

Working Together for a Better Community

# NEROCHE VILLAGES Newsletter

For the parishes of Staple Fitzpaine, Bickenhall, Curland  
and Orchard Portman with Thurlbear

Issue 35 - Spring 2020



Welcome to the Neroche Villages' Newsletter, a quarterly publication delivered free to every household in Neroche Parish, helping the community to stay connected and up-to-date on local issues.





## **There's only One Somerset**

***By John Thorne***

DESPITE the photograph, there is only one of me. I was just looking for a novel way to introduce the fact there is only one topic which is going to dominate local politics for the next year or more. Yes, I might sound like a television advertisement for a certain cashback company, although one tries to make one's point in a way that engages the reader.

The one subject is the debate which has begun on One Somerset proposals. One Somerset is what it sounds, one local authority for the whole of Somerset replacing the existing county and four district councils. Discussions about the future of local government in Somerset have been ongoing for two years and all the councils have been involved. Consultants hired to study the issue came up with options: Do nothing; all the councils working more closely together and sharing more services; two unitary councils on either side of the M5, or north and south, or even three unitaries; and a single unitary for the whole county. They also suggested there was exciting potential in doing something completely new, it was just they did not know what that would be!

Their favoured option, supported by the district councils who would otherwise be abolished, was for all of us to work closer together and share more services. All of the options except 'do nothing' were

projected to save large sums of money. My council leader prefers the single unitary council option, One Somerset, and so that is the one we now want to progress.

It should save up to £47 million a year, extra money which can go to frontline services, helping with schools, bus services, social care, mending potholes, and more. We are still right at the beginning of the process and it would require Government consent, and a demonstration of some public support if it was to happen.

My position as your county councillor is that I am a late and reluctant convert to One Somerset. I opposed the unitary idea when it was first proposed 12 years ago, and I opposed it when my leader resurrected it two years ago. However, the chief executives and leaders of all the different authorities have agreed that 'do nothing' is not an option and there has to be change. I know from being a Deane councillor at the time 12 years ago, that the idea of all the councils working closer together and sharing services was the compromise outcome of the previous unitary bid. It was named Pioneer Somerset and large savings were forecast. However, next to nothing resulted from it and Pioneer Somerset was quietly forgotten.

I was also around when the notorious South West One launched in a fanfare which trumpeted massive savings by sharing provision of services across a number of public bodies, including the county council – I was the only Deane councillor to speak and vote against SW1, and over time I have been proven 100 per cent right. I do not believe having two or three unitaries in Somerset is viable because they will be too small.

So, the only option left is to have a single unitary authority for the whole county, and so, my position has slowly shifted to support One Somerset.

Your parish council will need to closely follow what happens next, as I believe they will have to take on more responsibilities and will be expected to provide, and pay for, more services.

The consultants' report and more information is available on the bespoke website [www.onesomerset.gov.uk](http://www.onesomerset.gov.uk) if you want to read more about the issue.

## Neroche Hall Christmas Lunch

Another fine festive lunch was held at Neroche Hall on December 5<sup>th</sup> for local, and not so local, residents. It's the highlight of the year for those who co-ordinate the Thursday Lunch Club, and one which takes meticulous preparation.

Once again, over 70 people were catered for, dining on succulent turkey with all the trimmings, any number of Christmas puddings, and a gargantuan display of hot and cold puddings to choose from. All washed down with a glass of wine, or sherry, tea and coffee, along with cheese and biscuits, crackers and mints.

Chris Luck, from West Hatch, led the carol singing on his guitar, and we were all in fine voice throughout.

It takes a large number of willing volunteers to cater for a lunch of this scale – from the team who setup the Hall and the tables, to all the cooks who sweat over their contribution in their kitchens at home, the servers and clearers, and most certainly not to be forgotten, the team of 'washer uppers' who remain out of sight, although do a great job in getting through the mountain of plates, glasses, bowls and cups! By the time, we leave, the Hall is immaculate once more.

We are always so pleased that the guests enjoy their lunch, and keep coming back every year!



**ST PETER'S CHURCH,  
STAPLE FITZPAINE**  
**Shrove Tuesday Annual Pancake Party**



*Featuring  
St Peter's Pancake Tossing Competition!*

**Neroche Hall**

**6.45 for 7pm**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**Adults £10**

**Children (under 16) £5**

**2-course Supper, Raffle.**

**Ring Alison Brown for details and to book tickets**

**01823 480441 or email:**

**[aabrown.battens@gmail.com](mailto:aabrown.battens@gmail.com)**

**Please bring your own favourite tipple and glasses**

**In aid of St Peter's Church Funds**

# Staple Fitzpaine Carol Service

December 2019

Our carol service at St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine, was on December 18 that was the day of the worst rain – most of the roads from Taunton were flooded and rain gushed down through Badger Street and Winterwell like a river. Despite that around 90 people turned up for a lovely and inspiring service.

Lottie Michaels opened with a solo of the first verse of O Little Town of Bethlehem which has become an annual tradition – and gets better every year. The choir, under Julie Pope's leadership, performed Gaudete, How Far is it to Bethlehem and A Christmas Blessing. They also get better every year, reflecting the work that Julie and the choir put in, and the fact that there are more of them, especially men! We would always welcome new members though, so do contact Julie if you are interested.

The hand bell ringers were great, especially Mary's Boy Child, which was very popular.

The Young Farmers' input was fabulous. Thank you very much to Tom Pope for becoming Chairman of Somerset YF and bringing them to our church this year. Their acting was great, and the addition of an agronomist to the shepherds, to stay behind and mind the sheep whilst the shepherds went to Bethlehem, cleared up a long mystery about why the shepherds felt confident abandoning their sheep!

Stephen Jones led the service to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world. We are lucky indeed that he and Jill chose to come to our community and contribute to our churches at this time of interregnum.

The choir also pitched in with mince pies and other nibbles, mulled wine and mulled cider – providing and serving them after the service, and cleaning up afterwards.

Paul Hart and the bell ringers summoned us to church in fine form. Thanks to the Church Flower Guild, the church looked beautiful, all the decorations were amazing, set off by a lovely tree from Staple Farm.

Mark and Tom Pope swept and sanded the paths, transported chairs and cleared them, along with Graham Glasper, at the end of the service. Chris Dunn kindly let the choir and vicar park at the manor, and Anthony Brown made sure everyone was parked in the right place, getting thoroughly soaked in the process.

It was a special service this year, partly because of the terrible weather, although mainly because so many people played their part to make it all work so well. We live in a very special community, with a very special church.

## **Do you Run a Local Business?**

**You could help the running of your Neroche Newsletter  
by advertising with us.**

**For a small fee, we will place your business flyer or card in  
with each edition, which is then hand delivered to  
250 local houses and businesses.**

**If you are interested please drop us an email to chat about  
it: [nerochenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:nerochenewsletter@gmail.com)**

## **Pop-Up Café**

**St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine  
Every Friday, 10.30am to 12.30pm**

**Come along for a cuppa with biscuits and delicious  
home-made cakes.**



**Meet old friends and  
make new ones**

**For more information contact**

**Tricia Dryden  
[tricia@witchlodge.co.uk](mailto:tricia@witchlodge.co.uk)**

# Neroche Hall

## MURDER MYSTERY EVENING



Saturday 22nd February 2020  
@ 7.00pm for 7.30pm

### WHO KILLED THE Secret Agent?

Come and solve this dastardly crime.  
Tickets on sale now

£10.00 to include light supper

Book early to avoid disappointment  
Nicky 01823 480675 or Sheila 480758

### Neroche Thursday Lunch Club

Neroche Hall  
12.30pm for 1pm



March 5th, April 2nd & May 7th

Come along to Neroche Hall and enjoy a superb home-cooked lunch in wonderful company for just £6 per head (transport and special diets can be arranged). Meet old friends and make new acquaintances - ideal for both long term residents and those who have recently arrived in the community. A wonderful way to spend a weekday lunchtime.

Please phone or email by the Monday prior to the lunch to book for catering purposes. Contact Alison Brown 01823 480441 or [aabrown.battens@gmail.com](mailto:aabrown.battens@gmail.com)



## Come decorate our Christmas Tree St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine

In December, last year, we organised yet another wonderful morning of fun, music and laughter in the Church. This year's decorations appealed to the crafting instincts of grown-ups as well as the children. The church was again a hive of activity. We decorated wooden stars and fir cones with multi-coloured jewels, made rag swags for the tree and the pew ends, all with sparkly ringing bells on the ends.



The lovely large tree was supplied by Mark Pope and erected by Chris and Harry Dunn. We were entertained by members of the Badger Street band who soon had us all singing along, Tricia and Carole being the most energetic. Wyn Balance donated a beautifully dressed china doll for a free "guess her name" raffle. The doll was won by Molly Kelly, who guessed the name Grace. Grace will now be in her new home with Molly's great granddaughter.



Our star tree decoration maker this year was George, he made so many wonderful decorations.

The cafe was run by Carole Wensley-Dodd and Tricia Dryden, as usual the cakes were just fabulous, although a special mention must go to Carole's spectacular Christmas tree cake. Sorry Carole, but my favourites were the "gnomes in the snow" cup cakes, just yummy.



A big thank-you to everyone who came along to make decorations and joined in the fun and laughter, you all made the morning so enjoyable and such a success. A big thank you also to Peta and Felicity Trott, Pauline Phelps and Karen Morgan who ran the crafts. What with

keeping those grown-ups under control, especially in limiting the amount of jewels they wanted to use on their stars!!! A very big thank to Rebecca and the members of the Badger Street Band for the wonderful festive entertainment.

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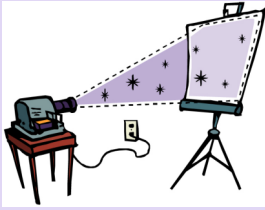
## St Peter's Church Flower Guild

The church has a small group of dedicated people who produce lovely pedestal displays each month, along with beautiful large displays for Christmas, Easter, Harvest Festival and weddings.

The Flower Guild has gone through a few changes as some members have left, although we have been lucky in gaining new ones. The members of the Guild, Alison Brown, Katherine Michaels, Karen Morgan, Candy Janes, Carole Wensley-Dodd and Tina Warren produced some stunning displays this year, complementing the Christmas tree decorated by children and adults of the parish.

Our Christmas display would not have been so successful without the many people who provide us with greenery, and help with its presentation, especially Diane Hood and Peta Trott. For many years, Di Grabham has been a major contributor and influence within the Guild, as she continues to be, passing on her valuable advice and support.





# FRIDAY FILM NIGHT – Neroche Hall

## Yesterday (12A)

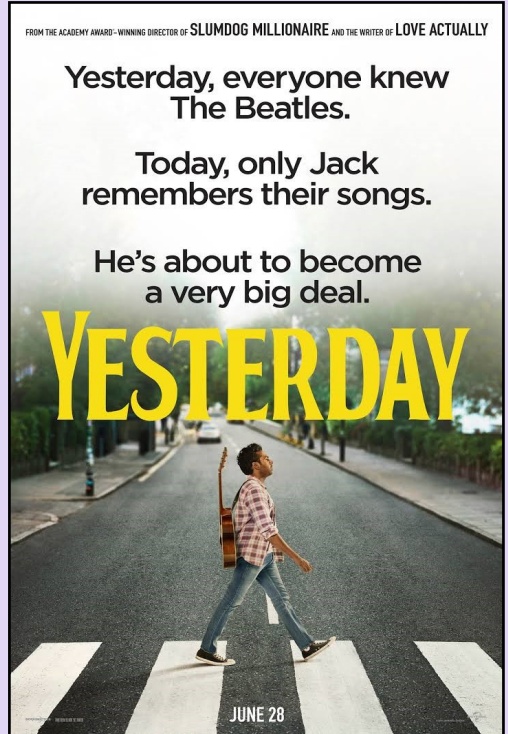
Friday 27th March @  
7.30pm

Jack Malik is a struggling singer-songwriter in a tiny English seaside town whose dreams of fame are rapidly fading, despite the fierce devotion and support of his best friend Ellie.

After a freak bus accident during a mysterious global blackout, Jack wakes up to discover that The Beatles have never existed.... and he finds himself with a very complicated problem, indeed.

Directed by Danny Boyle, and starring Himesh Patel and Lily James, this entertaining comedy features the music of The Beatles and a cameo role from Ed Sheeran

**Bar and snacks available - Tickets £6.00**  
**Contact Karen Learoyd 01823 480886**



## Farming Update

by *Mark Pope*

As I write this article the sun is streaming down on a cold frosty morning. It's nice to see the sun after months of rain. This last winter has been the wettest that I can remember. I hope that by the time you read this we will be into a warm pleasant spring.



*Trees in the yard*

Christmas trees are now getting a pruning to shape them up for the next season. I

have also ordered more to be planted, fingers crossed, by the end of February. Thanks to everyone who bought your trees from Staple Farm last year.



*Mark and Julie*

Due to the wet winter we did not manage to plant any Winter Wheat. This has caused us some problems as our crop rotation has had to be altered, and it will take us a few years to get back to where we wanted to be. The winter wheat seed cannot be planted after the end of January, this is because the seed needs a period of cold on it to grow into a crop of Wheat, known as vernalisation. Instead we will plant more spring barley this year and some more grass. Our aim will be to get the Spring barley planted by the first week of April. Spring crops like to be planted into a warm moist soil so they can hit the ground and grow vigorously. The crop should be ready to harvest by the middle of August. Due to the very wet winter across the country, just over half the winter wheat that should have been, was planted. The problem we will have is a lot of spring barley will be planted, making finding a home for our barley more challenging.

The grass we will sell to local dairy farms, who will make silage or hay. Planting grass in our rotation helps us with difficult weeds like blackgrass, and also grass will put a lot of organic matter back into the soil.



*Open Day Staple Farm*

# News from RSPCA West Hatch

## By Bel Deering – Centre Manager

### Seal Update

In the last newsletter I mentioned that our theme for seal names this winter was local villages. Broadway was one of the early seals in and was released back to the wild on 3/1/2020 after a successful rehabilitation at the centre.

Bickenhall was released more recently on 5/2/2020, and at the time of writing, Horton and Curland are still in care in the centre.

Curland is making good progress to release, putting on weight and gaining fitness on an outside pool.

Horton, who came in with swollen glands in the neck, progressed well at first although is now back on treatment.



*Curland and pal*



*Horland*

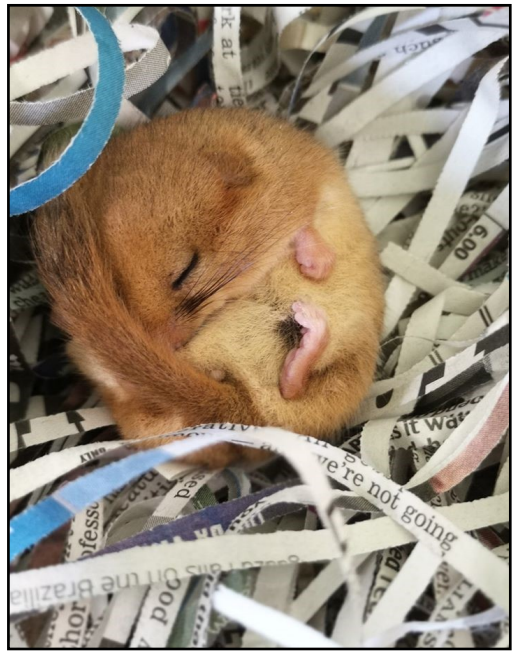


*Seal under GA*

Although these pups are usually admitted as orphans, many also have injuries to their flippers either from hitting rocks in storms or from bite wounds from other seals or dogs. Our vet often has to surgically remove damaged digits to prevent the seals living a life of discomfort. Seal anaesthesia is a skilled job involving intensive monitoring and assisted breathing to ensure the seals make it through surgery. Fortunately, the veterinary team at West Hatch have many years of experience working with this species and a great success rate in fixing problem digits.

## Dormouse

This little dormouse came into the centre on the 19th November after being rescued by North Devon Animal Ambulance. He had been caught by a cat and his check-up revealed an eye injury. He has now had treatment at the centre and is making a good recovery in our care. This photo shows what he mostly gets up to every day!



*Dormouse asleep*

## Bailey's blanket appeal



Bailey the Staffie has taken it upon himself to let everyone know that we are running very low on large, warm, fluffy blankets. As you can imagine, we go through them quickly during the winter months, so we would be extremely grateful for any donations of big comfy blankets to keep our kennel residents comfortable, warm and snug during their stay with us. As an aside, Bailey would also like to remind everyone that he is still looking for a loving home. Find out more about Bailey here: <https://bit.ly/37L246t>

**Doglaw** Sponsored by **Petplan**

What every responsible dog owner needs to know

Saturday 26th September 2020  
Taunton, Somerset

Presented by **Trevor Cooper Solicitor**  
"The Legal Beagle"

This seminar is a wide-ranging mix of legal issues that are important to dog owners, including responsibilities when buying and selling dogs, liability (both civil and criminal) for dogs that harm people and animals and much more.

Topics are likely to include:-

- Stray Dogs
- Microchipping and Collar & Tag
- Dangerous dogs (including dogs that are dangerous to people) and other animals
- Breed Specific Legislation
- Public Spaces Protection Orders
- Community Protection Notices
- Nuisance
- Duty of care and cruelty under the Animal Welfare Act
- Buying and selling dogs
- Ownership of dogs
- Civil liability for the actions of your dog
- Licensing Regulations in England

The seminar is expected to last up to 4 hours. Content is liable to change.

ONLY £20 Per person

Book your place online at [www.DoglawSOS.co.uk](http://www.DoglawSOS.co.uk) or call on 0800 999 3647

New seminar dates are frequently added, and if there isn't a venue near you, ask about hosting a seminar yourself!

## Dog Law Seminar 26th September 2020

Trevor Cooper is holding a Dog Law seminar at West Hatch on Saturday 26th September. Tickets are just £20 per person and the seminar starts at 10.30am.

Please visit <https://bit.ly/2RuHaD0> to buy tickets.

## Meet Hayley Peart – Community Engagement Manager

**The staff at West Hatch would like you to join us in welcoming Hayley Peart to the team. Hayley says,**

“Having recently joined RSPCA West Hatch as their brand new “Community Engagement Manager” I am tasked with developing local partnerships in order to implement a prevention and education programme that not only enhances people’s knowledge of animal welfare, but one which also addresses the needs of young people and their families locally. I moved to Somerset for this job role, having lived and worked in a variety of locations across the UK.

Over the past 10 years I have enjoyed a number of roles that have always had a focus on animals, nature and supporting young people and families in a variety of settings from formal education, youth charities and animal conservation organisations.

Like those already working at RSPCA West Hatch I too share a passion for teaching children and families, empathy and respect for animals in order to prevent cruelty and neglect. I remain confident that through the delivery of inspiring, interactive, innovative and insightful activities the RSPCA and I will be able to generate greater respect and care for animals and the natural world.

We believe teaching animal welfare can ensure children and young people develop key life skills, including compassion and empathy, as

well as respect for animals and a basic understanding of how to care for them. The RSPCA also believes animal welfare could make a significant contribution to young people's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The RSPCA's Generation Kind initiative comprises of nine projects. Below are those which I will be co-ordinating the delivery of free of charge from RSPCA West Hatch

- **Compassionate Class:** This is an education project aimed at 7-11 year olds, featuring online videos and interactive content, to inspire compassion for animals through learning about their needs.
- **Wild Things:** Aimed at school children in deprived areas, young people who have been (or at risk of becoming) excluded from school, those out of employment or training, or from troubled families, Wild Things gives them an opportunity to engage with and understand animals and develop compassion and empathy for them.
- **Looked After Children:** Our animal action days are aimed at children in care, to help them develop positive relationships with animals. The project teaches compassion and empathy.
- **Volunteer Speakers:** Our volunteer and inspectorate speakers go into schools, youth groups and clubs to teach children about the five welfare needs of animals and promote a better understanding of animals. We want to expand this to 150 speakers across the country.

If you are interested in volunteering some of your time to support some of these activities please do get in touch to find out more. With your help we can increase our reach and ensure a greater number of children and families understand animal welfare.”

Interested in volunteering? Pop me an email to discuss further:  
[hayley.peart@rspca.org.uk](mailto:hayley.peart@rspca.org.uk)

For more information and to keep up to date just follow us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/RSPCAWestHatchAnimalCentre/>

Finally, we are always happy to offer talks to local groups. If you would like to find out more please email me on: [Bel.deering@rspca.org.uk](mailto:Bel.deering@rspca.org.uk)





## **Neroche Hall Fish 'n' Chip Quiz Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March**

Maximum of 6 per team - £3 per person entry  
(Food extra)

BYO beer / wine and a glass!

**Doors open 7pm for prompt start  
7.30pm**

Advance booking essential on  
01823 480286

Email  
[r.davies507@btinternet.com](mailto:r.davies507@btinternet.com)



## Forestry England Update

*By Robert Greenhalgh,  
Community Ranger*



The cold winter months are finally settling in, and as I write we've had our first splattering of snow on the Blackdowns this morning. Smokey Bottom Lodge has a glisten of white and as the mild, wet weather gives way to some chilly temperatures (hopefully!) we'll soon be reflecting on how stunning this landscape is when masked in the quiet of winters grasp.

The centenary celebrations went well – we had a good turnout despite some rough weather, and the issues we had surrounding purdah restrictions during the unusual pre-Christmas election campaign. 35 attendees ranging from the AONB, local residents, volunteers, charitable partners and organisations, as well as our distinguished guest (former employee Peter Darch who worked these hills some 50 years ago!) helped us to celebrate this iconic time in our history. Everyone in attendance was invited to be a part of the tree planting and shovel some soil in to the hole, and help bed in our wild service tree. The ceremony was opened by an informative and impassioned speech about our organisation by Forester Jon Burgess and rounded off by an excellent recital, by Craftsman Dan Nicholson, of Carol Ann-Duffy's poem 'Forest', a piece commissioned from the former laureate by the Forestry Commission for our centenary year.

Looking forward, you may have noticed a large fence line has been installed at the northern tip of Neroche forest running along the road to Staple Fitzpaine. This fence is a precaution against grazing wildlife – it helps to protect the young trees we have replanted against browsing and grazing. The fence will be in place until the trees are established – usually for a minimum of 5 years. Inside the fence line we're hoping to create a mixed woodland structure consisting of 70% conifer 30% broadleaf. Trees such as oak, beech, maple and chestnut that have naturally regenerated inside the fence line will also be nurtured to grow alongside the planted Japanese red-cedar. This will encourage a more diverse and healthy woodland – minus the browsing deer and rabbit damage hopefully!

The year ahead brings more exciting activities and events. Following on from October's event alongside Neroche Woodlanders to 'put the dragon to bed', we'll be reawakening the dragon in Spring with a similar event, only building on last year's success. On the final weekend of the Easter holidays we'll be working alongside the Blackdown Hills AONB, Neroche Woodlanders and Newhaven Coppice to provide a fun and free, historically packed event day at Castle Neroche. We want to promote the history and heritage of this site and bring to life some of the traditions and folklore attached to the site. Spanning the vast majority of our human history, Castle Neroche is one of those sites that can claim to have some very real, and very mystical, associations from our history and the foundations of the surrounding communities and landscape. We hope to have a series of activities aimed at promoting the lifestyles and culture of those that lived in the landscape in those early periods of tales and folklore, as well as blend some of how we manage the woodland today in order to keep that heritage alive. Please look out for confirmed dates and times, and join us in celebration and ceremony.

We've been hit fairly hard with the post-Christmas fly tip brigade! The Hills were littered with dump spots on our return from the festive break. Two separate incidents at Priors Park, one at Staple Hill, one at Castle Neroche and two further cases at Sturms Hill near Thurlbear. It's always a real issue although the most frustrating part is we spend so much money as a national organisation on fly tip removal. Each instance costs between £50-£1000 depending on the size and contents of the waste. When you consider this is tax-payers money that is clearing the waste away, although it is tax-payers themselves dumping it in the first place, it presents a bizarre paradox of events. We always try to mitigate against this criminal activity although it's a difficult situation. Please do report anything suspicious anywhere on the Hills to your local police team on 101.

We will once again be conducting adder and nightjar surveys alongside our partners on the hills so if you're interested in joining us and learning about some of the beautiful wildlife in this part of the world please look out for our survey opportunities in the coming months, either on our Facebook page @EastDevonBlackdownsRanger or on the Blackdown Hills AONB page.



**Friday March 20<sup>th</sup> “An Evening of Song”**

**St. Peter’s Church, Staple Fitzpaine**

**7:30pm (Doors open from 7pm)**

**Featuring: Lottie Michaels and the  
St. Peter’s Singers**

**FREE ENTRY- DONATIONS ONLY**

**All donations to Blind Veterans UK-  
Lottie’s Marathon fundraising campaign!**

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/CharlotteMichaels>

**Bar and Raffle**

# Neroche Local History Group: 1950s Minutiae

*By Jane Hole*

We were recently at a 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for a family member and I was tasked with making a 1950s trivia quiz. A modified version with a rather random selection of information follows:

- At the start of WW2 the UK was importing about three quarters of its cheese, sugar, fruit, cereals, fats and about half of its meat. One of the principal strategies of the Germans in the Battle of the Atlantic was to attack shipping bound for Britain, restricting industry and potentially starving the nation into submission.

The Ministry of Food instituted a system of rationing to deal with food shortages. To buy most rationed items each person registered at chosen shops. The shopkeeper was provided with enough food for registered customers. Purchasers had to present their ration book and coupon(s) when shopping.

Rationing continued well into the 1950s. The petrol ration for each car was between four and ten gallons of standard petrol per month depending on individual needs. Petrol rationing ended in May 1950. The weekly ration for bacon and ham was 4oz and other meats to the value of 1s 2p (equivalent to two pork chops), it was the last rationing to be lifted in July 1954.



*1950s petrol pump*



*Bill Haley and His Comets*

- The British singles record chart was established in 1952 when *New Musical Express (NME)* was first published. The biggest-selling single of this period was "Rock Around the Clock" by Bill Haley & His Comets, which became the first single ever to sell more than a million copies in the UK in 1955. The NME became an online-only publication in March 2018.
- The Light Programme on BBC radio began broadcasting 'Listen With Mother' on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1950. It started at 1.45pm, lasted 15 minutes and always began with the now famous catchphrase "Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin."

The world's longest running soap opera *The Archers* was first heard nationally on the Light Programme on 1 January 1951.

Blue Peter started in 1958 with Leila Williams as one of the first presenters.

- J Sainsbury's opened their first self-service branch in Croydon in 1950.
- There were four Prime Ministers in the decade 1950 to 1960; Clement Atlee, Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden and Harold Macmillan.
- A 1950s Hoover washing machine complete with mangle costing about £42 (including tax) would have equivalent purchasing power to about £1,448 today (CPI inflation calculator).

## HOOVER WASHES CLEANER

**W**HEN you buy your electric washing machine, do make sure it's a "Hoover". It has an exceptionally gentle action, yet definitely washes cleaner. It does the full weekly wash for a large family in an astonishingly short time — yet will stand under the average draining board. And you'll be delighted with the wringer, cleverly sprung to take even large bulky articles. Demand is heavy, so see your Hoover Dealer now. Remember, it's made by Hoover, makers of the world's best cleaner.



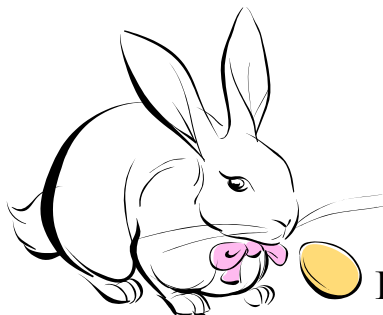


**WHY THE "HOOVER" WASHES CLEANER**

The Hoover Electric Washing Machine works quite differently from any other make. The "pulsator" is set in the side of the tub and swirls the soapy water through the fabric without churning the clothes. That is why, though very gentle, the "Hoover" washes everything so much cleaner.

**£30** (plus £12.7.0 tax) H.P. terms can be arranged, of course.

# **EASTER FAMILY BINGO**



**Chocolates**

**Easter Eggs**

**Prizes galore!**

**FRIDAY 3rd April 2020**

**6.30 pm FOR EYES DOWN 7 pm**

**at**

**Neroche Hall, Bickenhall**

**RAFFLE**



**Bar and snacks available**

## NEWS FROM NEROCHE HALL

*By Richard Davies, Chairman*

You may have noticed upon receiving this latest copy of the Neroche Villages Newsletter, that it is in fact edition number 35. This led me to thinking about all the previous articles I have written about Neroche Hall, and to some extent the repetitive nature and cycle of our annual events. Many of you will be familiar with our regular events, that are frequently repeated each year, and so the committee are always looking to try and ring the changes to bring you different functions.

At the start of each year therefore we try to plan how we can structure the next twelve months to provide a variety of interesting attractions and this year is no different. On that note I will give a brief outline of our schedule for 2020.

You will recall that I have reported on the falling numbers for our monthly film nights and that in future we would need to select films more carefully to try to ensure that there is a wider appeal to our audiences. Our first film this year was 'Downton Abbey' which has been popularised over several television series, and this did prove to be a crowd puller. It is always satisfying to see the hall full of people rather than rows of empty seats! The next film screening will be 'Yesterday' to be shown on Friday 27 March, and full details together with a link to the film's trailer, can be found on the forthcoming events page on the hall's website.

We have also committed to another Murder Mystery Evening with the intriguing title of 'Who Killed the Secret Agent' which will be performed on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. You are invited to pit your detecting skills against other teams for a chance to win our Murder Mystery Trophy. Advance booking is required as a light supper is included in the ticket price.

Our regular Fish and Chips Quiz Night is another popular event and is being held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. This again requires advanced booking to ensure your team has a table. Tables are already going well and to avoid disappointment I recommend you contact me sooner rather than





later. As with all events, full details as to how you book, plus cost etc are on our website.

Something the hall has not had for many years will make its comeback on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April when we shall be holding an Easter Bingo Evening with Easter themed prizes.

During May or June (the date has yet to be confirmed) it is proposed to have a musical evening with a local entertainer, Jay Quick, who has a wide repertoire of various genres of popular music. Once we have firmed up the date, we will of course circulate details via the usual channels.

The committee are also hoping to hold another Boules Tournament on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August (Bank Holiday weekend), as this has always been a popular way to spend a summer's afternoon. It is also something which all the family can enjoy and partake in be they young or old. Anyone willing to help on the day should contact any committee member.

We would also anticipate that in early October our Fish and Chip Quiz will take place and that later in the same month or early November will see the return of the very popular Craft Fayre, and we will be fixing those dates over the coming couple of months.

As you can see, we do have a good variety of entertainment planned throughout the year, and I hope that we can rely upon your support for at least some if not all of them. It is very important to support your local hall to ensure its continued upkeep and valuable community contribution. Should you wish to be involved in any of our activities, then you are most welcome to come and talk to us as many of you have transferrable skills which are always useful towards making our community a vibrant and successful place to live, work and play.

Finally, as always, remember that additional information about Neroche Hall, whether you wish to book it for a function or attend an event, can always be found on our website:

[www.nerochehall.org.uk](http://www.nerochehall.org.uk)

## Update from Thurlbear School

By Jo Moore

I know Christmas is on its way when glitter and tinsel starts appearing on the carpets at the beginning of November, and then the term becomes one big juggling act! The Christmas Fair, Nativity Plays, Carol and Christingle Services, and of course a visit by that very important person, Santa. Despite all the festivities, lessons continue as normal.



As part of their literacy lesson, Hazel Class read *The BFG*, a children's book written by Roald Dahl, and illustrated by Quentin Blake. In the book, the BFG collects dreams, which he then blows into the ears of sleeping children with his dream blower. As part of their learning experience, the children made their own dream jars.

*In year 3 we learned about the BFG. In the story the BFG collected dreams to put in jars on the BFG's shelves. For homework we got asked to make dream jars because of the BFG. Everyone made dream jar small sized and big sized. Most people had tiny fairy lights around their jars. Many people put their favourite things in the dream jars like unicorns, lego figures and a rubber football. When everyone had brought in their jar we all turned off the lights to see what they looked like it was amazing! In mine I put Harry Potter lego figures, a picture background and snow. We were all proud of our masterpiece! What an experience about dream jars!*  
By Emily Smith



*In Hazel Class we had read *The BFG*. In the story the BFG collected dreams, so in Hazel Class we've made dream jars. We had to put our dreams in our jar. I put in my jar some fake*

*snow and a snowman that glows in the dark. When everybody brang  
there dream jars in we turned the lights off.*

*By Rihards*



Thurlbear School would like to thank the Neroche Communication Action Group for its generous donation of £250 towards school funds. Coach travel is one of the schools most expensive costs, and because of our rural location the school has to transport our children to events. We will therefore be using the donation to help towards coach travel so that our pupils can attend the local sports festivals. Every class attends a sports festival over the academic year so every pupil will benefit.

'The Neroche Communication Action Group switched bank accounts during 2019 and received a welcome gift of £750 from the new bank. The committee decided this should be shared amongst 3 local well deserving causes, and so this was equally distributed between Thurlbear School, Neroche Hall and the Fingerpost Restoration group.'

**School Holidays**  
**4th-19th April 2020**  
**23-31 May 2020**

## Spring Update

**By Ross Henley, District Councillor**

Last time I reported on a controversial planning application in Curland which attracted a large crowd to an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting at the hall to discuss. Since the meeting the application has been withdrawn although lots of local residents still have concerns, which I share, about this site. I suspect that I will be reporting further on this in the next edition. On another issue I have been pressing the Council to recruit more staff in the Planning and Enforcement area.



I have also been continuing to follow the saga of the proposed dualling of the A358. The next stage of promised consultation process has still not happened. I remain concerned at the proposed closure of some of the access points from our villages into the A358.

Another issue I continue to keep an eye on, regards the potential of large-scale development in the Neroche villages by large national house building providers, who are playing the long game. The council does not need to see any large-scale developments in our area, and I will always resist any plans if they ever come forward.

In my role as the Executive Councillor for resources, I'm introducing a policy close to my heart, which is a new autism and hidden disabilities strategy and policy at the Council. This would support job applicants better than at present, and also existing staff. So many people with hidden disabilities are deterred from applying for positions at the Council often by the words used in job applications and job specs. A change is long overdue and as someone who has autism myself, I'm proud to move this forward.

On a more social aspect, I'm looking forward to attending the twice yearly Neroche Hall quiz and fish and chip night on March 13th. I

always enjoy this evening and it's great to catch up with so many local residents. I keep getting asked by members of the quiz team I'm in if I can join them at the monthly quiz at the Greyhound and I'm now going to do this.

Finally, since my last report a long-term resident and friend to so many locally, Madeline Spears, sadly passed away. I last met Madeline when I sat next to her at the Neroche villages lunch in November. I was pleased I was able to support David, her husband, at the service that took place at the village hall alongside so many other residents. It was amazing to hear of the incredible and interesting things that Madeline had achieved in her life.

## Is your Business using the Neroche Villages Website?

One of the main reasons for developing the Neroche Villages website was to promote our local business. It does this in two ways, both designed to help them become better known and more easily found by those needing their services.

All businesses operating within Neroche Parish are entitled to a **free entry on the Business pages of the website**. They are listed in one or more of seven categories: Accommodation, Arts and Crafts, Building and Gardening, Equine, Farm and Agriculture, Food and Drink, Leisure, and Services. No business is too large or small to appear and there are many involving one person. Each free entry lists the name of the business, type of activity, contact details, address and telephone number/s. Many pay £10 per annum to have an email address and/or website added to the entry.

The **Advertisers page** allows a business to provide more details of its activities for an annual charge of £30. We can help you create your advertisement.

Please have a look at the website at [www.nerochevillages.org.uk](http://www.nerochevillages.org.uk). Use the Contact page to get back with your details or to correct any entry. We are keen to have all businesses listed on the website, and with more than a basic Business page entry. All additional fees are used to fund the activities of the Neroche Communication Action Group.

# LOTTIE MICHAELS IS RUNNING THE LONDON MARATHON

In April 2020 I am running the London Marathon for the incredible charity, Blind Veterans UK who work tirelessly to help ex-service men and women rebuild their lives after sight loss. I have committed to fundraise at least £2000 which is a challenge in its own right alongside a training schedule of 3 runs a week, 1 session in the gym and A Levels!!

I am so excited to take on this huge challenge although would appreciate any support you can give me.

I also have a fundraising page and would be very grateful for anything <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/CharlotteMichaels>



**Friday April 17th**  
**Neroche Hall - 7 for 7.30pm**

£9pp to include 2 course supper  
Prizes; Raffle; BYO drink  
Quiz master: my Dad!

Limited numbers so book now  
[familyoffice@btinternet.com](mailto:familyoffice@btinternet.com) or Tel: 01823 480474

## Neroche Woodlanders at Young Wood

I'm writing this as Storm Ciara rages outside, and so it's not a day for being in the woods! We all worry about trees falling across roads and in gardens at times like this, although it's actually rather amazing that the vast majority of trees are able to withstand the thrashing they get from the winds, and flex in response to the onslaught, in order to withstand it. There's a lesson for all of us in watching how trees use flexibility to make them strong.

Despite the weather, the first signs of spring are showing, including the male catkins lengthening on the hazel bushes. Have you seen the female flowers on hazel? Small, infrequent ruby-red bud-like dots close to the stem, with a tiny fluffy style at their tips. Hazel is monoecious, meaning that both male and female flowers are found on the same tree, although the female flowers must be pollinated by pollen from other hazel trees – which reaches them on the wind.

There's life on the ground, too. Lots of snowdrops in the verges, and the odd daffodil coming out, while deeper in the woods, fingers of cuckoo pint and wild garlic are poking up out of the leaf litter and tentatively starting to unfurl. And the bird song is increasing in volume on still, brighter days. Snowdrops are one of those beguilingly simple plants which appear to be all the same, although in truth contain a wealth of variation. Gardeners have been picking out and nurturing that natural diversity for many years, and a whole esoteric world of collectors – or 'Gallanthophiles' – exists to chase and covet and share and show off the dozens of different snowdrops that exist, distinguished only by tiny differences in the amount of green on the flowers, the length of the petals, whether they are double or single, length of pedicel, and many other discreet characteristics.

At Young Wood we've been coping with the winter by spreading fresh woodchip on the ground in our camp area, to stop the soggy ground becoming poached up. We're also felling a few of our ash

trees, where they have become infected by Ash Dieback and risk dropping branches over areas frequented by people. While it is sad to be seeing the effects of this disease, we hope we can turn it to good effect by opening up new space for young saplings of other tree species to come through and provide more sunny corners for insects to bask in, once the summer comes.

Our parent and toddler group, Young Saplings, runs on Friday mornings, and has spaces available for any parent or guardian who would like to bring young children (up to age 5) for some quality time in the woods – see [www.nerochewoodlanders.org/young-saplings](http://www.nerochewoodlanders.org/young-saplings) for full information.

Meanwhile as ever, anyone is welcome to join our friendly, informal volunteer days: at Young Wood on the fourth Wednesday of each month, and at other local nature reserves on the second and third Wednesdays. See [www.nerochewoodlanders.org/ncv](http://www.nerochewoodlanders.org/ncv) for more information.

*Gavin, Jenny, Sarah and the team at Neroche Woodlanders*





## **News from Neroche Parish Council**

*by Jon Bell, Chairman*

The first news is that we now have a new Parish clerk. Gillian Midworth, our previous Clerk stepped down in August, she had provided us with excellent support for a few years and we will miss her experience. We wish her well. Our new Clerk is Nicola Harrop who can be contacted at the usual Neroche Parish Council e-mail address ([nerochepc.org.uk@gmail.com](mailto:nerochepc.org.uk@gmail.com)). This is Nicola's first job as a Parish Clerk, and she has already settled in well.



The District Council elections last May provided us with a new District Councillor, Ross Henley. Some of you will already know him through his attendance at various local events, or through his previous role as our County Councillor, we look forward to working with him. Meanwhile, our present County Councillor, John Thorne, continues to provide us with excellent support, with helpful updates about what is happening at the County Council and attendance at our two-monthly meetings.

On the planning front, a recent application in Curland has caused considerable local concern. We first became aware of this when parishioners alerted us to the construction of a tarmac driveway into a recently purchased field from a widened gateway. There were worries that we might be in the same situation as occurred a few years ago in North Curry. Fortunately, this proved not to be the case and following intervention by the planning department, a retrospective application for the work was submitted, shortly followed by a more extensive application for construction of various agricultural buildings in the same field. Following consultation with parishioners including an extraordinary Parish Council meeting, we objected to the application on various grounds. The initial retrospective application for the roadway was refused so this was added to the second application, which was subsequently withdrawn. I understand the planning department have now asked for the area to be returned to its original state, as it was before the roadway was constructed, so we await the outcome.

The route for the upgraded A358 has now been decided. The section near our parish follows the route of the existing road although it is not entirely clear yet which side of the existing road the new carriageway will be constructed, or where any junctions or cross over points will be. Everything seems to have gone rather quiet on the project recently, perhaps the recent general election has been a distraction. We maintain a close watch on the situation.

At our January meeting the Parish Council agreed to increase our precept (the amount the Parish Council adds to the Council Tax bill) by a modest amount, as I outlined at last year's annual parish meeting. This is part of an ongoing plan to increase funds available for local issues and initiatives, such as the finger post restoration project which clearly matter to parishioners but for which District and County councils do not provide funding.

We are also about to start planning for this year's annual parish meeting, likely to be held in late April or early May. I'm sure there will be a lot to discuss and I hope to see as many of you there as possible. The date will be confirmed at our March meeting and will be circulated afterwards.



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## ARE YOU NEW TO THE AREA?

Here are the different ways you can find out what's happening in Neroche from the Communication Action Group:-

**Neroche Newsletter** is delivered free to every household each quarter – full of upcoming events, articles on recent events, and updates from local Groups and leaders. Contact us at [nerochenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:nerochenewsletter@gmail.com)

**Neroche Villages Website** - the place for information from the Parish Council including planning applications, meeting minutes etc. You will also find information on local groups and clubs, events, News, local businesses, and details of the Blackdown Hills and Neroche Woodlanders.

[www.nerochevillages.org.uk](http://www.nerochevillages.org.uk)

**Neroche Email alert** – distributed every 3 to 4 weeks, bringing you information about local events, information from the Parish Council, and details of what's happening in our neighbouring villages. To sign up for the Email alert, just send your details to [nerocheemail@gmail.com](mailto:nerocheemail@gmail.com).

**Welcome to Neroche**

# News from Your Local MP

*By Rebecca Pow*

Hello

Welcome to my Spring update. I am delighted to be back in Westminster representing Taunton Deane, it is a great honour to be elected as your MP for a third term, and as ever I will continue to serve all constituents no matter how they voted.

With the election over and a decision made about Brexit leading to our official departure from the EU last month, there is an overwhelming sense of positivity, both locally and in Westminster. We now have an exciting opportunity to bring the whole nation together and move on with things that really matter to everyone whether it be the NHS, education, crime or the environment, and I sense a wave of new optimism in this respect.

I will keep local issues at the heart of my work in Westminster, prioritising a range of issues including improving our high streets, increasing local mental health & social care provision and modernising infrastructure.

## **GARDEN TOWN FUNDING**

I am pleased the Government recently awarded £340,000 to support Taunton's Garden Town initiative. Getting Communities Secretary of State, Robert Jenrick, to Taunton to discuss the plans made a real difference. This funding is for preparing environmental assessments and planning preparations relating to future developments in the town. The Government's commitment to new housing is welcome, although it is essential that communities have a say to ensure the right homes are



*'Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick visits Taunton'*

built in the right place, in an environmentally friendly way, and this funding will help do just that.

## **POLICE FUNDING**

Having made a clear case to Government, I am delighted that Avon and Somerset Police will receive an extra £22.6 million to tackle crime and keep our streets safe – an increase of 7.2% from last year.

This comes on top of the Conservatives' plan to recruit an extra 20,000 police officers, along with ensuring they have more powers and better kit. Avon and Somerset Police are already set to receive an additional 137 officers this year, with more to come in the future. Overall police funding is set to increase by the biggest amount in a decade. This will see more money available to recruit, train and equip police officers, as well as investment in national priorities like tackling serious and organised crime, and our counter-terrorism capabilities. I am also continuing to ensure that tackling rural crime is a priority.

## **ROUGH SLEEPING FUNDING**

Having been involved previously in bringing the Homelessness Reduction Act in Parliament, I am pleased that Somerset West and Taunton will receive an additional £289,740 to tackle rough sleeping this year to support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. It is part of a nationwide package of £112million that councils will receive through the Rough Sleeping Initiative and it builds on the Prime Minister's announcement before Christmas of £260 million for local authorities to help those who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes, get back on their feet.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative has reduced the number of vulnerable people sleeping rough in the areas it has been operating in by 32 per cent since its introduction in 2018 and is a central pillar of the Government's strategy to end rough sleeping completely by 2024. There is still a lot more to do, and I'll be working with the council and local organisations to ensure the additional funds are spent locally in the most effective way.

## **ENVIRONMENT MINISTER**

It won't come as any surprise to those who know me and my background in environment and farming, that I am delighted to have been asked by the Prime Minister to continue as the Environment Minister delivering on the Government's commitment

to make this country the cleanest and greenest on earth. I am responsible for steering the Environment Bill through Parliament. It is a transformative piece of legislation that will provide the framework for a sustainable future for our environment, protecting and enhancing it for the future.



The Environment Bill sets out Government action on the Environment as outlined in the 25 Year Environment Plan, and confirms our commitment to tackling climate change, achieving net zero emissions and tackling biodiversity losses and will also focus on four key areas: nature, air quality, water and waste and recycling.

## **AGRICULTURE BILL**

I continue to meet with farmers locally and I know they are following the progress Government is making with some key legislation that forms an essential part of leaving the EU, namely the Agriculture Bill. This will transform British farming and safeguard our countryside and farming communities for the future. It will reward farmers for protecting our environment and help us meet goals such as better air and water quality, tree planting, carbon storage and higher animal welfare standards. Improving the quality of our soil has also been included as one of these 'public goods' and I am delighted that my determined work with stakeholders, including the Sustainable Soils Alliance as their parliamentary champion, has met with success and been recognised as an important plank in our future farming.

## WELLINGTON MONUMENT

I'm sure you will have noticed that the Wellington Monument is now encased in scaffolding. A mere 8 miles of it. This signals that restoration work is well underway. Recent donations from Historic England and the funds raised from the joint raffle between St Margaret's Hospice and the National Trust, are all helping to reach our £4m target. I am so proud to be involved with this project in association with the National Trust and the whole community. We are nearly there!



## Neroche Knitting, Crochet and Stitching Group Held locally



Come and join us for a friendly  
group of people  
enjoying these traditional crafts

**Monday afternoons  
2.00pm to 4.00pm**

All levels of skills welcome from beginners to advanced.  
Starter help for crochet. Most levels of help for knitting.  
Free of charge

**For further details phone Nicky 01823 480675  
or Brenda 01823 480218**

# News from Bickenhall and District WI

By Jacqueline Kolkowski



## MEETINGS

Our December meeting was a very festive event with Carole Wensley-Dodd producing the most wonderful array of canapés, as she explained to us how she prepared them. Of course, these had to be tasted many times by the members to ensure we could match the ingredients against the recipes - we can all say they were delicious.



*Carole's canapés*

For our first meeting of the new year, we had an excellent speaker, Gavin Saunders of the Neroche Woodlanders, based at Young Wood on the road to Taunton from Staple Fitzpaine. Gavin explained about this social enterprise in 100 acres of magical and beautiful forest. The group work with nature to improve people's lives, while making the woods richer for wildlife. They encourage children, young people, adults, families and organisations to learn about nature and build connections with others. Many of the children (and adults) have never experienced playing in the woods or seeing nature so close. This is encouraged through various programs including Wild Forest and Families in the Forest. All the programmes they run, and the team members, are inspirational in the care and support to all those who need it.



*Woodlanders Mission Statement*

Gavin also spoke about the work of the Neroche Conservation Volunteers who work at Young Wood and across a variety of wildlife sites in the Blackdown Hills, a few of our members showed great interest in joining this group.

Gavin's knowledge about all aspects of nature ensured he had many questions about the wood and the surrounding areas even well after he had finished his talk. We hope to visit Young Wood in the spring. If you are interested in knowing more about the Neroche Woodlanders, they have a very informative web site.

## COUNTY EVENTS

Members attended the Annual meeting at Wellsprings leisure centre in November, speakers included King Hal (Mike Farley) humorously telling the story of Henry VIII. The afternoon speaker was Nick Bailey, garden designer, writer and presenter on BBC's Gardener's World. He spoke about how colour captures your attention in the garden, and how you can transform your plot whatever size, combining design with colour, so you would have colour in your garden 365 days of the year.

Nick judged the competition for an autumn wreath. An excellent entry was entered by our WI and made by Peta Trott.

Wells Cathedral again hosted the County Carol Festival, always a joyous carol filled occasion in a wonderful setting.

## TWIDDLE MUFFS (SENSORY BANDS)

Many of our members have been knitting the twiddle muffs for many years. The muffs contain strands of textured ribbons, beads and various fabrics attached both inside and outside. People with dementia often have restless hands, and these muffs help keep their hands occupied providing a source of visual, tactile and sensory stimulation. They have also been found to provide anxiety relief and increase brain activity in children with autism.



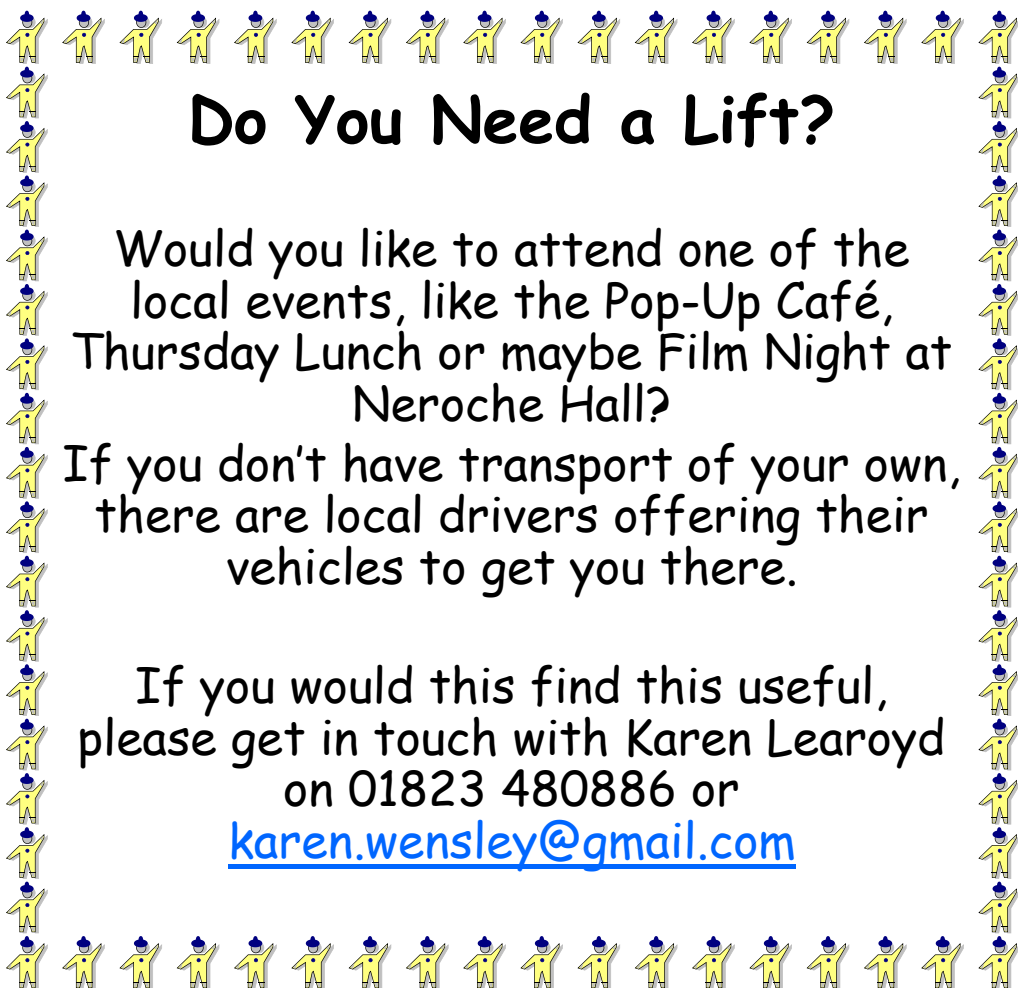
*Twiddle Muff*



Our latest batch were taken to Selworthy Special School, many of these were made by Jean Hellyer (Pauline Phelps' mother). Jean who lived in Sussex, sadly died in November, over the years she has knitted numerous twiddle muffs and hand puppets to help support young and old within Somerset and Sussex, we thank you Jean.

*Bickenhall and district WI usually meet the second Wednesday of each month, we have arranged this year's interesting programme of speakers and events and we would be delighted to welcome new members to our meetings*

*Please contact Tricia Dryden at [tricia@witchlodge.co.uk](mailto:tricia@witchlodge.co.uk)*



## Do You Need a Lift?

Would you like to attend one of the local events, like the Pop-Up Café, Thursday Lunch or maybe Film Night at Neroche Hall?

If you don't have transport of your own, there are local drivers offering their vehicles to get you there.

If you would find this useful, please get in touch with Karen Learoyd on 01823 480886 or [karen.wensley@gmail.com](mailto:karen.wensley@gmail.com)

# Would you be willing to **share your garden with the local community** in aid of **St Margaret's Hospice Care in 2020?**



St Margaret's Hospice Care is hoping that many of you, our green-fingered supporters, will open your gates this summer to the general public to showcase your own glorious green spaces and raise money for the hospice.

Whether it's for one day or for the summer season, the money raised by sharing your garden or allotment will go straight to helping St Margaret's make each day count for patients and their families facing a life-limiting illness across Somerset.

This is a fantastic way to support your local hospice and a great way to showcase your gardening prowess to your local community. From small courtyards to country estates, **no garden is too big or small** and every garden will have something for people to enjoy.

**If you would like to join our Glorious Somerset Gardens season, please visit [www.st-margarets-hospice.co.uk](http://www.st-margarets-hospice.co.uk) or call us on 01935 709182.**

# Glorious Somerset Gardens 2020

## Season Ticket



Are you looking for a special present for a keen gardener or would just like to treat yourself?

Glorious Somerset Gardens season 2020 tickets, priced at £25, will give entry to all of the gardens participating in the 2020 season.

The Glorious Somerset Gardens Scheme raises vital funds for our hospice.

The list of next year's participating Glorious Somerset Garden's will be launched in March 2020 and run until September 2020.

# Ringborough Design and Planning

*by Guillaume Dijon*

I was born in Normandy and moved to London in 1998 in order to study for a postgraduate course at Imperial College. After graduating, I worked full time while starting to do property development on a very small scale. I started to draw plans using CAD software to submit my own planning applications.

In February 2014 I moved out of London; as one might say: “I escaped to the country”.

Within 24 hours of moving into our new home a tall tree in our garden was toppled over by the wind and missed the house by a few inches. That was a lucky escape!

I have found the community in the Blackdown Hills to be very friendly and welcoming. The way of life is very laid back and less stressful compared to the capital. The weather can be extreme at times and we can have the four seasons all in one day, and I love it!

I live about ½ mile away from Staple Hill and I enjoy going for walks into Staple plantation all the way up to Neroche Castle.

I volunteer in the Village Community Shop and Post Office in Churchinford. Being nearly three miles away this is my “corner shop”, the place I go when I run out of milk. I was made very welcome by Ruth and the other devoted volunteers. I try to buy local produce as much as possible to support our local farmers and small traders.

My next project will be to get some beehives in order to collect my own honey. Any tips on apiculture would be welcome!

2020 marks a fresh start for me. Having recently submitted a new planning application and having submitted many successful planning



applications in the past, I have decided to start helping others achieve their dream by designing and building their home for life.

I can give you advice on design and planning issues.

I can do a house survey and produce existing plans and subsequently plans for your proposal.

I draw relevant plans (elevations, floor plans etc) using CAD in order to obtain planning and building control approvals.

The planning game is a game of compromise and I can meet planning officers to discuss your project.

I can also submit your planning application online on your behalf, or print/email the plans to you.

Please call Ringborough Design and Planning for an informal chat or come up to the house and speak to me.

Ringborough Planning and Design  
Ringborough House  
Churchinford  
Taunton  
TA3 7EB

01823421049

07892406096

[gdijon@mail.com](mailto:gdijon@mail.com)

[ringborough@mail.com](mailto:ringborough@mail.com)

<http://www.ringborough.co.uk/>

[https://directory.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/  
company/1287321623166976](https://directory.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/company/1287321623166976)

## Bailey and Down – A Poem

Keith @ Bailey & Down

I deliver milk, papers, spuds and eggs,  
It's a great job, but hard on my legs,  
I drive all night in my old caddy truck,  
although I may moan, I can't believe my luck.

I love what I do, and I do what I love,  
beautiful countryside and sky up above,  
Nature is my favourite thing,  
all seasons are lovely especially spring.

In my hi-vis vest and my worn-out boots,  
this is the life that I think best suits,  
From 2 in the morning til around midday,  
from Taunton to home, delivering all the way.

Papers in letter boxes, milk on the step,  
counting and ordering and loading is prep,  
then off I drive for miles and miles,  
stopping at each customer with occasional smiles!

At 72 years, I can still run around,  
up roads, paths and lanes I trot up and down,  
When I get home, I'm as stiff as a plank,  
but for ordering from me, my customers I thank,  
I intend to keep going, for as long as I can,  
I'll crawl if I have to, cus I'm your paper/milk man.

I reckon I work 12+ hours each day of the "wick"  
I have an old fashion Dorset language, so don't take the mick!

It's a good life, come rain, snow, winds and sunshine,  
it keeps me fit and busy, and the hours are mine,  
as long as I am needed and able I will,  
so keep reading the paper and drinking the milk!

**THE POP-UP CAFE PRESENTS**  
**COME CELEBRATE THE 75th**  
**ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY**

**FRIDAY MAY 8TH**  
**AT ST PETER'S CHURCH**  
**10.30am – 12.30pm**

**MUSIC**  
**MEMORABILIA**

**MEET VILLAGERS WHO REMEMBER VE DAY**  
**READ THE MEMORIES OF VILLAGERS AND OTHERS**  
**ABOUT LIFE DURING THE 2ND WORLD WAR.**  
**COME DRESSED IN PERIOD COSTUME (optional)**  
**GAMES AND CRAFTS FOR CHILDREN**  
**PERHAPS HAVE A TASTE OF A POTATO SCONE**

**AND OF COURSE, THERE WILL BE LOTS OF CAKE**





## **News from your Village Agent** **Welcome to 2020!**

Winter and early spring time can make driving tricky with icy roads, floods, potholes and wet leaves. We have many deep ditches on the sides of our roads which fill with icy water at this time of year - not a pleasant place to be trapped in your car!

The AA have got great tips on how to drive through a flood, and in ice so do look it up. I have included a few preparation tips.

<https://www.theaa.com/driving-advice/seasonal/winter>

- Remember to pack a coat and strong shoes throughout the winter. You may get stuck in the snow, flood or mud and need to walk home! Enough petrol, a blanket and water are useful for motorway journeys, just in case you get stuck in long queues.
- Clear snow from the roof – it can fall onto the windscreen and block your view.
- Replace worn or damaged wiper blades.
- Keep number plates clean, to avoid fines.
- Use a cigarette lighter to warm a key for a frozen lock.

Some of you may have seen the team from the CCG at some of our Talking Cafes and Roadshows lately. They have been joining our agents to give out some key messages to help us stay healthy at home this winter. Below are some helpful tips aimed especially at people who care for others but useful for everyone too!

### **Ten Top Tips for to help keep us in good health this winter and spring**

1. Pressure ulcers often start in the home. If you notice a red spot that doesn't blanch when you press it, it could be the start of a pressure ulcer.



2. Do not rub the areas of red skin as this could cause a breakdown of skin.
3. Rubber rings can create areas of increased pressure, not prevent them.
4. If incontinence products are used, try to not multilayer them as this could increase the risk of pressure ulcers occurring.
5. When moving out of bed try not to ruck up sheets or bedding which could drag on the skin.
6. Where possible, reposition or move regularly to avoid prolonged periods of high pressure.
7. Remember that dehydration does not only occur in the summer. When we turn the heating on, we still need to keep hydrated.
8. Keeping properly hydrated helps to prevent against Urinary Tract Infections.
9. Incontinence issues? Try switching to decaffeinated drinks although switch over slowly to allow the body to get used to the withdrawal of caffeine. Keep drinking at regular intervals during the day as this can actually help with incontinence issues.
10. Remember good hand hygiene can help prevent against bugs and infections. Infectious illnesses, like 'flu and norovirus, (the 'winter vomiting bug'), are very common at this time of year, and whilst the fit and healthy can recover quickly from their symptoms, the elderly and those living with long term conditions are particularly vulnerable and can become quite ill. Good personal hygiene, like washing your hands with soap and water after going to the toilet and before preparing food for others, is an essential way to reduce the spread of unpleasant illnesses to friends and family.

## **Somerset Village & Community Agents**

CCS Village & Community Agents provide confidential, practical community-based solutions for you, wherever you are in Somerset.

Your local CCS Village Agent can be contacted directly, or by referral through your Doctors surgery. CCS Community Agents can only be

contacted by a referral from your doctors or Adult Social Care Services. Due to growing demand, we also have other Agents who give much more specialised support in the areas of Cancer, Mental Health, Hospital-based and Transport support.

They help when others don't, won't or can't!

To find your local agent please visit: <https://somersetagents.org/>

Somerset Village & Community Agents are brought to you by CCS:

[www.somerstrcc.org.uk](http://www.somerstrcc.org.uk) and [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org).



## **Easter Craft Activities**

**at the Pop-Up Café**

**St Peter's Church,  
Staple Fitzpaine**

St Peter's Church and the WI are running an  
**Easter Craft activities session**

at the Pop-up cafe on

**Saturday April 11th 10.30am - 12.30pm**

for young families, suitable for toddlers (with parental help) and children up to 8. Any older accompanied children are invited too.

Pop-up cafe refreshments, cakes etc. will be on sale including child friendly items.

**Everyone welcome, do come!**

# Events for your calendar

(Venue is Neroche Hall unless stated)

## February 2020

- 22 Murder Mystery Night - "Who Killed the Secret Agent?"  
25 Shrove Tuesday Annual Pancake Party

## March 2020

- 4 Quiz Night (The Greyhound)  
5 Thursday Lunch Club  
13 Fish "n" Chip Quiz Night  
20 "An Evening of Song - St Peter's Church  
27 Friday Film Night - "Yesterday"

## April 2020

- 1 Quiz Night (The Greyhound)  
2 Thursday Lunch Club  
3 Easter Family Bingo  
11 Easter Craft Activities - St Peter's Church  
17 Lottie Michaels Quiz Night

## May 2020

- 6 Quiz Night (The Greyhound)  
7 Thursday Lunch Club  
8 VE Day Celebration - St Peter's Church

For latest updates visit [www.nerochevillages.org.uk/events-calendar](http://www.nerochevillages.org.uk/events-calendar)

## Household Recycling & Refuse Collections

All dates will be 1 day later than usual collection



Somerset  
Waste  
Partnership

To check collection dates go to:  
<http://www2.tauntondeane.gov.uk/asp/webpages/waste/pdf/RefuseWednesdayB.pdf>

# Local Communication and Information

## **Websites:**

### **Neroche Villages** [www.nerochevillages.org.uk](http://www.nerochevillages.org.uk)

Community website run by the Neroche Communication Action Group. It has an up-to-date calendar of events; a news section; information about residents' action groups, including broadband, traffic; a business section and advertisements.

The website features a comprehensive list of clubs and organisations, including details of those in neighbouring parishes. It is also the website of Neroche Parish Council and lists its activities, agenda, minutes and reports.

### **Neroche Hall** [www.nerochehall.org.uk](http://www.nerochehall.org.uk)

A new-look website which lists the coming events, facilities and availability for hire of our village hall, and has an online booking form.

### **Church of England Seven Sowers Benefice** [www.sevensowers.org.uk](http://www.sevensowers.org.uk)

Has a calendar of events and church service times for Staple Fitzpaine and Orchard Portman churches, as well as other churches in the benefice.

## **Email Information:**

The Neroche Communication Action Group runs an Email Alert System for sending information to those wishing to receive it. **Please note there is a new address to contact the email alert: [nerocheemail@gmail.com](mailto:nerocheemail@gmail.com)**

## **The Parish Magazine:**

Full information on benefice matters, a great source of news, coming events and general information, and details of many local businesses and services. For new subscriptions phone Kate Reynolds on 01823 444023.

### ***Many thanks for taking the time to read this Newsletter.***

*The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or the Neroche Communication Action Group. Publication of an advertisement in, or with, the newsletter does not imply the Action Group's approval of the goods or services.*

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***Printed by Parish Magazine Printing - 01288 341617***