd-hutton.com

#### LOWER SAPEY NEWS

Margaret Griffiths: 01886 853543  
spock958@gmail.com

#### ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIP

Andrew and Anna Brazier: 01886 887898  
teme.triangle@thebraziers.co.uk

*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:

*Shelsley parishioners enjoying the 'Pie, Pud & Pint' night at the village hall. The evening was organised by the Parochial Church Council, raising funds for All Saints Church, Shelsley Beauchamp.*

## WELCOME to the May 2026 edition of the Teme Triangle....

Lots of interesting articles, as always, in this month's edition - thank you to all the contributors this month - we couldn't do this without you.

### 25 YEARS OF THE TEME TRIANGLE!



Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey MAY 2001

Welcome to the new TEME TRIANGLE which we hope will take the best of the old and develop it to include community news and information for Clifton on Teme, The Shelsleys and Lower Sapey. The team is listed elsewhere but we do rely on you to send us your news and to let us know what information you would like included, and we hope to develop the calendar of events across the region, so think ahead and let us know as soon as you have a date in mind. The Teme Triangle will run in tandem with the Clifton-Upon-Teme website which will include sections on both The Shelsleys and Lower Sapey so look there for even more information. www.clifton-upon-teme.org.uk. The site is maintained by Jerry Johns on 812 304.

#### FOOT & MOUTH



Has there ever been such a difficult time for the countryside? Foot and Mouth is just the last in a succession of crises for our farming community and at this time it seems there is little practically we can do to help. However below are one or two suggestions.

#### Charities offering help to farmers (all of whom welcome donations)

The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution - Dedicated to helping members of the farming community who are suffering hardship: 01865 724931

The Rural Stress Information Network - Information and advice 024 76412916 www.ruralstet.org.uk+rusin

The Farm Crisis Network - Emotional, spiritual and practical support for farming families 07002326 326 www.farmcrisnetwork.org.uk

Arc/Addington Fund - The Arthur Rank Centre Stoneleigh Park CV8 2LZ, addington@rase.org.uk or 024 7685 8370 - see later.

Advantage West Midlands - Helpline for businesses affected by F&M 0800 975 5355

It is hard to believe that we are celebrating 25 years since the publication of the first *Teme Triangle* in May 2001 (pictured left). Jerry Johns (TT editor) recently gave a fascinating and very informative talk on this subject in Clifton Village Hall. He said:

"Looking back through 250 issues of *Teme Triangle*, what emerges is a fascinating portrait of three rural Worcestershire parishes with lively, resilient communities.

There are of course always the editorial challenges. I often hear the same refrains: too much news from one particular parish, or too much church news. Even the choice of the cover image can provoke strong views. In a small community, everything matters, and everyone notices. And that, perhaps, is the thread that runs through all 250 issues: not just a record of village life, but an expression of it - shaped, sustained, and read by the very people it represents."

### HERE'S TO ANOTHER 25 YEARS!!

## SPRING LAMBING

2026 arrived after a difficult 2025, the weather causing many problems. The main problem was that from mid-February to mid-September, we had hardly any rain, just the odd shower, which resulted in very little grass to graze and small crops of hay and silage. We spent the summer supplementary feeding all the sheep with both hay and sheep nuts.

From the middle of September, the rain came, fortunately not too heavy and with the ground being so warm, the grass started growing just like springtime. For three months the ewes had plenty of grass which was ideal to flush them, as we put the rams in with them in early October. By the time January came round, our ewes were too fat and one of the resulting problems is that they can more easily get cast (stuck on their backs). We lost one nice ewe because she was cast in the night and so from then on we brought them in at night so we could look at them and of course they are less likely to get cast when they are inside. I did suggest to Fi that she could call in to Great Witley surgery and get a couple of hundred of the slimming jabs – we would soon see if they worked!!

Lambing soon comes around, we start a few days in to March. It wasn't the best start as we had four ewes abort with dead lambs, but we had them tested and Toby, one of the vets at Belmont Vets, soon sorted that out, although it did mean injecting all the sheep.

One evening when we were getting the ewes in, one tried to barge through the gate and knocked my knee into a metal gate post. I was hobbling around on a stick for two days. I went to see the physio and while there, I helped a person up from the chair in the waiting room and came home with a bad back to go with the knee! Also, Fi's fitbit keeps thinking she's had a bad fall every time she is putting the sheep cake in a trough!! Just when we have two hundred sheep to lamb! I even suggested to David Moore that perhaps he would like a bit of night lambing, I can't repeat his answer here... Even my friends Trevor Sanders and John Richards were putting their phones on silent from 5pm in the evening.

In the end we had a good lambing, with plenty of good strong lambs. We had a lot of triplets and even one set of quads. We have over 40 tiddler lambs on the milk feeders. When a ewe has triplets we take one off almost straight away because they struggle to feed three lambs, especially as the lambs get older.

When lambing is going well, it's very enjoyable and sometimes amusing. I was in the shed one night and a ewe had had three lambs earlier that day, her lambs were shouting loudly and climbing all over her trying to get her to stand up so they could have some milk. I'm sure she was exhausted having all those three! As soon as she stood up they were quiet, able to get the milk they wanted.



Every morning, a little robin used to be singing loudly outside the shed, which made us feel spring was on the way.

A big thank you to friends and neighbours who brought us suppers, cakes and even home-made jam, to help keep us going.

I love feeding ewes and lambs when they go out into the fields. Looking over the hedge, I notice Val and Peter haven't got any lambs with their ewes again, I think Val isn't keen on night-time lambing!

Bryn has got very bored with us being busy with the sheep and is looking forward to going for walks again. As I write, the weather is glorious, but the forecast is for rain, which is probably needed for the grass, but humans and sheep alike aren't so keen!

*Allan Jeffries*

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## Abbreviated draft minutes of Clifton Parish Council meeting held Thursday 2 April 2026 at Clifton Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Bowden (Chair), Cllrs R. Neave, D. Crawshaw and P. Brooks plus two members of the public. Apologies: Cllr S. Haywood, Cllr A. Griffiths, District Cllr Paul Cumming and County Cllr Justin Bowen.

**Approval of Previous Minutes:** Approved. Proposed Cllr Crawshaw. Seconded Cllr Neave.

**Public Time:** A member of the public raised concerns around the increase in population of the village and the provision of facilities and activities. The member of the public proposed conducting a survey to identify what services, activities and facilities inhabitants would want. A second member of the public added that there is a need for a doctors' surgery in the village.

Cllr Bowden added that any future building should have accompanying S106 funding which could be used to provide support to mitigate against the absence of a surgery. Action: Cllr Bowden to contact *Teme Triangle* about promoting existing activities within the village and requesting suggestions for potential events / activities.

**Parish Clerk Correspondence:** The Circuit (Defib status and reporting). Action: Cllr Brooks to send email confirmation to clerk that all pads have been changed. The circuit can then be updated.

Citizens Advice request for donation. Decision: Donate £500 to Citizens Advice. Proposed Cllr Bowden. Seconded Cllr Brooks. Funding for Neighbourhood Plan. Action: Clerk to review existing Neighbourhood Plan in terms of progress against objectives. Action: Clerk to request further information regarding MHDC current position on Neighbourhood Plans and how they are best utilised. Action: Cllr Neave to write to Jack Hanly (Case Officer) to request clarification regarding late submission of counter arguments.

**Planning Matters:** No notifications received from MHDC regarding planning updates or applications. M/25/00790/PIP – Written Representations Procedure Ref 6002718 no appeal date or decision date publicised.

**County Councillor's Report:** Annual Report submitted by Cllr Bowen: £600 million debt (Worcestershire County Council); Increase in number of foster carers by 20%; £12million saved; Government decision due regarding local government reorganisation; Tenbury Wells Flood Resilience Scheme - £1.8 million reinstated to the budget; Review of policy for determining speed limits on roads forthcoming; £1million ringfenced for rural road maintenance; £10,000 allocated to local organisations.

Action: Cllr Neave to contact Cllr Bowen regarding change of policy and whether this will include changing speed limits on approach to the village.

**Financial and Governance Matters:** Payment schedule to be circulated via email by the Clerk. Received and approved by all councillors. Action: Clerk to highlight which 'previous payments' were not stated on previous month's Payment Schedule.

Consideration of upcoming expenditure: Action: Clerk to provide a copy of ROSPA report to all councillors including summary of works required. Cllr Brooks raised issue of wooden tractor which has been noted on the ROSPA report again. Decision: Wooden tractor to be removed and suitable replacement to be considered. Action: Cllr Bowden to arrange removal of wooden tractor.

AGAR Process and Key Dates: 1. Annual Governance Statement published on website before 1st July 2026. 2. Return to be submitted to external auditor no later than 30 June 2026. Action: Thursday 7 May meeting to be moved to Thursday 28 May to coincide with Annual Parish Meeting.

**Parish Matters and Updates:** Review of the Parish Council Calendar 2026, including notable dates and events. Carols on the green. Provisional date: Friday 18 December. Action: Clerk to confirm with organisers that they are happy to organise again. Update on the noticeboard (Cllr Neave): noticeboard has been ordered. Cost £1190 + £95.00 delivery ex. VAT. Due to be delivered shortly. Tunnel project: work to commence shortly. Wildflower noticeboard: ordered and awaiting delivery. Tree donation from Woodland Trust: no update. Faulty speed sign: returned and awaiting fitting. Summer Fete: Saturday 11 July. Cllr Brooks to update on improving accessibility to specific footpaths in and around the village. Cllr Haywood – Public Footpaths, concerns from landowners. Discussion around the Parish Council's responsibility for improving the amenities around the village, including footpaths, whilst taking into consideration landowners' concerns regarding increased misuse of rights of way and members of the public straying from the rights of way. Cllr Bowden explained that Worcestershire County Council will provide gates or stiles but the County Council won't meet the cost of fitting. Funds for fitting such furniture could be sourced from alternative grants etc. to incentivise landowners to approve such improvements. A range of possible solutions raised: 1. Addition of localised maps detailing footpaths in the immediate vicinity to augment the main footpath map displayed in the centre of the village. 2. Re-launch of the Clifton-upon-Teme pocket footpath guide. 3. Increase awareness of free-to-use websites and apps outlining public rights of way according to the user's location (ie <https://footpathmap.co.uk/>). 4. Identify and invest in a circular route around the village to help improve accessibility and reduce unauthorised access to land without a right of way.

Action: Councillors to review footpaths in and around the village and identify any routes that could be appropriate for a circular route for further consideration. Pavilion Update: Cllr Bowden will provide an update on the Pavilion. There should be a decision on the planning application by the 14 April 2026. No objections received.

**Strategic Planning Updates:** SWDP update. Further information has been circulated and the plan has been adopted.

**Highway Matters:** Road and footpath closure notices: Proposed Order: to close that part of C2072 Clifton-upon-Teme from its junction with U64602 Hope Lane to its junction with U64600 Harpley. 1 day Commencing: 1 May 2026. Order made to close Footpath CT-603, Clifton on Teme and Footpaths SW-501, SW-503, SW-504, SW-505, SW-509, Shelsley Walsh for their entire lengths. 10-12 April - 26 September.

**Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agendas:** Cllr Bowden raised the possibility of CCTV covering the Pavilion car park in response to littering. Cllr Brooks proposed that CCTV coverage should be considered as part of the future refurbishment of the Pavilion. Seconded by Cllr Bowden.

### CLIFTON-UPON-TEME ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Thursday 28 May at 7pm in the Village Hall.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will follow on immediately after the conclusion of the Annual Parish Meeting.

Representatives of local clubs and organisations are invited to submit a report. Contact: [clerk@clifton-upon-teme-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@clifton-upon-teme-pc.org.uk)

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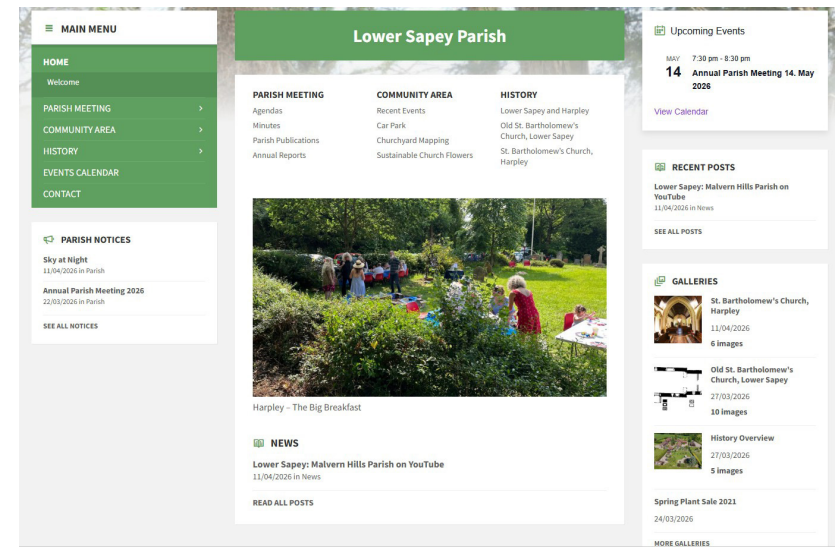
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## NEW WEBSITE FOR LOWER SAPEY

Lower Sapey Parish has launched a new dedicated website for residents of Harpley and Lower Sapey:

<https://lowersapey-parishmeeting.gov.uk>

The site has been designed and built by Bernadette Higgins, with contributions from several parishioners. Candy Connolly and Jen Denniston provided historical and churchyard information, while Howard Rigby contributed photographs of recent local events.



Bernadette describes the website as “three sites in one”. It includes:

- a section for the Parish Meeting (the parish’s equivalent of a Parish Council),
- a Community Area featuring churchyard mapping and sustainable church flower initiatives, and
- a Local History section covering both St Bartholomew’s Church in Harpley and the Old St Bartholomew’s Church in Lower Sapey.

Dr Sue Everitt, Clerk to the Parish Meeting, said: “We’ve brought Lower Sapey into line with national standards, with a gov.uk website and email address.”

Residents are encouraged to explore the new site and discover more about their local community.



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## SHELSLEY PCC 'PIE, PUD & PINT' NIGHT



*Happy helpers at the fundraising night.  
From left to right: Rachel Wright, Jill Smith, Jan Speyer, Jude Bettinson,  
Susie Taylor, Bridget Francis and Kate Hurst.*

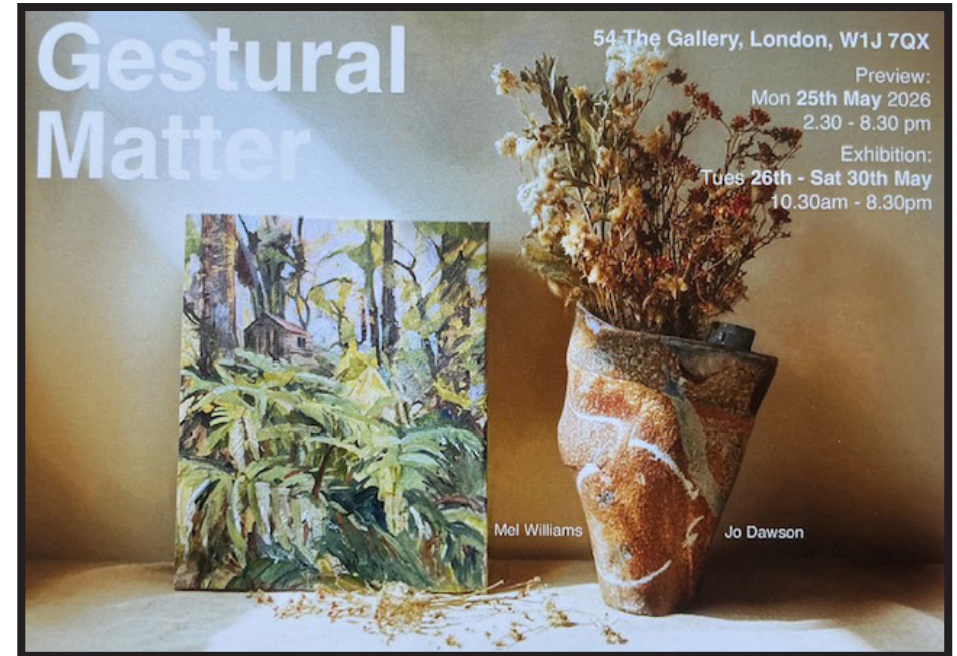
### THE FILLING STATION

Our next meeting of the above will be on Thursday 21 May, when our speaker will be Kerry McLeish. Having experienced a period of exhaustion 15 years ago and having discovered how to rest well, Kerry now works as a Rest Coach and Mentor. She lives locally and is a trained Spiritual Director and has a Diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission, focusing particularly on the issue of rest.

We meet as usual at Eastham Memorial Hall, WR15 8NP at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start.

We look forward to you joining us for our evenings of fellowship, worship, teaching and refreshments. If you are not on our mailing list and would like further information or details about our meetings, then please do not hesitate to contact me on [kate.harley6@gmail.com](mailto:kate.harley6@gmail.com).

*Kate Harley*



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Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey July / August 2008



"A fete revival in Lower Sapey"

**In this edition**

- \* A special day for old St. Bartholomew
- \* Summer events for all the family
- \* Church and parish council news
- \* Motorcycle update

Price 60p

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INCORPORATING CHURCH NEWS

Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey December/January 2009



"24 days and counting!"

**In this edition**

News  
 Elements  
 Solutions  
 Services  
 Residents  
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Top Left: Lower Sapey fete - July 2008

Above: Mill Farm Shops open - January 2010

Left: Shelsley fete and fun dog show - July 2010

# TRIANGLE

INCORPORATING CHURCH NEWS

Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey July / August 2010



Be there - your village needs you!

**In this edition**

- \* Tesco trouble in Tenbury
- \* Wildlife news
- \* Events for all the family
- \* Parish news

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November 2017

# Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey



The Bishop of Worcester at the Shelsleys' Village Hall after speaking on 'The Challenges of Life'

**In this edition**

- \* Bishop John's Teme Valley Talk
- \* End of an era for the New Inn
- \* Clifton Referendum vote
- \* Artist opens gallery



www.temetriangle.net

Left: Bishop John visits the valley - November 2017

September 2018

# Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey



St Kenelm's Bells 350th Anniversary

**In this edition**

- \* Win A Thumb-Stick Raffle
- \* Shelsleys' Stalwarts Retire
- \* Clifton Bells 350th Anniversary



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Free to Residents

Above: St Kenelm's Bellringers - September 2018

Left: Lockdown - May 2022

# Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton upon Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey



Thanks to the NHS

**In this edition**

- \* Coronavirus Local Heroes
- \* Shelsley Author's Lockdown Launch
- \* Local Businesses Update

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Above: Works continuing at St Kenelm's



Above & below: Happy volunteers clearing the churchyard at St Kenelm's



## ST KENELM'S, CLIFTON NEWS

**A Special Celebration:** On Sunday 17 May, 5pm in St Kenelm's Church, we are having an afternoon tea for Pat Snelling, to celebrate her voluntary commitment to the community and the church as a Licensed Lay Minister for the past 25 years. She has supported many people at difficult times over the years and has been there as a constant support when there has been changes with the vicar or no vicar. The tea will be followed by a special Evensong at 6.30pm if you wish to stay for that. Do come and celebrate a very special occasion. Thank you Pat.

**Tower:** The tower is still waiting to be repaired. The exterior wall facing, which collapsed, has been propped and covered to protect the exposed stonework. Paperwork for the repairs is yet to arrive. Hopefully more positive news for next month!!

**Warm Welcome:** The last weekly Warm Welcome celebrated Maundy Thursday with a meal of salmon and salad. It was a good turnout and great to see everyone enjoying their meals. It was a real pleasure to meet a newcomer to the village who enjoyed meeting neighbours. Warm welcome will continue for the next few months, meeting only on the fourth Thursday of the month, from 11am to 1pm. Do pop in for coffee, chat and lunch.

**Donations:** Thank you to everyone who has supported St Kenelm's through donating change in the collection tins. At the last count Clifton Shop raised over £250 last year. Amazing!! Thank you to Michael for his support and encouragement.

**Hedge Planting:** In March, several people came and helped tidy the rubbish at the bottom of the churchyard. New hedge plants have been planted to fill in the gaps and are beginning to grow. More days in the future will be planned to continue to tidy and manage the churchyard. Please contact me if you would like to help with watering or tidying over the next few months.

**Services:** Welly Church is now meeting monthly in the churchyard. A new half-hour informal opportunity for everyone to explore faith and hear where God is at work through stories, crafts and engagement with the natural world. It often involves a treasure hunt, a dramatised bible story, prayer and a hands-on activity followed by refreshments. On Sunday 10 May, a special service for Rogation, when prayers are said asking God to bless the land and environment, will be held at New House Farm at 10.30am, followed by refreshments. A fabulous time to thank God for the stunning beauty of the area and the hard work of our local farmers who provide our food. It is also a chance to visit a local farm.

*Ruth Wilson*

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## LOWER SAPEY NEWS

So, spring is on the way and we have enjoyed some lovely sunny, but windy days. Gardeners and growers are busy and the garden centres are exceptionally busy. I am not sure that it is yet time to be planting seeds like mad, so will hold on for a while. Swallows have been seen in a neighbour's garden, but of course the saying goes "one swallow does not a summer make" (Aristotle?). The same neighbour was watching recently and saw the red kite swoop down and pick up a live squirrel in its talons and fly off with it. I must say that this is the first time I have heard of this as normally, they just take carrion.

Plans are still going ahead for events at St Bartholomew's and there will also be three garden services around the fire pit in the spring. These were quite well attended last year. If the weather is not suitable, they will be indoors of course. They will be on Tuesday 19 May and Tuesday 16 June. Join us for a reflective time, between 10am and noon. There will be coffee, tea and biscuits available. Jill will be leading these. If the weather is inclement, we will be inside the Church.

On Saturday 16 May, we will be holding a Cream Tea in the Church. Music will be provided by Candy and friends and donations will go to Christian Aid and St Bartholomew's. This will be between 3-4pm. We are happy to welcome more volunteers if you feel able to help.

I have to report that my house was broken into whilst I was recently at the Good Friday service, but fortunately, I disturbed them and they were gone by the time the police arrived. I must commend the police though on their speed, efficiency and sympathy. So watch out, as they could well be in this neighbourhood.

**SERVICES:** As before, please check times on the Church Services page. Quiet Services are May 19 and June 21, 10am - noon. Circle service is on Sunday 25 May at 10.30am. **HOUSEKEEPING:** Angie Dallow. **LADIES BIBLE GROUP:** Tuesday 12 May at The Hatt. Thank you Pat. **MOBILE LIBRARY:** Friday 15 May at 10.20 and 10.40am.

Enjoy the rest of this best month of all.

*Margaret Griffiths*



Jessie Buckley, Paul Mescal, Emily Watson, Joe Alwyn

12A

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**FLICKS  
IN THE  
STICKS**

## TEME TRIANGLE EDITORIAL VACANCY

Teme Triangle magazine is looking for an additional editor to help the current two editors produce ten issues a year. A flair for writing and some experience with Adobe InDesign would be helpful, but full guidance and support will be given. Contact Jerry Johns or Louise Hutton for further details.

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## SPRING, TRUST, AND THE COURAGE TO BEGIN

I noticed the first swallow and the first house martin appear above the house on April 11 - within thirty minutes of each other. I stood and watched them for a while, these two small birds who between them had covered thousands of miles to get here, and what struck me was their complete lack of hesitation. No circling cautiously. No waiting to see how things turned out. Within what felt like minutes, they were already sizing up the eaves, getting on with the business of building. I found myself smiling. There was something quietly defiant about it - as if nobody had told them the world was in a difficult mood. There's something humbling about that kind of purposefulness.

Jesus once pointed to birds like these - not to romanticise them, but to make a serious point. "Look at the birds of the air," he said, "they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them." He wasn't suggesting we drift through life without effort. He was pointing to something deeper - a trust woven into creation itself by a God who made it, loves it, and has not for one moment stopped attending to it.

I think about the farmers in this valley when I read those words. I have a great deal of respect for people who work this land. They know, better than most, what it means to plant in faith. The seed goes into the ground and the farmer does everything right - and then the weather, the markets, the costs beyond anyone's control take over. You cannot farm without a profound relationship with uncertainty. And yet, every spring, the work begins again. The fields are prepared. The seed goes in. That, quietly, is an act of faith - and it mirrors something God himself has always asked of his people. Not certainty. Just trust. And God, for his part, has been remarkably consistent about his side of that arrangement. "For I know the plans I have for you," he says in Jeremiah, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Not a vague comfort - a promise. And in Romans, Paul reminds us that nothing in all creation - nothing - can separate us from the love of God. Not difficult times, not uncertainty, not the noise of a troubled world.

That is the ground we stand on. And it holds.

Thomas Aquinas put it simply: "To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible."

Hope and faith travel together. Faith is the decision to trust. Hope is the quiet certainty that God's love has the final word. The farmer planting his seed has both. The swallow returning to last year's nest has something that looks remarkably like both.

T.S. Eliot put it with characteristic precision:

"For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business."

Which is, perhaps, all any of us need to carry into the months ahead. The world may feel uncertain. But God is not. And that, in the end, is enough.

*Pete Thorp*



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

## May 2026

### Sunday 3 May

**9.30am:** Morning Praise, St Bartholomew, Harpley

**10.30am:** Holy Communion Service, St Kenelm's, Clifton

### Sunday 10 May

**10.30am:** Rogation Service, New House Farm,  
Clifton-Upon-Teme

**10.30am:** 'The Melville Service', All Saints, Shelsley  
Beauchamp

### Wednesday 13 May

**10.30am:** Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Shelsley Walsh

### Sunday 17 May

**10.00am:** Praise 4 All, St Kenelm's, Clifton

**5.00pm:** Afternoon Tea Celebration for Pat Snelling

**6.30pm:** Evensong, St Kenelm's, Clifton

### Saturday 23 May

**4.00pm:** Welly Church, St Kenelm's, Clifton

### Sunday 24 May

**10.30am:** Circle Service, St Bartholomew, Harpley

### Sunday 31 May

**3.00pm:** Outdoor Service, St Bartholomew, Harpley

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## TEME VALLEY WILDLIFE GROUP

Mankind has found many uses for plants, employing them as food, fuel, clothing and construction materials and learning to exploit their properties in medicines, dyes and perfumes. One aspect of plant use which I had never considered before was their potential contribution to civil engineering. Not, that is, until a friend lent me a hefty tome with the somewhat uninspiring title of "The uses of vegetation in civil engineering". The book is crammed with fiendish-looking mathematical formulae calculating such details as the forces of water absorption through plant roots and the torsional effects of increasing windspeed on the trunks of trees growing up hillsides. I ignored these and, following the main principles outlined in the book, began to look anew at the landscaping schemes used at the completion of civil engineering projects.

We are all familiar with the sight of rows of tree-guards protecting new shrubs and trees planted along dual carriageways and we enjoy the flowers of cowslips and ox-eye daisy which are often seeded into new grass verges. Trees and shrubs may be planted as screens, windbreaks and noise diffusers but my friend's book concentrated on the use of grasses, shrubs and trees in preventing the erosion of soil by wind and rain and in stabilising steep banks of bare soil left after the creation of deep road and railway cuttings.

I sometimes drive along the A417 at Birdlip, Gloucestershire, where huge works are in progress at the site of the old Air Balloon pub. Thousands of tons of rock have been blasted away and countless tons of earth have been shifted and smoothed over in a project that seems far from finished. Some of the new slopes look very steep and it will be interesting to see what is planted to help keep them in place. The type and structure of the soil determine the depth that roots can penetrate and plants with different root depths and root configurations can be selected for any given site. Grass roots spread widely but not deeply, and they are good for trapping water and protecting soil from the effects of water, wind and footfall. Deeper-rooted plants might be chosen for steep slopes, and my eye was drawn to a technique in which bundles of horizontal willow twigs were dug into recesses at regular intervals along the sides of a high bank.

Willow plants root very easily, even under water, and grow rapidly, making them ideal for such projects, particularly when used along riverbanks in schemes designed to counteract river erosion. It seems apt to use a

plant with diverse other uses, namely for basketweaving, as a source of the medicine aspirin, and as the raw material for making cricket bats.

Next time you pass a new road scheme, look at the planting. Is it just for visual enhancement or is it performing a structural function? Whatever the reason, growing plants is always to be encouraged. And I think I can give my friend his book back now!

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7:30pm on Thursday 14 May 2026 at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall, WR15 8RR. We welcome Alison Wakeman whose talk will be about bees. 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 available on our website at [www.teme-valley-wildlife.org](http://www.teme-valley-wildlife.org). We hold meetings on the second Thursday of the month. Everyone is welcome.

## SHELSLEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

On Tuesday 12 May at 7pm, The Shelsleys Annual Parish Meeting will take place in the Village Hall.

Representatives of local clubs and organisations are invited to submit a report.

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will follow immediately afterwards.

Contact: [clerk@shelsleys-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@shelsleys-pc.org.uk)

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MAY

- 2 Christian Aid Big Breakfast, Clifton VH, 9am & 11am sittings
- 2 Beltaine Spring Celebration at Hollow Meadow, 11am-4pm
- 9 'Hamnet' film showing at Clifton VH, 7pm
- 12 Shelsley Annual Parish and Parish Council meetings, VH, 7pm
- 14 TVWG talk on 'Bees', Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH, 7.30pm
- 14 Lower Sapey Annual Parish meeting, 7.30pm
- 16 Combined Annual Parochial Church meeting, including Clifton, The Shelsleys & Harpley, Stoke Bliss VH, WR15 8RS, 9.30am
- 16 Harpley Church Cream Tea, 2-4pm
- 16 Live Music 'Back to the 80's', Shelsley VH, 6.30pm
- 18 Table top sale & coffee morning, Clifton Pavilion, 10am-12 noon
- 23 Christian Aid Coffee Morning, The Old Vicarage, Clifton, 10am
- 23/24 Shelsley Walsh Watermill open weekend, 10am-4pm
- 28 Clifton Parish Council and Annual Parish meetings, VH, 7pm
- 31 Harpley Church 150th anniversary celebration, 3pm

### JUNE

- 6 Stanford with Orleton fête & dog show, Orleton Court Farm, 2pm
- 20 Teme Valley Wildlife Group at Hollow Meadow, 10.30am.
- 27 Shelsley Village Hall Summer Gala and BBQ

### JULY

- 11 Clifton Summer Fête
- 19 Willow workshop at Hollow Meadow, 2-5pm

### SEPTEMBER

- 5 Evening supper and talk: The oldest hillclimb in the world, Clifton VH
- 26 St. Kenelm's Fun Dog Show, Clifton, 2-4pm

## CHURCH CONTACTS

**Oversight Minister:** Rev Julia Curtis 01886 853286 [revjuliacurtis@gmail.com](mailto:revjuliacurtis@gmail.com)  
 Christenings, Weddings, Funerals: Rev Jen Denniston 07783 432017  
[jendenniston@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:kathrynhurst@btopenworld.com)  
 Holly Perks 01886 812369 [hollyperks@me.com](mailto:hollyperks@me.com)

**St Kenelm's, Clifton:**

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

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

David Richards / Liz Younge [lowersapeychurchwarden@gmail.com](mailto:lowersapeychurchwarden@gmail.com)

## HARPLEY GIRLS BRING HOME THE MEDALS

Local runners Hattie and Pippa Richards (pictured opposite) from Harpley, competed in their first track event of the season with Hattie winning Gold in the Under 17 3,000m and Pippa Silver in the Under 14 100m. The Harpley community was very proud!



Hattie had also recently qualified for the county U18's cross-country team, representing Hereford & Worcestershire. 48 counties competed with their best

## STANFORD WITH ORLETON FETE & FUN DOG SHOW

SAT 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2-6 PM

ORLETON COURT FARM  
WR6 6SU

FREE ENTRY

Village Fete in Stanford  
on 6<sup>th</sup> June from 2-6 pm

Variety of stalls including Tombola, 'Tug of War',  
bric-a-brac, and fun activities for all ages

athletes. Hattie ran an exceptional 5k race, finishing 75th out of 389 entrants.

She has also competed for Worcester in the English Club Championships in Nottingham and the English Schools in Liverpool.

Well done girls!

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## Clifton Village Stores

Tel: 01886 812303



Contributions for the June 2026 edition by Friday 8 May 2026 please, to:  
[editortemetriangle@gmail.com](mailto:editortemetriangle@gmail.com)

Printed by Orphans Press of Leominster Tel: 01568 612460