

## REMEMBRANCE DAY



*Cleobury Concert Brass led a fine parade through the town to the Cenotaph, where the two minutes silence was solemnly observed.*

Remembrance Sunday is a major event in the town, which normally draws a crowd to line both sides of the High Street. You need to get there early to get a good view of the passing parade and capture the atmosphere of respect for the occasion, though there were few people evident in our shot.

More about the event and the people on Page 31.

## A CHRISTMAS WISH

A very happy Christmas to every Clarion reader, with the hope that the occasion will bring you health and happiness and a New Year that will give more than the gloom mongers are forecasting. Thank you for reading the Clarion, a special thank to all our contributors and best wishes to all Shropshire people.

## MATT SHEEHAN RETIRES

Matt Sheehan, who has served this community as Clerk to the Parish Council and more recently as Town Clerk, has stepped down from his position, due in part to ill health. He has been a hard working, helpful presence who helped a lot of people beyond what his job title suggests.

A thoroughly decent and hard working man who was proud of this town, he writes a farewell and thank you note on Page 17,

## RUNNING CLUB ACCLAIMED

Cleobury Mortimer Running Club has been recognised as Regional Club of the Year. This is for the second time, as they won the same award in 2018!

At the England Athletics Volunteer Awards they were described as "A welcoming, friendly and inclusive club with excellent coaches and almost 200 members, who all support each other in training, at park runs and at races."

"They work with the local community hub and have welcomed members who need company as well as regular exercise, enabling refugees from neighbouring towns to join for free, as well as supporting local school events and parading on Remembrance Day."

That is a tremendous vote of confidence in both the club and the community it represents. A picture of the award and more inside on Page 13.



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*One very fit lady.  
Klassie Kerrie  
See Page 9.*



*How to taste Scotch Whisky  
properly - a demonstration.  
See Page 31.*



*In Business. Heath Farm Meats  
is a truly family affair.  
See Page 53.*

## **And On Other Pages....**

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### **VALERIE'S CARD**

Wishing all family, friends and neighbours a very happy Christmas and a good New Year. A donation has been given to the Royal British Legion in lieu of cards, to thank family and carers for their help and care over the past year with my illness

God bless you all.

*Valerie Carter*

### **LIME TREE PLEACHING**

The Horticultural Society hosted a coffee morning in October, to raise funds towards the annual pleaching of our historic Lime Trees. We realised £312.00, and to those who supported the event, our thanks.

Appreciation also goes to John al at Market Hall. of Hands-on-Printing who supplied our new banner. Also thanks for from Spire Hairdressing, Cleoburrs, The Wash House and Ashley's Bakery for displaying our poster in their shop windows.

What is pleaching? A style of growing trees in a line, where the branches are tied onto canes or wires to form tiers

and then clipped to form a flat plane. This is a very specialised arboricultural technique used since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in France and Italy, which fell out of fashion until pleached trees began to appear again in Chelsea Flower Show gardens.

The Lime Trees that grace our High Street were planted 120 years ago to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and photographs taken over the years show they were regarded as a very important feature of our Town. Initially, the trees were simply lopped to prevent them growing too big.

Several years ago the Horticultural Society was responsible for training them into the pleached structure you see today, which is a unique feature in Shropshire.. Even in winter the pleached trees play an important role when showing off our Christmas lights. We are aware a photograph of our trees is displayed in a small French town as an illustration of how such a feature can enhance the local

environment. The Horticultural Society now helps to manage the annual pleaching contract work which is carried out by a specialist arborecare company.

*Linda Ashman, Sec, CMHS*

### **A SPECIAL EVENT FOR THE FRIENDS OF SAINT MARY'S**

The Friends have invited the Ludlow Male Voice Choir to perform in the church on Saturday 3rd December at 7.30 p.m. It will be a really enjoyable evening.

Tickets cost £10 each and are inclusive of a hot drink and a mince pie in the interval. If you'd like to go please let me know on 01299 272820, or any member of the committee.

We hope to see you there.

*Diane Waddington*

### **COCO COFFEE MORNINGS**

There will not be a CoCo coffee morning on Wednesday 28th December.

Also our prices will be going up from January to £3.00 for tea/coffee and a slice of delicious homemade cake- still excellent value for money!

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### **CLEOBURY W.I.**

The Winter Warmer Lunch was well-supported by members and locals, despite the main road being closed! It was good to see so many local people enjoying home-made warming soup and desserts. Proceeds will go towards our donation to the Midlands Air Ambulance, our chosen charity for this year.

The latest donations for the children's clothes recycling initiative have been sorted into boxes which are stored under the stairs in the Market Hall. Anyone in the community is welcome to take whatever clothes they can make use of for their children or grandchildren.

We welcomed Mark Baldwin to our November meeting to speak about the Women of Bletchley Park during WWII. Mark explained the function of the Enigma machine and his machine was on display. We learned that of nearly 10,000 personnel who were key to code-breaking, 75% were women. Mark's talks are always interesting and informative, and the event attracted many visitors in addition to our own members.

On Remembrance Day ten members were proud to take part in the Parade to church.

Fran and Maggie laid a wreath on our behalf.

Many of the beautiful plants in the centenary garden have come to an end with the onset of winter. We plan to plant the commemorative tree on December 7<sup>th</sup>, the actual date of our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday! Members are invited to join us at 2.30pm for the planting, followed by tea, prosecco and celebration cake at 10 Church Street.

Our Christmas social for members is on December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Market Hall. Meals are to be provided by the Kings Arms, and we will have our usual Secret Santa, which is optional. Those who wish to join in are asked to provide a wrapped gift to the value of £5 and are then able to receive a gift from the sack.

For further information or to join WI, you are welcome to contact Clare 01299 271905 or Judy 01299 270983 or email [judysant10@gmail.com](mailto:judysant10@gmail.com)

*Val Sniadowski*

### **THANK YOU**

John Wall and his wife went to the Larch Barn for lunch on November 2nd before shopping in Kidderminster and heading for home. Only then did John

realise that he'd lost his wedding ring, a serious matter for a couple with 61 happy years to look back on. John phoned the Larch Barn on the 7th, hoping that it might have been found there.

Imagine his surprise and delight when a call from the Larch Barn next day told him that waitress Sarah Stanway had found the ring. It's now back with John, who would like to thank Sarah for her care and honesty.

### **THE ROYAL FOUNTAIN IS BACK**

Good news for those who enjoy pub life with accompanying food - the Royal Fountain is back. It's had a varied life in recent months, but was much missed by those who liked the excellent garden and outdoor dining.

I've booked to take my lady there before you read this and will report in the February issue. In the meantime, we wish Lizzie Butcher the best of success and a prosperous life behind the pumps. Good to see the place open again. *JR*

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At the Pump House she offers a wide range of exercises, from chair fitness for the less agile through to body conditioning and combat. She has morning times reserved through the week to accommodate whatever special attention you may need from her range of nine. You can be spoiled for choice here.

The beauty and holistic treatments cover a huge range, from pedicures to facials and Indian head massage. It's one very impressive range and a call to Kerrie on 07812 586312 gives you the chance to learn more detail than we can fit on this page.

So it's a local girl making good, full of enthusiasm and a wish to help you look and feel fit. Fully insured and with a list of qualifications nearly as long as your arm.

## DODDINGTON NEWS

After a long wait, the Developing Our Heritage project is moving ahead with real purpose. We have appointed Jim Grevatte, a heritage consultant, to help us shape our plans and submit a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund next year. At this stage it is vital that we fully understand what local people and visitors to the area need from our special church. What facilities should we create within the church, how can we engage people with the local heritage and what are people interested in? These are key questions as we develop our design for the church, who it works with and what it offers in the future. You can really help us with this by completing our short questionnaire. Copies are

available in the church and locally, and we will be attending local events in the coming weeks. If you want to share your ideas from the comfort of your home, then this QR code scanned on your smartphone will take you to an online version. If you would like to speak to us about the project, please get in touch as below.



Our Carol Service with Cleobury Country Brass is at 3pm on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> – come and enjoy a good sing of traditional carols in the seasonally decorated church followed by mince pies and sherry. All are welcome! For up to date news with more on our project as it unfolds follow us on Facebook: @StJohnsDoddington, or check our website: [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10505/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10505/) Email: [stjohnsdoddington@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsdoddington@gmail.com)  
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## SILLY BIT

**Just back from my mate's funeral. He was hit on the head by a tennis ball. It was a lovely service.**

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## **THE BREAKFAST CLUB**

At our November meeting we were due to hear a talk about 'Conflict Management and Personal Safety'. Unfortunately, the speaker failed to attend, but. However, Peter Blackburn rose to the challenge and elected to speak on the very subject our planned speaker was to address. On several occasions in the past, we have seen one of our members fill such a gap at short notice, but never have they picked up the very baton dropped by the absentee.

Peter stressed that the primary aim in a conflict situation should be to save life and minimise harm, and active listening skills are essential to help calm a situation and work towards understanding the problem. Then solutions can be explored to help any person in crisis. 'A soft answer turneth away wrath' (Proverbs, chapter 15) is excellent advice, endorsed by Peter. We might add the next phrase, too 'but grievous words stir up anger', and anger is exactly what should be avoided. Creating time and space to reach out to a person in crisis, and building a rapport and trust, should be

encouraged. Negotiation is one of many tactics and it has proven effective in resolving many situations with no-one being hurt. It's often good to talk to resolve a crisis. Altogether a thought-provoking talk, delivered with Peter's usual confidence.

This month our meeting will be held on the 6th and will be addressed by Mark Baldwin, who promises a brand new subject which has probably never been tackled in Cleobury before. Those wishing to attend should contact Angela Drennan (270636) to book places.

### **IN PRAISE OF...**

Just to say a "BIG THANK YOU" to Matt who owns Mawley Matt Garage in Cleobury Mortimer, who could not have been more helpful with my car.

In April, I took my car to the dealership where I bought it from new and they advised me I needed new discs along with replacement brake pads. I decided to go and see Matt, who checked my brake pads and discs on two occasions at no cost to me and told me that the discs were absolutely fine and the brake pads had at least 7000 miles still left on them.

As we bought the car from new and paid for five years servicing, when it needed to be M.O.T'd in September, I went back to see Matt and again he got under the car and let me know they still had 3ml left on the brake pads, which would pass an M.O.T.

Surprise, surprise, on the day of the M.O.T. I had a phone call from the dealership to say it would fail due to the brake pads. I challenged this and they immediately said they would put it down as an advisory and pass the M.O.T. I also had a problem with the wing mirror; the dealership stated, it wasn't repairable and would cost £572.00 to replace.

The dealership then heavily discounted the price of the pads and wing mirror replacement to cost £405.00. Mawley Matt replaced the pads and successfully repaired the wing mirror, at the cost of £150.98, which saved me 66%.

From now on, I will be using Mawley Matt Garage, who I can thoroughly recommend, who are so helpful and courteous, trustworthy and who are not going to rip you off.

*Robert Powell*



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Afternoon Session	12:30am - 3:00pm	£10.00
After School Club	3:00pm - 5:30pm	£10.00



**CLEOBURY  
RUNNING CLUB  
AWARD**



*Club secretary Lindsay Tillsley (left) and coach Lisa Garlick with big smiles in place as they accept the West Midlands Club of the Year award.*

Accepting the award, Lindsay said: "We were just so shocked and couldn't believe that we'd actually won it again. We are so proud of everyone in the club, and it was just so nice to hear us described as 'a wonderful example of what they look for in a club'."

England Athletics Head of Talent Sarah Benson was there, along with Luke Gunn, three times Commonwealth Games steeple chaser. Select company!

**STOTTESDON W.I.**

We have had a full and varied programme this year. After nearly two years of meetings on Zoom, we have enjoyed meeting in person.

The programme was organised on a month by month basis, because of the on/off with lockdown. Special thanks to our resourceful programme co-ordinator and committee for their efforts in bringing interesting and engaging speakers to us. This included

Life and Fortunes of Emma Hamilton, Home Swap to Sri Lanka, Singing Tutorial, Quilling, Plight of our Curlews, Tour at Pool Meadows, Larch Barn Lunch, Yoga Garden Party, Apple Stories, Art and Science of Communication, and Christmas Decorations using Fimo Clay.

In addition, we have supported the following local charities: Ludlow Foyer Project; Save our Curlews; the Ukrainian Support Group

We have two facebook pages, a public and a private one as well as a WhatsApp Chat group for committee and members.

My thanks to all our members for their friendship, support and contributions to our Group. New members and visitors always given a warm welcome.

*Helen Hale*

**FROM THE  
BANDROOM**

Everyone loves the sound of a brass band at Christmas, there will be plenty of opportunity to hear us carol playing (and perhaps pop a bit in our donation tin please!)

After we have brought some early Christmas cheer to the CM lights switch on, you can also expect to hear us playing some carols at both Morrisons and Sainsburys in Kidderminster, the lovely Doddington carol service on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> at 3pm and a stint down the High Street on the evening of 20<sup>th</sup> December.

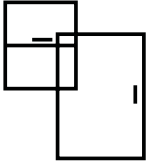
But the MAIN event of the season is our Christmas Concert, on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December in the Parish Hall, tickets are £10 and available from The Wash House or Amanda on 01584 891199 – we look forward to seeing you there!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas from all at CMCB.

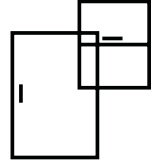
*Katie Griffiths*

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### NEWS FROM COCO

It's been a while since Cleobury C o m p a s s i o n a t e Communities (CoCo) have updated you, though we remain as active in the community as ever, albeit discreetly. But we are soon to make some noise again, as we plan a couple of resounding community events for the early New Year in the form of a Springtime Concert in the Church and a Pub Quiz! Details to follow.

You might be surprised to know that the running costs of CoCo can be as much as £5000 per annum, making the need for fund raising so important. There are hidden costs attached to each of our team of volunteers who receive training, a DBS check, on-going supervision and insurance. Money well spent, for the minimum of 2,300 hours we will have spent visiting the more isolated amongst us in 2022 alone!

Periodically, we also offer individuals discreet one-off monetary support with things like fuel, hot meals and emergency care, as well as on-going support with specialist day-care – which can be a real life-line to a person or couple in need.

And then CoCo is also always keen to look outwards into our wider community and offer financial support where it's needed, be that to the CM Men's Shed in its early days, in supporting individuals costs for Nineveh Ridge Care Farm or earlier this year funding educational books for our Ukrainian visitors English studies. But perhaps one of the most significant things CoCo

has supported, both financially and with volunteers in the last two years, is the setting up of the Good Grief Café alongside Cleobury Community Hub. A project quietly and consistently offering a welcoming space for those feeling the loss of a loved one, to come and be together, share experience and find comfort in that.

So we hope you will be able to support the fund raisers planned for 2022 and in turn support the many ways we reach out into our community. Alternately you may like to support the regular CoCo coffee morning every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 10-12 at the Market Hall, all proceeds from which go to the main CoCo project.

If you are interested in becoming a CoCo volunteer or want to refer someone to receive a regular visit, please contact Katja on 07966080111 / [cleoburycoco@hotmail.com](mailto:cleoburycoco@hotmail.com).

*Katja Jones*

### ST. MARY'S CHURCH CLOCK TOWER

If you've been walking past the church you might be forgiven for thinking that nothing is happening up in the tower. You may not be able to see it, but much progress is being made. The clock mechanism was removed to the workshop of Cumbria Clock Co in August, and we understand that following restoration work it's performing very well there on test. We hope to have an idea quite soon of when it will be back.

The bell frame was painted on schedule in October, and after a month's lay-off we are now able to ring again. The work went very well, and we are grateful

to Nicholson Engineering and Ian Hasman for the efficient way in which it was carried out.

Work on the staircase design is moving more slowly for various technical reasons, but we hope to be able to agree a final specification quite soon. Although we had hoped that the whole project might be completed in 2022, it's now clear that this part will not now be done until some time in the new year.

Our fund-raising continues satisfactorily. My sponsored walk raised the magnificent sum of £10,500, including Gift Aid tax relief. Thank you so much to all of you who sponsored me. For those who are interested, there's an account of the walk on the Benefice website. We have been promised a grant from the Bell Restoration Fund of the Hereford Diocesan Guild of Bellringers towards the frame painting, and from the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers towards the clock restoration. However, until we have a final agreed specification and costing for the staircase, we will not know what our final commitment for the whole project will be. Hopefully we will have this before too long.

*Chris Kippin*

### VETERANS' SURVEY

An addition to the National Census, this Survey is being carried out to learn more about the lives of the UK Armed Forces community. Find out what to expect at Veterans' Survey - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk)) There are copies of the questionnaire. The Survey Enquiry Line is 0800 085 7376.





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*This letter from Matt Sheehan is his personal way of saying "Thank You" to the people who have known and supported him in his work for the town. JR.*

### **Thank you to the Community**

As most may now be aware I have had to retire early from Cleobury Mortimer Town Council, as your Clerk due to ill health. This decision was not made lightly but with advice from health professionals and other factors.

Over the thirteen years as Town Clerk, I am proud with what we have achieved, especially in the last ten years with the guidance of the last two chairs of Sean Thorogood and now Debbie Brown. Working together with all the councillors, that were only there to help the community. We turned it around and have worked wonders together in partnership with the community to enhance what we had. With all we have achieved we are frequently used as an example to other councils of our integrity, transparency and community led involvement.

Another landmark was to get the new Medical Centre built and located in Cleobury, which has proved invaluable and a great asset and benefit to many.

Over my time we have raised well over £100,000 from grants to help pay for lots of projects in the last ten years so as not to use the council tax, thus keeping our contribution low. Grants were applied for and secured for many things including, the CCTV system of 32 cameras and a complete ring of steel around Cleobury, which came from the Crime Reduction group of council and community members. Love Lane Play area refurbishment, outdoor gym equipment, dog training area, and bike trail. We took over and enhanced the Christmas lights which were put up and taken down by community volunteers every year and are now using our own electricity supply. We worked with Katja at Compassionate Communities and the Community volunteers to get our community through the Covid crisis with the help of selfless volunteers to help those struggling. Started the annual festival involving all community groups. A new way of doing the Annual Parish Meeting involving the community with prizes for outstanding businesses and community members. Given grants to good causes and local start-ups.

I worked with Cllr Brown on her great idea to set up the Food Bank also supported with partnership of both churches, which has proved to be a lifeline to the vulnerable in our community, also a big thank you to the community members and businesses for their continued donations. We also worked with Katja at Compassionate Communities to help the elderly and vulnerable at Christmas, by putting together cards and gifts. We were the First Town in Shropshire to have Smartwater and become a 'We Don't Buy Crime' town. Solar lighting and new bins in the QE11 area by the Skate Park and new steps from the playing field. Two new speed signs for each end of the town (secured the grant before I went off sick) yet to be fitted. But our greatest achievement was to have a good working relationship with the community and local groups plus all the volunteers that we are so lucky to have and value so much. This put us above most other councils and gained us county wide recognition and Gold Standard Quality status.

Now the Neighbourhood plan group is working very hard to make sure that the new houses we have been told we must have, are what we want to be built and where.

Working together and being totally transparent has been the main aim that I and the councillors have worked to achieve and to get as much benefit for our community as we could. If you have time and a wish to enhance the community, then think of being a Town councillor. Councillors are volunteers just like the special volunteers we are so lucky to have in Cleobury and surrounding area.

I want to thank you the community for your support over the years and especially the volunteers that made my job a lot easier, also both Churches, Ashley, and Justin and many of our community groups, businesses and certain individuals that are too many to mention but know who they are. It has been a long and sometimes a very challenging road but together we came through it, and I will miss it.

I will still be around to help when I can but wish you all good health and the best for the future. Please look after each other as we never know what tomorrow brings.

*Matt Sheehan*

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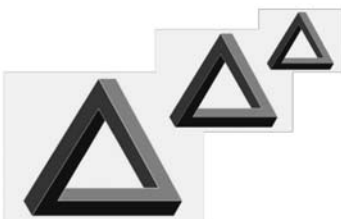
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The November 26th Christmas Fair at Victory Hall saw people get some special bargains in good time for the Festive Season. The final event in a very eventful year for the Hall. Redecoration work is progressing well and will ensure that the Hall is ready for a busy New Year.

Remi Harris will be returning to the Hall on February 3rd for another memorable musical event. Tickets from [yardbirdarts@gmail.com](mailto:yardbirdarts@gmail.com) or by ringing Dani on 01584 881564 or 07814 986868.

Another musical event on February 25th when Moss Casa will be appearing at the Hall. The Management Committee would like to thank everyone who has been kind enough to support the Hall throughout this year and to wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Contact the hall on 07738 014884 or 07379 959895, email [admin@clowstopvictoryhall.co.uk](mailto:admin@clowstopvictoryhall.co.uk) or visit the Clows Top Victory Hall Facebook Page.

*Nigel Caldicott*

## FAR FOREST POPPY APPEAL

At the recent Branch meeting Poppy Appeal Organiser Jim Wood declared that over £7300

had already been banked and the counting of the contents of other collection boxes was progressing. Martin Fisher took up the role of Appeal Organiser for Strensham Services and informed members that whilst counting was continuing, the collections had already totalled in excess of £17900!

Rev Sallie Butcher, Branch Chaplain confirmed that the Church Collection during the Remembrance Service realised well over £300 for the Appeal.

The Branch meets at the Rock Cross Inn at 7pm on the second Monday of each month. Contact: [chairman@farforestandrocklegion.org.uk](mailto:chairman@farforestandrocklegion.org.uk). The Branch also has its own Facebook Page visit Far Forest and Rock Legion Branch.

*Nigel Caldicott*

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

I would like to thank all who have supported us throughout the year. Support for the Poppy Appeal was again excellent this year; the Appeal runs for a whole year from the end of October and in 21/22 raised £6666.23. We don't yet have results for the house-to-house and street collections for this November yet but I will publicise them as soon as they are available.

We had a great evening at the Poppy Concert and Fish & Chip Supper at the Parish Hall in October; entertainment by the Shropshire-based Ukulele band Koswekans. Two hours of great music which, at times, had members on their feet. Mimi's Plaice supplied the excellent fish and chips. A total of £265.00 was raised for the Poppy Appeal.

We plan to increase the presence of the RBL in the area next year in an attempt to improve membership which is falling. Please remember that you don't have to have served in the military and you can all play a part. Branch meetings are in the Sports & Social Club on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7pm.

*Mike Hermolle*

## COCO COFFEE MORNINGS

Catherine Evans writes to tell us that there will not be a Coffee Morning on December 28th.

And in January the cost of the morning treats will be going up - which is no more than what we expected. From next month the price will rise to £3.00 for coffee or tea and a slice of delicious home made cake. We'll keep on reminding you that these friendly gatherings are in the Market Hall on the second and fourth Wednesday in the month. Start time: 10.00.



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# Stepping Out! Who's Walking, When and Where.

## C.M. FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION

December brings a change of season with shorter days and colder temperatures. The meteorological year is divided into seasons of three complete months. The astronomical system is linked to the rotation and tilt of the Earth with the seasons changing at the solstices or equinoxes. So meteorological winter begins on 1<sup>st</sup> with astronomical winter at the solstice on 21<sup>st</sup>.

There was a steady rain throughout November's Country Walk. Nine people attended including six visitors from the London area. The walk followed the route of CMFA Walk 17 (Round of Golf). Visitors were delighted to walk in the lovely countryside around Cleobury despite the adverse conditions. Frequent stops were made to point out historical trivia around the route. The 4½ mile route was completed in 2½ hours. We returned to Cleobury thoroughly wet but with a sense of achievement. The last walk for 2022 is at 10.00am on December 4<sup>th</sup> and will be based on CMFA Walk 12 (The Bransley Twist).

The Country Walk on New Year's Day will start at 2.00pm outside the Market Hall. Food will be provided at the Kings Arms for all walkers. Join us to blow away the cobwebs and welcome 2023.

The work parties in November and December replaced a stile with a gate and repaired several steps. These completed a busy year repairing and clearing the local footpaths. Our organiser and group of volunteers have earned the traditional Winter break with no work parties planned for January or February. If you see anything that should be included in the plans for 2023 please use the link on the CMFA website. It also has details of our Adopt-a-Path scheme where individuals undertake to look after a specific path and keep it free of summer weeds. Maybe you could help with this in 2023?

The recent heavy rain has already made several local paths slippery so the Walking for Health walks will be staying on paved paths. There are many lanes and surfaced paths around Cleobury that make interesting walks. There will be no Walking for Health on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> December. 14<sup>th</sup> December, 11 and 25 January 2023 are all as

usual. Meet outside the Market Hall at 10.00am.

The last Social Walk of 2022 was on 26<sup>th</sup> November. Starting in Aston-on-Clun then heading along the Hopesay Valley to Wort Hill with its wonderful views. The next outing will be on the last Saturday of January.

I would like to thank anyone who has read my thoughts and ramblings during 2022, it has been fun!

CMFA activities are on our website [www.cmfa.co.uk](http://www.cmfa.co.uk) and also on Facebook.

*Veronica Hargreaves*

## ROCK PATHFINDERS

### December walks:

Thursday 1st: 10.00am start from St Peter's Church, Martley WR6 6QE

Thursday 15th, 10.00am. Stourport Farm Shop, Walshes Farm Park, Dunley Road, Stourport DY13 0AA.

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*Susan Humphries*



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The continuation of warm weather into autumn has kept flowers flowering and insects buzzing for much longer than normal. This is good news for the birds that stay, or arrive, for the winter although those looking for berries saw them disappear at the usual rate. Ivy is a wonderful source of nectar and pollen during the autumn and early winter, as the Hornet in the photo has discovered. After the flowers the berries provide a feast for Wood Pigeons, Thrushes, Blackbirds and Blackcaps, so it is a very valuable plant for wildlife.



When the frosts come they accelerate the leaf drop from trees and finish off the tender plants, but do they signal the beginning of hibernation? The temperature is certainly a factor in a complicated set of triggers which include day length and food availability.

In the UK quite a number of creatures enter a state of hibernation. Cold-blooded creatures including bees, ants, ladybirds, some butterflies (such as the Peacock), frogs, newts, toads and snakes just cannot function in low temperatures anyway but in mammals it is a behavioural and physiological adaptation to survive periods with little food. The metabolic rate drops to less than 5% of normal and, for Hedgehogs, Dormice and bats, the winter is spent in a state similar to a deep sleep. Squirrels, which make winter dreys out of close-knit leafy twigs up in the forks of tree trunks, sleep huddled together there for warmth but wake in milder periods for the purpose of toileting and seeking out a snack from their stores. The same is true of Hedgehogs to a lesser extent, and for them it is riskier as they don't have stores of food and they may expend more energy than they can make up.

We can help hibernating creatures by providing shelter, whether it be bug hotels, heaps of leaves or piles of woody prunings, and making sure we don't disturb these during the winter.

I hope you'll be enjoying the season and, like our wildlife, have plenty of shelter, company and food this Christmas!

*Linda Iles*



**PHILIP DUNNE VISITS CLEOBURY  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



*Philip Dunne with an enthusiastic reception committee from the school.*

Philip Dunne visited Cleobury Mortimer Primary School in November. He was introduced to the School Assembly by teacher Mrs Nicola Mountjoy and met the School Council.

Mr Dunne said, "I was very encouraged to see Cleobury Mortimer Primary in such good shape, with some 270 children on the school roll this term. "The children were really well behaved and engaged during the Assembly.

"I also had a very good meeting with members of the School Council. A Year 6 teacher at Cleobury Mortimer Primary School said, "The children and staff really enjoyed hearing about Mr Dunne's experiences of Government and life as a politician.

"The School Council loved asking him questions and finding out that elements of our election process replicate real life.

"It is so beneficial for the children to meet such an inspirational visitor and it gives them a belief of what they could achieve in the future."

**THE READING GROUP**

Deana Kimber opened the group meeting on November 20th with a dressing on the eye that had been the subject of a cataract operation that same day. Heroine of the month? An appearance much appreciated by all present.

Reni Eddo-Lodge's 'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race' is a multiple award winning work that excited much admiration for the research and mixed opinions in response. Clare Bradwell offered convincing arguments that white women are less represented in some respects, but most seemed to admit learning from if not enjoying the book. We wait to see what title we discuss in December.

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## **Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster**

Although it is still early in November as I write this, I am looking forward to Christmas.

A warming climate has been high on the agenda this past year, not least at the UN conference COP27 which has yet to conclude as I write, but after the UK has handed over the Presidency to Egypt. It is clear that 2022 will go down as the warmest year on record with drought conditions and record temperatures over 40 degrees leading to some of our rivers running dry in their upper reaches.

We've had the warmest and driest autumn since records began and as I write, have not yet had the first frost. Of course, I cannot predict what will happen for the rest of the year nor whether we will enjoy a white Christmas – I will leave that to the papers – but I have no doubt that our climate is changing around us.

It is reassuring that our changing climate and the contribution we have made to our planet's warming is now near-universally recognised by global leaders, 110 of whom attended the COP27 Climate Conference in Egypt in December, including our new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

In November, I had the opportunity to ask the Prime Minister, now that we no longer have the COP Presidency as our forcing mechanism, how his Government will secure the necessary cross-departmental working to ensure our national net zero ambitions are achieved. He gave me a resolute response with a personal commitment to ensuring all government departments work towards decarbonising our economy.

Ahead of the COP27 Conference, our new King, HM Charles III hosted world leaders, business figures, environmentalists, and NGOs at Buckingham Palace. King Charles has been a leading figure in the

environmental movement for half a century, long before many others had awoken to the developing crisis. We are fortunate to have both a Prime Minister and a Monarch fully committed to a sustainable future and the protection and preservation of our natural environment.

As Christmas approaches, like me, many people will be looking forward to spending time with loved ones, watching younger family members open their presents from Father Christmas and catching up over the Christmas Turkey. But Avian Influenza, more commonly known as bird flu, may put our Christmas dinner at risk. At the time of writing, there had been 220 outbreaks since October 2021, 88 of which were during October this year.

Bird flu is a very virulent disease with turkeys particularly susceptible. The poultry industry is taking what steps they can to protect their flocks. I have joined colleagues in calling on the Government to harness our best scientists and virologists to develop a vaccine with the same urgency as we saw during the Covid pandemic.

Poultry farmers are not always highlighted for praise, but avian flu can completely devastate their business. The sector provides over 50% of the meat that we eat. Not to mention how critical they are to our traditional Christmas meal which dates back to Henry VIII who is thought to be the first person to eat turkey on Christmas day.

I hope that our poultry growers can provide the 10 million turkeys thought to be eaten each year at Christmas so that we can all enjoy the festive period and our Christmas Dinner to the full! Have a wonderful Christmas.

Philip Dunne

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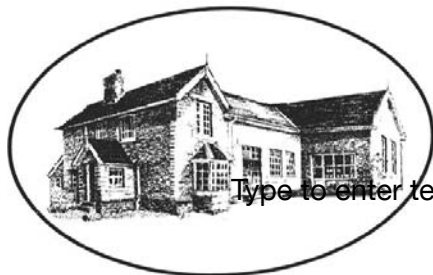
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Our school vision: We aim for everyone to be a part of our community, be life-long learners who are confident, enthusiastic, valued and reach their God given full potential.





## **KITES OF CLEOBURY**

Last month I watched a lone Red Kite circling over and around the sky of Cleobury. It was a wonderful and exciting sight. In recent years we have got used to the appearance of kites to the west of our town as they gradually spread from Wales, but here was one kite almost certainly flying around looking for a new territory for feeding and breeding next year. Human intervention by the importation and releasing of kites into Wales and the Chilterns from 1989 by RSPB and Natural England has been heralded as "one of the UK's biggest conservation success stories." Since their reintroduction, intervention continues. At official kite feeding stations in Wales up to 1500 kites congregate every afternoon for a free feed. The kite population in the Chilterns is estimated at 2,000 and increasing by 14% each year. Human intervention to support rare species has not always been positive. The introduction of grey squirrels from America in 1870 to the detriment of native red squirrels is a case in point. The recent importation of beavers and buffalo, although

well researched may lead to negative consequences in the future.

From a recent letter in the Spectator, human intervention has brought about a change in the kite's behaviour in the Chilterns as they move from scavenging to predation. With their larger numbers, kites are now competing for food against native species such as owls, jays, magpies, buzzards sparrow hawks and kestrels. They are predating on voles – the owls' main food source, and chicks of ground nesting birds such as skylarks, lapwings, and curlews all of which are on the RSPBs Red List.

Let us therefore rejoice in the appearance of kites and enjoy their natural spread, without additional human intervention, such as feeding stations. Let nature sort out the pecking order.

*Kit Smith*

## **SPECIAL TREE PLANTING**

Cleobury Youth Partnership planted their commemorative tree to celebrate Queen Elizabeth 11's Platinum Jubilee in the Cleobury Queen Elizabeth 11's Park on November 22nd. Joining us

was the Lacon Childe Head, the Head Boy and Girl and representatives from Year Seven.

We were fortunate to have fine dry weather to plant the Quercus Rubra ( Red Oak) on the edge of the tree group next to the Dog training area, and look forward to seeing it grow and add colour through the coming years. We have underplanted with Bluebells which we hope will start to colonise that area.

*Madge Shineton,  
Cleobury Youth Partnership*



*From left: Madge Shineton, two Year Seven pupils and Lacon Childe head teacher Noah Turner.*

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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Friday 27 January at 7.30pm

Tickets £15 - 01299 271713,

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Piper, dancers, haggis,  
poetry, whisky, social dancing

### CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE

AT  
CLEOBURY MORTIMER PARISH HALL  
SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022

Doors open 12pm - 5pm

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AVAILABLE

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Free Admission

Saturdays at 7.30  
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Tickets £5



21 January

Top Gun - Maverick



Starring Tom Cruise: after thirty years, Maverick is still pushing the envelope as a top naval aviator, but must confront ghosts of his past when he leads TOP GUN's elite graduates on a mission that demands the ultimate sacrifice from those chosen to fly it.

18 February

Downtown Abbey - A New Era



The Crawley family goes on a grand journey to the South of France to uncover the mystery of the dowager countess's newly inherited villa.

18 March

Ticket to Paradise



George Clooney and Julia Roberts star as a divorced couple who team up and travel to Bali to stop their daughter from making the same mistake they think they made 25 years ago



February Festival of Comedy

Sundays at 6pm - Tickets £5

Soup and pudding £3. Bar.



5 February  
The Ladykillers



12 February  
The Titfield  
Thunderbolt



19 February  
The Lavender  
Hill Mob



26 February  
Whisky Galore





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## TIRED OF THE SAME OLD BEER?

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BECAUSE Life is too short for Sh\*t Beer

\*Please note this is not implying any of your local shops have a poor range of beer. Its is a generic statement used for marketing purposes. I imagine your shop probably has nice beer.



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## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The way the town commemorates the eleventh day of the eleventh month always impresses, the main street filled with the parade and onlookers. The fact that 19 wreaths were laid at the war memorial confirms the strength of feeling in the grim matter of war and its effects. It was particularly pertinent to see a tribute laid by a representative of the Ukrainian refugee families we are accommodating.



As our photo shows, once again the representation of youth was a strong point, with schools, scouts and guides all smartly turned out. As one onlooker put it: "They are important - they are the future."

Ashley Buck conducted the service, with British Legion chairman Mike Hermolle responding and David Taylor as ever a very effective bugler. It's part of the calendar, respect for those lost in action.

## NIGHTINGALE NURSING FUND NEWS

Many thanks to Keith Walton for organising a very successful quiz night and supper at Kinlet Village Hall.

During the evening Keith had arranged for fish and chips to be delivered from one of Bewdley's Fish and Chip shops. They were delicious!

The evening raised funds for the Nightingale Nursing Fund and the local Severn Hospice Support Group. A fantastic profit of £466.00 was raised with £233.00 going to each charity.

It was a very friendly evening with thanks to everyone who attended and gave so generously, with a special mention for Keith and team for the opportunity to raise funds for local charities.

Sadly we hear of the Doddington Friendship Club being dissolved after over 30 years. They tell us that ageing and falling membership as well as the pandemic is the reason they have reached this decision.

It was the wish of the remaining members that the remaining funds were divided between local charities. The Nightingale Nursing Fund received £843.14 for which we are grateful and the trustees send their sincere thanks.

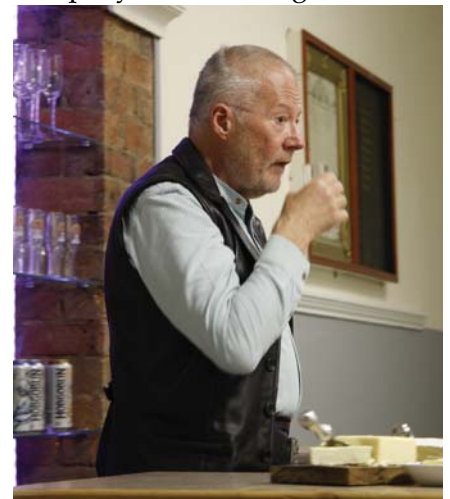
*Rosemary Abbiss*

## A WEE SAMPLING

A novel way of drawing attention to the monthly Flicks in the Sticks in November was the chance to sample the famed Scottish dram before the matter of a mere film was addressed in the Parish Hall.

It was Robert Hodge's idea, with samples of various whiskies available to test the palate and hear about the ancient craft of distilling. Did you know that alcohol emerged in ancient Egypt? Long before the likes of Johnnie Walker took up the business seriously.

Robert poured samples of three different types, identified by the geographical source. The editor's hearing not being of the best - except when asked "What'll you have?" - much of the information offered was not understood. What Robert did make clear was that a swilling of the glass is not effective, but a decent sniff at the flavour can help identify the original of the sample you're holding.



*A man happy in his work - Robert shows how to savour the flavour,*

The film 'The Angels' Share' followed, the dialogue not easy to follow with such strong North of the Border accents. And are there really parts of Scotland where people swear that much? Billy Connolly emerged as a mere choir boy in comparison.

An interesting evening, the redesigned bar adding to the early session. Flicks with a supporting cast? Could catch on.

*JR*





# Merry Christmas from us all at Doddington Lodge

would like to welcome you and your family to Doddington Lodge, our newly renovated, privately owned residential and dementia care home in this historic, tranquil hamlet of Doddington, Nr Cleobury Mortimer. Located on the beautiful Shropshire & Shropshire border, providing picturesque views from every aspect of our home.

Our home features a modern bistro dining room and bar with a delicious daily menu created by our accomplished chefs. Individually designed spacious double rooms, perfect for couples to stay together or beautiful single rooms all with en-suites and stunning countryside views. Even a hairdressing salon for a little pampering to provide a place of well-being.

Doddington Lodge is a place where friendships are made and special moments are shared. We organise many fun activities that everyone can get involved with, whether that's a sing along, arts and crafts, collecting fresh veg from the allotment or just simply helping each other with a crossword in our daily newspaper. Each day is different, we certainly have many happy moments...

Our home is a loving community and family, where you can consider Doddington Lodge a home away from home. We will provide you with all the key information, guiding you through every step of the process, whether you are staying with us for a short or long stay.



Royal Ascot Ladies Day comes to Doddington Lodge



A very special visit from DML Racing, Worcester

*"There is such a lovely atmosphere & many friendships made. Every step is taken to make each day enjoyable and for everyone to get involved with the activities."*



## Join our team and make a real difference...

Becoming part of the Doddington Lodge family is really something special. Our team is built on a shared purpose, to provide outstanding care for our residents and support for loved ones. We invest in our team members, helping them progress and develop within their roles and career path. More than ever we are looking for the right individuals who can really make a difference. If you believe you have the right skills please email your CV to: [enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com](mailto:enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com) or visit [www.doddingtonlodge.co.m/careers](http://www.doddingtonlodge.co.m/careers).

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- Part Time -

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*"I began working at Doddington Lodge over two years ago & what an amazing place to work, a beautiful home with great carers and management, lots of investment has gone into making it into such a wonderful place. Doddington is like my family and I will be forever grateful for having an opportunity to work here x."*  
Georgie - Deputy Manager

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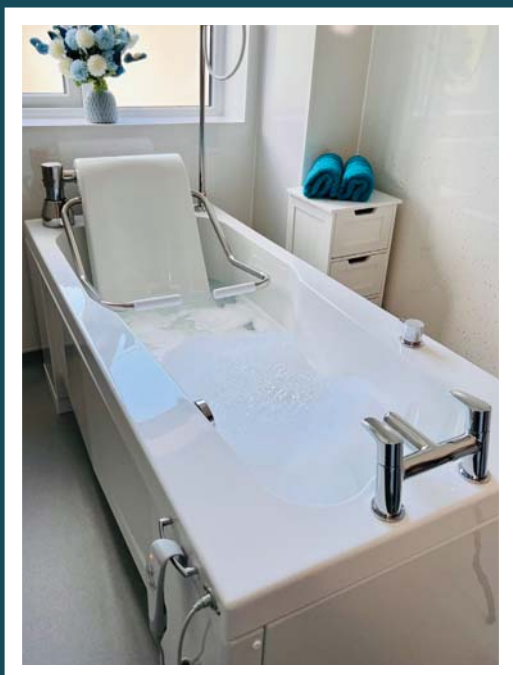




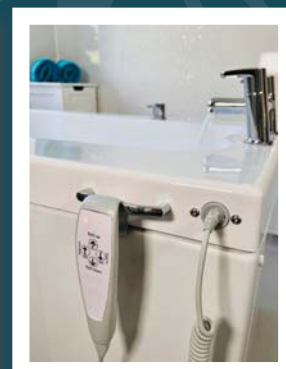
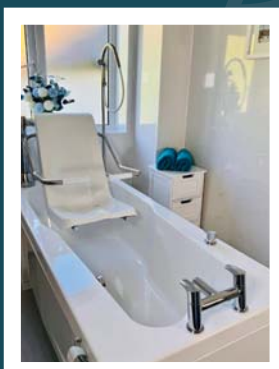
It has been an incredibly busy time, with lots of lovely Christmas activities, baking, flower arranging, garden centre visits and celebrating special events throughout the month. Each day is so different at Doddington Lodge. All the activities are planned and thought-out carefully to make sure everyone is enjoying their day as much as possible. There is truly something for everyone with lots planned for the new year!

## ‘Doddington Lodge A Day Away From Home’ Self-Care & Respite Day is Coming Soon!

We are so delighted with our fabulous new luxury specialist bathroom. Bath bombs and bubbles, relaxing in the bath, and having a pamper is something everyone can enjoy, with our Comfort VH1700 Variable Height Transfer Bath with integrated powered seat, nursing arms and safety strap, along with TMV3 WRAS compliant brassware & shower unit. Thank you to EA Mobility for such an amazing job!



‘Doddington Lodge A Day Away From Home’ Self-Care & Respite Day is coming soon! We’ll take care of everything, so you can enjoy a day away from home in a beautiful location with plenty planned for your relaxation. It can make all the difference, allowing you to enjoy a day away from home to relax and have a well-deserved rest and to re-energize. To find out more email: [enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com](mailto:enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com)



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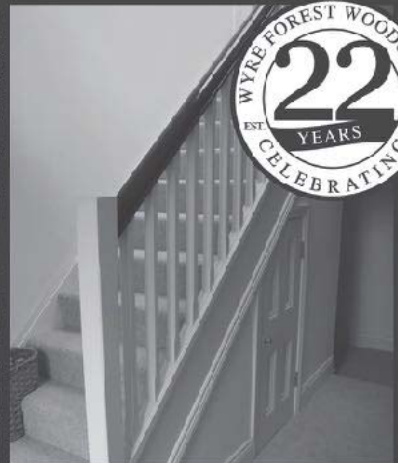
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**A SIMON EVANS  
BOOK**

The Friends of CM Library have been offered a signed copy of Simon Evans' book 'Shropshire Days and Shropshire Ways', dated April 1938. It is in good condition for an 80 year old, though age has affected its appearance. It is currently at the Barnard Castle Oxfam Shop, where the contact is volunteer Robin Brooks.

The library already has a copy of the book, so it is not of interest there. But a local lover of Evans's work might be interested and we can put you in contact with Mr Brooks if you would like more details and a price. Contact the editor in the first instance on CM 270642.

**FREE ENTRY**

Frank Matthews Tree Shop in Tenbury Wells' Berrington Court have a Christmas Fair on Thursday December 8th. 6.30 to 8.30 and entry is free.

Matthews have kindly provided Christmas trees for the town this year and as they are offering free mulled wine and mince pies, it sounds like a good place to visit. 10 percent off all tree Shop purchases on

the night, local smallholders, a book signing and talk from Tamsin Westhorpe for her new book 'Grasping the Nettle' and a visit from Santa. An evening out for the family?

**WHOOOPS!**

Viv Kerry writes advise that the editor reporting the life of Sarah Margaret Fry in the Creative Writing Group report was inaccurate. The lady's true name was Sarah Margory Fry and humble apologies are offered to her memory. JR

**HEROINE AGAIN!**

Three days after Deana Kimber opened the Reading Group meeting still with a hospital dressing over the eye, we could not report that the new read was available. Then one of the lady's regular emails rang the Inbox bell to advise that the new offering was available for collection. You can't keep these keen types down.

**NEEN SAVAGE  
SUNFLOWERS**

Thank you so much to everyone who brought, grew or donated to the new Competition. A big thank you to Clare Todd for letting me sell seeds at Cleobury Country and two Farmer's Markets

(thank you James and Sue Barratt for letting me stand on The Little Detton Stall). John & Karen Gallagher for also selling the sunflower envelopes and everyone who welcomed us on our measuring visits!

A total of £328.00 was raised and all monies will be divided equally between The Ukraine Disasters Appeal Fund and St. Mary's, Neen Savage. The Winners were announced at Harvest and are :

- Most Unusual Sunflower  
Millie Roberts
  - Widest Sunflower Diameter  
Gordon & Julie Cork
  - Tallest Sunflower  
Brian & Carol Link with a 2nd Prize for this class awarded to John & Joan Griffiths
- This year has been a particularly difficult growing season and so everyone's support has been really appreciated.

**STOP PRESS  
WATCH THIS SPACE.....  
The 2023 COMPETITION  
WILL BE PUMPKINS!**

*Emma Haywood*

**Sorry to hear that Jenny of Shoe Box fame is pottering off to Hampshire. She will be missed. So I will be doing the Shoe Boxes for the foreseeable future. There's no way I can match Jenny, but I will try. My contact number: 07976 307 889. KEITH BALMER**

**MORE ABOUT SHOE BOXES**  
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**Cleobury Mortimer Benefice  
Church services throughout the Benefice in December**

**St Mary's Cleobury Mortimer**

Compline every Wednesday at 6.45pm throughout December  
Every Thursday Drop in 10-11.30am (Tea/Coffee and biscuits) followed by free soup and a roll 12- 1pm  
The Church will be open daily 10am -4pm if you need a warm space

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 10.00am Family Service  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 8.30am and 10.00am Eucharist  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December - 10.00am Eucharist  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December – 6pm Community Carols  
Christmas Eve – 11.30pm Midnight Mass  
Christmas Day - 10.00am Eucharist

**St John the Baptist, Doddington**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 11.00am Eucharist  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 3pm Carol Service  
Christmas Day – 11.00am Eucharist

**St Michael and All Angels', Hopton Wafers**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 9.30am Eucharist  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December – 7pm Carol Service  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 9.30am Eucharist  
Christmas Day – 9.30am Eucharist

**St John the Baptist, Kinlet**

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 11.15 Eucharist BCP  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 6.30pm Carol Service  
Christmas Eve – 11.30pm Midnight Mass

**St George's, Milson**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 6.00pm Evening Prayer  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 6pm Carol Service  
Christmas Day – 10.00am Eucharist

**St Mary's, Neen Savage**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 6.00pm Evening Prayer  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 6pm Carol Service  
Christmas Eve - Crib Service 4pm  
Christmas Day – 10.00am Eucharist

**All Saints', Neen Sollars**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 11.00am Village Worship  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 11.00am Village Worship  
Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 6.30pm Carol Service  
Christmas Day – 11.00am Eucharist

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# Simon Morton

## Garden Winners and Losers from 2022

It won't be long until our TV schedules are awash with reviews of the year. You know the sort of thing - a clips show, fronted by assorted C-list celebrities, designed to make you go, "oooh...was that only this year?". Well, if it's good enough for Channel 5, it's good enough for me. Here, dear reader, are the Winners and Losers from my garden in 2022.

### The Winners

**Sweetpeas** - this has been a game of two halves. There was no shortage of anxiety earlier in the year as the local bird population decided that 'Morton Sweetpea' was the new must-have food fad. Very frustrating, but it provided an excellent display for the local twitchers.

Miraculously, a few straggly shoots survived and somehow battled on. So, despite the odds, 2022 brought us flowers for the first time in approximately five years and, by jingo, those blooms kept showing off and filling the air with a beautiful scent until early November.

I have high hopes for a repeat show in 2027.

**My leaf rake** - now, before you leap to conclusions about boys and their toys, let me assure you that this really is a game changer. A friend showed me his in action (this is the sort of thing we do for entertainment in Neen Savage), and the giant plastic tines made the collection of damp, rotting and sticky leaves an absolute joy. OK - 'joy' might be pushing it; after all, the battle of sticking them into the wheelbarrow and then cursing as the wind catches them on the way up the garden path remains, but I assure you that my new toy is a huge step forward from the springy lawn rakes of old.

**Interesting side note** - I proudly showed off my new rake to my mate Brian, a man

who has forgotten more about gardening than I'll ever know. He smiled and then casually remarked that they had been using this particular design decades ago, but it had gone out of fashion. It's one of life's truisms - stick around long enough, and things always return...even garden rakes.

### The Losers

**Dahlia flowers** - *last* year was an excellent year for dahlias. After decades of failure, I discovered that you could grow dahlias from seed and overnight, any spare pot or patch of ground had a baby dahlia stuck in it. The garden was a riot of colour and interesting-looking blooms.

Unfortunately, this year, we're back to where we were - lots of foliage but very little to show in terms of actual flowers. It might be a soil thing or a feeding thing, or - and my money is on this - it might just be a 'me' thing. Ho hum.

**Verbena Bonariensis** - it feels wrong to stick these jolly purple beasts in the 'losers' pile, especially seeing that the problem is very much of my own making. I went big on Verbena a few years ago, and a sowing/planting frenzy duly followed. I had wrongly assumed that the cold and wet winter would be a natural culling process, taking them down a notch. This was not the case, and they've taken over - it's getting a bit 'Children of the Corn', albeit a prettier version.

All in all, 2022 has been a good, but not great, year in the garden, and that's down to me. I needed to spend more time doing, rather than thinking about, jobs. I needed to get up earlier and stay out later, ignoring the call of the warm bed or cold beer. And I needed to have a plan and then stick to it.

Just you wait - 2023 is going to be amazing...

*Simon Morton*





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So, a review of Police vetting and recruitment procedures has roundly criticised the current set up after examination of a number of cases showed that candidates were routinely accepted despite concerns about their character and attitudes. These included one who exposed himself repeatedly to a woman, another who lied about his links to organised crime and a third who had a history of suspected sexual violence. Some forces failed to carry out basic employment checks and only carried out virtual interviews despite repeated concerns that this would enable unsuitable applicants to slip through. In one case, a successful applicant had previous criminal convictions and was linked to drug suppliers and an aggravated burglary. As might be expected, 'Ethnicity' rears its head with a clearly unsuitable candidate being accepted 'to increase diversity' This reminds me of the last series of 'Line of Duty' where a gang member is recruited to the police to gain information relating to operations. Another case of fact being stranger, or at least as strange as, fiction. It used to be said that poachers made the best gamekeepers as they knew all the tricks but I'm not sure that is a good precedent to follow for law enforcement. However, having seen photos of some of the unsuitable applicants involved, I have a really useful tip for recruitment teams – never employ anyone with a shaved head. You're welcome. At least some common sense is breaking through now as the Home Secretary has told Police forces to stop insisting on a degree for all officers. What is needed here is a degree in 'Life' not several years losing touch with reality in an academic institution....

Talking of which, the latest nonsense from the university world (no connection with Planet Earth) is a suggestion from the 'Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (who?) that a number of courses require 'decolonisation'. They pontificated that 'Colonial and Imperial geographies and their contemporary legacies of systemic disadvantage, for example, racism, classism, ableism, homophobia and patriarchy must therefore be acknowledged and countered by fostering an inclusive learning community encompassing a range of participants'. Does this take the star prize for being utter cobbles?. On

maths, the QAA said that 'The curriculum should present a multicultural and decolonised view of mathematics, statistics and operational research informed by the student voice'. And I thought maths was all about addition and subtraction...

I don't know if you watch a programme on Friday evenings on Channel 5 entitled 'Susan Calman's Grand Day Out'. Basically, the Scottish comedian tours a different county each week in her camper van and last weeks programme covered Shropshire. All went well until I nearly choked on my supper biscuit when she praised our roads for being so smooth... Having recovered from my spasm, I gave the matter some thought and realised that she had hardly ventured off of the A49 during her tour and this, as a trunk road, is maintained by Highways England and not Shropshire Council. This reassured me and I was able to retire to bed with an untroubled mind. The good news is that the main road through Cleobury has finally been resurfaced and the contractors seem to have done a good job although there still seem to be a few queries about replacement markings. Now for all the other surrounding routes...

The new 'Levelling up' Minister, Michael Gove has made a promising start by making a speech saying that new developments must be in keeping with local tradition and building styles. He promised to 'call in' any development proposal that didn't fit this principle. On a related subject, I gather that the draft Local Development Plan has been approved by the Town Council and now has to go for final checking before being put to a public vote. Don't forget that the agreement and implementation of this plan is vital if we don't want unrestricted development in Cleobury.

*Ariadne J. Grumpy*

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## THE CLARION SOCIAL CALENDAR - DECEMBER/JANUARY 2022/23

Date	Time	Details
Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.00	Rock Pathfinders step out from St Peters church, Martley. PAGE 21
Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup>	8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall. Sonia 01584 890874
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup>	7.30	Ludlow Male Voice Choir entertain in the Parish Church. Tickets £10 CM272820
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.00	CMFA's final Country Walk of the year starts from the Market Hall PAGE 21
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup>	7.30am	The Breakfast Club meet at the Golf Club to hear Mark Baldwin talk. PAGE 11
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>		BLACK WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY
	6-7pm	Late Night Opening at the Food Centre in the Market Hall
	7.30	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall. Sonia 01584 890874
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup>	2.30	The WI plant a tree to commemorate their 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary. PAGE 7
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup>	6.30	The Creative Writing Group meet at the Library to swap stories.
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>		GREEN WHEELIE BINS AND DOMESTIC BINS EMPTIED TODAY
		WI Social at the Market Hall. Details: Clare at CM271905 PAGE 7
	10.00	Cleobury CoCo coffee morning at the Market Hall PAGE 15
	10.00	Walking for Health steps out from the Market Hall. PAGE 21
	7.30	Royal British Legion meet at the Sports and Social Club, Love Lane
Thurs 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.00	Rock Pathfinders start from the Farms Shop at Dunley. PAGE 21
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>	8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall. Sonia 01584 890874
Sat 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.30	Cleobury Country Farmers Market, in & around St Marys Church
	6.30	Pantomime at the Parish Church, admission free
Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>	3.00	Carol Service at Doddington Parish Church. 01584 318036 PAGE 9
	7.30	Cleobury Concert Brass in the Parish Hall. Tickets: Amanda 01584 891199
19 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30	Holiday Club for primary age children in the Community Hub
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	7.30	Nearly Dead Poets Society meet at the Library, to rhyme and laugh together
Tues 20 <sup>th</sup>		Evening. Cleobury Concert Brass fill the High Street with fine sounds. PAGE 13
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>		BLACK WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY
	7.30	Whist Drive at Doddington Parish Hall. Sonia 01584 890874
Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>		ITS CHRISTMAS DAY, MAY YOU HAVE A HAPPY ONE & A SAFE AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup>		GREEN WHEELIE BINS AND DOMESTIC BINS EMPTIED TODAY – DETAILS NOT AVAILABLE AS WE WENT TO PRESS
		AND LOOKING FORWARD TO JANUARY 2023
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup>	2.00	Country Walk starts from the Market Hall. Lunch in KA afterwards. PAGE 21
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.00	Walking for Health starts from the Market Hall. PAGE 21
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30	Cleobury Country Farmers Market in and around St Marys Church
Date	Time	Details
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.00	Walking for Health starts at the Market Hall PAGE 21
		AND FEBRUARY.....
3 <sup>rd</sup>	7.30	Remi Harris entertains at Clows Top Victory Hall. Tickets 01584 881564 PAGE 19
		AND A REMINDER ABOUT THESE REGULAR LOCAL EVENTS.....
Mon	8.00	Bingo in the Market Hall
Tues	2.00	The Friendship Club meet in the Parish Hall
Thurs	10.00	Drop in at St Mary's church to chat and maybe share a problem
	7.00	Lessons in the Birth Dance and good health, in the Market Hall



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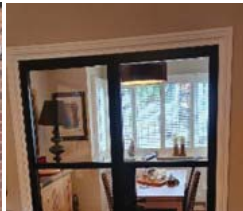
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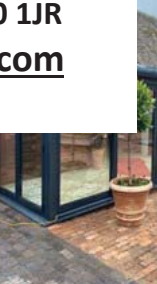
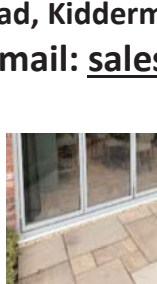
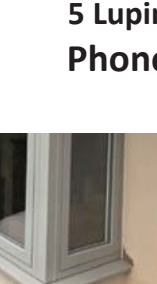
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Tuesdays - 9:30am-12:45pm, 2:30pm-9pm

Fridays - 9:30am-12:45pm, 2:30pm-5:30pm

December promises to be yet another busy month with lots going on. We continue with our main activities throughout the month with the coffee shop closing for Christmas on Friday 23rd December. Look below for our list of special events and timings.

**Saturday 17th December: 6:30pm** - St Mary's Church - 4Front Theatre Company brings us "**Jilly Rogers Christmas Adventure**". A FREE Pantomime retelling the Christmas Story, fun for all the family. (Limited spaces remaining-book online or in the CCH)

**Monday 19th - Wednesday 21st December** - Our Christmas Holiday Club for Primary age children. 9:30am-3:30pm. Games, Songs, Crafts, Climbing and all the festive fun!

**Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd: 9:30pm-1pm** - The CCH will be open for coffee, soft play and climbing.

#### **FOCUS ON: Warm Welcome lunch - Mondays 12:30pm-2pm**

Our Warm Welcome is about community. The initiative may have been born out of the energy crisis but we know how powerful connection with others is and so our warm welcome is our promise that we will provide a warm, welcoming, safe space for all, whatever your age. Our soup lunch, every Monday, is for everyone. Two soup options available for all.

The **Soup Garden** is our micro-allotment and has been put together and nurtured by volunteers in our community. Please come in, ask questions and get involved. We would love to talk about how everyone with a small area of ground can make their own micro-allotment and we would love to help you do it too!

*However you feel about Christmas we want to encourage you that you are dearly loved and valued and are always welcome in the CCH. The name Climb61 is based on Psalm 61:2 "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I" - The Rock is Jesus and we celebrate His birth on 25th December. If you're feeling overwhelmed this Christmas (or even if you're not), please get in touch. We would love to see you, spend time together and listen to your story."*

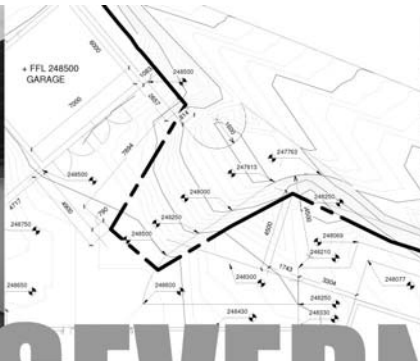
*Mark, Bev and the CCH Team*

Climb61 Session Times - To book climbing and events: [www.smypp.org.uk](http://www.smypp.org.uk)

**Tuesdays** - 9:30am-11am, 11:15am-12:45pm, 2:15pm-3:45pm, 4pm-5:30pm, 5:45pm-7:15pm, 7:30pm-9pm (**Mondays**) 6:30pm-8pm

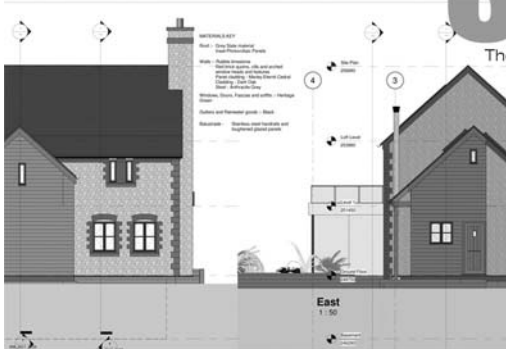
**Fridays** - 9:30am-11am, 11:15am-12:45pm, 2:15pm-3:45pm, 4pm-5:30pm

**LADIES NIGHT** - 1st December

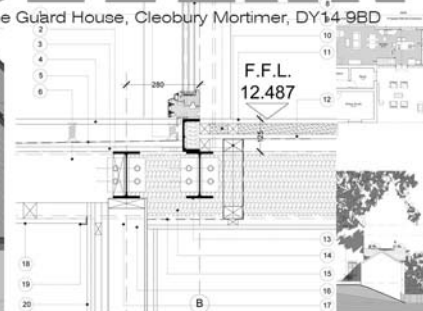


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## In Business - Heath Farm Meats

It's a very special place out at Heath Farm, just a modest sign that leads you down a winding track to a mix of old and new buildings, tucked into a fold in the Shropshire countryside. Where the farm rears cattle, sheep and pigs that it sells through a modest looking building that grew from a barn into a shop.

Like many others, it was hit hard by the BSE outbreak in 1996 that convinced Clive to find a more reliable way of making a living from his knowledge and 75 acres of land. In 1997 he became a butcher, working with a carpenter friend to convert a farm building into a shop, learning the trade of butchering a carcass to give the best of meat and in 1999 Heath Farm Meats opened its door to the public. I can still recall my late wife's reaction when we bought our first steaks there: "It's so good, it hardly needs cooking," she told me.

23 years on, Clive works with son Sid, raising animals, taking them to A H Griffiths' abattoir at Leintwardine to be slaughtered and then prepared for the shop. There's no mechanised process here, they prepare meat that their happy customers want; on the wall is a list of 14 different

sausages they can prepare, all made with meat they reared and prepared. Regulation today demands traceability; they can tell you the breed and the day it was slaughtered and then prepared for sale.

There is a growing habit amongst supermarkets to cut in American style, very different from traditional British; ask for an American style steak like Porterhouse and they know what that looks like using British methods. Same quality meat, same cutting to the customer's order, same flavour with a different name. Because they butcher a whole carcass, they can produce a traditional or new style according to your choice. Is there anything they can't do? I asked. "Nothing in raw meat" was the answer.

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They have occasional demand for a customer's animal to be butchered. It's taken to the same abattoir and they butchered to produce whatever the customer wants. Few can do that.



*Clive and Sid, a father and son team .*

Their name has spread beyond expectations, with customers from the Black Country making regular journeys out into the Baginswood country to buy quality Or maybe one of the terracotta Mexican chimneas that a customer ships in from the other side of the Atlantic.

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**Cleobury Clarion December 2022/January 2023**

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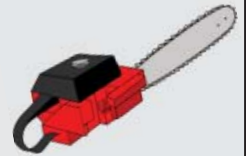

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I would like to reflect on the ongoing activities of those who would rob us of our money. These scums never stop, so I will close 2022 with a summary of the key items raised over the last 10 months. In February we talked about Chris whose social media accounts were cloned because of weak passwords on many of his internet activities. We identified a scam about a so-called relative who claimed his phone had been lost and needed money, demonstrating that you always should check who is calling or emailing you. In March we learned that 45 million people had scam telephone calls in 2021, a huge number showing just how extensive the problem is. April saw the return of the Nottingham Knockers, door to door salespersons claiming to be everything from reformed criminals to innocent vendors selling inferior goods at inflated prices on your doorstep. Along with this was the 'distraction crime' where these people work in pairs with one looking around the rear of the property while the owner is distracted at the front door. In May we provided a great example of the lost phone/whatsapp scam. A Clarion reader had seen the previous article, received such a call and immediately realised it was a scam. We also reported that over 400,000 scams were reported to authorities in 2020/2021 representing £2.3 billion of losses. We also know that some people are reluctant to report a scam due to embarrassment for whatever reason. That suggests the figures are somewhat higher than even reported. Social media fraud and Dating fraud were also featured in May. In June we urged people to use the telephone and email services in contacting the Police about anything that concerns us. It could be insignificant to you, but when the police put many little pieces of a jigsaw together they see a much clearer picture of criminal activity and can then address it effectively. We talked about scammers gaining access to personal computers. Sometimes under the guise of a bogus fault or more likely through the use of a 'Trojan Horse' which is a small program embedded in a seemingly innocent email or message which quietly enters your computer and records everything you do, including access to banking etc. The data gathered is often sold on to criminal elements who use it to create cloned identities and steal

your money. In July we looked at the latest scams in emails that look genuine from recognisable sources like the BBC, Government, banks, DVLA etc. These look very genuine but are intended to steal data from your debit or credit cards as they ask you to confirm a payment or make a payment that appears to be genuine. They gather the data you enter, name on card, long number, expiry and security number on the rear and then they have all the info they need to make purchases online and have goods sent to a different address. We demonstrated how to identify these rogue emails and never to follow instructions in them. In many of the articles we identified a trusted source of information to help you understand scams and not be caught by them. August found us looking at GIFT CARD Scams, many of which involve Amazon although in fairness it is not Amazon to blame, but scammers who are impersonating for their own benefit. September looked at the top 5 scams which included Dating Scams within Social Media, Suspicious retailers, Bogus Tech Support, Government Agencies and general fraudulent email scams. For nearly all of these the first check should be the sender's email id, clicking on it opens the real identity of the sender and it never looks remotely like what you would expect. In October we outlined how scammers use sophisticated computer technology to reach out to literally hundreds of thousands of people very quickly and easily. They are using data bought from the criminal underworld which YOU have inadvertently given them through responding to adverts or games on Social media. Think before you click! In November we reported details provided by West Midlands Police Economic Crime Unit on some of the recent key scam frauds and how to spot and prevent them. So finally as we go into the Christmas period, please STOP, THINK and CHECK before you react, respond, or even open emails. It's your money and it's even more precious these days. Have a great Christmas, see you in February 2023.

You can find more online at [www.beat-the-scams.info](http://www.beat-the-scams.info)

~ Nigel Reid



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Have a lovely Christmas and a peaceful healthy New Year.

Thank you.

Clebury Mortimer Town Council







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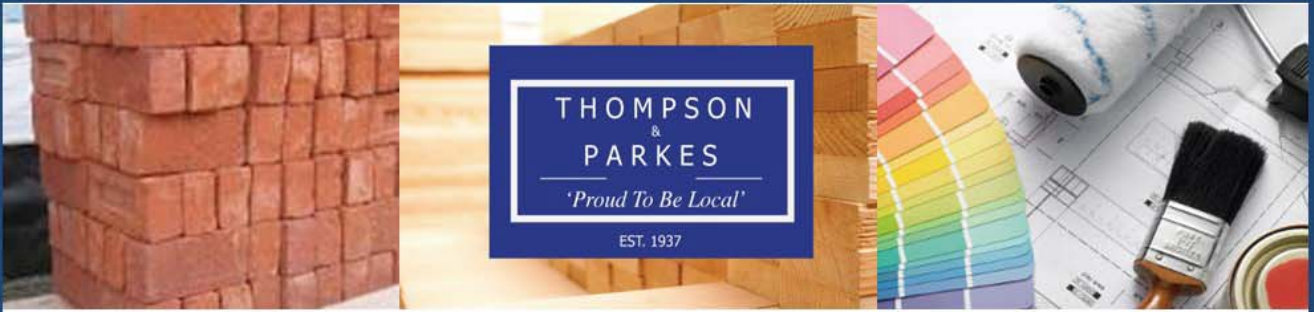
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