

Bredon Times



A free monthly newspaper including Bredon's Norton, Westmancote, Kinsham, Bredon's Hardwick and surrounding villages

Issue 1

September 2026

FREE



Top of Bredon Hill photograph by Evie Aubin, Hughes & Co.

Welcome to the Bredon Times, a new newspaper for Bredon and surrounding villages. This exciting new venture has been created by the Parish Council and Hughes & Company, a family publishing company based in Pershore. The benefits are: a high quality product in full colour, 16-20 pages of interesting articles. In addition, the publication is online and has links to six other newspapers.

It is free of charge and the newspaper can be collected from three locations (Bredon Village Hall, the Spar Shop in Church Street Bredon & Bredon's Norton Village Hall) with further pick-up points to be added. We are very enthusiastic about this new venture and look forward to receiving local news

and stories. Editorial (250 words) is free. This is your newspaper and we need the support of everyone to make it successful. We already publish popular local newspapers in Pershore, Kempsey, Powick, Whittington, Upton upon Severn, Broadway, and

Tibberton each with its own local news. We hope to obtain advertising from inside and outside the Bredon area. Details are enclosed and we look forward to hearing from you. We never publish a newspaper filled with advertisements.

We believe editorial sells advertisements! Many thanks to the Parish Council for their help in getting this project started. We look forward to an exciting future.

Bon Voyage, Bredon Times.

Editor

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Community Play & Recreation - supporting our Village



Bredon Community Play & Recreation are a group of local volunteers who work together to maintain and improve our park, provide new play equipment and organise community events for everyone to enjoy. We do what we do because we love where we live and want to make the most of our beautiful surroundings, creating a welcoming space where people of all ages can play, relax and spend time together.

Making a Difference

Our most recent success is the installation of a fabulous outdoor table tennis table, available for the whole community to enjoy. We hope it will provide plenty of fun, friendly competition and opportunities for people to get active outdoors.

Over the past few years, we have been busy! Some of our achievements include:

- Replacing the toddler slide and refurbishing the roundabout
- Installing three new picnic benches
- Quiz nights
- Supporting a comedy night at Croft Farm
- Installing new junior swings, including an inclusive swing seat
- Organising Bredon's Big Day out for the whole community to enjoy
- Organising Play Rangers events for local children and families
- Replacing the fencing around the toddler play area
- Creating a lovely flower garden

- Renewing the seating at the park entrance
- Replacing the hut roof
- Carrying out repairs to the climbing frame
- Replacing the bark chippings each year
- Replacing the popular bowl swing

We Need You!

Sadly, a few of our long-standing team members are now having to leave us, and as a result our already small team is becoming even smaller. We are therefore putting out a plea for new volunteers to join us, so that we can continue the work we do to look after and improve our park and play facilities. Our small team has achieved a lot recently, but we haven't been able to put on some of the larger community events held previously when there were many more of us!

With some new members joining us, we hope to share the workload, bring in fresh ideas and, in time, start planning more events for the whole community to enjoy. We are a friendly bunch, and volunteering with us is a great opportunity to meet new people, make new friends and do something positive for our local community. You don't need any experience or special skills, just a little time, enthusiasm and a love of our village! If you think you could



spare some time and would like to help us keep Bredon Community Play & Recreation going, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Debbie at bredonplayingfields@gmail.com to find out more.

Our 200 Club

We raise money through fundraising activities, community grants and, most importantly, our 200 CLUB. For just £15 per year, members have the chance to win a cash prize every quarter, while helping us continue to improve and maintain our wonderful

village facilities. Whether you are a regular park user, have children or grandchildren who enjoy the play area, or simply value having a beautiful community space on our doorstep, your support makes a real difference. Thank you to everyone who has supported us so far, and we look forward to making the park even better for our community in the years to come!

We would be so grateful for new members, if you would like to find out more about joining, please email Debbie at bredonplayingfields@gmail.com.

New Parish Councillor Co-opted

Bredon Parish Council would like to welcome Joanne Hill onto the Parish Council. It is always great to get a new member to help and bring new ideas to the group. It now also means we have representatives from Bredon and all the surrounding villages in the parish.

Below is a brief introduction given by Joanne:-

"I grew up on a dairy farm in Worcestershire. I then spent my career working in land-based industries, based in Lincolnshire, South Wales and Warwickshire. I moved in 1994 to Bredon and then later to Kinsham. I have been involved

in various community activities over the years. Since 2022 I have been on the organising committee of Bredon Boat Races. I look forward to representing the local community in maintaining and improving the villages that we live in."

The Council still has a vacancy if anyone else would like to join to help us with the running and upkeep of Bredon and the surrounding villages.

Application forms are available from the Parish Clerk:- parish.clerk@bredonpc.org.uk



A few words from... Dame Harriett Baldwin MP



MP Celebrates Innovative Farming on Bredon Hill

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP joined an award-winning farmer looking to beat the drought by growing an innovative crop on Bredon Hill. Dame Harriett visited Jake Freestone who manages Overbury Farm to see the fields of hemp which the farmer is growing thanks to an intervention by the MP who helped secure a licence to allow him to grow the controlled plant. Hemp needs less water than other crops, draws more carbon from the atmosphere, and can be processed into eco-friendly goods like textiles and building materials. Jake was mired in red tape before reaching out to his local MP to get support for his application. Hemp is subject to tight restrictions and farmers must seek approval to cultivate it. Jake is a highly regarded innovative farmer and has embraced a variety of new

techniques to improve productivity and profitability at his farm.

Dame Harriett said: *"I have been meeting with Jake for over a decade to see his innovative approach to farming and I was happy to help him navigate the red tape to grow hemp in rural West Worcestershire. Anyone who drives around the county as we approach harvest time, know how dry and brown the landscape is so it was refreshing to stand by a field so lush and green that is good for the environment and useful to our national economy. Hemp is an exciting new crop which local farmers can turn to for its adaptations to drier weather and qualities as a sustainable product. It does have a poor reputation, but in my opinion, and in the view of expert farmers, we should be making it easier, not harder to grow."*

Homelessness Contact Number

To report homelessness or seek urgent housing advice in Wychavon, call the Wychavon District Council Housing Needs department at 01386 565000
(available Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM)
For out-of-hours emergencies, call 01527 912966

Knee Osteoarthritis: what you can do



Knee osteoarthritis is extremely common and is a normal part of ageing. "Wear and tear" seen on an X-ray does not necessarily reflect how painful your knee is. Some people have significant changes with very little pain, while others have mild changes and more symptoms.

It is important to treat the patient, not just the image, and having osteoarthritis does not mean your symptoms cannot improve. *Exercise and rehabilitation* Exercise and rehabilitation should always form the foundation of treatment. Strong muscles help support the knee, improve function and reduce symptoms, even though we cannot reverse the arthritic changes themselves. The best programme is tailored to the individual but usually includes strength training, regular movement, low-impact exercise and sensible activity pacing. Doing too much on a good day can cause a flare-up, while doing too little can lead to weakness and stiffness and overall worsening wear.

Two simple exercises to try

1. Sitting straight leg raise: Sit tall and slowly straighten your leg, pulling your toes up. Hold for ten seconds, then slowly lower. Repeat ten times, twice daily.
2. Squats to a chair: Keep your weight through your heels, push your hips backwards and knees out, and squat towards the chair, lightly brushing it without sitting down. Complete

fifteen repetitions, three sets, twice daily.

What else is available?

What are the options?

Treatment is usually approached progressively. If physiotherapy and rehabilitation alone are not providing sufficient relief, injectable treatments may be considered. Steroid injections are now generally not used due to only offering shorter-term relief. We favour hyaluronic acid injections for appropriate patients. Hyaluronic acid helps support the lubricating and cushioning properties of the joint and can reduce pain and improve function. For selected patients, Arthrosamid®, a non-biodegradable hydrogel injected into the knee, may provide longer-lasting symptom relief and help delay the need for surgery.

Ultimately, knee replacement can be an excellent option when conservative treatments have been exhausted. Outcomes are particularly favourable in older patients though, with less desirable long term outcomes under the age of 64.

The key message

Osteoarthritis is not something to fear. Although we cannot undo it, there is a great deal we can do to reduce symptoms, stay active and get the greatest possible longevity from your natural knee.

*Lucinda Davies,
Pro-active Physiotherapy and
Pilates, Overbury*

Bredon Hill Walks



Bredon Hill Parish Walks is an informal programme of Summer walks that anyone fit and able can join.

We aim to walk up to four miles or two hours on Monday evenings from Mid-May to early August.

Details are published in local media and we hope to introduce our 2027 programme in the April issue of Bredon Times.

Our final walk of Summer 2026, took place on Monday 10th August. After walking to Westmancote and back we celebrated a successful season in the leader's garden in Bredons Norton.

We each make a small voluntary donation on each walk, all of which is given to local charities at the end of each programme.

This year's donations go to Bredon Outward Bound Association and Beckford Nature Reserve.

On New Year's Day, those of us who were capable would set out to walk over Bredon Hill. We usually started from Little Comberton, wrapped up against whatever weather January had decided to throw at us. In the early days, we would make for The Cross Keys at Overbury, but when that closed we began to frequent The Yew Tree at Conderton, and sometimes The Crown at Kemerton. If wintry conditions made going over the top too difficult, we would take the gentler route along the slopes of Bredon from Little Comberton, eventually arriving at The Star at Ashton under Hill — a very welcome sight indeed.

The New Year's Day walk was usually repeated in June, around the longest day of the year. On one particularly warm and pleasant evening, dressed in shorts and short-sleeved shirts, we made it over the top and down into The Yew Tree. The pub was renowned

for its cider, and on a summer evening it was hard to imagine anything better than sitting outside, sipping a glass and enjoying the warmth. We did not notice the time slipping by and left it rather late to return home over the hill. By then it was dark. We had a torch, but of course there were no mobile phones in those days. A few of us were well under the influence of Dr Launchbury's cider and thought it might be a good idea to sleep it off on top of the hill. That plan lasted only until someone declared, "No — the badgers will have you!" After a great deal of falling about in the nettles, the effects of which were strangely not felt until the next day, we finally began our descent of Bredon. And somehow, despite the cider, the darkness, the nettles and the threat of badgers, we all made it safely back to Little Comberton.

Michael T. Pugh



In summertime on Bredon,
The noise won't go away.
Our village is complaining.
We hear it night and day:
The M5 motorway.

To Church on Sunday
morning
My love and I would come,
To hear the engines revving,
And feel the tyres thrum
From Wales and
Birmingham;

And I would cry in anguish,
Upon my bended knees,
'Oh, end this evil uproar!

Let all commotion cease,
That we might find some peace.

'For traffic south to Bristol
Returns from Bristol too.
The carriageway is dual:
A great hullabaloo
In one unending queue.'

But blessed inspiration
Will comfort those who pray:
One trip to Boots the Chemist
Should end my sad dismay
In such a simple way.

Paul Miller
(after A.E. Housman)

The Battle of Worcester, 1651

Tim Hickson



Portrait of Oliver Cromwell



Charles II of England, circa 1653

From 1642 to 1651 England had three Civil Wars. Charles I believed, like his father before, that he had been appointed by God so that he had a divine right to rule as he felt he should. In those days, Parliament did not meet regularly but only when summoned by the Monarch to raise taxes or to make new laws. Thus, in one period of eleven years, the King ruled alone. Parliament, however, wanted to meet more often to enact legislation on its own. Also, Charles tried imposing on the Scots his High Anglican creed and the English bible. In protest, the Scots invaded England. The King was obliged to summon Parliament to fund a defensive army. In return, Parliament demanded concessions including regular meetings. In the face of this humiliation, he decided that force was needed to get his ideas accepted so he raised his standard at Nottingham in August 1642. Worcestershire, and Worcester in particular, were generally Royalist as was Wales. Worcester was important crossing of the Severn as it had the only bridge between Bewdley

in the north and Upton in the south. From Worcester roads led west to Hereford, Bromyard, Leominster and Tenbury. The main road to Evesham, Oxford and on to London left the city in the east. At this time much of the Royalist infantry was recruited in Wales and passed through Worcester on its way to the King's headquarters in Oxford. Also, as the nation's main arsenals were out of reach of the King, this county helped to arm his forces. Canon were produced at Dudley, shot at Stourport, and many small forges in the north of the county produced swords and pike heads. Pike-staffs came from the forests and salt from Droitwich helped to preserve meat. On the 23rd of September, 1642, Powick Bridge was the site of the first major skirmish. About 1 000 Parliamentary troops, coming up the west side of the Severn from Upton, reached the Teme and, unaware of the resting Royalist cavalry beyond, started to cross the narrow bridge. When the Royal troops became aware of what was happening, they immediately attacked and

a fierce hand-to-hand battle took place during which the Parliamentary troops were driven back in chaos. The military effect of this action was insignificant; its main outcome was to give the Royalist cavalry a fearsome reputation. Later, at the Battle of Edgehill, Royalist and Parliamentary armies met. Although the Royalists gained the upper hand, many hundreds of Englishmen were killed by other Englishmen. Parliament did not forget this. Although the war seemed initially to be going in the King's favour, Parliament's control of London gave it an advantage and when it put into the field its highly-disciplined and well-equipped New Model Army, a professional fighting machine, King Charles' hopes of victory vanished and he lost the Battle of Naseby in 1645. In spite of being in captivity, Charles sparked Royalist uprisings in 1648, the Second Civil War. However the New Model Army was too strong for the Welsh, the English and the Scots. In captivity, the King kept escaping, in the end he reached

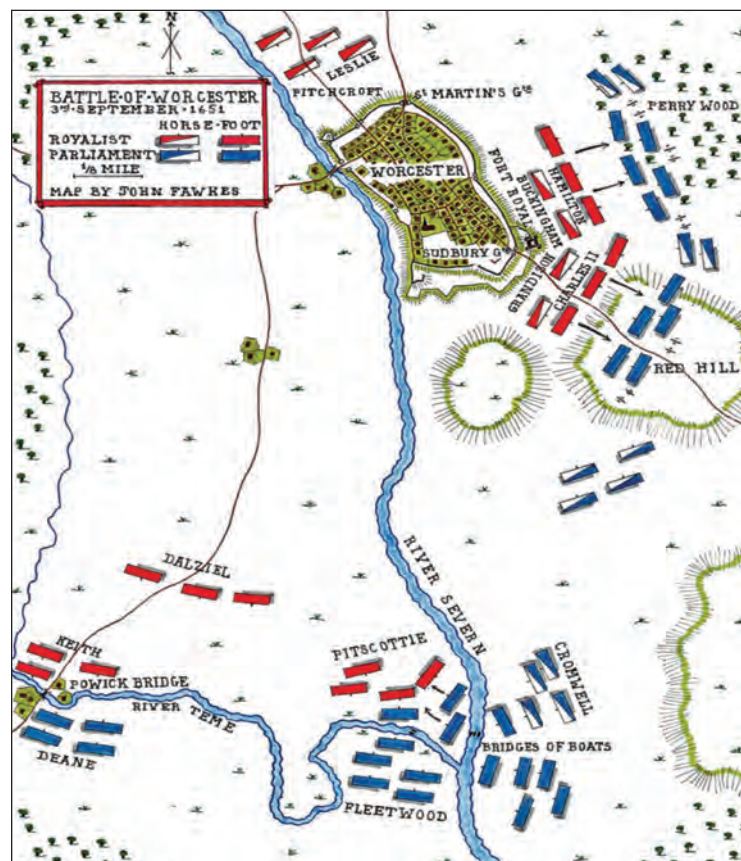
the Scots army and appealed, as their King, for help. However, the Scots sold Charles to Parliament with the condition that he could live in peace but with diminished powers. This was not acceptable to the Puritans in the New Model Army so, finally, Charles was held in custody, any Parliamentarians who might not agree that the King deserved to be punished for causing so many English deaths were ousted from Parliament and the King was put on trial. He was sentenced to death and was beheaded on Tuesday, January the 30th, 1649. On June the 23rd, the following year, Prince Charles arrived by boat in Scotland where he was proclaimed King Charles II. He set off with the Scottish army from Stirling on July the 31st and headed down the west side of England, but hoped to get to London eventually. Meanwhile Cromwell, that hard-bitten and successful General, had been besieging Perth. Having finished that business, on September the 3rd he set off south down the east side of England and was eventually heavily reinforced at Warwick.

The Battle of Worcester, 1651 cont.

Tim Hickson



Ground Plot of Worcester 1651



Map of Worcester 1651

Having passed through Kidderminster and Ombersley, the 20-year-old Charles II reached Worcester on the 23rd of August. He had expected to be significantly reinforced by English Royalists on his journey south but only a trickle joined him. This was partly because the Parliamentary forces had confined and disarmed many known-sympathisers but also because the Scots were not trusted. His forces were tired and not always in agreement with one another and Charles realised they had to rest. This did, however, give him time to repair the city walls and to restore Fort Royal. During this time, more Parliamentary troops arrived from the east, travelling through Broadway, Evesham and Pershore. The net was tightening about Worcester. Nevertheless, to the west the way was open for the expected significant Royalist Welsh reinforcements. In the south, Upton was well-garrisoned by the Royalists who had broken down part of the bridge. But a single plank had been left across the broken arch and, worse, the bridge was left without a sentry. When this was discovered by a Parliamentary force coming from Pershore, 18 picked men shuffled across the plank and

then barricaded themselves in the nearby church. This was immediately attacked but a ford to the south was used to send cavalry to their aid. The Scots were forced to retreat towards Worcester, via Powick. Now Cromwell was able to attack Worcester from both sides of the Severn. He also prepared a bridge of boats built across the Teme just before it meets the Severn. Cromwell later claimed there were about 16,000 Scots and English Royalists whereas he had nearly 36,000 well-disciplined and well-armed soldiers. By the end of August he was ready to move. On the east of the Severn, his forces were concentrated on Red Hill and in Perry Wood; to the west, he had forces north of Upton. On the 29th, his cannon opened fire on Fort Royal and on the Sidbury Gate area of the city. Whilst the garrison fired back, they had fewer gunners than guns and these men were not good at using what were unfamiliar weapons. However, this action encouraged the Scots to plan a night raid on the Parliamentary battery. Unfortunately for them a Worcester tailor, William Guise, heard them planning and went to tell the Parliamentarians. As a result, their enemy was ready

for them and the Royalist plan failed. It seems that Cromwell's idea was to distract Charles on the south-east side of the city whilst the real attack was to cross the bridge of boats to the land between the Teme and the Severn using the troops coming up from Upton. On the 3rd of September, early in the morning, two columns advanced north towards the Teme, one aiming for the bridge of boats, the other to Powick Bridge. By midday the fighting became fierce. The column heading for Powick Bridge had to clear the Scots out of Powick (musket-ball marks on the church bear witness to this). Two arches of the bridge were broken down to prevent the Parliamentarians using it. By now, Charles, surveying the scene from the Cathedral tower, became aware that the major attack was underway. He sent a detachment to face the Parliamentarians on Red Hill and two brigades, about 3000 foot-soldiers, to defend the line of the Teme. It is generally agreed that the young Charles showed great bravery and sound military judgement during this battle. He frequently rode around his troops urging them to stand firm. However, although Powick Bridge was broken, the river

was low enough to be forded and the attacking forces crossed the Teme both there and over the bridge of boats. As the afternoon wore on, the heavily outnumbered Scots were forced back towards St. Johns. On the other side of the Severn, as so many of Cromwell's men had been sent to cross the Teme, numbers were more even and Charles launched an attack, aided by the guns of Fort Royal, towards Red Hill that initially made good progress. But then Parliamentary reinforcements arrived from the south and the tide turned. Having taken Fort Royal, its guns were swung round to fire towards the Sidbury Gate. In spite of his brave attempts to rally the defenders, they were driven back into Worcester. The large number of Scottish cavalry on Pitchcroft failed to join the fighting. Whilst some blamed them that day for not coming to turn the battle, it seems more that their commander realised that a city's street were not suitable for cavalry. As the evening arrived the Scots began to flee and were hunted down and slaughtered. Charles, as we know, managed to escape to the north and, after many adventures to France.

Refreshing garden borders, containers and hanging baskets for Autumn colour

September is the ideal month to refresh tired summer containers and hanging baskets and perk up your borders for autumn colour. After a long season of heat, the garden can start to look past it's best. A quick autumn makeover keeps your outdoor spaces looking vibrant right through to winter. *Clear out spent summer plants* Remove any annuals that have finished flowering or become leggy. Lift out old roots and shake off loose compost. This gives you a clean slate and prevents pests or diseases over wintering in the soil.

Empty and clean containers

If the compost is exhausted, tip it out and wash the pot with warm, soapy water. Cleaning removes algae, mould and hidden slugs, and helps keep autumn

plants healthier. Terracotta pots benefit from a scrub with a stiff brush to remove mineral deposits.

Refresh the compost

Refill containers with fresh peat-free compost mixed with a little grit for drainage. Autumn plants prefer well-drained soil, especially as rainfall increases later in the season. Choose hardy plants for long-lasting colour. Good choices for September planting include violas, pansies, cyclamen, heuchera, ivy, miniature grasses and winter-flowering heathers. These cope well with cooler temperatures and continue to provide interest through autumn and into early winter. You can also introduce more unusual plants to elevate your displays. Anemone 'Wild Swan' flowers

from May right through to November, adding elegant white blooms with a grey-blue streak on the reverse - perfect for brightening part-shaded borders. *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldtau' is an evergreen grass that thrives in sun or light shade and adds wonderful texture and movement to containers and borders.

Add structure and height.

Small evergreen shrubs such as Skimmia, dwarf conifers or euonymus make excellent centrepieces. For a more dramatic option, *Actaea simplex* 'Pink Spike' provides tall, scented bottlebrush-type flowers in September and October and reaches around 1.75m. Its purple spring foliage turns green as it matures, making it a striking



Nikki Hollier

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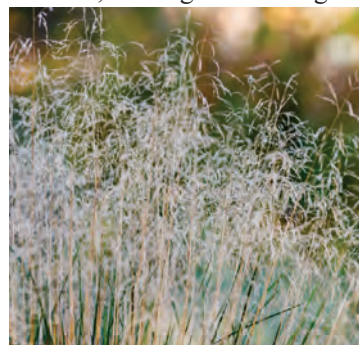
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addition to the back of a border.

Finish with bulbs for spring.

While refreshing your containers, tuck in a few spring bulbs such as crocus, dwarf daffodils or early tulips. They'll sit quietly beneath the autumn plants and emerge in spring for an extra burst of colour. Place containers where they'll be seen and enjoyed - near doorways, patios or garden paths. Water well after planting, then reduce watering as temperatures drop.

Refreshing containers in September is a quick, satisfying job that keeps your garden looking cheerful as the seasons change. With the right plants and a little preparation, your pots and borders will stay colourful right through to winter and beyond.



August gardening tips

Reg Moule BBC Hereford & Worcester

Early in the month.

This is a good time to move established evergreen shrubs, and the traditional time to start planting new trees and shrubs of all kinds. Use some mycorrhizal fungi when planting to aid rapid establishment in the new situation. As the summer bedding plants begin to fade replace them with cheerful autumn bedding varieties to brighten up the dull winter days ahead.

Make-up winter hanging baskets using pansies, bright evergreens and winter flowering heathers. Prepared hyacinths should be planted and put in a cool, dark place by the end of this month if you want them in bloom by Christmas. Watch out for aphid attacks on winter flowering pansies. Also there are three types of leaf spot fungal diseases that can attack pansies, so check the foliage for them too.

Mid September.

Sow some hardy annuals outdoors in flowering positions in sheltered spots. Now is the

time to get busy with planting spring flowering bulbs and garden centres will have a comprehensive range on display. If you like to prioritize your buying, the things to go for now are autumn flowering crocus, Madonna lilies, Colchicums, Fritillarias and prepared hyacinths. Where the lawn has recovered from the summer drought it may be deeply raked to remove "thatch" and fed with Autumn lawn dressing. This is a good time to sow or turf a new lawn and repair bare patches. You could also over-seed all or part of the lawn to thicken the sward. Grease band the trunks of fruit trees to trap the wingless female Winter moths as they climb them to lay eggs. Strawberries should be planted by the end of this month for cropping next year. Plant garlic now in a sunny free draining spot. They like a long growing season in order to make the best cloves. Sow some autumn lettuce under cloches or for planting in

a cold greenhouse. Plant out spring cabbage plants 15cm (6in) apart in rows 30cm (1ft) apart. If your lawn is infested with leatherjackets or chafer grubs control them using natural biological pest control nematodes available from specialist suppliers. Sow green manure crops on vacant areas of the veg garden for digging in next spring. Plant Japanese onion sets to get a lovely crop of flavoursome onions ready from June. Spray Michaelmas daisies with a fungicide or plant invigorator to prevent mildew.

Late September.

Lift beetroot, carrots, turnips and potatoes for winter use. Leave parsnips and swedes in the ground to develop more flavour. Sow some compact hardy annuals in a cold greenhouse to grow into winter flowering pot plants. Pick green tomatoes for chutney or ripening in a brown paper bag in a drawer indoors. Don't put them on a windowsill in the sun this dehydrates them.



Reduce watering and ventilation in the greenhouse as temperatures drop. Lift, divide and re-plant early spring flowering herbaceous perennials. Bring in any tender shrubby plants taken outside for summer displays e.g. Brugmansia. Cut back marginal plants and net your pond to keep out autumn leaves. Dry some herb foliage for winter use, or chop and freeze them in ice cubes. Prune summer fruiting raspberries by removing old, fruited canes. Take cuttings from roses, preferably using shoots that have flowered. Trim them to 23cm (9in) long. Bring in any houseplants that have been outside "on holiday" for the summer.

What a scorcher! Too hot to fly!

Martyn Cracknell



Bee's waiting

Actually, insects cope rather well. In normal circumstances, heat gain is achieved by muscular activity such as wing fluttering and also by basking in the sun. Heat loss is usually by seeking shade and by evaporative cooling either through a thin cuticle or through the breathing tubes or spiracles, but this latter mechanism can only be maintained for a few hours before the insect dies through desiccation. For social insects like the bees and wasps, the temperature of the nest and all the grubs must also be regulated, and cooling is achieved by collecting water, spreading it over the combs and fanning it with their wings to cause evaporative cooling. A temperature of 35C is optimum, and the limits of tolerance are remarkably narrow, 34 – 36C. In a hollow tree, the bark and wood provide a thick and effective insulation from the outside temperature, and the straw of an old-fashioned skep hive is surprisingly efficient, but modern hives are

constructed of thin wood which can be cold in winter and too hot in summer, so care is needed in siting the hives to avoid extremes, and a water supply should be provided. If the roof has a metal cover but inadequate insulation underneath, then hive temperature can be excessive. Some countries in southern Europe are noted for their fine honey, such as Greece, Turkey, and the south of France, and bees thrive there perfectly well. However, the native flora in those countries is typically Mediterranean subshrubs like Thyme, Rosemary and Lavender which are adapted for survival in a semi-arid climate, and produce nectar when the soil is dry. This year we have had the heat and drought, but our native flora cannot cope with the drought conditions, so our nectar flow dried up early. Fortunately, the early summer bramble blossom was good so there should be a good honey harvest. Now the bees are simply standing at the entrance and guarding what they have.

Jazz News

Peter Farrall



Forest Hill Owls

Modern Jazz (which is now about 80 years old!) always has its share of quirky innovations in style, content, and instrumentation. Think about Roland Rahsaan Kirk playing two or even three instruments at once and whose musical artillery included the stritch and manzello, both parodies of alto and soprano saxes, alongside his ordinary tenor sax and flute. Yusef Lateef used an ancient Chinese clay flute called a Xun for part of his "Eastern Sounds" album in the nineteen sixties. It has a beautiful, wistful sound, and the one found by Lateef in New York's Chinatown is said

to be 1200 years old The intriguing figure of a black man in full tartan regalia, playing jazz on bag pipes came by courtesy of American musician Rufus Harley who became obsessed with the instrument after seeing the band of the Black Watch. He left a full complement of recordings which, sadly, are little accessed nowadays. Not novel nor quirky is an instrument which, in the "trad versus modern" days of the nineteen fifties, would have horrified the traditionalists to find in a modern jazz group; the good old banjo, beloved of the traddies, is now established, albeit some what sparsely, in a

number of progressive jazz-influenced bands. Bebop on a banjo? Try Bela Fleck or Jesse Eads. The banjo played a part in the lead-up to the birth of jazz; its history goes way back to unknown times in Africa where a gourd attached to a shaft with strings running down provided an instrument to make music. Slaves shipped to the New World brought these instruments with them or found ways of making them in their new surroundings. There are references from the mid sixteen hundreds in the Caribbean, of slaves dancing to such artifacts and, by the late eighteenth century, sketches and paintings from there and the southern areas of America show instruments more akin to the modern banjo. Some popular entertainment in the nineteenth century took the form

of minstrel shows where black faced white performers caricatured the music of the slaves in condescending pseudo-romantic performance using the banjo as an "authentic" effect. The banjo became all the rage in this period and was adapted by the string bands who graced polite soirees in the upmarket districts of towns and cities such as New Orleans, where it was also the rhythm instrument of choice for the booming jazz bands of the red light district. (Very ironic that if we hadn't had slavery, we probably wouldn't have had jazz). Banjo became the king of the beat during the jazz age of the 1920s and 30s, and the Forest Hill Owls will bring us transcriptions and arrangements from that era, complete with authentic banjo work from Mr Wheatley.

Forest Hill Owls

Wednesday 30th September

Doors open at 7pm, music at 8pm

Admission £12.50 to include a raffle ticket.

In the Function Room, Pershore Football Club.

Book in advance and pay on arrival

Visit www.pershorejazz.org.uk Tel: 01527 66692

find us on Facebook.

Ailsa's Kitchen *Ailsa Craddock*

In the UK we call them courgettes, in other countries, zucchini, and when they get BIG, they are called marrow. Wherever they are, once they start producing, they go on and on till you are wading through a glut. The trouble is, you cannot grow just one courgette. The trick is to pick and eat them quickly - although this now gives you the problem of what to do with them. All of these recipes are freezable - or pass-on-able - or barter-able (you know how your blackcurrants failed - find someone whose didn't and do some trading.)

Courgette and Parmesan Soup

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large white onion, finely sliced
- 3 sprigs rosemary, leaves chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1kg courgettes, finely sliced
- 700ml vegetable stock
- 30g parmesan, grated
- Hazelnuts, roughly chopped

Heat the olive oil in a large casserole pan or saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion and fry gently for 5 minutes or until beginning to soften. Add the rosemary and garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes. Add the courgettes and sauté for a further 5 minutes. Next add the stock, bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Pour into a blender and blend until smooth. Season to taste and top up with a little more water if it seems too thick. Top with some chopped hazelnuts to serve.

Courgette Frittatas

- 1 large or 2 small courgettes
- 4 spring onions

- 2 tsp rapeseed oil
 - 1 crushed garlic clove
 - 3 large eggs
 - A good pinch of dill fronds
 - 4 tbsp Greek yogurt
- Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7, then put an empty muffin tin inside. Coarsely grate 1 large or 2 small courgettes and slice 4 spring onions. Heat 2 tsp rapeseed oil in a frying pan and fry the spring onions for about 3 mins. Stir in 1 crushed garlic clove and the grated courgette and cook for another 1 min, then set aside to cool. Beat 3 large eggs, a good pinch of dill fronds and 4 tbsp Greek yogurt together in a jug, then season. Stir in the courgette mixture. Take the muffin tin out of the oven and drop in eight muffin cases, divide the egg mixture between the cases and bake for 15-18 mins until set and golden. Serve hot or cold.

Courgettes, like carrots, make very good cakes so don't forget they can have a sweet side.



Courgette Loaf Cake

Courgette Loaf Cake

- 2 large eggs
- 125ml vegetable oil
- 85g soft brown sugar
- 350g courgette, coarsely grated
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 300g plain flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 85g walnut, roughly chopped
- 140g sultanas

Heat oven to 180C/160C

fan/gas 4. Butter and line a 2lb loaf tin with baking parchment. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, oil and sugar, then add the courgettes and vanilla. In another bowl, combine the remaining ingredients with a pinch of salt. Stir the dry ingredients into the wet mixture, then pour into the tin. Bake for 1 hr, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave to cool, then serve, or freeze for up to 1 month.

The big plastic pick-up

Karen Rose

Just outside Pershore is Stoulton Community Woodlands, one of the area's best-kept secrets. With free parking, woodland paths, space for dogs and plenty for children to discover, it's a lovely place to explore. The site has an interesting story too. It was created using soil from nearby flood defence works, turning a problem into an opportunity, with wildflower meadows and woodlands which were planted to celebrate the Millennium and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Thousands of young trees were put in and protected with plastic tree guards to help them grow safely. These guards do an important job: they protect saplings from hungry deer, rabbits, squirrels and voles, but once the trees are strong enough, the guards must be removed. If they are left they can become woodland litter and, over time, the plastic

breaks into small pieces that spread through the soil or wash into streams and rivers. Across the UK, millions of plastic tree shelters are used every year, so tackling this problem matters. Every piece of plastic tree guard which we remove helps keep our countryside cleaner for wildlife and for future visitors. We want to do our bit so we'll be having a big Plastic Pick Up from 10am til 12 noon on Sunday 4th October at Stoulton Community Woodlands. We'll meet in the car park with litter pickers and bags provided. Wear old outdoor clothes suitable for whatever weather we get and, if possible, bring gloves. Everyone is welcome - come along, explore the woods, meet Wychavon's biodiversity officer and, best of all, help to make a difference.

Karen Rose is a biodiversity officer at Wychavon District Council



Roaming with Romy

Romy Kemp

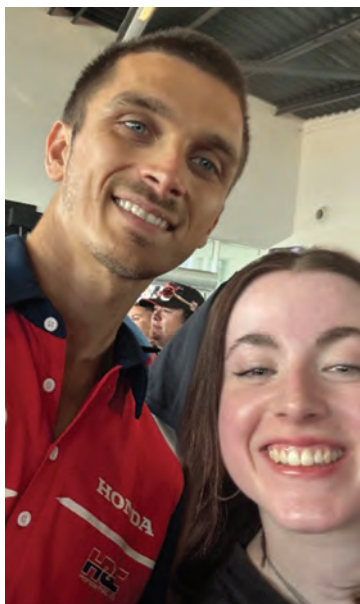
A few weeks ago I went to the British MotoGP at Silverstone. My dad is a huge fan, and although I'm not the most knowledgeable about the bikes, I still like the loud grumble and zooming colours. There was also quite a lot of F1 merchandise and advertisements throughout the weekend, which also appealed to me. We had a meet and greet with KTM riders Pedro Acosta

and Brad Binder; waiting in line with about one hundred other people for about two hours was not ideal in the heatwave with little shade, but it was worth it. We went for both the Saturday and the Sunday; with the Saturday proving to be extremely busy, we knew that the Sunday was going to be unbelievable (which it was). The Saturday was more of a wandering day with free roaming

grandstands, where throughout the practice sessions and qualifying we could walk to different parts of the circuit and watch from there. Sunday morning saw us in line again, but this time it was for the Hero Walk. When I say that it was crowded, that is an understatement. Everyone stands alongside a barrier to wait for the riders to come out to sign hats and t-shirts as well as take pictures



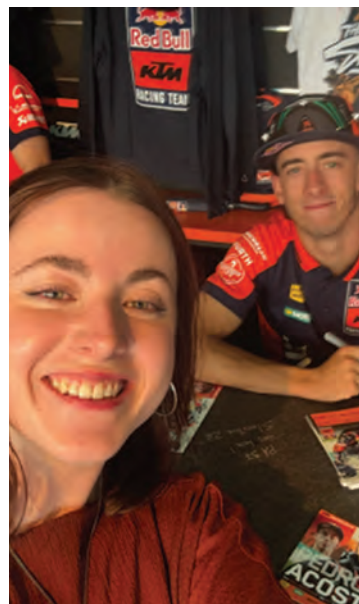
with fans. The majority of the riders came out to greet everyone. I managed to take a few photos with some of the riders, including Alex Marquez, Luca Marini and Iker Lecuona. On Sunday, we had specific grandstand seating - from our seats at Club Corner we were able to watch quite a large amount of the track. Before the MotoGP race started, the Red Devil display team parachuted in, which was amazing! They came zooming down trailing red smoke and a huge Union Jack, and landed perfectly on an X next to the podium. The Grand Prix races saw several crashes, and we witnessed quite a few at the corners where we sat, and later were able to watch the podium winners collect their trophies directly opposite. Overall, I had a wonderful weekend, and the atmosphere was one to remember!



Luca Marini



Alex Marquez



Pedro Acosta

A Place to Meet

While writing this month's piece, I don't have my usual white wall backdrop in my bedroom. Instead, I am overlooking the city as cars whiz past in the evening rush hour, and just below, cyclists and dog walkers stroll along the canal before the sun sets. There is always noise here. Especially at this time of the evening, with car engines and people lost in their conversations. I'm not used to it, but I am enjoying people-watching. My first week in this apartment has been filled with flat-packing, sorting bills and spending hours online shopping, using up all my data while I wait for my broadband to be installed. At this point, paying for extra 4G every other day has become my biggest financial struggle of adulthood. Moving out has been quite literally an emotional rollercoaster, and for me, going

from living with family to living completely alone has been its own challenge to adapt to. There is no doubt that it is increasingly difficult for young people to move out these days, and I feel that we are becoming a generation where moving out can happen at different ages and in very different ways. Home and independence can look different for everyone, and there doesn't seem to be one standard timeline anymore. For me personally, I have spent these last few years travelling, dealing with personal grief, and taking time to decide what I wanted in life. I think it is important to give younger generations the space and time to do this. This summer hasn't just brought a change of home. With my new job starting very soon and my birthday in a couple of days, there is a lot of change to keep up with. This

year, I am spending my birthday volunteering at a summer theatre workshop for children to help them build their confidence around performing. At the end of the week, we put on a show for their families to showcase their growth and skill. It has been a lot of fun working alongside my friends and the children, and being around them every day has been a lovely full-circle moment, as I was once a little theatre kid myself, being taught by the 'grown-ups'. Now, somehow, I have become the 'grown-up'. One who cries over new bills and the price of a weekly shop, maybe, but still, as grown-up as you can get at 28. I guess, along with the children who I am trying to teach to be confident, I am also trying to learn confidence in my own stage of life. I am beginning to establish routines and become more familiar with the city

Chloe Pickstock



centre, while being closer to the community and friendships I have built, as well as my new job. I am slowly adjusting to the noisy street outside, and I've even found it helps me sleep. I have even begun to recognise some canal regulars. The week began with me in this new environment eating my dinners on my kitchen floor while my dining table rested nicely in its box, and my bed was just a mattress on the floor. It has now ended with an actual sofa to sit on, a dining table to eat at, a bed set up to sleep in, and a new home that is slowly becoming mine.

Gregory's World!

Yep, that's an alligator! Oh, say can you see? I couldn't. As soon as we touched down at Louis Armstrong International Airport, the plane windows steamed up. Summer in the bayous of Louisiana! It would be hot and muggy ... and worth it. Me and my sister, Ali, landed on 3rd July. The United States was about to turn 250 years young. After last year's odyssey across New England with Natdog, I just couldn't get over the buzz of America. This year, I wanted to explore a different region to deepen my understanding of the country. I also wanted to experience 4th July, and where better to than the party capital, New Orleans? The Big Easy, NOLA, the Crescent City ... A long time ago, it was 'Bulbancha' ('place of many tongues'), a trading post for the Chitimacha, Taensa, Houma and Choctaw peoples. When the French gate crashed in the 1690s and brought their fur trading, sneezes and colonial aspirations to the region, they made it the capital of French Louisiana. They named it 'La Nouvelle-Orléans' after Philip II, Duke of Orleans. These settlers needed a bigger labour force, so they brought in African slaves, starting an era of slavery which wouldn't end until 1865 and the end of the American Civil War.

But first, the Seven Years' War. In the 1750s and 60s, Britain kicked out over 11,000 French colonists, known as Acadians, from its northeastern American territories. The Acadians who survived migrated to Louisiana and became known as Cajuns (yes, like the spicy fries in Nando's). War crippled Britain's wallet – but Britain wasn't as broke as France. To make back some cash, France sold Louisiana to the Spanish in 1763. So, the city became 'Nueva Orleans'. It also welcomed a wave of French Creole refugees during the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804). Then Spain gave Louisiana back to France. Although France had an appetite for empire-building, Napoleon chose not to love it but to list it. He sold the mahoosive Louisiana territory – covering 828,000 square miles, roughly 1232 Worcestershires – to the U.S. to fund fighting the British. Louisiana has been part of the United States (albeit a brief Confederate teenage phase) ever since. New Orleans is a wreck-this-journal of colonial history, a collage of culture, and a feast of flavours. We rode the St. Charles streetcar into the French Quarter. Imagine buildings with ornate ironwork balconies, festooned with lights and hanging baskets,

the streets sauntering with party-goers and the dreamy lilt of jazz. The daiquiris are just within reach; no wonder New Orleans is known for its laid-back atmosphere, there's a Thai massage parlour on every street corner! Cafe du Monde in Jackson Square is a rite of passage for tourists. Since 1862, it's been the go-to spot for beignets, deep-fried pillows of pastry submerged under a snowdrift of sugar. Birds hopped around under the tables, feasting on our crumbs, while an army of waiters wearing 1950s-style paper hats descended on us to attend to our every need. Have the napkins on stand-by, fellow reader; don't even try to eat beignets tidily. Why not try chicory coffee? It's another Louisiana speciality, the chicory balancing out the bitterness of standard coffee. Other cuisine highlights from our city break included gumbo, jambalaya, and a 'gator po-boy', an alligator-sausage sandwich. (As we left the city, I drove past two alligators on the side of the road!) Bibliophiles at heart, we explored the city's literary heritage. It was once the artistic hub for the likes of William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Tennessee Williams. Later on in our visit, it started to rain, and I remembered Blanche's line in Williams' *A*



Streetcar Named Desire (1947): 'Don't you just love these long rainy afternoons in New Orleans when an hour isn't just an hour – but a little piece of eternity dropped into your hands – and who knows what to do with it?' Bworp! A security alert came through to my phone. I gulped. Emergency alert ... flash flood warning ... dangerous and life-threatening situation. I opened Google Maps. We were smack bang in the centre of the danger zone. These guys weren't kidding, either, not when the scars of Hurricane Katrina were still visible along the Mississippi. As we sought a cafe to hunker down inside, water sluiced through the streets, military vehicles mobilised around us, but a saxophone player simply shrugged, shuffled under the balcony and continued to play. The night of the 4th was clear with promise, however. Ali and I joined an audience of hundreds to watch fireworks illuminate the river. What an anniversary! What a country! Happy Fourth, yall.

Evie's Adventures

Evie Aubin Oxford Brookes University



As you may remember from my last article, I was about to go camping in the Peak District with two of my friends from university, Scarlett and Rosie. Whilst my one hour journey turned into a three hour one (I do not wish to relive that awful journey) I eventually I made it to the train station in Derby, greeted by my friends' grinning faces, and swiftly whisked away to Rosie's house for a night of bbq's, her adorable dog Juno, wine, and catching up with each other before heading to our campsite the following morning,

ready for our amazing weekend! Our first day, we went to a little town for a walk before going wild swimming. When I first dipped my legs in, the water was absolutely freezing compared to the lovely sunny day we were having, but eventually I managed to work up the courage to actually swim rather than just wading, and I will never regret it. The next day, we visited Chatsworth House. And oh my life, it was stunning- the paintings, the architecture, the history, yet I think the gardens were my favourite part. We started at the farmyard and

fed goats and sheep (adorable). Before making our way round the rest of the gardens, and facing the hedge maze. We spent at least six hours wandering and taking in the whimsical scenery. On our third day, we walked to the top of Thorpe Cloud before heading down to the stepping stones. We had lunch there and spent the afternoon enjoying the sun and nature around us. And before we knew it, we were heading into town to get M&S Picky Bits for our last dinner. We spent the evening playing card games, drinking wine and stargazing at the campsite. On our final morning, Scarlett and I woke up at 6 am to hike to Thor's Cave before leaving. The view was incredible and definitely made the early start worthwhile. After packing everything up, I headed back to the station, hoping for a smoother journey home! Another favourite memory was spent in Wales with my mum, dad and two brothers. We started our day in Aberystwyth before heading to



Borth, and luckily, the weather was absolutely beautiful. We walked along the beach, took in the views and spent plenty of time together without having to worry about anything else. The best part for me was swimming in the sea at Borth. The water had a slight chill, but because the weather was so warm and sunny, it felt really refreshing. We laughed, relaxed, explored and made the most of the good weather. It reminded me that some of my favourite memories aren't necessarily big or expensive experiences-they can just be ordinary days spent with the people I love, somewhere beautiful, with nothing else to worry about. Until next time, toodles!

Farming

Mike Page

I have spoken in recent articles about farmers being optimistic, especially this one. Seasons like this have been few and far between, but climatologists say we could well be looking at the 'norm' for the years to come. Most crops were burned off prematurely by the heat and drought, with combines finished and back in the barn before the date in most years for harvest to have even started. After a reasonably wet spring this year, grass fields supplied reasonable grazing or forage for conservation as hay/haylage/silage early/mid-summer, but with continuing heat and drought there has been very little or no regrowth and much of the countryside is now turning from green to brown with no regrowth and some of the fodder conserved earlier having to be fed to livestock in the fields so that they have something to eat. All we can hope for now is one hell of a wet autumn to get soil moisture back up to a level which will support some new growth. There are troubles afoot in the livestock side of the industry as well. Blue Tongue is a viral disease of both cattle and sheep, spread by midges,

thought to have been blown across the Channel from France where the disease was already established. The disease, leading to far more problematic symptoms (and even death) in sheep but not affecting cattle so badly, is fairly widespread in England, but as yet only rarely seen in the rest of the UK. Vaccine is available through vets, but seemingly not always available for immediate supply. At least Worcestershire seems to be clear of infection presently, but where infection has been found it can lead to restrictions on animal movement. It will, almost inevitably, arrive here at some time. Another trouble threatening livestock farmers is Bovine TB. A bacterial disease not easily treated in cattle, and transmissible to humans. When I was first in farming, a MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food — forerunner of DEFRA) scheme came into being, and all cattle on livestock farms were regularly tested. Animals that failed testing were then culled and the farmer compensated by MAFF. The scheme carried on for several years, until the disease had been more or less eliminated, but was



eventually abandoned by the Government of the day before absolute elimination had been achieved, for financial reasons I would guess. As a result, BTB is still detected occasionally in herds. And that will result in a farm having the infected animal destroyed and an animal movement restriction being applied to the Farm until testing again shows that Farm to be free of the disease. A real headache on some farms as if a retest is positive, the ban on cattle movement off farm remains in place until such time as the Farm eventually tests as All Clear; there have been occasions

when all cattle sales/movements off a farm have not been allowed for a time measured in years. Badgers are known to be major carriers of the disease, and one method used to help in disease control has been Badger culling by shooting. Very effective as a means of helping control the disease, but resulting in fierce opposition from the Preservation of Wildlife lobby. Vaccination of badgers has been suggested, but it raises the question of 'how on earth do you go about vaccinating an entire population of animals living wild, and half of that underground?' We are living through strange times.

Brucellosis in dogs



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If you have adopted an imported dog, or frequently travel with your dog abroad, you should consider testing for Brucella.



What is Brucellosis?

Canine Brucellosis is an infectious disease caused by the *Brucella canis* bacteria. The disease is not naturally occurring in the UK but is widespread in dog populations around the world. Due to the rise in imported dogs entering the UK cases of Brucellosis have been seen in the UK. Brucellosis can cause reproductive problems and infertility as well as lethargy, fever, paralysis. Sometimes dogs with Brucellosis will display no clinical signs but can still pass on the disease.



Why should I be concerned about the disease?

Brucella canis is zoonotic, which means that it can infect and cause potentially serious disease in humans. Unfortunately, even with treatment, we cannot successfully cure dogs who carry *Brucella*, so they will always pose a risk to other dogs and people.



What can I do?

Imported and at risk dogs should be blood tested at least 3 months after re-entering the UK. As dogs often do not show any symptoms testing should still be carried out even if they have been resident in the UK for a number of years.



What if my dog tests positive?

Cases are still very rare. If your dog were to test positive advice would be given on a case by case basis. Consultations with your vet and GP would be able to guide you should the situation occur. Often animals are able to live long and happy lives despite a diagnosis of Brucellosis.



info@martinandcarrvets.co.uk



martinandcarrvets.co.uk

More information can be found on the government website, search:
[Brucella canis: information for the public and dog owners - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/guidance/brucella-canis-information-for-the-public-and-dog-owners)

Sophie's Teenage Focus

Sophie Faulkner



Sadly, in England, one in six people has very poor literary skills. With our developed education system, how is this happening? Well, often it's children growing up in deprived areas and having parents who are illiterate. This makes it hard for them to learn to read because no one can teach them. By the time they've started primary

school, it's difficult for them to start learning as there's not much one-on-one teaching. Not being able to read causes frustration and means the child's more likely to skip school and misbehave in lessons, making the matter worse. This carries on into adulthood, where they're twice as likely to be unemployed, and the illiteracy cycle continues. Of course, there's

lots we can do, but often, it's difficult to see the scale of the problem because there's no clear definition of what illiteracy means. The National Literacy Trust defines 'very poor literacy' (being functionally illiterate) as being able to 'understand short straightforward texts on familiar sources' but being unable to read 'information from unfamiliar sources'. Other countries and surveys may describe illiteracy differently, though, so it's hard to know exact numbers. Also, surveys may count people whose first language isn't English as illiterate, which isn't accurate, as they might be fluent in another language. Finally, not everyone who's illiterate are counted because they don't say anything because they feel ashamed. So, what can you do to help? Charities like Yes We Can Read accept any



volunteers aged eight to eighty who can read fluently. They teach illiterate people how to read, in just three to six months. If you want to help, sign up using www.yeswecanread.com or literacy.trust.org.uk for the National Literacy Trust. Every volunteer is important. Also, keep reading. 40% of Britons haven't read a book in the last year. This non-reading culture creates perfect conditions for illiteracy to develop. Reading stops it from becoming out of control.

Music Matters

This summer, a UK chart record that had stood for 73 years was broken, and barely anyone noticed. Sam Fender and Olivia Dean's duet of "Rein me in" was number one in the charts for 20 consecutive weeks, beating a record previously held by Frankie Lane. It's a perfectly decent pop song, by a well-known artist, but the odd thing is that for such a popular record, not many people have heard it. Back in the days of Bryan Adams "Everything I do" (16 weeks) and Queen "Bohemian Rhapsody" (14 weeks), when a record topped the charts, everybody knew it. With just 4 TV channels and a limited number of radio stations, these hits were unavoidable; the position of a record in the charts was important to the artist

because it was based on physical sales. Nowadays, the charts are based on a combination of sales, downloads and streams. Spotify, YouTube and others have made music more accessible than ever, but by using algorithms to direct you to music they think you'll like, making it difficult to break out of your lane and discover new music. Music has always been tribal in nature, but it can become stale when all we want is more of the same; sometimes different can be good too.

Notable New Releases

Music, fashion, film

by Charli XCX

A new rockier type feel for this album, a clever album that sounds honest with a raw edge.

Much to enjoy

Standout track - SS26

Alien metal

by King Gizzard and the Lizard

Wizard

This one mixes electronic with rock and trance beats. The Gizzards continue to show their originality and undeniable musical abilities

Standout track - Sapience

Different when it's silent

by Tricky

Sparse, lo-fi arrangements, dark and desolate themes. Stream of consciousness songs dealing with grief as a parent

Standout track - I'm yours

Add to playlist

Really sayin' something

by Bananarama

Disco life

by She she she

A Rose for Emily

by The Zombies

7 bridges to burn

by The Knats

You're in a bad way

by St. Etienne

Steve Ide



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Bikes

Angela Johns

What a fabulous ride out on the bike I had just recently. Out of Ledbury, up and over the Marcle Ridge, then back up, along again, then down and down, a must-do pop into Weston's Cider for a half of Rosie's and back to Ledbury the circuitous route via the lanes. The clouds were amazing, the sun was shining and the far-reaching views familiar but still heart-swelling. I don't often give in to the challenge and get off my bike up a sharp hill, but I've had to do it a couple of times this year: on this trip on the steepest final climb to the Ridge, and before on the short sharp climb out of Clun in Shropshire. My heart and legs could take it but my left knee couldn't. However, this time we did have a tailwind, and I had plenty of cool water in my bottle. Better still, no agenda for the day so we could take as long as it took, with just a cup of tea and a good book in the garden under the umbrella on our return. Without this slow pace though, how else would I have seen the four-leafed clover at my feet? And looking up, with such open landscapes in all directions, I could take in how far we had come and how far we had to go, with that lovely feeling of seeing the miles roll out before us and then behind us. Like in life with our challenges, some - times we have to look closely



to see the joy or the solution or even the choices. Yet sometimes we must look up and see the bigger picture, or whatever it is outside of ourselves, to bring us answers. We can look close and inside for the strength within, or look up and reach out for the help without. We can't always remove the challenge, but if we can find the small thing, or big thing, that can keep us going, we can get to our destination. If we have to get off our bike to get up that hill, then so be it - we will still get to the top no matter the pace. You will always have challenges, but I hope that you always find the thing that keeps you going. May all your uphill have a tailwind!

Angela is a qualified Emotional Therapeutic Counsellor registered with the FETC and NCPS.

Also a Reflexologist and Reiki Practitioner, she is passionate about her therapies and spends quality time with her clients to facilitate their wellbeing. You can find her at angelajohns.co.uk

Rent a room scheme

Carol Draper



My grandparents had always taken in lodgers, and when I was a child my grandparents had a lodger called Jock. For my grandmother, having a lodger provided a welcome addition to her income, and it didn't seem to bother her having someone else to cook and clean for. Jock was treated as part of the family, though he was a strange character. If you have spare accommodation in your home and are interested in making some extra money by renting this out, there are plenty of options available. The original Airbnb concept was that hosts would rent a room in their home and provide bed and board on a short-term basis. Alternatively, if you wish to let out a room in your home longer term, then taking in a lodger or perhaps a student is something to consider. From a tax point of view, there is a very useful relief called the Rent a Room Scheme. It applies where you let furnished accommodation in your only or main home. Under the scheme, you can receive up to £7,500 a year tax-free. If someone else also receives income from letting accommodation in the

same property, such as a joint owner, the limit is halved to £3,750 each. Put simply, the allowance enables you to receive a total of £625 per month for rent and bills without the need to make any declaration to HMRC as the exemption is automatic and no tax is due on that income. If receipts exceed the limit, you can choose whether to pay tax on your actual profit after expenses, or on the amount received above the Rent a Room limit. The best option depends on the level of your costs. You can take advantage of the scheme whether you own or rent your home, though if you are a tenant you will need to ensure that subletting a room is allowed under the terms of your tenancy agreement. If you would like more advice about whether the rent a room scheme could apply to your circumstances, speak to your accountant.

*Carol Draper FCCA
Clifton-Crick Sharp & Co Ltd*

Make the most of playday with tax-free childcare

-Working families urged to sign up for Tax-Free Childcare on Playday to help pay for holiday clubs, after-school clubs, nurseries and childminders.

-Latest statistics show families save almost £100 a month with Tax-Free Childcare.

-Number of families using Tax-Free Childcare for children aged eight and above increased by 20%.

Working families are being encouraged to check if they could cut the cost of childcare this Playday (5th August), as HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) latest statistics show families using Tax-Free

Childcare saved an average of almost £100 a month. Playday, the national day for play, is a reminder for eligible parents to see if they could benefit from the scheme. Tax-Free Childcare can provide up to £2,000 per year per child (or £4,000 for a disabled child) helping manage childcare costs while balancing work and family life.

People can visit GOV.UK to check eligibility and sign-up for Tax-Free Childcare.



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Mark your calander!

The Autumunal equinox occurs on September 22nd. The sun will be directly above the equator, day and night are nearly equal in length. In the Northern Hemisphere, this marks the start of fall, for the Southern Hemisphere, the beginning of spring

Village Life

John Driscoll



The record-breaking summer has continued through much of August. The month will have drawn to a close by the time you read this, and with it the end of meteorological summer. We have avoided any large-scale wildfires in the immediate area, but were shocked by the horrific house fire in Pershore that destroyed two homes. Many of us feel so deeply for those affected, while redoubling our efforts to avoid starting fires in line with the alert relayed over our mobiles. This national mobile phone alert seems to have stoked controversy in some quarters. It certainly caused more than a little consternation in my household with confusion over what our phones were doing – not the usual notification of

yet another unwanted message! Let's hope it helped to avert further incidents. A much happier note was sounded when we discovered that the field next to our house has been planted with sunflowers – the first time in almost 30 years. How can they fail to raise a smile, and what a great reminder of past French holidays where they're such a regular sight. That's saved the cost of a ferry crossing and long drive through France, and a great excuse for a glass of red to complete the 'ambience' in our little corner of Blighty! Our surroundings are still pretty parched, and we've become used to the sight of yellow fields, gardens and verges where vibrant green is the norm. Lots

of time saved as lawns have not needed mowing, but that's small consolation. Of course we know rain is inevitably on the way, and we'll complain when it arrives – but then, that makes us who we are! Let's just pray we don't have sudden torrential storms with run-off and flooding. Those of us old enough to remember 1976 will recall that all the PM needs to do is appoint a Minister for Drought and hey presto - the rain will arrive! Enough of the weather. A recurring theme in this column has been the effectiveness of WhatsApp at spreading news – good and bad – through our village. A recent message warned of an incident in a nearby village where balaclava-clad youngsters were causing mayhem. Very worrying, and we were encouraged to keep an eye out for our neighbours, especially those who might be worried. What a great way to spread a message that could have helped avoid a nasty incident, and a chance for the village to act together. Reassuringly, the message stream soon reverted to someone wanting to pass on a no-longer needed household essential that was promptly snapped up. WhatsApp has also been very effective at highlighting the possible implications of a recent

planning application for 1,200 houses close to our village border. There is a slim chance of us stopping this development, but we recognise the need to awake planners to the need to safeguard our interests as existing residents. A major concern is the possibility of vastly increased traffic on narrow lanes that won't be able to cope. WhatsApp has enabled us to spread this message and to encourage multiple residents to register their concerns – with the hope we can protect at least some of our cherished peace and quiet. Apart from this, the village has been fairly quiet through the summer, maybe because so many of us have been hibernating to avoid overheating. Our pub held a summer party and raised an impressive sum for Acorns Hospice. We had intended planting spring bulbs around the village, but will likely need pneumatic drills to break ground, so this may be put on hold for now. Oh, and the phone box remains un-painted, but cools! Will September bring yet another spell of hot weather, or should we brace ourselves for a sudden autumn? Whichever it is, let's hope for an end to natural disasters and let's embrace the arrival of autumn colours and cooler nights with better prospects of a good night's sleep!

View from the boundary

The "Hundred" carries on; I cannot say that I am overly excited. But they do get some good gates, and it brings some good money. It did give Worcestershire a chance in the 50-over game, given that all top players are in the 100, but Hey Ho! still not there. The football season is about us when the overly paid fall over and cry without being touched. But the men's game of Rugby will also soon start; at least when they are battered and bruised, they go off and get six stitches and run on all bandaged up. Let's look forward to Worcester Warriors doing well. Well, now we need to speak

of the politicians. So, the new saviour Mr Burnham, educated at what is now St Aelred's Catholic Technology College, then English at Fitzwilliam College with a degree in English, does sound like he did not learn too much. He then worked as a researcher for a London MP and served as an "advisor" To the Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport; what experience is that to be CEO of UK plc? I was talking to farmers and the new minister for the Environment food and rural affairs, the one and only Dame Angela Eagle DBE, in old money Minister of AG and Fish. Let's look at her

claim to fame. Formby Comprehensive, then a BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Then a researcher and press officer for the CBI, and then here we go, the Confederation of Health Service employees UNISON. What does she know about cows' udders and Mastitis, tractors and what happens in the environment? Security minister, Jonathan Reynolds held himself out to be a solicitor; he would not know which way up to hold Blackstone's (the main book on criminal law); there are plenty of cases prosecuted by the Solicitors Regulation Authority under the Legal Services Act

for "holding out". Is this the best we have. I have undertaken a lot of Probate applications recently for people who have lost loved ones. Some of the quotes from solicitors are ridiculous. But what is even worse, I told clients that the government fee is £300. I checked, and it has gone to £536.00 in the middle of July; that is an increase of 70%, which to me is theft. The latest proposition is that if your house is worth over £2 million, large council tax will have to be paid; to start with, that is 70% of all central London properties, some of which are given to migrants for free rent.

Peter Jewell



Did you know

Just 10-15 minutes of sunlight exposure can provide you with your daily dose of vitamin D. So, stepping outside for a brief walk can do wonders for your mood

100 years ago ...

21st September 1926, Jelly Roll Morton and his Red Hot Peppers pushed the boundaries of early jazz by recording revolutionary jazz track "Sidewalk Blues" and "Dead Man Blues".

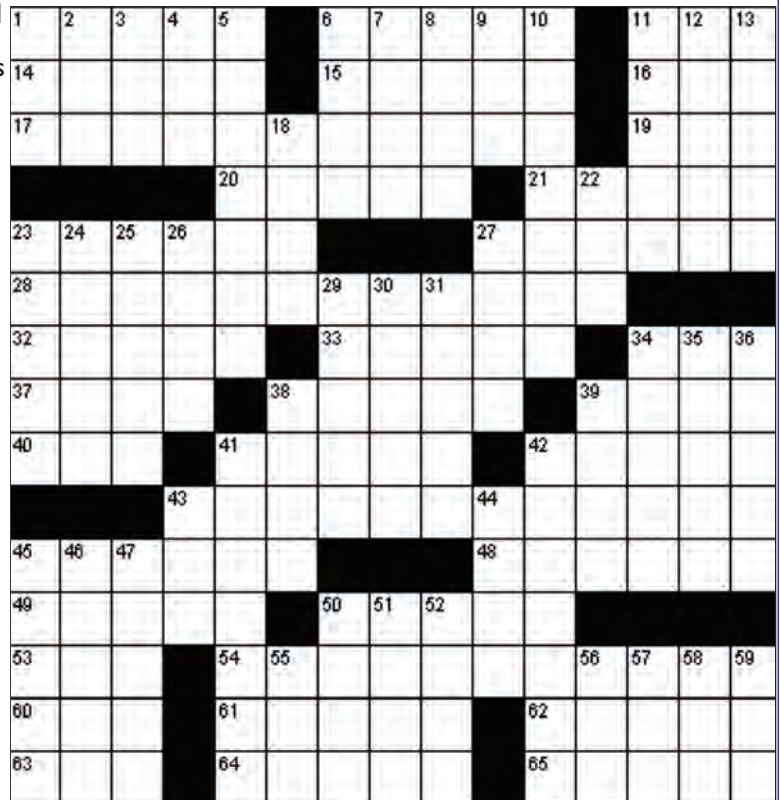
Coffee Break Crossword

Across

1. Ice pinnacle
6. A durable aromatic wood
11. Consumer Price Index
14. Wash out with a solvent
15. A tributary of the Missouri River
16. Possessed
17. Dramatized or exaggerated
19. American Sign Language
20. Periods of reduced prices in stores
21. Sound
23. A blackcurrent flavoring for drinks
27. Was afraid of
28. Public speaker
32. Collection of maps
33. Violent disturbances
34. Reverend (abbrev.)
37. The beginnings of a plant
38. Angelic headgear
39. A contest or amusement
40. Make a mistake
41. Anagram of "Sense"
42. Long-legged aquatic bird
43. Instances of unfaithfulness
45. Liveliness
48. The whole thing
49. Having a sharp inclination
50. Largest moon of Saturn
53. Ocean
54. Having calmness of temper
60. Entirely
61. Strange or weird
62. Braid or plait
63. Affirmative
64. Fearful anticipation
65. A forest god

Down

1. Perceive visually
2. Type of tree
3. Chafe
4. Consumed
5. Metric scale of temperature
6. Something wound into a series of loops
7. Nature of being
8. Anagram of "Dash"
9. How long something has existed
10. Anagram of "Senders"
11. Seat
12. Outmoded
13. Made inactive
18. Final
22. A type of cereal grass
23. Stop
24. Change
25. Cobbler
26. Cigarfish
27. Being the right size or shape
29. Pertaining to modern day Persia
30. Lubricated
31. Hangman's knot
34. Half-diameters
35. Chieftain
36. A line in a poem
38. Lift with difficulty
39. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
41. Pruned
42. Sifts
43. Anger
44. Meadows
45. An analytic literary composition
46. An ancient upright inscribed stone slab
47. Deep prolonged sounds
50. Rubber wheel
51. Latin for "Flanks"
52. "___ the line" = conformed under pressure



55. Not him
56. Anagram of "Ape"
57. Bowler, derby or cap, for example
58. A climbing vine
59. Conditioned Emotional Response

Sudoku

Each row and column must contain the numbers from one to nine, without repetitions.

6			1					2
8		1		9				
	7	5		8	4			
4	3			2		5	6	1
5	1	8	7			4		9
	9	6	4	1		3		
				7				
	6			3	1		5	
7		2	5	4		6		3

	4	3		8				
8		2				4	1	
			7					3
	6		8			3	7	
			6	1			9	4
2				4				
7	2	6		5	3		4	8
1				7	9			
	9	4		6	8	7	5	1

	2					8		
	5						4	
			8	9	1	2		
			4		9		3	
7					2			
2	1				8		6	4
		8				4		7
	4	2	6	8		9		
1	9			5				3

G	N	P	U	T	W	E	N	E	L	L	O	P	M	E
D	L	J	H	K	Q	H	T	Y	N	O	E	P	O	Z
E	L	V	X	Y	F	X	Y	F	Q	F	Y	E	S	R
M	X	E	M	L	A	P	I	L	U	T	Y	D	S	F
P	E	P	O	R	L	C	F	D	B	K	P	A	O	T
R	T	A	D	A	Z	O	I	W	U	O	H	R	L	E
F	T	A	T	D	R	A	S	N	P	B	I	A	B	U
W	L	E	A	C	E	X	V	P	T	R	D	P	N	Q
V	P	I	H	L	P	E	Y	U	O	H	Y	Z	P	U
F	S	I	A	H	C	W	G	Z	T	I	Z	O	I	O
Y	D	Z	W	Z	Q	W	Z	M	Q	R	R	S	V	B
F	A	H	D	L	O	G	I	R	A	M	O	U	E	H
S	Z	J	D	R	C	Z	W	X	Q	Y	T	M	S	A
T	M	H	D	S	A	S	Y	L	I	L	X	U	O	M
N	P	M	D	J	J	D	B	F	Z	B	K	X	R	V

Flower wordsearch

- | | |
|----------|--------|
| AZALEA | ORCHID |
| BLOSSOM | PARADE |
| BOUQUET | PEONY |
| DAISY | PETAL |
| FLOAT | POLLEN |
| HYACINTH | POPPY |
| LILY | ROSE |
| MARIGOLD | TULIP |

Brainteasers

- 1) A sundial has the fewest moving parts of any timepiece. Which has the most?
 - 2) Without reordering any letters, how many animals appear in the sequence: *tenre crabaturtle mureindeer*?
 - 3) I have seas without water. I have forests without wood. What am I?
- 3) A map
2) Seven - Tenrec, Lemur, Reindeer, Deer
1) An hourglass. (sand grain)

A SHROPSHIRE LAD

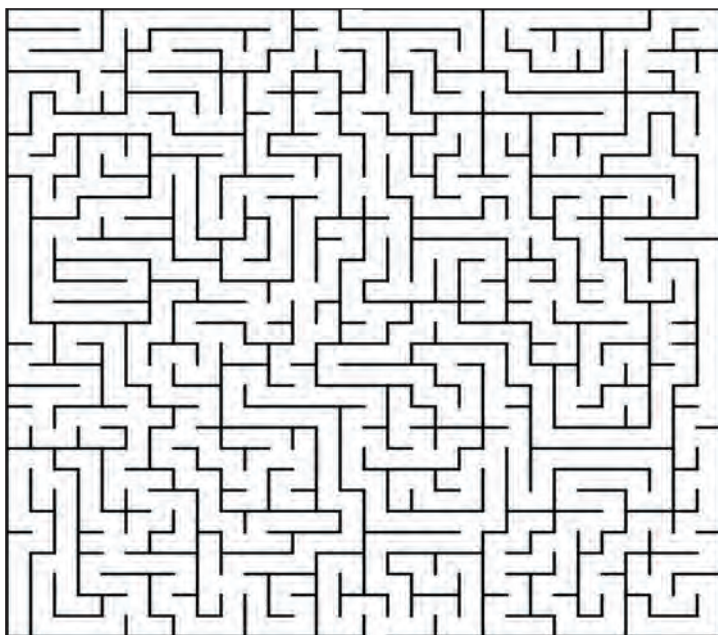


A.E. HOUSMAN
Photographs John Hayward

This is the only photographic edition of A Shropshire Lad in which the county's stunning landscapes, which have scarcely altered since Housman's day, have been matched with the stanzas on each page. The enduring appeal of this lyrical English poem, first published in 1896, lies in its exploration of the universal themes of loss, nostalgia and love. Certainly its international popularity today is undiminished. The rural landscape of the beautiful Shropshire countryside, from the bucolic Clun valley to the bleak hills of Stiperstones, is sympathetically captured by one of Shropshire's finest photographers, John Hayward. Over fifty stunning new photographs enhance Housman's popular work and this edition marks the 90th anniversary of his death.

Available from Hughes & Company
for £20 from September 2026
Tel: 01386 803803

The maze Make it from start to finish, staying inside the lines



Quiz!

- 1) Which London Underground line is represented as green on the tube map?
- 2) Which country has the most castles in the world?
- 3) Who are the three members of the American supergroup Boygenius?
- 4) Which legendary surrealist artist is famous for painting melting clocks?
- 5) What is the capital of Westeros in Game of Thrones?
- 6) What type of pasta has a name meaning "little worms"?
- 7) What is the biggest planet in our solar system?
- 8) Which Shakespeare character kills Tybalt and Paris?
- 9) Taylor Swift released two studio albums in 2020: one was titled Folklore, but what was the name of the other one?
- 10) What is the tallest mountain in the world?
- 11) What is the name of the main antagonist in the Shakespeare play Othello?
- 12) Friends ended in May 2004 after how many seasons?
- 13) What region of France is a Claret wine produced in?
- 14) What food is Matt Damon's character in The Martian able to grow when he gets stranded?
- 15) How many countries still have the shilling as currency?
- 16) In which year did the Apollo 13 space mission take place?
- 17) What is the capital city of Slovakia?
- 18) How many centimetres are there in a metre?
- 19) What number is a baker's dozen?
- 20) Who plays comedy character Alan Partridge?

1) The District Line 2) Germany 3) Phoebe Bridgers, Lucy Dacus and Julien Baker 4) Salvador Dali 5) King's Landing 6) Verneice 7) Jupiter 8) Romeo 9) Evermore 10) Mount Everest 11) Iago 12) Ten 13) Bordeaux 14) Poirot 15) Four - Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Somalia 16) 1970 17) Bratislava 18) 100 19) 13 20) Steve Coogan

Did You Know?

The Moon occults the Beehive Cluster (one of the closest and brightest open star clusters to Earth, containing over 1,000 stars) on the 8th September from 4am until dawn!

Famous September Birthdays!

Elizabeth I of England
7th September 1533
Roald Dahl
13th September 1916
Freddie Mercury
5th September 1946
Serena Williams
26th September 1981

Flower of the Month Aster

symbolising patience, wisdom, love, faith and remembrance

Word of the Month 'Epizeuxis' (ep-uh-zoox-sis)

Definition: A term that describes the repetition of a word for emphasis. E.g. 'When Iliacs last in the Dooryard Bloom'd', Walt Whitman

August Answers

J	O	N	A	H	E	L	B	O	W	S	E	C
A	D	O	R	E	K	I	O	W	A	A	G	O
M	E	R	C	I	L	E	S	S	L	Y	T	E
					R	U	S	T	S	B	L	A
G	A	B	L	E	S					G	I	A
A	C	O	U	S	T	I	C	A	L	L	Y	
T	U	R	N	S	L	I	B	E	L	S	A	C
E	T	N	A		D	I	V	A	N	B	I	R
D	E	E			F	R	U	I	T	A	A	I
					S	E	A	M	L	E	S	S
S	A	F	E	T	Y					H	I	S
I	L	I	A	C		M	A	S	O	N		
N	I	L			H	A	U	G	H	T	I	N
E	K	E			E	N	S	U	E		N	O
W	E	D			S	T	E	E	D	E	G	R

Taxes and spending

Brian Johnson-Thomas

He would have stood out from the panicking crowd – taller than most men of his generation and extremely well-dressed (almost foppish, by some accounts) - and surrounded by some hand-picked friends he nevertheless joined in the headlong rush through Worcester's teeming streets, desperate to evade the stormtroopers of Cromwell's New Model Army. That was the young King Charles at the climax of his attempt to seize back his father's Throne exactly 375 years ago this coming weekend. There are lots of events that day at Worcester's Commandery museum and advance booking is not required. It's ironic that the English Civil War both began and ended here locally with a minor skirmish at Pershore Bridge back in 1642 one of the first events of note in the run up to the inconclusive Battle of Edgehill that October. The War was essentially about taxation and that's still one of our national bugbears which is why the pub chain Wetherspoon's is cutting the price of all food and drinks by 7.5% on Thursday the 17th for that day only.

This action is to highlight the discrepancy between the VAT charged by the hospitality industry, set by the government at 20% and the zero VAT which supermarkets are required to pay on food. Many publicans say that this allows supermarkets to unfairly subsidise their alcohol sales, which is why Wetherspoon's is staging this, polite but pertinent, protest.

On the bright side, and assuming that you're still solvent in these challenging times then you might like to visit A Place in the Sun Live which returns to Birmingham's NEC for the weekend starting on Friday the 18th. It's the largest event of its'

kind in the UK and is the obvious destination for anyone who's thinking of buying a property abroad.

A wide variety of destinations will be showcased including Albania, Costa Rica, Egypt and Thailand as well as old favourites such as Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, France and Florida. The exhibition is a unique opportunity to meet a wide range of overseas property professionals and, as a special bonus, our readers are being offered a massive 50% discount on advance purchase tickets.

For discounted tickets go to www.aplaceinthesunvents.com/birmingham

and apply the code **LIVE50** at the checkout.

Maybe see you there?

Bristol's not much further than Brum (assuming that the M5's behaving itself!) and it's nice to know that the Ambassador Cruise Line is again offering a season of no-fly sailings from there this autumn with five cruises on offer from the 26th of this month until November 11th. Sailing from the Royal Portbury Dock the first cruise is to France, Spain and Portugal, a thirteen nights epic whose highlights include Le Verdon on the doorstep of the Bordeaux wine country and the historic city of Lisbon. Prices for this start from £1,430. After a nine night cruise to the coasts of France and Ireland (seven nights from £836pp) there's a really special 17 night cruise to Norway's Land of the Northern Lights which offers not just the magnificent landscapes of the fjords but also visits ports of call a long way past the Arctic Circle, thus giving an excellent chance of seeing the Aurora Borealis. Prices start from £2,213 p.p. – again in an Ocean View cabin). There's another sailing then to

western France and Spain (nine nights from £890 pp) before their Bristol 'season' concludes with a two night sailing entitled 'Back to the 80's with entertainers celebrating the best of 80's music. That's just from £239p.p, again all prices are based on an Ocean View Cabin.

For more details see

www.ambassadorcruiseline.com/no-fly-cruises/cruises-from-bristol/ or call

0330 162 4111.

Nearer home again then it's time for the 2026 Malvern Autumn Show at the Three Counties Showground from Friday 25th until Sunday 27th of this month. It's the UK's largest harvest season celebration with a packed programme featuring the CANNA UK National Giant Vegetables Championship, the RHS Flower

Show and also featuring the return of the Great Malvern Cake Off, which I suppose is a spin off from the Great British Bake Off TV series. There's also an Indoor Food and Drink Market plus a Great taste Market and an Artisan Food Market, street food and live music on the Festival Green, the Orchards and Hopyard Pavilion and a chance to relax in the new Two Beacons Vineyard Wine Garden. Plus there's fun for all the family with a new Fun Farm Activity Area - and don't forget that children aged 16 and under can enter the Show free of charge. For the rest of us entry prices start at £22 if booked in advance but there's also a two-day ticket plus the chance to bring the dog on Sunday only.

For more details see

www.malvernautumn.co.uk.

I'm looking forward to it already!



Wychavon calls for tools to end rough sleeping

Wychavon has urged Prime Minister Andy Burnham to give councils the tools they need to turn his pledge to end rough sleeping into reality. Councillor Rick Deller, Wychavon's Executive Board Member for Housing, warned for the Prime Minister to achieve his commitment, preventing homelessness before people reach crisis point must be at the heart of the Government's plans. Wychavon's own five-year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is based on

early intervention, partnership working and tailored support to stop people losing their homes in the first place. The council is also investing in innovative solutions, including its supported youth homelessness scheme in Evesham, with a second scheme planned for Droitwich Spa, to help vulnerable young people avoid homelessness and build independent lives. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government's Everyone In scheme, which provided funding,

flexibility around accommodation and wrap around support, virtually eliminated rough sleeping across the district. Cllr Deller said this proved what was possible with the right approach. Ahead of the Government revealing their full plan to end rough sleeping in the autumn, Cllr Deller has now written to the Prime Minister setting out a series of recommendations from Wychavon and asking for the district to be considered for any Government pilot schemes aimed at ending rough sleeping.

The recommendations include:

- Reforming welfare rules that leave people with rent shortfalls.
- Improving access to mental health and addiction support. Faster access to supported accommodation.
- Giving councils greater freedom to join up funding instead of bidding into multiple short-term funding pots.
- Multi-year funding for successful prevention schemes so they can become permanent services instead of relying on already stretched council budgets.

Letter from the South Worcestershire leaders

Dear residents,
So now we know. From April 2028, we will have a North Worcestershire Council and a South Worcestershire Council, delivering all services from bin collections to roads and social care for children and adults. As leaders of the three district councils in South Worcestershire, we believe this is the right decision, not just for the communities we serve, but for the whole county. Moving to a unitary is a government decision. It has to happen and we are fully behind a South Worcestershire unitary. Our task now is to make reorganisation a success. The people of Worcestershire will expect us to focus less on yesterday's arguments and more on tomorrow's opportunities. That is the responsibility we all now share. There is a long and complex road ahead. Working with Worcestershire County Council and our colleagues in the north, we are determined to seize this once-in-a-generation

opportunity to transform services, move towards long-term financial sustainability, and deliver better outcomes for residents. The proposal for two councils emerged from extensive public consultation. You told us it was important to reflect the distinct character of north and south Worcestershire, keep decision-making close to communities and protect the local services people rely on. We're pleased the Government listened to your voice, but you still have a key role to play. The creation of unitary councils will enable the next stage of local government reorganisation and the devolution of power from Whitehall. This means that more decisions will be made locally by people who know Worcestershire well. The subsequent formation in stage two of what are called strategic authorities, consisting of a number of new unitary councils constructively working together under a mayoral structure, allows the possibility of control

of infrastructure development in our region supporting the economic growth and jobs that we need. As the English White Paper says, "The number one mission of this government is to relight the fire of our economy and ignite growth in every region". To that end, we stand ready to play our part in making local government reorganisation and English devolution a success. Over the next nine months, your existing councils will help shape the new authorities.

In May next year, you will elect the councillors who will lead the final preparations before the new councils take over on 1st April 2028.

For many councillors, this will be the final chapter of a lifetime of public service. For others, it will be the beginning of a new one. Whatever the future holds, it has been the greatest privilege to serve the people of Malvern Hills, Worcester and Wychavon. Until our final day, we will remain focused on

serving our communities. History will judge this moment not by the councils we create, but by the difference they make to people's lives. Our responsibility is to ensure the new councils inherit strong services, sound finances and thriving communities. That is the legacy we aim to leave. A new and strong economic voice.

Councillor John Gallagher
Leader of Malvern Hills
District Council

Councillor Lynn Denham
Leader of Worcester City
Council

Councillor Richard Morris
Leader of Wychavon District
Council



Letter to the Editor

My good friend (and active Housman Society member) Linda Hart has drawn my attention to the letter in your current issue of Pershore Times from Es Hoyle and Wm Coleman. We in the Society have also been most appreciative of your printing all 63 poems from A Shropshire Lad over the last couple of years or so. Can I suggest that the positive response of your readers is evidence of the abiding appeal of Housman's verse? As I'm sure you are aware ASL has never been out of print since its first publication in 1896 and its themes continue to have relevance in the 21st century. Less well-known, but containing what some regard as Housman's finest work, is his

second collection titled Last Poems published in 1922 and commemorated in the Society's centenary edition four years ago. Rudyard Kipling declared the Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries the finest poem written during the Great War. Housman lovers within sight of Bredon Hill who are not yet members of our Society might care to visit our website at www.housman-society.co.uk where there is much information together with downloadable copies of our Newsletters and annual Journal. I wonder if you might share this possibility with your two correspondents

Max Hunt
(The Housman Society)

Debbie Donoghue
(Broadway Golf Club
Reports)

Many thanks for our coverage in the August edition - what a fantastic publication.

Thoughts from the Snug Holiday complaints

Most of the Snug fellowship has been struggling with the heat waves, and the prospect of yet another in September has caused some dismay. However, some acknowledge it has been a bonus not to have to travel abroad to get the sun. One member arrived at a gathering with a list of customer complaints from the now defunct Thomas Cook Travel Agents:

-They should not allow topless sunbathing on the beach. It was very distracting for my husband who just wanted to relax.

-We booked a session at a water park, but nobody told us we were to bring swimsuits and towels. We assumed they would be provided.

-The beach was too sandy. We had to clean off every time we returned to the room.

-We found the sand was not like the sand in your brochure. Your sand was white, but it was yellow!

-It took 9 hours to fly from Jamaica to England. It took Americans only 3 hours to get home. Seems unfair.

-Although the brochure said a fully equipped kitchen, there was no egg slicer in the drawer.

-We had to line up outside to catch the boat, but there was no air-conditioning.

-I was bitten by a mosquito. The brochure did not mention mosquitoes. Is it any wonder

Thomas Cook went bankrupt with these clients? Staycation, that's the answer.

Buddy Bach

Cover Photo Competition!

We are looking for six photos for our papers

Each photo should be high-resolution and landscape

submissions to: news@hughes.company

with your name and paper you would like to be considered for

Deadline: 20th of each month



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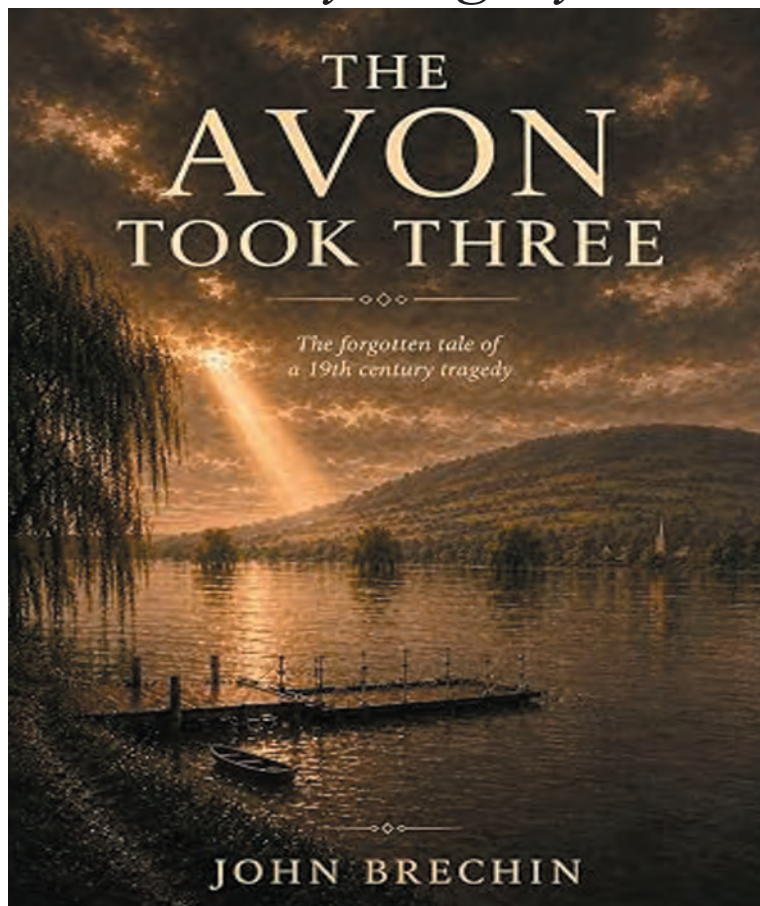
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Copy Deadline for

October Issue - 15th September 2026

The Avon took three: The forgotten tale of a 19th century tragedy



Hi my main hobby is family history. My great grandmother was Alice Maud Wagstaff born in Stoke Lacy and she ended up meeting an Aberdeen lad in London, married there and came up with their two daughters and a son to the granite city. She was the daughter of Thomas Wagstaff who appears briefly in the novel as a newborn babby. I researched the Wagstaff and other lineages (Adams, Turner, Whistance, Jones and more) leading to them. And my wife and I had the pleasure of visiting Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Wales, and of course Worcestershire about 15 years or so ago. Unfortunately our visit to Bredon coincided with a biblical downpour that stopped us even exiting our car. This is slightly ironic as in later years in Newspaper articles of 1835 I found the sad story of my three times great uncle Thomas Wagstaff of Bredon drowning in the Avon which was in spate after heavy rains. The baby Thomas was born days after his uncle's funeral. There were two other young men drowned in the same incident Daniel Trapp also of Bredon, and Charles Stephens of Alderton. Later I found an

article mentioning a 1838 criminal trial brought about by John Wagstaff (my four times great grandfather) against Cornelius Stephens, both blacksmiths of Bredon. I told my immediate family of these stories, and my niece suggested I should write a book about it. It intrigued me, but I did nothing until retirement allowed me time to sit down and write. The novel is my fictionalised story of what may have happened between these two factual incidents. The retirement was meant to give us time to revisit our grand tour of the counties and country previously mentioned but with more time to explore, and finally get out and walk in Bredon. Unfortunately soon after my retirement my wife was diagnosed with Cancer and her ongoing treatment has curtailed those plans for the time being. That is also the reason all royalties from the sales of the ebook and paperback at Amazon are being donated to Cancer Research UK.

*The Avon Took Three:
The forgotten tale of a 19th
century tragedy*
<https://amzn.eu/d/09M9Kjqqa>



How old is the Bredon Parish Magazine?

I am sure many of you would be interested to know how old our parish magazine is. Sally Deakin showed me a book, which is kept in the Church Room. It contains copies of some very old Bredon Parish Magazines. The oldest one she can find is this copy dated December, 1919. She doesn't know when the first magazine was published, but this issue is the oldest we have in our archive.

- Anne Choi

COMPETITION TIME!

Take a look at the anagram

The answer is the name of a business that is advertising in the Bredon Times this month

**SPOT
&
SHOP!**

Chance
to WIN
**£50
CASH**

This
month's
anagram

**CARRIED
POETRY STOW**

This month's prizes!

1st - £50 cash

2nd - £25 cash

Donated by Hughes & Company

3rd £20 Food Voucher
at The Queen Elizabeth, Elmley

4th £10 Voucher
at Revills Farm Shop, Defford

5th £10 Voucher
at Craftypyro, Bakers Arcade, Pershore

6th £10 voucher
at Upper Crust, Pershore

7th Pat's Pantry -
Jar of home-made marmalade/jam

Complete and return this form or email:
news@hughes.company for your chance to win!

Bredon Times closing date: 24th October 2026

Answer:

Name:

Telephone/email:

Return to: Hughes & Company/Bredon Times

8 Church Street, Pershore Worcestershire WR10 1DT

Community Care

Bredon Community Care –has supported so many in the parish villages of Bredon, Bredon's Hardwick, Bredon's Norton, Kinsham and Westmancote for nearly 50 years, by providing transport and wheelchair hire, it's a Service for all Ages.

You may have seen the blue Tewkesbury Community Bus driving around the village on a Thursday morning, Bredon Community Care support these trips, and have the privilege of enjoying time with really interesting people and doing something to support some of the less mobile members of our community and their families. The Service is for shopping trips to Morrisons and also on the weeks when the Warm Welcome Scheme is providing lunches to get to Bredon Village Hall. There is a small charge of £3 per round trip to cover fuel, running costs and insurance.

We have a small band of volunteer drivers who provide services in their own transport to get to Out Patients appointments at local Hospitals, Doctors, Physio, Dentist or Optician.

There are a number of wheelchairs which are available to loan/ hire, please contact

Linda Poulton: 01684 772167

So many people are now under so much pressure, not only financially, but time wise too. Do we want these services to continue – or do we just assume someone else will be there to provide them in the future when needed?

Sadly the truth is – once they go they are gone forever.

We would ask some of the younger members of the

community to consider if they could occasionally give up the odd morning to help either with the Community Bus or drive someone to hospital. Please consider supporting something which has been such a part of our village life to continue to thrive. Our annual fundraising event in conjunction with St Richards Hospice of Soup & Sandwiches is on Thursday 5th November 2026 at Bredon Village Hall, from 12 noon, where there will also be stalls selling Christmas goodies.



If you want to know more about helping on the Community Bus which has a Wheelchair Facility – please call Arti Ranner: 07940 427112

If you can spare some time to do the odd drive and become a volunteer driver – please call Elaine Lane: 01684 772311

If you would like to work with the Bredon Community Care Team – call Vicki Clift: 07799 660090

Finally – this will not be a big commitment – just a very rewarding one. Thank You.

Vicki Clift

On behalf of all the Members of Bredon Community Care.



Malvern Male Voice Choir

will be singing popular toe-tapping numbers, songs from the shows and stirring Welsh hymns.

Saturday, 26th September 2026

7.00pm

St Giles' Church, Bredon

Tickets at £12.50 each (free for under 18)

Scan the QR code to purchase your tickets



Drinks and canapes will be served during interval

Malvern Male Voice Choir began as a male quartet in Malvern Wells in 1922. It currently has about 30 members. The Choir has performed in public every year since it was established, with enforced breaks for World War II and the Covid pandemic. The Choir performs throughout the area at a wide range of venues, small and large, often working with other choirs and musical groups. Our concerts frequently support charities (local and national). We create a sound which is often impressive, beautiful and mysterious, and which furthers the Choir's living tradition. There are many benefits to singing in a choir. Amongst other things, it has been proven to reduce blood pressure and stress, improve mental wellbeing, enable

connection with others and improve self-esteem. Fancy a sing? The Choir welcomes people of all singing abilities. There are no auditions, and there is no requirement to be able to read music. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Patrick (07913 503 175), or alternatively, just come along to a rehearsal. We rehearse at Holy Trinity Church, Link Top, Malvern, every Monday at 7.30pm throughout the year, except for a couple of weeks off around Christmas and New Year, some bank holidays, and during our summer break (July and August). Our rehearsals are always good humoured, with an emphasis on enjoyment. Find us on Facebook or at www.malvernmalevoicechoir.org

Winter Glow makes festive magic easier for families

Winter Glow is making Christmas even more accessible thanks to the return of the popular 'Kids Go Free' on the Light Trail offer for the 2026 festive season.

Winter Glow is the West Midlands' biggest multi-attraction festive experience. Based at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, it's due to be held from 20th November to 31st December. Back by popular demand, children under the age of ten go free on the Classic Light Trail experience when accompanied by a paying adult – but for a limited time

only. The offer is due to end on Saturday 31st October. The Illuminated Light Trail includes more than 20 unique installations with brand new immersive light features planned for this year. This year's theme for the Light Trail is The Tale of Altas Frost. It will depict the story of Atlas Frost, the Guardian of Curios, who is carrying home news of wondrous trinkets and toy inventions from faraway lands to Father Christmas. While at Winter Glow, visitors can also enjoy other attractions

such as ice skating on the West Midlands' largest indoor ice rink, UV Glow Crazy Golf, and truly special personalised Father Christmas Experiences. Entry to Winter Glow is completely free, offering access to the fairground, Christmas Market and Food Quarter. Onsite parking is also free, representing even more savings for families.

Chris Tarren, Founder of Winter Glow, said: "Christmas is the time to make memories – last year we gave away 6,000

kids tickets to help families do just that. That's why this year we have brought back the popular 'Kids Go Free' on the Light Trail offer, so even more families can enjoy the magic of Winter Glow. It's going to be truly special, and we can't wait to welcome visitors to Winter Glow this year."

Tickets are on sale now, subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply. For more information, please visit: <https://winterglow.co.uk/>

The use of plastic within the Churchyard



As part of St Giles Church's commitment to the Eco Church programme and to the care of God's creation, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) has agreed to reduce the use of plastic within the churchyard. To support this commitment, plastic items will no longer be permitted on graves, ashes interment plots, or memorials within the churchyard.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Artificial (plastic) flowers
- Plastic plant pots
- Plastic flower containers and holders
- Other decorative items made from plastic

We appreciate that many of these items have been placed with love

and in memory of those who are dearly missed. We therefore ask families and visitors, where possible, to replace plastic items with natural, biodegradable, or other environmentally friendly alternatives. During routine churchyard maintenance, any plastic items found on graves or memorial sites may be removed. Wherever possible, this will be done with care and sensitivity, and fresh flowers that remain in bloom will be left in place. This change will be introduced gradually over the coming months to allow families time to make any adjustments they wish.

Thank you for your understanding, support, and help in caring for our churchyard for future generations.

St Giles' Diary

Wed 2nd September
Monthly Interdenominational Prayer Meeting for communities around Bredon Hill. All welcome.
9.30am at 6 College Road, GL20 7EH

Fri 4th September
Games Morning.
An opportunity to meet others over a game of Scrabble, RumiKub, crib, dominoes, etc.
Note new time of 10.30am.
10.30am at the Village Hall. This is re-starting after the summer break and will run until Easter, on the FIRST Friday of each month.

Mon 14th September
Coffee, Cake & Chat
A chance to catch up with friends and meet other locals.

2:00pm to 3:30pm at The Royal Oak. This runs on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

Sat 26th September
Concert with Malvern Male Voice Choir. Come and enjoy an evening of popular toe-tapping numbers, songs from the shows and stirring Welsh hymns.
7.00pm at St. Giles. Book in advance using QR code on poster or pay at the door. Adults £12.50, free for under 18.

Mon 28th September
Coffee Cake & Chat.
A chance to catch up with friends and meet other locals.
2.00pm to 3.30pm at The Royal Oak. This runs on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

A warm welcome back to our children

As we look ahead to September, we are excited to welcome all our children back after the summer break. We hope that everyone has enjoyed a happy and relaxing summer and is ready for another wonderful year together. September is always a special time, with new beginnings and lots to look forward to. We would also like to wish all of our children who are starting school the very best of luck as they take this exciting next step. We are incredibly proud of them and hope that they enjoy their new adventures, make lots

of lovely memories and continue to reach for the stars! There are lots of exciting things planned for the coming months at Playgroup, and we can't wait to share them with the children and their families. We look forward to another year filled with fun, friendship, learning, laughter and plenty of special moments.

A very warm welcome back to everyone -we can't wait to see you!

Our contact email is:
bredonplaygroup@gmail.com

Recognise..... Ever yours. Rev.Katryn

Things in the world continue as febrile as ever. As I write, we are hoping that Andy Burnham, the seventh prime minister in a decade, is going to be better news for the country. Analysis of his track record suggests that the realities of being in government may present a steep learning curve for him. Whoever he is, however he turns out to be, the duty of Christian citizens is to pray for leaders and government (including the loyal opposition), that government at all levels may be mindful of the margins of society, those whom the Old Testament calls the widow, the orphan and the stranger. It is when we are mindful of the people on the edges, those pushed out of the mainstream by misfortune, ill health, age, colour, gender, that we become a wholesome society. One in

which everyone feels safe, supported and with opportunity. The Church of England has just had a week called 'Recognise'. We were invited to recognise and give thanks for all people working with Children, youth and families, especially families needing support. As the school term came to an end, we recognised the work of our Open the Book Teams, our Messy Church/Making Church teams, our pastoral teams keeping an eye on families in our villages. We gave thanks too for school staff who have become a cross between educators, social workers, health visitors, mediators and more! We pray that the summer break may indeed be a refreshing time for all who work in schools and with young people and their families.

Bredon with Bredon's Norton Parish Services

6th September: All Age Service with Baptism
St Giles - 10.45am

13th September: Holy Communion
Chapel of Ease - 9.00am

13th September: Morning Praise
St Giles - 10.45am

13th September: WhizzPop
St Giles - 3.30pm

Recently started as a follow-up to iSingPop in Bredon Hancock's School. It is planned as a fun time for families with children aged 5-9 years (other ages also welcomed). There will be an opportunity to sing known and learn new iSingPop songs, watch or hear a short Bible story, try your hand at craft activities and play a game. Refreshments served from 3.15pm.

20th September: Holy Communion
St Giles - 10.45am

20th September: Harvest Festival
Chapel of Ease - 6.00pm

27th September: Village Worship
St Giles - 10.45am

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Public car park improvements



For years the quality of the two public car parks had been getting worse - bollards were falling over, drainage was poor, and they lacked any fencing to stop children running out into the busy car park. Bredon Parish Council would like to thank Councillor Colin Davidson for all his hard work, supported by other councillors, getting this project over the

line. Overall cost of this project, excluding VAT, was £52,189. As a percentage of the overall cost Bredon Parish Council contributed 18%, with the bulk of the cost therefore being effectively paid for by Grant contributions (Section 106; Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and a contribution from Councillor Adrian Hardman's local member's fund).

Bredon Parish Council (BPC)

Date of Next Council Meeting:

Monday 14th September 2026 - 7pm at Bredon Village Hall

BPC Contact details:

Email: parish.clerk@bredonpc.org.uk

Web: www.bredonpc.org.uk

Tel: 01684 773984



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