

Working Together for a Better Community

NEROCHE VILLAGES Newsletter

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

Issue 34 - Winter 2019



We wish to thank our friends at Taunton Racecourse for their support in sponsoring all of the production and print costs for this issue of the Neroche Newsletter. See pages 24 - 25 to find out more about what's happening at the racecourse

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.



The Autumn Fish “n” Chips Quiz

By Alan Perrior

Who'd want to go out on a dark, dull, damp Friday evening in Neroche? The 15 teams of hardy quizzers – that's who! They all streamed into Neroche Village Hall for the bi-annual Fish “n” Chips quiz held on Friday 11th October.

The quiz was set and presented by Whistling Mike Michaels who was ably assisted by scorers, Anne Perry and Tami Boden-Ellis.

So, by 7.30pm we had 15 teams, ready and waiting to be crowned 'The Brains of Neroche'. Although, as in all quizzes there have to be winners and losers – more of that later.



The lovely scorers—Anne and Tami

The quiz comprised nine rounds of ten questions each, in categories such as General Knowledge, Art and Literature, Sport and Geography. There was an additional round of 20 photographs (of celebrities from the worlds of music, sport etc) slotted in half-way through the evening so that we could mull over the photos during the “dinner break”.



As ever, 'Layz Ricks' did a superb job in the limited time allotted to them, and produced hot food for the quizzers and helpers. All the meals came with chips, as you'd expect, although the menu choice included fish, chicken, sausage and a veggie version with baked brie in breadcrumbs with cranberry sauce.

It's a good job that quizzers were allowed plenty of time to argue over the photos, as some of them were distinctly dodgy. One team thought that the photo of Paul McCartney was actually Theresa May! Perhaps they'd have found it easier with colour photos.

However, the quiz itself was tough but fair, with a wide range of questions. We had everything from: 'Vexillology is the study of “what”?', to 'What is the official language of Bangladesh?', to 'Which city in the

world has the most bridges?', to 'What is the English translation of the Welsh soap opera name Pobol y Cwm?'.

If you knew that, the answers to the above questions were (respectively):

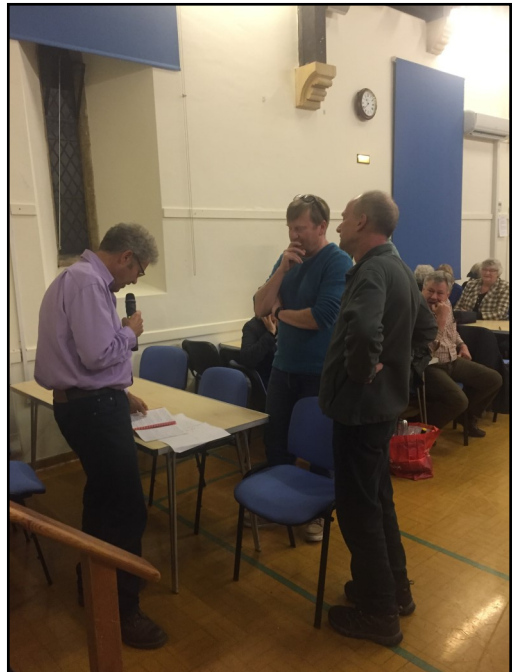
Flags, Bengali, Hamburg (who counted them?), People of the Valley, I hope you were at the quiz as, surely, you would have done very well! And if you weren't at the quiz – WHY NOT?

The only dissension during the evening was in the Sport round when the quizmaster announced that the first Wembley FA Cup Final to require a replay was in 1979. Quite a few teams were vociferous in their assertion that it was actually 1970, when Chelsea and Leeds drew 2-2 at Wembley with Chelsea winning the replay at Old Trafford a couple of weeks later. It turned out that Mike had mis-read the '0' for a '9' when compiling the quiz and order was soon restored.

In amongst the serious business of tough questions on rounds such as 'Science and Nature' Mike Michaels came up with his now traditional "whistling" music round. This time it was 'Themes from TV and Radio programmes'. Everybody enjoyed this round and enthusiastically joined in with the quizmaster's whistling, playfully (and perhaps unnecessarily) requesting repeats of most of the themes. Luckily Mike didn't "dry" and his whistling lasted the extended course with most teams scoring really well.

And so, on to the quiz results and the bragging rights associated with being the new Brains of Neroche and, as it turned out, the right to be the "wooden spoons"!

There was a prize for the Wooden Spoonists, and two teams tied for last place. The team leaders for the 'Bunch Of Fives' and 'The Greyhounds' were called forward for a tie-break and discovered that



Quizzing for the "Wooden Spoon"

they were playing for the right to be last! The tie-break was about pastry and, unsurprisingly, the chef from The Greyhound was first with the correct answer.

So, by answering correctly, the Greyhound team came last and therefore claimed the prized “wooden spoon”.

The winners on the night were ‘Bob Times Two’ captained by Colin Croad – the team played brilliantly to win with 90 points, a clear 2.5 points ahead of ‘The Unfathomables’, closely followed by ‘Not Poldark’.

But the real winner was Neroche Hall; this much used and appreciated hall benefited from the proceeds of the quiz. Well done to all the teams and, special thanks should go to Richard Davies and his stalwart group of helpers. It was an excellent evening.



“Bob Times Two” - Itr Paul Harwood, Liz Harwood, Robert Harwood, Pat Croad,

Roll on the next quiz in the Spring of 2020.

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

Furry Fun at Staple Dogs Run Free

By Jacq Wanstall

In early October, Mark and I went to visit Staple Dogs Run Free, in Staple Fitzpaine, with our 2 hairy and excited boys, Wesley and Woody. It's a lovely peaceful setting, so humans can relax and enjoy themselves, while the dogs have 2 acres of secure fields to go crazy in. There are big tyres for the dogs to jump in and out of, and tree logs to play around too, as well as a water butt and bowls, and seats (for tired owners!) In the future, Mark and Julie Pope are also going to put in some agility poles and a shelter for even more canine fun and games.



When you book, you have the whole space to yourself, so it is ideal for dogs who are nervous or don't like to be around other dogs. It's also perfect for those with poor recall, or perhaps in training, or newly adopted into your family. There is plenty of parking outside, or you can simply bring your car inside, if your furry friend would prefer that.

The space would be great for group bookings, so lots of doggie friends can get together in a happy safe space.

Wesley and Woody had a wonderful morning bombing around with their doggie friends, it is really super to have a great facility like this on our doorstep, so please give it a visit.

Prices are from £6 for 30 minutes or from £10 for an hour for 1-2 dogs. Plus, an additional £2 for each extra dog.



You can book and pay online from the website at stapledogsrunfree.co.uk or from the Facebook Page Staple Dogs Run Free.

Alternatively you can call on 07710 791 298 or email stapledogsrunfree@staplefarm.co.uk Staple Dogs are also on Instagram.

New Signs at The Greyhound

An update from Veronique - "we will be opening at the end of the month and are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the pub. We are so grateful for all the positive support from the community and are looking forward to this new chapter for The Greyhound.

The next pub quiz will be on January 8th! There will be no pub quiz in December".



Neroche Thursday Lunch Club

Neroche Hall
12.30pm for 1pm



Dec 5th (Christmas lunch), Jan 9th & Feb 6th

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



Dates for St Peter's Church December 2019

Sunday 1st December Family Communion Service at 10.00am

Christmas Tree Decorating & Coffee Morning

Saturday 14th December 10.30am to 12.30pm

Children & (grown-ups) making decorations, singing carols,
coffee/tea & seasonal refreshments.

*Carol Service - Wednesday 18th December at 7.00pm
Enjoy a traditional Christmas celebration followed by
mince pies and mulled wine*

Carol Singing Around the Villages- Saturday 21st December

Further details to be announced

Join us to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!

*Christmas Day Family Communion Service
All welcome!
10.00am*



St Peter's Church is part of the 'Seven Sowers Benefice' of which

further details can be found at www.sevensowers.org.uk

Super slow superfast broadband

By John Thorne

As a football referee, I have been called many things. For instance, I often have to tell players and spectators that, no, I don't work in a bank (think about it! Lol). As a journalist, I have been called much worse things. No, I have never hacked into somebody else's mobile phone, nor taken their dustbin to rummage through (well, I suppose that might depend on your definition of the word 'rummage').

As a politician, using a lower case 'p', I have also been called much worse things. Again, no, I have never killed people by closing their hospital or forced people into poverty by taking away their benefits (in fact, I have had benefits taken away from me, forcing me to borrow from family and friends). Until recently I had never been called a fortune teller (and I don't consider myself to be such).

This moniker has been in use since September, which is when we were officially told that we were not going to have the superfast broadband full-fibre network that we were promised by the end of 2019. This news seemed to come as a surprise to Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS), the body tasked with overseeing private contractors Gigaclear to deliver said network. I can tell you that it was not a surprise to your parish councillors, because I had been telling them for about 18 months that this was exactly what would happen. My prediction of the future came spectacularly true as CDS finally confessed that Gigaclear did not have a credible plan for bringing us superfast broadband with speeds of up to 1 Gbps.

I genuinely wish that I could have been proven wrong.

Because, if I had been wrong, it would probably mean you were reading this column after downloading it in the blink of an eye even if (like me) your Xbox-raised children are blowing away the enemy on Call of Duty, or scoring the winning World Cup final goal on Fifa 19, while simultaneously YouTubing the KSI v Logan Paul fight on their tablet, and Facetiming their girlfriend/boyfriend on their mobile (how do kids do that kind of multi-tasking, I ask myself).

You – the people and businesses I represent across Neroche and the Blackdown Hills – have been badly failed by CDS, and not for the first time. This is actually the third time.

At the time of writing this, CDS was starting over again with the whole

superfast broadband phase two project. Unfortunately, it is going to take them until December 2020 before they announce to whom they have awarded new contracts. It is then going to be 2022 or 2023 before the superfast broadband reaches everybody it should. So, there will be some who have waited seven years without access to what is accepted these days as a utility service, every bit as important to daily life as is electricity.

I have made the point that rural homes and businesses would not be expected to manage without electricity or running water, so your council, and your Government must do more to supply better broadband and to supply it more quickly. Rest assured that I will be doing all that I can to push for more action more quickly. I am already coming around to the view that some critics hold that CDS should be wound up, and the job should be managed directly by Government because CDS is inept.



County Cllr John Thorne with a fibre broadband network junction box originally installed by Gigaclear although with the company's branding now removed.

Winter Update

By Ross Henley, District Councillor

I've enjoyed a busy couple of months since my article in the last edition of the Neroche Newsletter.

There is a huge amount of interest in Curland, and the Neroche area in general, regarding planning applications on land that used to belong to the Crown Estate. I have been engaging with many local residents on a specific set of applications, one of which resulted in a packed public meeting held at Neroche Hall in October. The Crown Estate, as we know, have been selling parcels of land locally, and some have been purchased by local residents who plan to use the land to enhance our rural community. However, I feel this specific planning application does little to enhance our area and is unwelcome to many local residents. I know many people went away from that meeting with more unanswered questions.



Also, on planning matters, I have been supporting St. Peter's Church at Staple Fitzpaine working with Alison Brown on the Planning Application for an on-site toilet. I've also been enjoying visits to the Church for the Friday coffee mornings. It's a great event which allows people to get together in the local community over a coffee and cake. A really nice sociable event.

Talking of nice social events, I made a return visit to the Neroche Hall lunch which takes place on the first Thursday of the month. They are extremely well attended, the food is so good, and the company is always excellent. Well done to everyone who works so hard to make these events the success they have become. In deeply rural communities like Neroche, this type of event is so important in bringing the community together.

October was time for the bi-annual Neroche Hall quiz. A super event with fish and chips as well. I enjoyed it so much I'm planning to join my team members at the regular quiz nights at The Greyhound in the New Year, which I'm looking forward to visiting after the current refurbishment is complete.



Now to an issue which has the potential to make life harder for Neroche residents. The A358 proposals for this area are a calamity. How can it be right to talk about potentially closing off a number of the access lanes onto the main road? It could make it much harder to get to places on the other side of the road, like Hatch Beauchamp, which has very close links to Neroche. I made these points at a recent Highways England meeting held at the Holiday Inn, Taunton.

Finally, another public meeting to mention. This one was at Stoke

St Mary Village Hall, and was also very well attended by people from many surrounding villages, including Orchard Portman. The meeting was about Taylor Wimpey buying land from the Crown, and the fear of local residents about housing development in the area. I made clear my opposition to the inappropriate development of land in the Neroche Villages.

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

HATCH BEAUCHAMP AND NEROCHE GARDEN CLUB



Wendy Morris and Joy Larkman recently arranged a demonstration of Christmas foliage decorations at Neroche Hall for members and guests of the Garden Club.

Angie, the doyenne of Cottage Flowers in Ilminster, brought along not only a large array of greenery and flowers, but more importantly, her vast professional knowledge.

While chatting away about all sorts of topics, Angie proceeded to make the most amazing swag. It was about 5ft long and could be hung on a door, or along a table as the centre piece. Various types of fir, beech, azarina, holly, pinecones and ribbons came together in a stunning way, with a little string of lights to add yet more pizzazz. This was followed by a lovely wreath which included dried

hydrangea flowers. And guess what? She made it all look so easy!



Two hours flew by, although not before guests partook of a glass of something and some 'nibbles'. A very enjoyable evening for everyone.

Neroche Hall October Craft Fair

By Carole Wensley-Dodd

It wasn't an auspicious start to the day – torrential rain and storms blew in, although this didn't deter the stallholders who arrived early to set up their pitches.



There were around 25 stalls offering jewellery, woodcraft, honey, artwork, glass ornaments, natural skincare, along with various decorations for Christmas, knitted toys, cards, and handbags. A real smorgasbord of crafts, many of which had been made by local residents. There was also a long waiting list of people who had applied to show at the Fair, although unfortunately space at Neroche Hall was at a premium.



Despite the weather, a steady stream of people came along to check out all the goods on offer, of course, buy as much as they could carry, and enjoy the tea, coffee, cake or ploughman's that were available to purchase.

A nice hot cup of tea didn't go amiss that day!

The good variety of stallholders were of a very high quality, a fact noted by sellers and buyers alike. One stallholder even had a customer from Northampton stop off en route to Devon, having seen an advertisement online. They do say it pays to advertise – and this client proved the point.



The closing of the day at 4pm saw quite a number of stallholders say they would be happy to take a spot again next year should the event be changed to annual. Watch this space....



Thanks, as always, to everyone who organised the Craft Fair, made the lunches and cakes, and helped setup, serve and clear away. In spite of the weather, the stallholders have universally provided really positive feedback about the Fair.

School Holidays

**Schools will finish on Friday 20th December 2019,
returning Monday 6th January 2020.
Half term will start Monday 17th February 2020**

Winter Farming Update

By Mark Pope



Well, Summer has been and gone, and true to form in August the heavens opened making harvesting of cereals a challenge. The end result that many of you may have heard, was our grain drier working to dry down the wheat and barley we had in the grain store. Finally, the crops are dried down to 15% moisture.

We planted 39 acres of oilseed rape in mid-August. We now have only 26 acres left, sadly we lost 13 acres to the flea beetle. I am sure any of you with vegetable patches will have seen them in your gardens as well. They are black and about the size of a large pin head, when you approach them, they jump just like a flea. Currently we have no effective means of controlling them, having lost the Neonic seed treatment. What I find slightly annoying is that the UK is now having to import the shortfall of oilseed rape from outside the EU, where the crop is grown using neonic treated seed.

Moving on, you will see that maize harvesting this year has also proved challenging on the clay soils. As I write this, we are currently waiting to plant our wheat crop, which should have been in the ground by now. However, Mother Nature often has other plans, and has decided we need more rain. We can plant the wheat up until the end of November, however, we will suffer a yield penalty planting that late on this soil.

We are also starting to get ready for the Christmas trees. We will have our open day on Sunday 1st December from 10.00am till 3.00pm.

Do please come along and say hello.

We will be cutting trees throughout December. Also, assuming the weather dries up we plan to plant some trees in late November and early December.

Pick Your Own Christmas Tree



Staple Farm, Staple Fitzpaine, TA3 5BE

Sunday 1st December 2019
10am to 3pm

Stroll through the plantation with your family, select a Christmas tree, then it will be cut for you while-you-wait; what could be fresher? You can then take it home immediately or, for a small charge, have it delivered during the following week. The freshest tree you will ever buy.

All the family and dogs-on-leads welcome.
Mince pies, other small eats and warm drinks
available all day
(Don't Forget Your Wellies!)

Ready cut trees also available on the day

Thurlbear School

By Jo Moore, School Business Manager

Thurlbear is no different to any other school with regards to financial constraints and lack of funding. The recent Government announcement of a £14.5 billion investment between now and 2022/23 is extremely welcome, although I think it would be fair to say it will take time to reverse the effects that years of austerity have had on schools. However, it isn't always about funding. Rural schools also face additional challenges such as lack of transport infrastructure, falling numbers, and old buildings not fit for purpose compared to newly purpose-built schools.

Our Church School is thriving, and we are working very hard on our role in the community, and our impact upon it, as we become more popular than ever. We recognise the importance of reaching out and engaging with people and organisations around us, and we want to work together with these to help our school and our community grow, irrespective of the political and economic climate.

We have extremely supportive families, and an incredible PTA who raise an amazing amount of money, although we know we cannot realise our aims without exploring other funding and income generation streams.



So what are we doing? Well, we have put together a financial and strategic visioning plan outlining our key objectives for the next 10 years. The objectives are ones that will impact positively on our children's

Christian learning and living within the classroom, and the space around the site.

Our priorities include such things as providing additional seating so that our children have the opportunity to reflect and socialise within a quiet space at break times, Astroturf to enable our children to have an effective learning and play space whatever the weather, refurbish old hut buildings and equip them as a modern space for teaching and learning, and of course traffic.

We are absolutely delighted, that with parent and community help we have begun to tick some things off our list. Following a Crowdfunding Project initiated by one of our parents we have just taken delivery of 3 picnic benches which have already been put to good use in our playground. We have also been in touch with County and Parish Councillors to investigate the possibility of school transport for some of our pupils to help alleviate traffic around our school site.



We warmly welcome volunteers into the classroom although if volunteering in the classroom isn't your thing and you would like to offer your expertise or volunteer your time in another way, please get in touch.

You can reach me on 01823 442277 or email me on jmoore@educ.somerset.gov.uk

NEWS FROM NEROCHE HALL (Winter 2019)

By Richard Davies, Chairman



In my last article, I mentioned the fact that one of our heating units was defective and that it would need replacing. I am pleased to report that we have now sourced a local company to install a new replacement unit, which will be similar in appearance to those currently installed, although far more economical and efficient. As with all things, improvements are made with the passing of time and the newer units can be programmed to switch off when no movement is detected after a specified period of time. Not every hirer remembers to turn the heating off, so potential savings are a bonus.

Some of you may have noticed that the flooring has been looking a little tired and scuffed of late, and as part of our continual refurbishment program we shall be having the surface chemically stripped and given three layers of polish. This will refresh the floor considerably and enable our cleaning team to maintain a durable surface for all uses. This process is necessary at 3 or 4 yearly intervals dependent upon wear and tear.

Recent events at the hall have included our usual fish and chip quiz night, which was well attended as always and provided an evening of challenges for the grey matter. We are expecting to stage our next quiz next Spring subject to the availability of one of our quizmasters.

Our Craft Fair was also well attended. However, I suspect that the inclement weather may well have deterred some from visiting. There was a great deal of interest from stall holders wishing to

book a table and a waiting list for any cancellations proved just how popular craft fairs are in the approach to the festive season. Ploughman's, teas and cakes were also very popular during the day, and thanks goes to those working in the kitchen who looked after everyone.

Film nights as I have said before seem to have suffered a fall in popularity and some difficult decisions had to be made to avoid further losses. A recent increase in Moviola's fees means that our profit margins have been cut even further. The choice of films available to screen varies considerably, and some months are better than others. Therefore, we have decided to be more selective in our choices with showings based on likely popularity rather than on a monthly basis. In other words, we cannot guarantee a regular screening. The coming films are 'Downton Abbey' on Friday, 31st January 2020, and 'Yesterday' on Friday, 27th March 2020.

By popular demand, we are currently in rehearsal for our next 'Murder Mystery' play which will be on Saturday, 22nd February 2020. The subject clue is in the title as always and on this occasion it is 'Who Killed the Secret Agent'? You may wish to polish your magnifying glasses and purchase a new notebook in readiness for unmasking the killer and winning our coveted trophy! Once again, we will have tables so that you can either make up a team or join others to form a team and work together to solve the crime. As before there will be a light supper and bar available.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we have recently recruited two additional committee members to join our team. Both Kingsley Beck and Andy Palmer have agreed to be co-opted, which will increase our flexibility as a committee to fund raise and promote new events.

For further details of all coming events please go to our website: www.nerochehall.org.uk

Neroche Woodlanders at Young Wood

As we watch the effects of flooding on communities in the north of England, it's worth remembering the value of trees, woods, scrubland and all natural vegetation in attenuating the worst effects of extreme rainfall – and equally, helping stave off drought at the driest times of the year. Anything which reduces the rate at which rainfall finds its way down a catchment towards settlements, is a good thing. Natural vegetation increases the 'roughness' of the landscape, and that roughness helps slow the water down. Tree roots, banks of scrub, boggy ground, and tussocky permanent pasture all help put the brakes on the water. So, the Neroche forest, with its rich patchwork of vegetation types, stands guard up there on the hillsides above our villages – another reason to be thankful for its presence.

It's been another busy autumn for us at Neroche Woodlanders. Alongside our regular programmes, during the half term holiday we ran a fantastical session for children and families at Castle Neroche for the Forestry Commission, called 'Putting the Dragons to Bed'. This was based on traditional Somerset stories that tell of the need to perform ceremonies around Michaelmas, to encourage the dragons which lie under the hills to sleep peacefully through the winter, and not cause trouble for the people. In our interpretation of the story, we enabled the children to make their own clay models of dragons, then make a nest



Children taking part in the "Putting the Dragons to Bed" event at Castle Neroche in October

for their dragon out of autumn leaves and twigs, find a quiet place to hide their nested dragon, so it could go to sleep.

Back at Young Wood our parent and toddler group, Young Saplings, is still running 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 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 (except Christmas) and at other local nature reserves on the second and third Wednesdays. See www.nerochewoodlanders.org/ncv for more information.

With best wishes for Christmas and the new year
Gavin, Jenny and the team at Neroche Woodlanders



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

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

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.

Welcome to Neroche

Macmillan Coffee Morning September 28th, 2019

This year's coffee morning was held at St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine. Whilst most take place on a Friday, we have found locally that holding the event on a Saturday means whole families can be there, and this proved to be the case.



To call this a "Coffee Morning" was in fact a bit of a misnomer as it was Cake, Cake, and Cake that took centre stage! So many beautiful and varied ones – all made by our local ladies, oh, and one man. Paul Hart baked a delicious lemon drizzle, which apparently is his speciality. There were fruit cakes, honey cakes, coffee cakes, lemon cakes, and cupcakes, all beautifully laid out for the enjoyment of visitors.

Of course, tea, coffee and biscuits were available too, along with soft drinks for the children. Cakes were also on sale for people to take home.

Jacqueline Kolkowski organised a Bric a Brac stall which proved to be very popular. Who knew we all had so much to pass on, then needed something else to buy!

You could also test your skill and guess how many berries in a fruit pie or how many dots on a cake.



Many thanks to Pauline Phelps who organised the whole event, to Jacqueline for the Bric a Brac stall, and to all the willing helpers, both on the day and before.

Year on year your generous donations never fail, and this year we raised the magnificent total of £621 – all in the space of two hours! Amazing.

We are all touched one way and another by the wonderful work of Macmillan and it is a privilege to help in any way we can.

Taunton Racecourse

By Karen Learoyd



Set in the heart of the Somerset countryside, and sited within our parish of Neroche, Taunton

Racecourse is England's youngest jumps racecourse and stages around fifteen race-meetings each season. Their visitors enjoy national hunt racing, featuring some of the biggest names in the sport; although Taunton Racecourse is not just about racing, it boasts excellent facilities for conferences, meetings, concerts, parties and events. It is also the perfect venue for your wedding reception. [http://](http://www.tauntonracecourse.co.uk)

www.tauntonracecourse.co.uk

Upcoming Fixtures 2019/20

Thursday November 28: Autumn Fixture

Thursday, December 12: Festive Fixture

Monday, December 30: Christmas Meeting

Tuesday, January 7: Love Musgrove Charity Day – 2 for 1

Saturday, January 18: Portman Cup Saturday

Sunday, February 2: The Sunday Meeting

Tuesday, February 18: Half Term Raceday

Thursday, February 27: Bath & West Raceday

Racecourse Membership

Have you ever thought of becoming a member of the Racecourse? Members and their guests, together with owners and trainers, have exclusive use of the Members Restaurant in the Paddock Stand, and the Members Car Park.

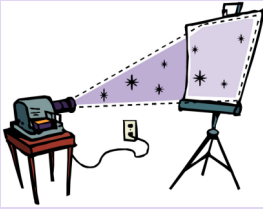
Wearing their badges, members enjoy free entry to Taunton Racecourse and are welcome at numerous days of free racing at 42 reciprocal racecourses across the country. This also includes free entry to Hickstead for the Derby meeting and the Royal International Horse Show, as well as a 2 for 1 saver ticket for the Royal Bath & West Show, if purchased before 1st May 2020.

2020 membership will be available to purchase online, by post and in person from Monday, 18th November. It will also be possible to buy membership during the next 4 race meetings on 28th November, 12th and 30th December, and 7th January. Changes have been made to the membership to bring it in line with other winter jumps racecourses – this means that 2020 membership will be limited to January to September.

Membership for these months will cost £115 per person if purchased before midnight on 7th January 2020. After that the price will rise to £135 per person.



FRIDAY FILM NIGHT – Neroche Hall



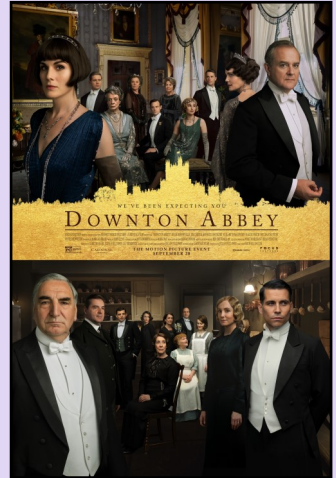
Downton Abbey (PG)

Friday 31st January @ 7.30pm

The Crawleys and their intrepid staff prepare for the most important moment of their lives.

A royal visit from the King and Queen of England will unleash scandal, romance and intrigue that will leave the future of Downton in the balance.

Starring Hugh Bonneville, Elizabeth McGovern and Maggie Smith.



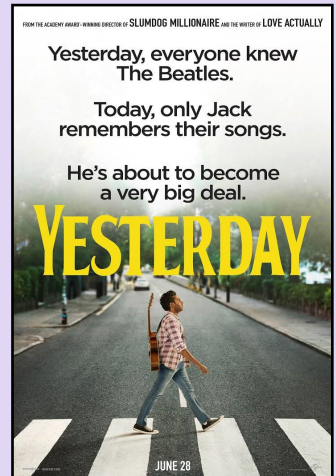
Yesterday (12A)

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



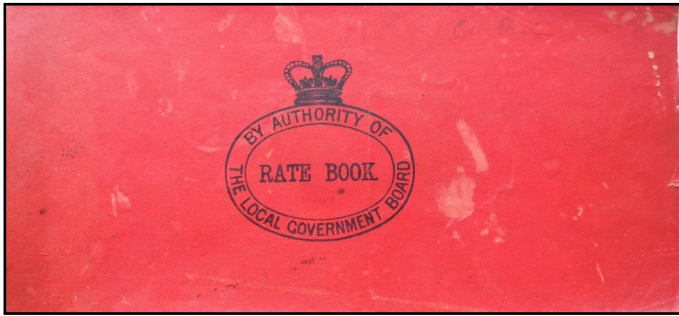
Bar and snacks available - Tickets £6.00
Contact Karen Learoyd 01823 480886

Neroche Local History Group: Whose House Is It Anyway?

By Jane Hole

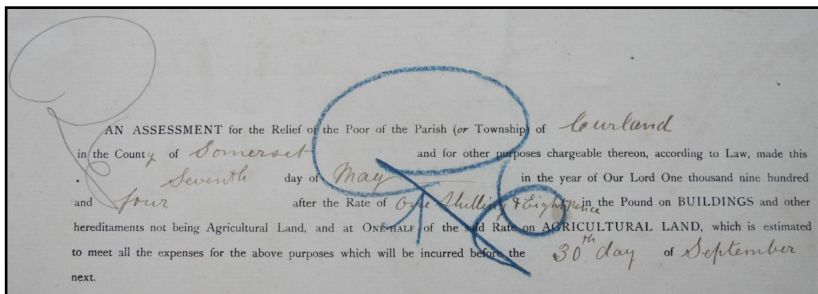
Our relationship with the houses we live in is complicated. Most of us live in homes we were not born in, some of them are owner occupied, and others have long term tenants. The majority of us were born outside of this area. Although the home we think of as “ours” most often has a much longer history than we do.

Information comes from The Rate Book for Curland and from the censuses.



The Red Cover

The Rate Book dated seventh May 1904 was an assessment for “The Relief of the Poor of the Parish” at a rate of “One shilling and eight pence” in the Pound for Buildings and other hereditaments (property) and half that amount for Agricultural Land.” The collection of this rate was authorised by the Union Assessment Act 1862.



The front page of the rate book with blue markings

We are briefly going to look at four houses in the village of Curland. Bulford, part of which dates from the late 15th century, was lived in for several generations by the Cozens family. In 1881 and 1891, John

Cozens is the head of the household and working as a farmer. By 1904, Helen Cozens a widow aged 60, is living there with the house being owned by John Cozens. Their Poor Law rate for the house was 7 shillings and six pence.

In 1881, Alford's now known as Annadale, was lived in by William Russell, a farmer aged 72, his wife and one son. In 1901, it appears to be unoccupied, by 1904 it was lived in by Albert Cottey and owned by James Russell. The Poor Law rate collected for the house and building was sixteen shillings and three pence.

PARISH OF *Curland*

R.A.F.F.

No.	NAME OF OCCUPIER.	NAME OF OWNER.	Description of Property Rated.	Name or Situation of Property.	R.A.F.F.			
					House- Rates.	Small House- Rates.	Small Value of Occupation Rates.	Total Rate.
1	Mr George H Cozens	Richard Burrage	Land	Alford	1	3d		10
2	Cozens	Robert Cozens	House & Building	Bulford	9	3d	5	10
3		late Mrs Brock	Land	Bulford	9	3d	5	10
4		late Mrs Brock	Land	Bulford	9	3d	5	10
5	Robert Cozens	Self	Garden & Garden	Old Post Office	2	2d	18	44
6	Robert Cozens	Self	Garden & Garden	Old Post Office	2	2d	18	44
7	Cozens	Trust Portman	Land	Cuffe Cottage	5	3d	3	12
8			House & Building	Alford	7	1d	5	12
9	Mr Albert	Robert Cozens	Land	Lower End of Alford	7	1d	5	12
10		James Russell	House & Building	Alford	19	2d	3	16
11			Land	Alford	7	1d	5	12
12	Thomas John	David Bone	Land	Town	5	3d	7	10
13		David Bone	House & Building	Alford	7	1d	5	12
14	Miss Miss	late Robert Bone	Land	Alford	7	1d	5	12
15	Miss Miss	late Robert Bone	House & Building	Alford	7	1d	5	12
16			Land	Alford	7	1d	5	12

Page 1 of the book with house names

In 1881, Stoneleigh also known as the Bake House, and subsequently as The Old Post Office, was lived in by Charles Newton aged 60, who was Lord Portman's coachman. By 1901, Samuel Rowsell was the occupier with the property owned by his father Henry. Samuel was working as a grocer and baker, as he was still in 1911. The Poor Law rate collected for Stoneleigh in 1904 was 17 shillings.

In 1901 New England was lived in by John Yard, a road contractor, his wife and eight children. By 1904 it was occupied by Henry Rowsell and owned by Lord Portman. The Poor Law rates collected were five shillings.

In 1904, the total amount of Poor Law Rate actually collected in Curland was £35 4s. The approximate value of £1 in 1904 was £115 in 2017.

Unlike the current occupiers of these houses, all of the people mentioned were born locally, five of them in Curland, the other three in Buckland St Mary, Staple Fitzpaine and Hatch Beauchamp.

News from RSPCA West Hatch

By Bel Deering – Centre Manager

Seal Season

The grey seal season has begun again and the centre is currently home to over 30 pups. This year we have given the pups names of local villages, and so far we have Broadway, Bradford on Tone, Sparkford, Merriot and Lopen amongst those in our care. We will keep you updated on their progress towards release, although it looks like we have a busy winter ahead!

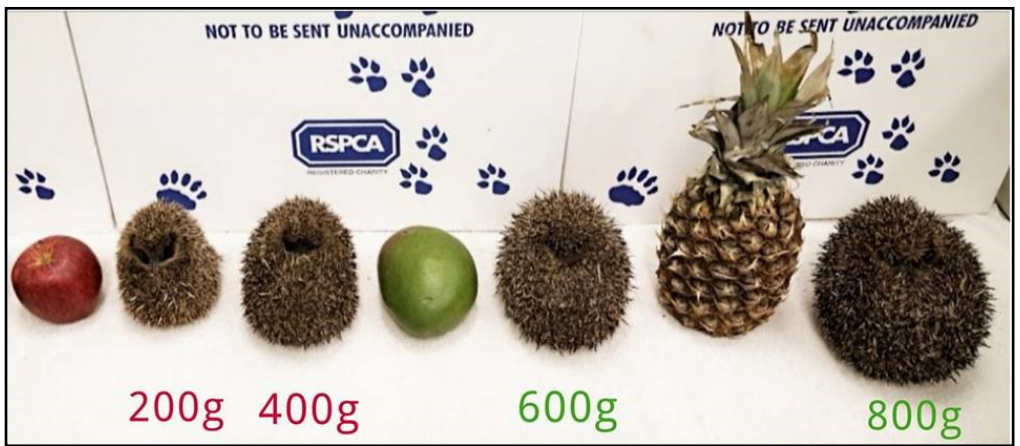


Broadway the seal having an afternoon nap

Helping hedgehogs

If you see a hedgehog out and about, you might be wondering whether it needs a helping hand. Staff at the centre have devised a fruity visual guide to help you identify hedgehogs that won't be able to survive the winter, so you know when to step in and when to step back. In simple terms, any hedgehog you find out and about in the winter under 600g (about the size of a mango) will need additional care. Furthermore, any hog out in the daylight, no matter what its weight, will need help.

You can find out more about helping hedgehogs on our website:
<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/gardenhedgehogs>



Hedgehog ID guide

Fishing Litter Tragedy

The gannet, pictured below, was admitted to the centre in October, suffering injuries inflicted by fishing litter. Sadly, this is a common occurrence. Last year the RSPCA in England and Wales received 3,274 calls about animals affected by angling litter. Apart from helping the individual animals affected, we are also trying to prevent such incidents through initiatives such as the provision of angling litter recycling points. We now have one of these at West Hatch, and anyone is welcome to drop off fishing line and spools for recycling. To find out where other collection points are located please visit <https://www.anglers-nlrs.co.uk/recycling-locations>



Gannet with wing injury



Fishing Litter



Kira and PC Liam Biggs

Police Dog Success

2 year old Springer Spaniel Kira came to West Hatch when her previous owner could no longer care for her. She had been well looked after although had become a little overweight. PC Webb from Avon and Somerset Police was called in to meet her after it was noticed by Supervisor Sue Dicks that her love of tennis balls might translate well to training as a search dog.

PC Webb agreed that she had great potential and he took her home in March for assessment

and basic training. Kira has now completed her seven weeks basic training and a licensing week, and is a fully qualified police dog able to search for drugs firearms and currency.

When Kira first arrived at the centre she could hardly even jump onto the sofa, as at 25 kilos she was very unfit! She now runs 5 miles a day along coastal paths and loves to swim in the sea. She adores the company of her German Shepherd brother, Bodge, and Liam's partner, Yasmin. PC Liam Biggs says, "She loves coming to work with me every day and was born to work. She has found her vocation and just loves life!"

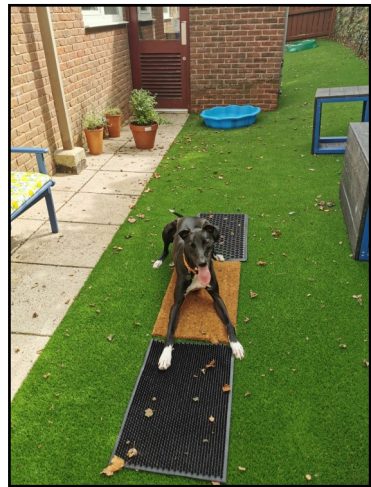
PC Webb said – "We are immensely grateful to West Hatch RSPCA for finding us another wonderful search dog. Kira joins the long line of successes from this relationship with the RSPCA and Avon and Somerset Police"

Friends of RSPCA West Hatch

Our fantastic Friends group has recently funded the improvement of some of our dog exercise and enrichment areas. If you are interested in joining the Friends to help support similar projects and improvements at the centre please get in touch with Bel to find out more.



Zena in dog enrichment garden



Kofi in dog enrichment garden

Volunteer gardeners and maintenance workers required

We are looking for anyone with a few hours to spare to help us look after the centre grounds. Jobs would include weeding, mowing, and hedge trimming. Please get in touch if you would like to help – no experience required.

Can you help?

We are looking for a number of items to help with caring for animals in both the wildlife and the domestic animal centre. Please get in touch if you can offer us any of the following:

- Original fairy liquid for washing contaminated animals
- Tasty dog training treats such as tins of hot dogs and tubes of primula cheese
- Spikes hedgehog food

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 and schools. If you would like to find out more please email me on:

Bel.deering@rspca.org.uk

**Come decorate our Christmas Tree
At St Peter's Church Staple Fitzpaine
Saturday 14th December**

All children (and grownups) are welcome

Please come along and make Christmas decorations to place on our tree

10.30am till 12.30pm

Sing along with the famous
Badger Street Band

Cafe serving hot drinks and
Christmas delights

Children must be accompanied
by an Adult



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 Sheila 480758

Blackdown Hills Food and Craft Fayre

The Blackdown Food & Craft Fayre in August was a huge success. As our local Liberal Democrat Councillor, Ross Henley, remarked “It was the best one ever!” With over 1,000 people attending on a truly lovely summer’s day the atmosphere was the very best, that only the Blackdown Community can create. The 40 plus stall holders had a busy time, with Devon Fish providing its usual high standard of local fish, complemented by Bollhayes’s Champagne Cider who did equally well, aided perhaps by the hot weather! Flowers from Bridget’s Flowers and Islebeck Nursery added to the variety of stalls. There was a mix of different crafts with glassware, cards, prints and photographs from Oliver Hollowell as well as unique lampshades from Nicola Cornish plus willow weaving from Satori and wool weaving from Sarah Downer. There was local woodwork from Carrot Oak and Blackdown Wood Crafts, while Helen Humble provided information on Climate Change.

The Face Painting Stall was popular, as were the cream teas provided by Churchstanton Pre-school Group. Wallace’s farm did a roaring trade as did Lorna’s Porkers, local cheese products were quickly snapped up along with Bumblees award winning preserves to accompany them.

This is only to name a few of the stallholders, the majority of which have booked for next year. There was disappointment when the BBQ did not appear although in true Blackdown style, the Pre-school team with help from volunteers and committee members, rose to the occasion and produced sausage and bacon baps. The raffle composed of donations by the stall holders helped swell funds to £700 for the Community Shop, and the food raising a much needed £670 going to the Pre-school. A really great achievement for which we wish to give a huge THANK YOU to the to the stallholders and volunteers working on the day, and the visitors that supported it by coming.



Neroche Heritage Fingerpost Project: End of Year 1 Update

By John Parsons and Jane Hole

The Fingerpost Team wanted to update the parish on our progress during the year. We got off to a cracking pace and had finished a total of three posts by early May. Our work received many positive comments from villagers and passers-by. The locals were really pleased to see the fingerposts being restored, and especially that the work was being done by volunteers from our own community. There were lots of appreciative car horn honks and thumbs up signs too!

The patterns for 2 new arms at New Road, 3 at Staple Fitzpaine and 3 at Thurlbear were delivered to the foundry in Bristol in mid-June. Unfortunately, things slowed down from then onwards. There were several delays at the foundry and then a family bereavement closed the workshop until mid-September. The new arms were finally collected from the foundry in early October. It has meant we have missed several months of painting weather and cannot start again now until April next year. Finally, the news is all positive, the 8 new arms are back in the parish and already painted with a primer coat. The project is indebted to John Learoyd for his first-rate work on the patterns. We have been loaned workshop and storage space at John Parsons and so the team will have the arms painted and ready for action stations by April!



8 new raw castings back from the foundry



A sample of primed arms next to their patterns (red)

The plan for next spring and summer will now include the renovation of the post, finial and existing arms at New Road together with addition of the 2 new arms. The renovation of the post at Badger Street will also

Continued on next page



Primed arms in storage ready for painting

be part of the summer programme and luckily it doesn't need any new arms. Work on these posts will be done by the volunteers. It is likely we will get contractors to finish off the posts at Staple Fitzpaine and Thurlbear because of their situation next to busy roads.

The Heritage Fingerpost Project was delighted to be awarded £555 from the Somerset Community Foundation Small Grants Scheme

in November 2018. We have spent almost two thirds of the grant on paints and materials and are hopeful we can carry the remainder forward towards new materials next year.

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**



somerset
village & community
agents

News from your Village Agent

By Linda Burton

It's getting colder! Now is a good time to think about your heating and insulation.

SMART meter roll out continues. The meters ensure that your bill is correct every month and not estimated. Smart meters tell you when your energy usage is high. They will save you money if you can turn off the high usage appliances, although please don't turn off your heating and risk illness to save on the bills. Free room thermometers are available which tell you what temperature a room should be, and how yours compares. Call: 0117 934 1400 or look in local information places such as libraries and CAB. Those on income-based benefits can apply to their electricity or gas supplier for a warmer homes discount. If you find yourself getting into debt, always talk to your utilities company who may be able to support you. Contact Wiser Money 01823 461099, enquiries@wisermoney.org.uk or Christians against Poverty <https://capuk.org/> 01274 760720 for advice and support (this can vary depending on your postcode) and check money saving expert for good deals.

Open fires and wood burners need to be cleaned regularly. The National Fire Protection Association says, "Chimneys, fireplaces, and vents should be inspected at least once a year for soundness, freedom from deposits, and correct clearances." Chimney Cleaning/Chimney Inspection Should Be Done Annually.

Also check that your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms (for oil fired heating and open fires and wood burners) are working. Consider a home safety check from Devon and

Somerset fire service <https://www.dsfire.gov.uk>. Call Freephone 0800 05 02 999 who are focussing heavily on fire prevention alongside the proposed service cuts (don't forget to sign the petition!).

Age UK are offering free practical advice about keeping warm and other information about how to insulate well and manage your heating costs for those over 65. Call: 01422 252 040 / 01484 535 994.

Cavity wall and loft insulation can really help, and it is worth checking with your provider to see if there are any offers available. Eon, EDF and NPower are mentioned by Martin Lewis <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/free-cavity-loft-insulation>. Remember to be wary of sharing information with telemarketers, always research their offer independently, and don't agree to anything on the phone!

Heating oil costs can be managed by using an oil buying scheme such as the one provided by ourselves <https://somersestrcc.org.uk/> oil 01823 331222 or using an online comparison tool such as boiler juice <https://www.boilerjuice.com>

Winter tip 1: Drying clothes on a radiator can cause the damp to circulate around the house until it finds a cold patch where it will turn to mould. Try to keep the doors closed and windows open in the room that you use to dry. A bowl of salt can be used to catch the humidity or hanging wardrobe dehumidifiers can be purchased cheaply from discount stores. See Centre for sustainable energy 0117 934 1400 <https://www.cse.org.uk/advice>

Winter tip 2: If you are in the house throughout the day, you may consider volunteering and joining social groups so that you are not having to heat the house so much and this will also make the evenings less isolating.

Winter tip 3: Don't forget to check your drains and gutters for the build-up of debris which can cause blockages and splits when the water starts to freeze. Local window cleaners often offer this service if you are unable to check yourself.

CCS Agents are on hand to support you this winter - to find out more about our work, go to our brand new website www.somersetagents.org – we help when others don't, won't or can't! For Carers specifically go to www.somsetcarers.org

It's coming up to Christmas! Every year CCS Agents collate as many local activities as we can, and publish them in a Somerset wide directory. If you are running a Christmas/New Year event get in touch and we will add it to our Christmas listings to be published late November for free!



07931018019

linda@somersetccc.org.uk

We have a team of Community Agents and Village Agents across Somerset. They help to bridge the gap between isolated, excluded and vulnerable individuals and statutory and/or voluntary organisations which offer specific solutions to identified needs. We can offer advice and support to find local groups and activities available in your community.

Please visit www.somersetccc.org.uk and www.somsetcarers.org or call me to find out who can advise you.

Forestry Commission Update

**By Robert Greenhalgh,
Community Ranger**



What a start to the autumn season we have had. The trees have been in glorious form and the colour along some of the roads, tracks and lanes throughout the Blackdowns have been a real pleasure to travel and roam, thanks to the vibrant palette! We've also noticed an explosion in mycology with fungi seemingly everywhere, in wild and weird forms. A real highlight for me this year, alongside the Dog vomit slime mould (*Fulgio Septica*), has been the Elfin saddle (*Helvella lacunose*) – a wonderfully mystical looking fungus said to be associated with elves who would ride them in the dead of night!

In the wider landscape, we are getting ready for the planting season as the days shorten in the forest. We plant trees when they are dormant and can best survive the disturbance to their delicate roots. This year we are going to be planting 27,000 new trees in the area at Castle Neroche that was cleared a few years ago. This will support the natural regeneration of any desirable tree species that have already found their way onto the site such as oak, beech and spruce. We have chosen to plant cedar on the site as it will be happy there although also hopefully remain productive as the climate changes over the next 60 years, which is the life span of the 'crop'. This is becoming an increasingly difficult choice to make as we now have to balance so many factors and some of the usual choices are no longer available because of the increasing number of tree diseases. To help protect these trees from the deer population we will be erecting a fence around the site, this will create a visual impact although hopefully people will still enjoy the views for a few years until the trees grow enough to block the view anyway!

We recently carried out some work within Piddle Wood, Wych Lodge, haloing the ancient Piddle Oaks. Haloing is a process of clearing surrounding trees, shrubs and foliage from veteran or ancient trees to allow them space to thrive – it allows light, air and nutrients into these ancient giants so that they might survive another few hundred years

thanks to our sympathetic management. Colleagues from within Forestry England, the Forestry Commission, DEFRA and other local groups such as the Neroche Woodlanders helped to clear the foliage over a series of five volunteer sessions. Thanks to all who helped out, the work has made a dramatic improvement!

We have also staged an event in association with the Neroche Woodlanders at Young Wood reigniting our passion for the Castle's history, heritage and legendary statues in lore and folk tales. We staged an event on Tuesday 29th October to invite local families and visitors along to help us put the dragons to bed. A good number of people attended, although we hope to build on this for coming years. As many of you are aware, dragons dwell within Somerset, are connected hugely to the counties history, and as we have our very own dragon association at Castle Neroche we wanted to pay tribute to this, and hopefully bring back an old tradition since forgotten. Huge thanks to the team at Neroche Woodlanders for their help and support – we look forward to working with you again in spring to reawaken the dragons from their wintery slumber!

Forestry Commission Centenary

A tree planting ceremony took place on 20th November at Castle Neroche to commemorate the centenary of the Forest Commission. The tree is a Wild service tree, which has ancient woodland associations, and is adorned by a commemorative plaque. A number of people attended from various local organisations, on what was a very cold Wednesday. This was followed up by a warming lunch at Neroche Hall, catered by the ladies of the WI.



By Jacqueline Kolkowski

MEETINGS

In September, Geoff Rickson came and spoke to us about The Samaritans and explained how they evolved, and how the charity has helped millions of people since being founded in 1953 by a vicar called Chad Varah. October had a craft theme to the evening. Fon Cousins came and showed us how to make willow craft decorations - some found this quite challenging didn't you Jacqueline!

Our November meeting welcomed Katherine Crouch, a local gardener and garden designer, who won the first BBC gardener of the year competition. Katherine gave an interesting and very amusing talk on various aspects of work. She demonstrated tools that were labour saving and very advantageous to those gardeners with muscular and joint ailments.

EVENTS

Our Summer outing this year was to J W Blooms, a cut flower nursery in Hillcommon, growing traditional British flowers, cottage-garden favourites and wildflowers. Many of their flowers are used for weddings. It was an excellent and very informative visit. Jan gave us a guided tour of the flower fields explaining her methods of growing the flowers, the varieties she grows, and where she obtains her seeds and bulbs.

Excellent tips were given on conditioning flowers for use in bouquets or just the vase. We ended the tour as one does with tea and cake, and a list of new



ideas and flowers to try and grow in our gardens next spring.

The **POP UP CAFÉ** is still a great success. Last month we welcomed a group of 10 wet walkers who enjoyed many a slice of cake before continuing on their long walk. We will be running another Bric-a-brac sale on the 8th December. The festive “come decorate our Christmas Tree” will be held on Saturday 14th December. The cafe **WILL BE OPEN** on Friday 27th December.

The WI run the Cafe every Friday in St Peter’s Church Staple Fitzpaine from 10.30am till 12.30pm. Do drop in for a slice of home-made cake or scrummy savouries, we would love to see you, and enjoy the chats and friendship found at these busy Friday mornings.

Look out for more events being run by the church and the WI during the Friday cafe.

SPORTING EVENTS

We are still getting a wiggle on with our walking netball, the standard of the play has really improved. It’s very enjoyable to play with and umpire the teams.

Skittles Our first game in this year’s knock out skittle league was against Ilminster WI at the Bell in Broadway. Our hopes were high, we had a strong team, there was fierce competition from members to even get a place in the team with trials held the week before. We started off really well, even though one of our team got a bit confused with the rules! Luckily, we had Rosemary with us for support and who put us straight on a few things,

Alas, from a good start, we went down-hill rapidly and LOST. So only a year to wait till the next competition, let’s get those friendlies played.

10 pin bowling members attended this enjoyable morning, run by the Federation and Frances was in the winning team. Members also attended a taster morning for **Short Tennis**.

Bickenhall and District WI usually meet the second Wednesday of each month, we are now in the process of organising next year’s interesting programme of speakers and events and would be delighted to welcome new members to our meetings.

Please contact Tricia Dryden at tricia@witchlodge.co.uk

Naturally Bright Nutrition

By Jessie Bright



It's the festive season again! How can you have a great time without either depriving yourself or putting on lots of weight? This Christmas Survival Guide will give you some ideas for what to avoid and what fabulous healthy and delicious choices you can make in order for you to look good and feel healthy in January and beyond!

Normal routine tends to go out of the window over Christmas. However, make sure you don't forget about yourself and still take the time to plan your food and look after yourself. That way, you will still have the right choices in the house, and it will be much easier for you to feel your best.

The festive period is a time to have fun and spend time with family and friends who might have been further afield during the rest of the year. Having fun doesn't need to come at the expense of feeling rubbish in January and feeling like you have to go on 'a diet'.

I have some top tips to enjoy the season. This will give you the freedom to enjoy yourself without the feelings of deprivation or the pressure to rebel...!

1. Be Balanced - Manage portions. Eat slowly. Savour each mouthful. It takes your brain 20 minutes to let your stomach know it's full.
2. Ensure each meal has a portion of protein (animal or plant-based) and use plenty of seasonal vegetables for soups and stews. They're cheaper with higher nutritional value due to their freshness. Serve with low GI carbs like quinoa, brown rice and sweet potato which release slow-burning energy to keep you going, and you are less likely to stuff your face with Christmas chocolates afterwards which are notoriously high in salt, fat, and sugar and will leave you feeling bloated and not at your best.
3. Start your day right with a warming, fortifying bowl of porridge topped with seasonal stewed fruit and nuts. They'll keep you

fuller for longer, and boost your immune system. Stewing fruits in honey and cinnamon ensure you're getting a nice dose of vitamins to get you through the day.

4. Don't go to a party hungry. If you do, you are more likely to make choices that don't best serve you.
5. Move your body. Encourage the family to get out in the fresh air with you for a morning walk - it's a great way to start the day and spend quality family time together too.
6. Drink plenty of water- add in fruit for added nutrients and to make it taste yummy too. This will encourage you not to overeat and will also improve how you feel the next day!
7. Make good alcohol choices. Avoid creamy or sweet drinks. Try to drink with food as this will reduce the impact of the sugars on your blood stream.
8. Bulk cook so you always have some food options available.
9. Most of all - Be gentle with yourself. If you do happen to overindulge, to enjoy whatever you are indulging in and get back on track afterwards.

Try my **No bake fudgy energy bars** for something sweet that is full of healthy goodies too.

For the bars:

- 1 cup packed pitted Medjool dates
- ¼ cup raw walnuts and ¼ cup raw pecans halves
- ½ cup shelled pistachios, divided
- ¼ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder (or cacao powder)
- 1 tablespoon melted virgin coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ cup goji berries (or dried cherries)



- 1 tablespoon warm water, if necessary

For the topping

- 1.5 ounces 85% dark chocolate (vegan, if desired)
- To garnish:
 - 1 tablespoon shelled pistachios
 - 1 tablespoon chopped pecans
 - A pinch of Maldon sea salt to sprinkle on top

Directions

1. Add dates, walnuts, pecans, only $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of pistachios to the bowl of a food processor. Process until chunky. Next add in unsweetened shredded coconut, chia seeds, cocoa powder, coconut oil and vanilla extract. Process again until mixture is chunky and slightly clumping. If mixture is dry, add 1-2 tablespoons of warm water.
2. Next add in remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pistachios and goji berries and pulse again a few times until pistachios are slightly chunky. Add mixture into an 8×4 inch loaf pan lined with parchment paper, pressing evenly towards the sides of the pan.
3. Melt dark chocolate in a bowl in pan of hot water (Bain Marie). Pour over the bars mixture, covering evenly. Garnish with 1 tablespoon of the following: pistachios, goji berries and crushed pecans.
4. Place mixture in the freezer for 30 minutes -1 hour to harden. Once ready to serve, sprinkle with Maldon sea salt then cut into 8 squares. Store covered in the freezer for up to 1 month.

If you want to start 2020 feeling your best and are sick of being 'on a diet' why not join me in my January Jump Start community. Starting on 6th January for just £49 it is a 4 week supportive programme with no fad diets or calorie counting in sight – just a supportive community with yummy recipes to help you feel at your best. Get my support as a Nutritional Therapist, a private Facebook group so we can all support each other, and a free ebook packed with yummy recipes to help you feel at your best. What are you waiting for – jump right in and kick start your January by taking care of number one – YOU – contact me at info@naturallybrightnutrition.co.uk to join. Let's make 2020 YOUR year!

Events for your calendar

(Venue is Neroche Hall unless stated)

December 2019

- 1 Pick Your Own Xmas Tree at Staple Farm
- 5 Xmas Lunch
- 14 Decorate our Tree - St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine
- 21 Carol Singing around Neroche villages

January 2020

- 8 Quiz Night (The Greyhound)
- 9 Thursday Lunch Club
- 31 Friday Film Night - Downton Abbey

February 2020

- 5 Quiz Night (The Greyhound)
- 6 Thursday Lunch Club
- 22 Murder Mystery Night - "Who Killed the Secret Agent?"

For latest updates visit www.nerochevillages.org.uk/events-calendar



Christmas and New Year 2019/20

Usual collection day	Revised collection day
Monday-Tuesday 23-24 December	No change
Wednesday 25 - Friday 27 December	All two days later , including Friday pick-ups on Sunday 29 December
Monday-Tuesday 30-31 December	No change
Wednesday 1 January - Friday 3 January	All one day later , including Friday pick-ups on Saturday 4 January
Monday 6 January	Usual collections resume

Revised days also apply to **assisted and clinical waste collections**. No **garden waste collections** 24 December - 3 January; resume from 6 January. **Recycling sites** on usual schedules, including all open **9am-4pm Saturday-Sunday 21-22 and 28-29 December**, and **4-5 January**. All sites close 25-26 December, 1 January. **Christmas trees**: home compost, take to recycling site or council drop-off point, book charity collection or, garden waste subscribers **only**, add undecorated trees under 6ft to garden waste collection from 7 January. (**Last resort**: place next to your rubbish bin on usual collection day 6-17 January 2019 and send it to costly, wasteful landfill.)

Follow **Somersetwaste** on **Facebook** and **Twitter**. **Advice, from weather to food waste: www.somersetwaste.gov.uk**

SWP manages waste services on behalf of all Somerset councils

Local Communication and Information

Websites:

Neroche Villages 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

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

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: nerochemail@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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