

**COVERING:**  
Aylton, Little Marde, Munsley, Pixley & Putley



the**cider**press

**Winter**  
Dec - Feb '23/24  
Issue No.101



Live at

*Putley Parish Hall*

*Saturday 16th December*

*Doors open half-an-hour before the show starts*

*Baubles, Bangles, Beads*

*- and sequins - compulsory*

*In other words, it's a Posh Frocks Party*

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## A word from *the Editor* by Julie Crompton

Hello Everyone, and welcome to the winter issue of the Cider Press.

Whatever happened to cold crisp winter days? So far, nothing but rainy wet days, not to mention the high winds!

They say it is much quieter in the countryside and in all the little villages and hamlets, but there's heaps of things happening in the shire this winter. People getting on and doing lots of fabulous things. Take a look through these pages and pick up on something you want to get involved in, even if that's simply staying in and baking the gorgeous melt in the middle chocolate puds (p10).

However, there's little better than kicking off the festive season with a spot of carol singing around the villages. All the information you need is on page 31.

Maybe you are raring to waltz along to the 'Strictly' final at Putley Parish Hall where you can enjoy all the action on the big screen with like-minded, glamorous sparkly people. I love the idea you can dress up super glitzy and may even win a prize for your efforts! All details on page 2.

Who says nothing happens in the garden during winter? Rosa Mundi's thoughts and ideas on page 5 might well surprise you, not to mention Kate Wollen's "The Changing Nature of Nature", a lovely little read on page 24.

So get yourself a cuppa and take some time to get ready for a cosy winter with the Cider Press. Meanwhile, I'm off for a walk so when I get back I'll get that warm fuzzy feeling of just being home again.

Happy winter everyone and see you all in the spring!

Julie

*If you have any events, stories, photographs or news, please let me know. If you don't tell me I can't pop it in our very own little mag!*

**Copy deadline for the next issue:**  
**Thursday 1st February**  
[julie@monster-creative.com](mailto:julie@monster-creative.com)



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# Who needs a Christmas tree?

by Rosa Mundi

Have you planted all your bulbs yet? The wholesale catalogue is too tempting, all those glorious photographs – no wonder fortunes were made and lost when tulipmania was at its height. Pheasant's eye narcissi and parrot tulips, anemones and aliums. Someone put the catalogue in the recycling quick....

Crocus maybe cheap but boy are they cheerful and being one of the earliest bulbs to flower they are a spangly reward for a walk outside on a cold day. Drifts of one colour may be more classy but the clashing yellows and purples and blobs of white really catch the eye. Grape hyacinths are a bit of a pain, spreading everywhere, but there are some extraordinary colours available, saffron stems with tufts of purple on top, dark blue fading to pale blue, and a dark wine topped with white. No wonder it is called Grape Ice.

We are advised to leave as much in the flower beds as possible for overwintering insects and seeds for birds, but it was so soggy in the autumn that the black, collapsing asters and fennel and salvias really did have to go. We have left a good couple of inches above ground for beetles and also to remember where plants are – the Disappearing Dahlias being a case in point! Geriatric gardeners don't need to do a crossword, just trying to locate the lovely yellow crocosmia you know is in the border somewhere keeps the remaining brain cells ticking over.

A major operation was pruning the mulberry tree. It's main trunk is split almost to the base so we are convinced a heavy snowfall will knock it splat onto the grass. It had taken over the lawn and shaded the seats so much it was hardly worth sitting outside, not to mention its eye-poking trailing branches. Now it is a smoother dome, shaped like a giant mushroom. The tree surgeon also trimmed a big blue fir which is getting a bit too big for its bed. The silvery

branches with the clusters of small cones are just right for Christmas decorations so are waiting in a cool shed for Inspiration to strike. Actually laying them on any flat surface, mantelpiece, conservatory table, shoving in a few candles and a couple of red baubles (or the angel with only one wing and a decidedly lop-sided head made by your five year old 40 years ago) and who needs a Christmas tree?

Visits to gardens, whether for NGS, National Trust, English Heritage or Open Gardens are mostly over, but a final trip to Witley Court in late autumn showed how a couple of parterres, a spectacular fountain, vast views, an absolutely enormous multi-trunk oak tree and the bones of a ruined orangery can be just as enthralling as any brightly coloured herbaceous border. The gardeners were removing summer bedding and replacing with pansies and winter daisies, but leaving the still-flowering pink Sweet Williams in their places. This seemed odd for biennials, but they are given a Chelsea (or perhaps Worcester) chop and will last for a couple of years, we were told.

At home winter preparations have involved investing in a packet of brown paper envelopes so no more mystery seeds and also putting all cuttings and tender plants back in the greenhouse until the spring. The conservatory is full of black aconiums, Queen's tears (bilbergia), big pots of 20 year old cymbidium orchids and Christmas cactus. The bouganvillia had looked pretty tatty so we gave that a root and branch hack, stuffed it back in its pot with new compost and fully expected it to die. But it had learned from the fate of its friend, Grandma Money Plant, and has made a big effort to send out shoots. So it is reprieved for now, but if it doesn't start flowering by March – well, there is still room on the bonfire.



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## PUTLEY PARISH HALL

by Josephine Felton

### A.G.M. held on 12th October

The current trustees were re-elected but would welcome new faces if anyone would like to join them. Hall finances are sound with a pleasing increase in income from hire. Expenses were down, partly due to the majority of major refurbishment having already been carried out in previous years.

Further improvements under discussion are replacing the flooring in kitchen and lavatories with catering/commercial quality vinyl. There is always just one more thing to do!

Queries to [jakeherbst@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jakeherbst@yahoo.co.uk) or [secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk](mailto:secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk)  
01531 670425



### September Results:

First prize no 38 Second prize no 24

### October Results:

First prize no 26 Second prize no 6

### November Results:

First prize no 7 Second prize no 2



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# AYLTON NEWS



## Charity Roadside Stall

Thank you for all those who have donated & purchased fruit and vegetables. So far over £500 has been raised for the **Herefordshire Community Reuse and Recycling Group**. This is amazing as we have had a difficult year with fruit & veg either doing very well and all coming at once or not producing much crop at all. The apples and pears are coming to an end but there will be mistletoe & holly to look forward to this festive season.

It was lovely that one person left a note saying how much they had enjoyed our greengages and saying they hoped we didn't think they were leaving us their rubbish but would we like the fruit containers back to reuse. Yes we would!

## Herefordshire Festive Gift Fair

A big thank you to all of those who braved the weather (*which was not half as bad as forecast!*) and made it to the second Herefordshire Festive Gift Fair at The

Pavilion Rooms, Ledbury RFC.

It was fantastic to see so many of you enjoying yourselves; supporting us, shopping and taking part in the Tombola - which definitely wins the prize for being the most encouraging stall!!

All monies raised will be split between Aylton Church and St Michael's Hospice.

## Christmas Services

Our Annual Carol Service takes place at Aylton Church at 5pm on December 17th. After the service we are invited to Court Farm Barn (next to the church) for refreshments.

We are looking forward to carol singing on the Aylton green triangle (*outside Yew Tree Cottage*) on Wednesday 20th December at 6.30pm.

Please join us on these festive occasions. All are welcome!

There will be no Christmas Day service at Aylton.

# Prancing Pony

at Putley Parish Hall

by Andy Booth

Another successful music night at the Pony this October with the appearance of the Helix Gold Band. It is becoming a truism that the humble old Pony is becoming something of a fixture on the local gig circuit. We've had so many varied acts appear over this last year and they've been wonderfully received by everyone. Your generosity on the night means that we are able continue to attract quality music entertainment to our Parish Hall. Of course, it's never just about the money and we're pleased to say that The Helix Gold Band donated their entire collection on the night to Cancer Research this last month.

October also saw the return of the popular Hillbillies Burger Van serving delicious burgers and fries – what a contribution that

makes to the evening.

Don't forget to put yourself forward for a stint behind the bar – it's a great way to get involved – just email us at: [putleyprancingpony@gmail.com](mailto:putleyprancingpony@gmail.com)

The final festive Christmas Prancing Pony of 2023 will be convened on Friday 22nd December, so do come along and make it a Proper Party.

There will be a short interlude for lusty carol singing for well oiled voices with perhaps a few Festive Pieces from our very own local thespians, so, if you have a favourite party piece, then this might be the time to dust it off and have a practice.

See you there!.

The Pony

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## AND OTHER OVEN BASED ADVENTURES... **Chocolate Fondants**

by **John Meringue**

All right, I admit it, I've gone a bit cheffy with this recipe, but these are delicious. A total indulgence, but so tasty! The recipe makes 2 standard ramekin sized puds. To make more, just double, treble or quadruple the recipe. These work perfectly, but if you really don't trust your 'melt in the middle' skills, you could always pop a chocolate truffle in the centre of each filled ramekin as you make them - It's not cheating, honest!

### **Ingredients:**

- Cocoa Powder, for dusting
- 50g good-quality dark Chocolate, chopped into small pieces
- 50g Butter, in small pieces, plus extra to coat the moulds
- 60g Caster Sugar
- 1 egg and 1 yolk
- 50g Plain Flour

### **Method**

First get your moulds ready. Liberally coat the inside of each ramekin with butter, then add a good spoonful of cocoa powder into the mould. Tip the mould so the powder completely coats the inside, then tap any excess cocoa into the next ramekin and repeat until all are prepared.

Place a bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, then slowly melt the dark chocolate and butter. It helps if they are chopped into small pieces. Once melted, remove the bowl from the heat and stir until smooth.

Leave to cool for about 10 mins.

In a separate bowl whisk the eggs and egg yolks together with the caster sugar until thick and

pale and the whisk leaves a trail. Sift the flour into the eggs, then beat together.

Pour the melted chocolate into the egg mixture a third at a time, beating well between each addition, until all the chocolate is added and the mixture is completely combined to a loose cake batter.

Tip the fondant batter into a jug, then evenly divide between the moulds. The fondants can now be frozen for up to a month and cooked from frozen. Chill for at least 20 mins or up to the night before. To bake from frozen, simply carry on as stated, adding 5 mins more to the cooking time.

Heat oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Place the fondants on a baking tray, then cook for 10-12 mins until the tops have formed a crust and they are starting to come away from the sides of their moulds. Remove from the oven, then leave to sit for 1 min before turning out.

Loosen the fondants by moving the tops very gently so they come away from the sides, easing them out of the moulds. You can test that they are ready to serve by tipping each fondant slightly onto your hand so you know it has come away. Tip it back into the mould until you are ready to plate up.

Sit a fondant in the middle of each plate, and add your topping of choice. Depending on how decadent I'm feeling, it might just be a bit of cream, but normally I go for it and add a raspberry puree, a scoop of ice cream a few more berries and a dusting of icing sugar!

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# Health & Wellbeing

by **Lesley Clothier** MCSP. Lic/Ac. CST.

## Cider Vinegar

The Big Apple event this year was fun as ever but it did spark my interest in the health benefits of cider vinegar.

Norman Stanier (the guru of anything apple) loaned me a book called *The Complete Cider Vinegar* first published 50 years ago in 1974. It's a great little book clearly demonstrating the health benefits of this clear amber liquid which contains a unique combination of minerals, organic matter and acetic acid. It can aid in weight loss, alleviate symptoms of arthritis, nose and throat disorders, insomnia, asthma, hay fever, digestion and heart conditions and high blood pressure. The authors of this book apply practical common sense advice for maintaining general health alongside the benefits of apple cider vinegar. 50 years later society is still dealing with same detrimental effects of processed foods, sugar, smoking and stress on the health of the nation mentioned in the book. The only omission in this book is the mention of poverty as a predictor of health outcomes. 21st century health problems e.g. diabetes and obesity etc. have grown exponentially and all the indicators were there over 50 years ago and were probably there post the second world war as increasing demands were made on farmers to supply quantities of cheap food. Of course then there is

the influence of Big Pharma which are powerful lobbyists.... too great a topic to discuss here.

So having read this little book with its wisdoms and its recipes, I came away feeling rather disappointed. Although there have been medical and scientific advances and the health professions work very hard, there remains the same chronic societal health problems which are probably worse today.

Nowadays the buzz words are "The Microbiome" and "The Gut Brain Axis" which have exploded the myth that you can eat anything that you like and it's okay and also debunked the advice that was given some years back, that we should eat a low fat high carbohydrate diet.

Topics like "leaky gut syndrome" and "adrenal fatigue" are on the whole not recognised by the medical profession and remain controversial. Maybe in another 50 years time they will be the current buzz words of the future. I remember years ago, patients coming for treatment being in floods of tears because they hadn't been believed by their GPs as having debilitating chronic fatigue and muscle pains now known as ME. Back in the 1980s it was called yuppie flu. The *Complete Cider Vinegar* book recognised 50 years ago how much diet influences our immune system and general health and even mentions reducing the consumption of processed food. It's disappointing that

those voices 50 years ago linking diet and the immune system weren't recognised.

I have rather strayed from the subject of cider vinegar prompted by the little book's clarity on what makes us sick. Cider vinegar I believe does give tangible health benefits

Some scientific experiments are proving this to be true. So returning to my chosen subject for this article on cider vinegar, just a few more points to say about it as I have digressed somewhat.

A slightly alkaline body pH is essential for good health and although apple cider vinegar contains acetic acid once it has been digested it turns alkaline and therefore reduces acid in the body. Finally as most of us at some point are plagued with arthritis and rheumatism, this is a

recommended procedure taken from the book to help alleviate arthritic symptoms of pain and stiffness. Molasses is added because of its great cleansing power.

1. On rising 2 teaspoons of cider vinegar in a tumbler of water
2. With each meal 2 teaspoons each of cider vinegar, molasses and 1 of honey sipped during the meal in a tumbler of water.
3. Vitamins A, C and E and selenium to aid the immune system.
4. A diet very low in sugar and refined flour.
5. A diet low in animal fat.

Be assured having taken cider vinegar as a remedy myself, the honey makes all the difference to the taste!

## Feel Good for Life

This month sees the launch of *'Feel Good for Life'* at Hereford Leisure Centre - a series of physical and social activities for people living with dementia, loneliness and depression.

The following sessions will run on Thursdays between 11.30am and 1.15pm:

30th November

14th December

11th January

18th January

The sessions will comprise 45 minutes of light physical activity (seated exercise and the option to use the Toning Suite, which will be closed for our exclusive use) followed by social/reminiscence activities such as arts, crafts, quizzes and games over lots of tea, coffee and biscuits. We are asking people to complete a registration form ahead of their first session and that can be found online at:

[haloleisure.org.uk/feelgoodforlife](http://haloleisure.org.uk/feelgoodforlife)

Sessions will be priced at just £2.50 and carers are invited to join in for free.

## What's happening at Little Marcle Church?



Since last year's update, some exciting things have been happening at All Angels, Little Marcle.

**Firstly**, we had a beautiful harvest festival service in October. The flowers and decorations were a sight to behold.

**Secondly**, the church has applied for Faculty Planning Permission to transform All Angels into a vibrant and inspirational community space for a wide range of activities.

The focus of All Angels project is to make our church into a space for everyone in our community but to be financially and operationally sustainable, we will need to attract some usage from beyond our local area as well.

To achieve this we have identified three ways in which this beautiful building will be used:-

- ❖ All Angels Community Hub – a multi-purpose space for a wide range of community led events
- ❖ All Angels Commercial Hire Venue – commercial hire to local clubs and societies and as a one stop venue for weddings, receptions and celebrations.
- ❖ All Angels Music & Arts Centre – an acoustically superb venue to host musical and arts events and show case musicians and artists.

The traditional role of the church will continue and be enhanced by a new Christian outreach program to introduce Christianity to non church goers.

**Thirdly**, we will be starting our fundraising campaign in earnest from 2024. The good news is that we already have 25% of funds pledged or in place. We will need to get to 50% before grant funders will consider providing the rest. We will be running a community event in the Spring (by which time we expect to have the permissions in place) to display the wonderful facility and hope that as many of you will come along to see how we plan to create a much needed community space for our parishes. More details to follow....

**Last but not least**, here are some dates for your diary for December:

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December 11am** - Regular Holy Communion Service

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 6.30pm** - 7 Lessons and Carols with the Hereford Church Singers and the now famous sausage rolls

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 11am** - Christmas Eve Crib Service with **Bishop Richard** with mince pies, mulled apple juice and mulled wine

It's not often that our Bishop (yes, the same one who escorted Queen Camilla at the Coronation!) visits Little Marcle and so we are delighted to welcome him. Come along and say hello.

**Please feel free to contact me – [jimqlanville@btinternet.com](mailto:jimqlanville@btinternet.com) or 07800 714011**

# Wanted Project Manager

Project Manager required for Putley Church to lead and manage an innovative digital information system. Training in January and an hourly rate of payment are available for a few hours a week for no longer than six months. This would particularly suit a younger person with some IT skills but who would like to develop more.

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For our patients with access to the internet, you can order repeat prescriptions and submit admin queries via our web page.

Please also consider using the NHS App to order repeat medication, check your test results, and to book the following appointments *following a request from us to do so*: Blood tests, Asthma reviews, Smear tests, Flu, Shingles and Pneumonia jabs, Contraceptive Pill check.

### Flu jabs

We have vaccinated over 3,000 patients so far. If you still have not had your flu jab, please contact us to book one. The following groups are eligible for a flu vaccine:

- patients aged 65+
- those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023
- primary school aged children (from reception to year 6) – will be vaccinated at school, not at the Practice
- carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person

- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- frontline workers in a social care setting without an employer led occupational health scheme

### Covid jabs

We have 2 more clinics planned for November, and possibly a final clinic in early December. If you are eligible for the jab and have not yet had it, please contact us by the end of November to book an appointment.

### Patient Participation Group

We are pleased to announce that after a successful inaugural meeting, held on May 10th, the LHP PPG has been formed, but further volunteers are very welcome. If interested please contact: [Ledburyhealthpartnership.ppg@nhs.net](mailto:Ledburyhealthpartnership.ppg@nhs.net).

Notice of meetings will be advertised well in advance, so that all LHP patients who are interested have the opportunity to attend.

### Planning for the Christmas period

To avoid running out of medication we would like to remind all of our patients to remember to order their prescriptions by the 18th December if your medication is due in the week beginning 20th December, and by the 28th December for medication due at the beginning of January.

Christmas opening hours: Monday to Friday from 08.00 – 18.30. We are not open on Bank Holidays.

If you require medical help outside of these hours, please call 111.

For minor injuries, please call the Minor Injuries Unit in Market Street 01531 632488 Option 4. Please call before attending; their opening hours are 07.45 – 18.30. Please note that they do not have an x-ray machine so if you suspect that you might have a fracture, please attend A&E.

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# News from Putley WI



As usual, we have enjoyed some great evenings together this autumn with talks and activities designed to interest all.

Jay Courtney, our September speaker, describes herself as an "accidental author". Finding retirement difficult after a demanding career, she enrolled in a creative writing course. One assignment led her to the Faroe Islands, and her article "37 Names for Fog" won the annual travel writing prize in the Daily Telegraph. Inspired by her success, she embarked on "Juicy Crones", a celebration of post-menopausal women and their untapped potential. Each chapter focusses on a different woman, who has overcome personal challenges or realised a long-held dream. Her message was an encouragement to be bold, and do something new ourselves.

Our October meeting was open to all. Although the subject of the talk was top secret, about 70 members, their friends and families turned up. The talk was entitled 'Spies, Codes and Cyphers' and given by our local answer to James Bond, whom we can't name as he works at GCHQ! We heard about the history of this organisation, and how messages have been passed secretly from ancient times right up to the present day. He let us look at artefacts such as the dials from an Enigma machine, and the briefcase which was issued to

spy Geoffrey Prime by the KGB.

As the nights draw in, we will be aiming to raise our spirits, and maybe the roof, through a Singing for Fun evening in November, with no musical experience required.

In December, our thoughts turn to Christmas. This year, we will be making wreaths the environmentally friendly way, helped by our own talented florists. There will also be mulled wine, Christmas canapés and Christmas music, all at no extra cost to members! What's not to like?

Our 2024 programme begins with a talk on climate change, and what we can do about it, by the Herefordshire Federation's expert Christy Crouch.

They say that behind every great man there's a good woman. In February, we will be hearing from Wendy Hill about two such women in the life of Sir Edward Elgar, and their influence on his career. They are his wife Alice and his daughter Clarice.

There's so much to discover at Putley WI, and if you have never been you really should come and see for yourself. Apart from the evening meetings at Putley Parish Hall on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm, there are lots of extra activities available. The Garden Group recently visited Bourton House and Witley Court, and the Craft Group went to a Quilting show to pick up a few tips for their weekly meetings at the Trumpet Tea Rooms. If that's not enough, there a gathering at The Nest for coffee on Friday mornings. Just drop in from about 10.30 am and look for a big table full of happy conversation and laughter. Or simply ask the staff for the WI table when you order your drink at the counter. We'd love to see you!

Our President, Anne Phillips, will be delighted to hear from you'd like to visit or join our WI. Ring 015331 671176, or email [annephillips48@hotmail.com](mailto:annephillips48@hotmail.com).



## *Pixley and District Parish Council*

The Parish Council currently meets in Munsley WI Hall, bi-monthly on the last Monday of the month starting at 7.30pm. Because of the Christmas period our next meeting will be on Monday 11th December. If you have any concerns or comment about the Pixley & District Parish that you wish to raise then contact the Parish Clerk who can then place your item on the next agenda if it is within the council remit. Contact details can be found on the parish website.

One of the important functions the Council performs is to consider all planning applications relative to the parish. The major concern when considering planning applications is whether the application is in line with the relevant policies as laid down in the Pixley & District Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan. The council can either support the application, possibly with conditions, or object stating reasons why. All current planning applications can again be found on the Parish website.

The footpath officer for the parish, with support from parishioners, continues to monitor all the public right of ways within the parish, to ensure all paths have easy access and well signposted. If there are concerns about any footpath within the parish then please contact the Parish Council clerk.

The Council is still awaiting communication with Herefordshire Council Locality Officer to fix a date for a "Parish Walk". This "walk" will entail travelling around the Parish highlighting any road defects, hedges that need cutting or any other safety issue. If you have any concerns about our roads then please get in touch.

The Parish Council continues to keep a watch on the condition of the Ashperton

Railway Bridge and is in communication with Network Rail. The council is also seeking the assistance of Herefordshire Councillor Barry Durkin, who is the Highways Cabinet Member for the County Council.

The Parish Council is considering implementing a Community Emergency Plan. This plan would be led by the Parish Council, but involving members of the community and local organisations. **The Aim of the Community Emergency Plan** is to increase resilience within the local community before, during and after emergencies, and to link into the Local Authorities and emergency services' emergency response structures. This Plan documents how Pixley, Aylton, Little Marcle and Munsley Parishes would respond in an emergency situation e.g., while awaiting the assistance of statutory authorities/emergency services, or in support of them. **It is not the role of the community to take on the responsibilities of these agencies e.g., to save life, to take any risks to themselves or to cope for long hours without agencies' help and support.**

This is a simple document listing how and who will respond to an emergency in the Parishes and gives a point of contact for the parishioners outside the emergency services.

If you or your organisation are willing to help, please get in touch.

Finally, the council continue to oversee the service on the parish defibrillator, which is located at the Trumpet Garage. Parish Council website at [pixleyanddistrictpc.org.uk](http://pixleyanddistrictpc.org.uk)

Diane Baldwin Clerk Email: [clerk@pixleyanddistrict.org.uk](mailto:clerk@pixleyanddistrict.org.uk) Tel: 01684 311309

# In praise of Ledbury's Minor Injuries Unit

by David Murdoch

None of us gets up in the morning intending to have an accident, yet every day, people unintentionally hurt themselves whilst doing routine tasks.

Sustaining cuts when chopping vegetables, banging their head on low door frames, spraining ankles on slippery or uneven surfaces, not to mention the myriad of things that can go wrong when playing sports or doing DIY jobs at home.

Whilst some injuries can be easily self-treated with a sticking plaster, others would really benefit from being seen quickly by a specialist nurse who is qualified to assess, advise and treat a minor injury.

Living close to Ledbury we are really fortunate to have a dedicated Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) on our doorstep, yet many people I speak to are unaware of its existence.

Ledbury's MIU operates from 7.45 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. 7 days a week, 365 days a year, including Christmas Day. It's located within the building directly opposite Ledbury's Market Theatre, also known as the Ledbury Community Health and Care Centre. Their postcode is HR8 2AQ.

It's always best to 'phone ahead on 01531 632488 to ask if your injury is something the MIU nurse can help you with. You will then be given an appointment time, often within the next hour or two. The MIU can help you on the day of your injury, or at any

time within the first 7 days since the incident occurred.

Please note, that although it's just up the hill from Ledbury's GP surgeries, the MIU operates completely independently and you don't need a referral from Ledbury Health Partnership to attend.

So if you do have the misfortune to hurt yourself, please don't be shy of asking Ledbury's MIU for help, and don't forget to spread the word, so that this excellent facility doesn't remain such a well kept secret!

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## Putley WI - A warm welcome awaits

If you are looking for fun, friendship and inspiration, join Putley WI! We meet at Putley Parish Hall at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month. If you need more information just give Anne a call.

**Anne Phillips** on: **01531 671176** or email: **annephillips48@hotmail.com**

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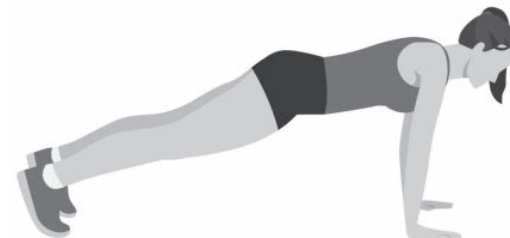
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## High blood pressure? Is it time to review the NHS Physical Activity guidelines?

by Sally Smart



The NHS guidelines for Adults (aged 19 – 64 years) should aim to:

- Do strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) on at least 2 days a week
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week
- Spread exercise evenly over 4 to 5 days a week, or every day
- Reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity

You may be familiar with the above. However, recent clinical trials suggest that static isometric exercises can help reduce high blood pressure, so perhaps these guidelines need revising.

A static isometric exercise involves holding the body in a position with no muscle or joint movement. Examples would be; the plank, wall sit, calf raise, low squat, V sit, glute bridge, overhead hold. The muscles are contracted whilst holding the position. If you are new to these exercises it is important to keep good form, breathe throughout, actively concentrate on contracting the

muscles and don't overdo it. Check out how to do these exercises before including them in your physical activity routine and if you suffer from high blood pressure do check with your GP.

For most people merely the thought of doing a plank could raise blood pressure, so, how do isometric exercises help reduce blood pressure? It is thought that whilst holding the contracted muscle the blood flow is reduced so less blood goes to the muscle and less oxygen. When you relax the blood flows quickly and this is thought to be the trigger which improves blood flow regulation. This process does not happen during other forms of exercise.

If you find the idea of isometric exercise unattractive do not despair. The NHS guidelines for physical activity will also help improve and maintain blood pressure.

### The Putley Fitness Walk:

(Monday Dec 4th, Jan 1st, Feb 5th, Mar 4th)  
Meet at the Parish Hall to set off at 10am followed by refreshments. We walk between 2.5 and 3 miles. All for £1! We also do 4 walks in the year which are a bit longer (6 to 8m)  
For further information ring Sally on 07468 793405



# The Changing Nature of Nature

by Kate Wollen

I have worked in the forestry industry for many years now and have seen many changes both in the way things are done in the industry and in the wildlife that uses the woodlands.

Autumn certainly comes later these days. We used to consider it 'safe' to start our programmes of winter work in late September. That is 'safe' in that we would not be disturbing the wildlife greatly as the woodland animals had all completed their breeding and that the summers wild plants had died back, and the associated insects were all sheltering or hibernating ready for winter.

These days the leaves hold on the trees for so much longer, some woodland flowers are still flowering even into early November and insects are still flying and feeding on these plants. Woodland animals such as the rare dormouse now hibernate later, and even regularly have litters of young in late September and early October, taking advantage of the mild autumns. It could be considered a good thing to have extended breeding seasons for some species, but this is not

always so. Having a litter of tiny dormice so late in the season does not give them long to grow and fatten up to survive the winter ahead. Although mild, our Autumns are often wet – this can be deadly to these late breeding animals. Migrant birds and insects that once found our British weather too cold to survive overwinter, are now able to stay and enjoy our mild winters. We now see red admiral butterflies on sunny, warm days through the winter. Only 10 years ago or so this did not happen, with any butterflies left here succumbing to the cold. Although it sometimes does not feel like it, spring is arriving earlier than in the past. There are many studies into this and is known as phenology. We see this in practice annually. In the daffodil woods of the nearby "Golden Triangle" of Dymock, Kempley and Newent, wild daffodils are putting their leaves up in sheltered areas even before Christmas. Insects often start emerging and breeding earlier than in the past and this causes a mis match with their prey. For example, the woodland bird, Pied Flycatcher, arrives here from Africa at roughly the same time each spring. By the time they arrive, the caterpillars associated with the oak trees that they rely on, have already pupated and so there is insufficient food for the birds to successfully feed on

and raise a brood of chicks.

Whilst it is nice to have milder winters and to see a butterfly flying in January, this changing nature of nature certainly is upsetting the balance of our wildlife.

It is also impacting on how we manage the woods. We now have to complete our winter work in more sensitive wildlife areas in a shorter time, starting generally not before November and completing it by the end of February. In parts of the daffodil woods, we stop work in January.

In our local parishes, we also all need to think about how we manage our land. From previous surveys and observations, we know that dormice live in many of our parish hedgerows. If dormice are breeding in these hedges into October, if we cut hedges before November we run the real risk of damaging the nests and even killing

the young dormice.

Ivy is often a component of hedges, and ivy flowers well into the autumn. This is an important nectar source for all of the late flying insects, so again leaving hedge cutting as long as possible will help to feed our later flying butterflies and hoverflies. Tidying our gardens early autumn often results in the removal of important nectar sources, so try to leave your tidying up as long as possible and leave some areas untouched for insects that are overwintering.

To help nature adapt to our changing climate, we need to adapt our behaviour.

If we all do just one (or ideally more) thing to help wildlife, we can make a positive contribution to the survival of our native flora and fauna.



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# PUTLEY CHURCH

by Sue Ashe



As winter settles into its darker nights and colder days, we look back on the summer and autumn events at the church.

A churchyard service took place in mid-September, when nearly thirty people from Putley and beyond met in the churchyard to remember their loved ones and family who are buried or interred there. After a simple, moving service, the attendees from near and far enjoyed time with new friends and those from years ago as they chatted and reminisced over tea and cake.

The Harvest Festival also took place in September and, as last year, gifts of food and money were collected for Ledbury Foodbank. Thanks to everyone for your donations.

An activity service for children and their families in October saw children and adults exploring the features of the inside of the church, answering a quiz with prizes!!! Stories in the windows and furniture gave rise to learning about the history of the church and the gospel within it. A good time was had by all.

On Sunday evening from 6-7 pm in alternate months we have had a reflection hour in Church for quietness and rest whilst music plays and some poems or thoughts are shared. We have changed the date of these for the next few months. The new dates are on the second Sunday of the months as below:

December 10th, January 14th, March 10th, May 12th.

During the summer, Putley church applied for a lottery grant to allow us to give opportunity for a more updated way for visitors to the church to find out about its history. Many individuals, as well as Putley

Parish Council, supported the effort and we have now heard that we have been awarded the money. This will be used to purchase a system called Info-point which allows visitors to use their phones to scan barcodes situated at various locations in and outside the church. They will then be able to listen to recordings of local people talk about their memories of the church and its specialness to them. It is an exciting project and we are eager to involve as many local people as possible.

We are looking for a project manager to oversee the whole enterprise. If you are interested, let us know and we can explain the work needed and the skill set which would be useful. Please also get in touch if you could offer a memory, e.g. the day you were married in the church or when your children were baptised. You may have been to Sunday school or remember going to harvest festivals or suppers, or Christmas or Easter services. You may have a memory of a parent, grandparent or friend who is no longer with us but who cut the grass, or was on the PCC or made kneelers or embroidered vestments. You may have done some of these yourself. Please let us know if you could help make history come alive for the current generation and those of the future. Please contact Sue.ashe@hotmail.com 07759 546487 or tim.beaumont@btinternet.com 07976 573635.

The annual Putley Parish Church Meeting will be at Putley Parish Hall on 17th March at midday. All will be welcome.

Christmas services at the Church are:

9 lessons & Carols: 23rd December at 4pm

Crib service: 24th at 3.30pm

Christmas Day Communion at 10am

Happy Christmas everyone.



I recently had the pleasure of spending a hour with a class of children, their teacher and teaching assistant from Much Marcle Primary School.

They came to visit St Bartholomew's Church to find out about services for different christian events, and how churches support making a world that Jesus wanted. The children were delightful, and had a myriad of questions and thoughts to offer during the afternoon!.

Although the children are familiar with the church from their regular whole school attendances at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' services, this visit was different. Yes, they filed in and sat down in the pews, but thereafter it was informal, simply an opportunity for 'one to one' time. To take in those first impressions of a building on such a scale, and think about why it was there. To imagine the occasions that people would gather in church for. They were amazed at the large bible read aloud at services, so that everyone can hear the word of God. Also by the organ, which could play music for all to sing along together with. I highlighted too the altar, where we bless and share bread and wine together to remember Jesus.

After a while they then went on their own journeys of discovery in pairs around the church, and enjoyed their explorations. Some soon found the font, and knew you could be christened/baptised there, to be a follower of Jesus. Others marvelled at the impressive west doors where brides and grooms leave together after making their promises in marriage before God. Another spoke of knowing it was the place where a family funeral was held. I showed them too the war memorial plaques, where the community remembers the sacrifice of those who died in two world wars. Before they returned to

school, we went out into the churchyard to see the distinctive style of a Commonwealth war grave. They quickly spotted several others in the churchyard. I hope they all went away that afternoon knowing that Churches are places where we both 'remember' and 'celebrate' our lives in the community with God, and that through Jesus, God's son, everyone is welcomed into the 'house of God' with love.

I so enjoyed that class visit to one of the cider churches. Not every church is on a huge scale, nor needs to be. But each and every church stands as a silent witness to the presence of God in our communities and the people of faith who continue to welcome everyone into God's house in Jesus name. Each pointing beyond themselves, to that greater and eternal truth, that God seeks us out in love, travels with us on our life's journey, and waits to welcome us home at our journey's end.

As we enter into these winter months of December, January and February, may we be inspired to look again as with the eyes of a child, as the Christmas story unfolds before us, and to discover afresh the companionship of God on our journey. Jesus, born 2000 years ago into our world with its joys and sorrows, and who inspires love. A warm welcome awaits you in all the cider churches as we go on that journey of exploration together into the church's seasons of advent (waiting in hope), Christmas (rejoicing in faith) and Epiphany (revealing in love).

P.S. Do come and meet our Bishop, Rt Rev'd Richard Jackson, who will be celebrating on TWO occasions with us during this very special time of year.

On Christmas Eve for Christmas Communion at Little Marcle at 11am

On January 14th 2024 for an Epiphany Carol Service at PIXLEY at 3pm

Best wishes *Val*

Rev. Val Tait - email: [valtait@live.co.uk](mailto:valtait@live.co.uk) Tel: 01531 634035



# PUTLEY

## PARISH COUNCIL

It is with regret that we have to announce that our lovely Parish Clerk, Chrissie Daniels, is stepping down from her role with the Parish Council.

She has supported us over many years and we are sad to see her go. We will miss her ebullience and her support greatly. We therefore want to take this opportunity of thanking her publicly for all the years of support and service she has given us. Privately, we also look forward to sharing a few drinks with her to wish her well as she enjoys her well-earned rest. This means that we are now looking for a new Parish Clerk, so if you know of anyone who might

be interested; do please point them in our direction.

On other matters, you should be noticing soon some new planting of fruit hedging at the back of the play area at Putley Green - this is thanks in the main to Sally Webster who secured the plants for this area.

The Parish Council is also currently considering what can be done to mitigate the risk of flooding for the houses at Putley Green.

Finally, it just remains for us to thank you all and wish you a very enjoyable winter season, a joyful Christmas and a peaceful and Happy New Year!



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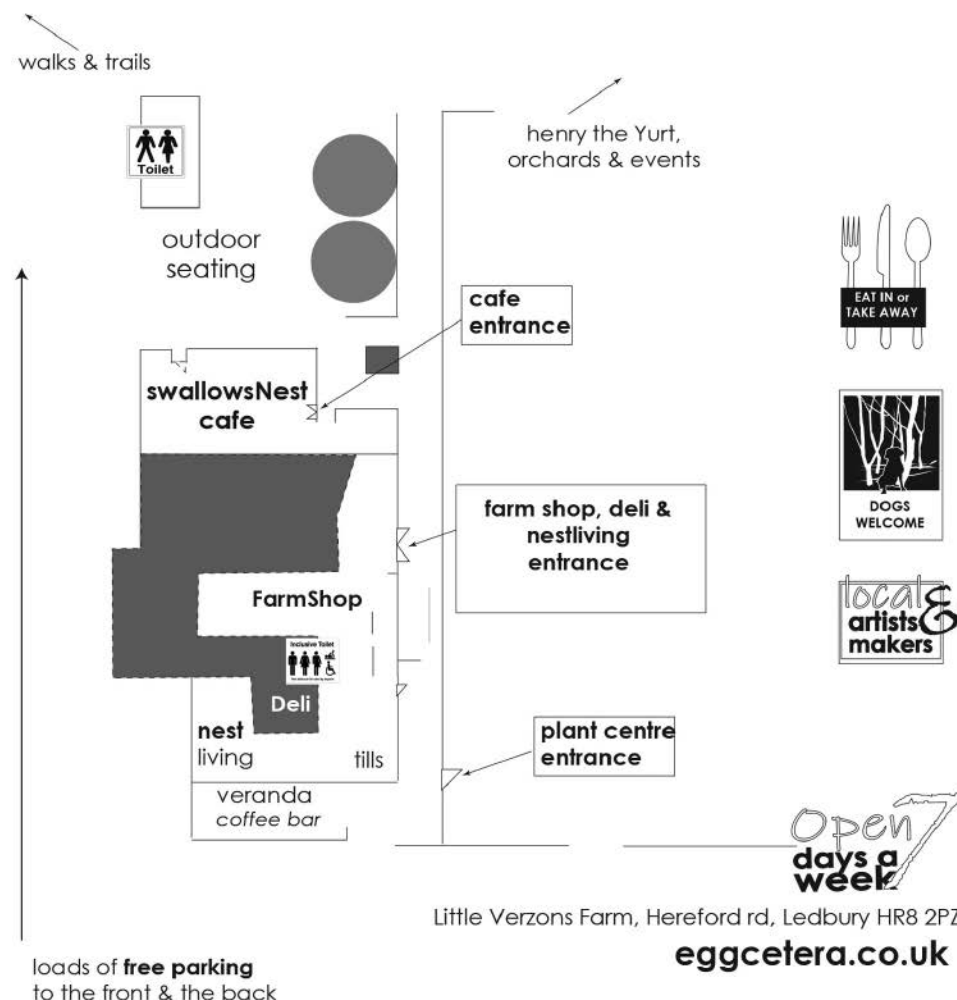
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## Wildlife Group

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Munsley David Murdoch - david@dunmurdie.plus.com 07518 921300

Pixley Lesley Clothier - lesley.clothier@yahoo.co.uk 07957 435276

## CONTACTS

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Putley Parish Hall

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# Festive CAROLS

*Around the villages*  
Wednesday 20th December

Few things are more evocative of Christmas than carol singing and this year there are even more opportunities to join in. Being outside in the fresh shire air, taking gentle exercise, stretching your vocal chords regardless of your singing ability, communing with others, enjoying

some refreshments as well as raising funds for Ledbury Food Bank would seem to be the perfect way to enjoy a traditional low carbon activity.

You can join us anywhere along the route, but the plan is:

Meet at Dragon House, Putley, at 6.15pm

We aim to travel on foot as in days of Yore, but if any one has mobility issues other more contemporary forms of transportation will be available.

6.30pm - Aylton Green

8.00pm - Putley Court

7.00pm - Aylton Court

8.30pm - Putley Common

7.30pm - Putley Green

Thursday 21st December 6.30pm

*Winter Solstice*

This is the day that the sun is at its lowest, the longest night and so the shortest day. Come and ensure that it starts to get

lighter earlier once again by joining in with Community Carols around the Pond between Lower Court and Putley Church.

Friday 22nd December

This will be the pre Christmas Prancing Pony pop up pub at Putley Parish Hall so do come along and make it a proper party. There will be a short interlude for lusty carol singing for well oiled voices with

perhaps a few festive pieces from our very own local thespians, so, if you have a favourite party piece, then this might be the time to dust it off and have a practice.

Norman Stanier at normanstanier@icloud.com or on Trumpet 01531 670263.





# CHURCH SERVICES

	Aylton	Little Marcle	Much Marcle	Munsley	Putley	Wellington Heath	Yatton
3rd Dec	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
10th Dec		11.00am	4.30pm Christingle	4.00pm Advent & Christmas	11am 6pm	9.30am	
15th Dec		6.30pm 7 Lessons & Carols					
17th Dec	5.00pm Carol Service		9.30am 4.30pm Carols, Candles & Cider		11.00am Putley Parish Hall	9.30am Carol Service	
23rd Dec					4.00pm 9 Lessons & Carols		
24th Dec		11.00am with Bishop Richard			3.30pm Crib Service	9.30am	6.30pm Carols by Candlelight
25th Dec			9.30am Christmas Communion	9.30am Christmas Communion	10.00am Christmas Communion	9.30am Christmas Communion	
31st Dec			10.30am Desert Island Carols				
7th Jan	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
14th Jan	3pm Pixley with Bishop Richard	11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11am & 6pm	9.30am	
21st Jan	11.00am		9.30am		11.00am Putley Parish Hall	9.30am	
28th Jan			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
4th Feb	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
11th Feb		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
14th Feb Ash Wednesday						7.30pm	10.00am
18th Feb	11.00am		9.30am		11.00am Putley Parish Hall	9.30am	
25th Feb			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	

## CHURCHWARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

**Aylton** – Anne Blandford: 01531 670274  
Selina Marcon: 01531 670900

**Little Marcle** – Jim Glanville: 01531 670125

**Much Marcle** – Richard Brooks: 01531 660241  
John Chapman: 01531 660664

**Munsley** – Mike Robinson: 01531 670356  
Linda Warner: 01531 632344

**Pixley** – Anna Ralph: 07980 680809

**Putley** – Elaine Spalding: 01531 670554  
Gail Gwenlan 07591 373715

**Wellington Heath** – Derek Barnes: 01531 248472  
Amanda Wright: 01531 633325

**Yatton** – John Reed: 01989 780439  
Chris Oulton: 07582 807361

Please get in touch Rev'd Val Tait Rector 01531 634035 / Email [valtait@live.co.uk](mailto:valtait@live.co.uk)

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