

The Cleobury Clarion

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SEPTEMBER 2021

FAREWELL AND THANK YOU, GAYNA



Gayna (left) with great friend and deputy Jane Leach.

Ever since it opened its doors eleven years ago, the Severn Hospice shop has been a warm and friendly presence on the High Street. And Gayna Woodland has been the manager, leading a team of volunteers and setting a high standard of presentation.

She's very modest about the impact the shop has made. "It's not me, it's my brilliant volunteers who deserve credit," she insists. But that team of 28 volunteers all know that her qualities of leadership have been an inspiration to them all.

She had no retail experience before. Fed up with her previous post, she got a job advert handed to her by a friend, a vacancy for a manager at Severn Hospice. "I looked at the salary and it was a big drop, but I was not happy and gave it a try," she explained. "It was the best thing I could have done. I've never had one day when I wasn't pleased to come to work."

And now she's retired, packed all the cards and flowers in the car with the help of husband Tony, hugged all the helpers and gone off to a more relaxed

life. Whoever takes over will be stepping into some big shoes, but will inherit a well run store with a great reputation and a friendly bunch of volunteer workers who do a great job.

ADRIAN SATTERLY

Mr Satterly appeared at Shrewsbury Crown Court on August 19th in relation to 20 counts of theft, to which he had indicated his willingness to plead guilty to 15.

It was decided that the case be adjourned to allow further consideration of his guilty pleas by the Crown Prosecution Service.

The case will be listed on September 13th at Shrewsbury for the CPS to confirm if the basis of Mr Satterly's pleas has been accepted. If the Crown Prosecution Service rejects the basis of the pleas, the case will go to trial.



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The Cleobury Clarion, September 2021

Volume Seventeen - Edition Six



On July 19th Cleobury's branch of the Royal British Legion celebrated 100 years. See Page 9.



These damned things are not going away, as you've probably noticed. See Page 27.



Smiles quietly, works damned hard and does a great job. Christine Smith of CLS Art See Page 57

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THE NEARLY DEAD POETS' SOCIETY

Four keen followers of the poetic art met on July 26th including newcomer Sylvia, who made her mark by reading a brief work devoted to our group. An excellent way to make friends:

The Nearly Dead Poets' Society

Sounds like it could be a riot
Or will it all be awfully reverent
Where everyone has to be quiet?

And how "Nearly Dead" are they likely to be
Will they all have one foot in the grave?
I'll arrive with some trepidation,
Not knowing how to behave.

Will I have to stand high on a classroom desk
A la Robin Williams
And will they be terribly precious,
With high falluting opinions?

But I'll bite the bullet and seize the day
Carpe Diem will be my motto,

And I'll take a bottle of Tesco plonk
And with luck we'll all end up blotto.

Tony followed with a brief offering in the manner of an ancient Arabic form, which impressed us all. Then David read one of Rupert Brooks's offerings from World War One to bring us down to earth. All the chairman could offer to follow was reading one of Wordsworth's works. It was a happy evening and Sylvia left her bottle of Tesco plonk for our next gathering.

WE GET MAIL

I was so pleased to see the Clarion has won an award. I have been singing its praises for a long time, to anyone who would listen to me.

It's wonderful that a small market town can produce such a superb magazine. I look forward to the postman bringing mine every month.

Thank you Jim and everyone else who contributes. From an ex Cleobury girl (Well, an old woman now, but still quite lively.)

Janet Dickinson

MORE NORMAL

How much better life feels if we hear of events coming back into the calendar. On Saturday the 11th this month we welcome the popular Neen Sollars Village Church Fete, at its established venue in Tetstill Farm. Starting at 1.00 and running through 'til 4.00, it offers a range of fun events to keep you and the children amused. Take the Milson road out of Neen Sollars, look for the sign to Tetstill on your left.

The Far Forest Country Show on August 14th and 15th was a great success, even though it was rather reduced in size compared with earlier events, large because it wasn't clear if there would be a show until quite late.

So congratulations to the organising team on setting a sensible size to make the weekend easier to handle, they reduced the admission charge to £5 for adults and must have had a word with the weather man as there was no sign of rain. A big crowd voted with their feet and the result was a profit that made up for no 2020 show.



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A VERY SPECIAL EVENING

It was a complete surprise. A Wednesday morning email from the Regal Theatre in Tenbury Wells, stating that Robert Plant and his new band Saving Grace, would be playing there in six days time.

I had never seen Robert Plant live, but had records going back to his days heading Led Zeppelin through to his latest. What I admire most about the man is his constant drive forwards with little or no reference to his past successes. Tickets would be on sale at noon on Thursday and I was number ten in the queue when I called the booking office at 12.00 precisely. In a fit of optimism I booked two tickets, certain I would find someone to share the experience.

I really should know better at my time of life, but a succession of calls and emails found nobody free to savour an evening with one of the best rock musicians. The editor of a magazine I used to write for suggested Rob Norton, which sounded good to me; she eventually traced him to the tent he was

sleeping in in Wales! Damn it, I was going solo.

The Regal had thoughtfully made a video of the new one-way entry and exit, which seemed to work well. But it was slow and the 7.30 start time slipped by until a local trio came on stage at about 8.00 and got their support act under way. Expecting Robert Plant and Saving Grace, a session of mediocrity did not please.

The interval saw some heading for the bar, while we of advanced years looked for the toilet. The first steward sent us off to the left and the next direction was to go right and around the theatre. Hmm. I walked out, crossed the road to the public loos and was back in good time.

At about 9.00 the roadies had removed the opening group's kit and made room for the headliner. The band came on to applause, with vocalist Suzy Dian getting a very warm reception before the man himself just stepped out from the stage wings without any fanfare, but a really warm reception. This was the man we'd come to see, one of British rock's greatest, happy to entertain his local fans in a

rural theatre with no display of ego or vanity. He was in his comfort zone.

If you haven't followed this man's career since his headlining days as vocalist and leader of Led Zeppelin, it's worth knowing that he has not coasted through life on past glories. That's for the likes of Status Quo; Plant has moved constantly on, listening and learning from musical sources all over the globe and presenting fresh sounds.

Please don't ask me to list the pieces Saving Grace offered through one and a half hours before they said "Goodnight", only to come back on stage as the audience stamped their feet and kept up a rhythmic applause. We were not ready to go home and they had to acknowledge the fact, singing three more numbers before we all accepted that the night was over and it was home time.

Walking out in a daze of enjoyment, I reflected on my expensive evening, paying for two seats and occupying just one. But that simply didn't matter; I'd had the best musical evening of many years and it was worth every penny. *Jim Reynolds*

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C M ROYAL BRITISH LEGION 100TH BIRTHDAY

Apologies for the lateness of this report, but when I downloaded my photos of the 100th birthday gathering at the War Memorial, they were a mess, totally unusable. I gave myself a month to get over such a silly mistake and here I am catching up. And my thanks to Mike Hermolle of the Legion for providing this photo.



Notable figures at the ceremony.
From left, RBL Chairman Mike Hermolle, flag bearer David Clarke, Curate Joe Simons and RBL president Ron Breakwell.

Cleobury Royal British Legion has a great deal to be

proud of. It was one of the earliest groups to form a branch of this body that does so much to support those who have given time, effort and in some cases even their lives for this country. On July 19th the current members and their families and friends gathered around the Memorial Park to remember and respect those who have gone before.

It was a brief service, with Curate Joe Simons leading proceedings before bugler David Taylor sounded the commencement of a two minutes silence and then the Reveille rang out to end those moments of remembrance. Legion chairman Mike Hermolle spoke gently of those who have passed on before the gathering expressed their support with that simple phrase "We shall remember them." Is there any more moving moment at times of remembrance than that?

It was good to see the considerable trouble taken to mount a display of the town branch's history in the window of the Market Hall. If you get a chance to stop and examine it for a few minutes it is a very fine tribute. JR

WRITING GROUP

A select trio gathered on August 9th to see what a few had made of the subject "Trains". Vivian read of seaside holidays and watching hovercraft crossing Southampton Water. She told us of her granny, who built greenhouses to order - clearly quite a lady - and loved the Severn Valley Railway.

Sylvia recalled school day romance and chaste kissing in days before she moved abroad to live in France and the chairman contrasted the noise and smell of LMS steam trains and the maglev from Shanghai airport that moves smoothly and silently at over 250 miles an hour. Will our subject "Country" prove as interesting when we meet at the library again at 6.30 on the 13th?

THE WORCESTER

BUS IS BACK

Back from the Covid lockdown, the monthly bus to Worcester. It leaves the Sports and Social Club at 9.15 on Thursday the ninth and returns at about 3.15. Adults £12.00, OAPs £10.00 and Under 7s free. Gill Shorter on CM 270826 can tell you more.

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TLC are a family run care provider supporting people with Disabilities, Dementia, Aging Population and Acquired Brain Injury to remain living at home for as long as it is safe to do so. Clients when considering home care will often find it difficult to accept and wonder about who are the staff and what qualifications they have? I cannot speak for other companies, however in our company it is made up from many sectors of our society and when these are put together, we have an Outstanding Team. 

One of those sectors are the future NHS professional, we have Daisy who is in her last year of her training to be a midwife, Lucy who is working towards the end of her training to be a Physiotherapist. Christina and Aila about to start their journey into nursing. We have further staff who have just been accepted into the NHS. These lovely kind young adults not only study many hours both in university, on hospital wards, they also give to us and have helped us support our clients for many years! Most joined us while still at college.

TLC have ex-nurses that come to us after raising their family and some, in recent times have re-joined their colleagues in the NHS.

We have staff who have raised their kids and now want a career, TLC will train or retrain people to help people reach their full potential and become one of our Outstanding Team.

We encourage kind caring and honest people of all ages and backgrounds who want to make a difference to people's lives to join our team. TLC invest heavily in people with ongoing support and training to help our new colleagues achieve their goals and reach their full potential. Once initial training is complete and they have been assessed as competent, TLC Induction Manager and our Training Manager will support staff through to achieve their Level 2/3 in H&S Care

Our Training

TLC's Training Team offers full free training on site and support staff through their Care Certificate. We have strong connection with an outside Training Provision who help our staff to achieve their Level 2/3 in H&S Care. Currently we have 32 members of staff that have already achieved Level 2/3 in Health and Social Care. We have qualifications at level 4 and five of our Senior Managers have Level 5. All staff that are new to care are required to achieve Level 2 within the first two years of their employment.

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For further enquiries please regarding Care or employment please ring TLC Care at Home 01299 272897 for an informal chat. Visit www.tlccareathome.com or wecare@tlc-careathome.co.uk

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COVID-19 Update

All our staff are provided with full PPE's including Gloves, Full Aprons, Sleeves, Visors, Gloves Surgical Masks.

Video training on Donning and Doffing PPE's sent out regularly.

Staff sign health declarations daily, Staff have weekly Covid-19 test. Most of our staff have now been vaccinated against Covid-19. TLC work closely with government regulation and update our risks assessment accordingly.

ROTARY CLUB CHARITY AUCTION

Ludlow Rotary Club usually holds fund-raising events and raises substantial sums for deserving charities, the main one being its well-known Fun Dog Day at Stokesay Court. Unfortunately, COVID19 has prevented most of these from happening during 2020 and 2021 so instead the Club is holding an Online Charity Auction and Prize Draw during September.

The aim is to raise money for St Michael's Hospice Hereford, Hope House Children's Hospice Oswestry and Ludlow Rotary Cares, the Club's own charity, which awards small grants to local Community Groups.

The Charity Auction is very kindly being run online and commission free by Brightwells Auctioneers and Valuers. The auction will start on 20th September and close at 6pm on the 26th. Winners will be notified by email.

Tickets for the Prize Draw will be on sale from 5th September and the draw will take place at 6pm on 3rd October. Winners will be notified by email.

For full details, including how to register in advance for the auction and to buy draw

tickets, go to the website www.ludlowdogday.org.uk where a list of items to be auctioned, the draw prizes and terms and conditions can be found.

Barry Treves

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING IN HOPTON WAFERS

The village hall in Hopton Wafers will be open from 10.30 on Friday September 24th for a Macmillan Coffee Morning as part of the global fund raising drive for that wonderful charity. Admission will be by ticket at a cost of £5 each and for that you get coffee, cake and good company in that fine hall. Parking is easy - lots of room.

Tickets available from Linda Broomfield on 01299 270591 or Posh Davis on 270547.

ROCK CHURCH HARVEST LUNCH

The Friends of Rock Church have a Harvest Lunch with a difference this year. They are inviting you to bring a scarecrow along with a prize for the best entry. No lunch will be provided for the scarecrows, as they are known to have very poor appetites.

It starts at 1.00 on Sunday September 26th at Coppice Gate Farm, Lye Head, Bewdley

DY12 2UY and the tickets at £12.50 include a glass of wine, a choice of meat rolls, a sweet and tea or coffee. Book yours with Dorothy Hughes on 01299 266235.

There will be a raffle, a tombola and stalls offering a range of goods including plants. All proceeds from the day will go to the Friends of Rock Church.

CLOWS TOP VICTORY HALL

Clows Top Victory Hall is open and ready to provide a flexible venue for a range of activities and entertainments. To make things easier we have updated our contact details and are looking forward to being able to offer Wifi at the Hall in the very near future.

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WANTED

The Parish Hall Committee is looking for a volunteer to fill the post of Secretary to the committee. Duties: to take notes and prepare the minutes at our monthly meetings.

If you can commit to this role please call Val on 01299 270830.

Cleobury Mortimer Town Council are looking for sites for inclusion in the Cleobury Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Shropshire Council has identified a need for another 120-130 houses in Cleobury up to 2038. The Town Council want to ensure that the best sites come forward and have opted to allocate the land in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) rather than leave the job to Shropshire Council.

In its confidential meeting on 13th July 2021, ratified formally in the Full Council meeting of 2nd August, the Town Council agreed a motion to suspend the public consultation of the Cleobury Mortimer NDP. The Town Council are concerned about the possible withdrawal of one site, and the potential traffic impact of other sites that were put forward and therefore there shall be a new "call for sites" in support of the NDP, followed by another public consultation to be organised by the steering group.

Ideally, the Town Council are seeking land of at least 6.5 ha plus additional provision of open areas for public recreation and wildlife improvements. The Town will also need additional land for Cemetery space to ensure we have sufficient capacity for the next 100 years. The proposed employment zone extension at New House Farm remains unchanged and will form part of the new NDP.

This is a very important initiative for our community and we are looking for willing landowners to come forward with proposals for land that they think will be suitable to ensure a good outcome for our community in coming decades.

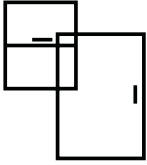
Landowners with suitable land have been asked to visit the Neighbourhood Plan page on the Cleobury Mortimer Town Council website (www.cleobury.org.uk) to view the Assessment Methodology document which sets out the necessary information.

The call for sites will finish at 12:00 midday on Friday, 17th September 2021 after which the sites proposed will be assessed by an independent consultant and the recommendations will be put forward to the Town Council. The NDP will be updated and a new public consultation will take place before Christmas.

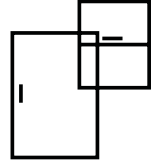


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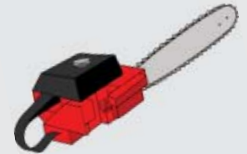


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BREAKFAST CLUB

In August the club again met at Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club. Although we had no formal presentation this time our leader, Angela Drennan, is confident that September 14th will see a welcome return to normality, with an invited speaker, when Chris Kippin will deliver his much-postponed and long-awaited talk 'The Most Unpopular Man in Britain'.

The last talk we had was by Jenny Vanderhook in September of 2020, so if Chris's talk goes ahead, it will be the first one we've had for a year. *Mark Baldwin*

THE LEGION'S

HARVEST AUCTION

Cleobury Mortimer's Royal British Legion will be holding their annual Harvest Auction on Friday, September 24th in the Sports and Social Club, starting at 7.30.

As usual Jim Hulme will be wielding the auctioneer's hammer and bringing it

down to seal the winning bids. He's built quite a reputation for the way he can persuade hands to dig a little deeper into pocket or wallet to add to the money they'll be raising for the Poppy Fund. A great event with a friendly atmosphere.

THE MENS SHED

Security shutters over the windows have been made and fitted by Colin Tolley and the shed has been painted with wood preservative. Big thanks to Colin, Iain Smith, Peter Cuthbert and Guy James for that. Woodworking machines ordered from Axminster Machinery will be delivered soon.

Mawley Town Farm moved the storage container and helped prepare the ground. Looking at the huge support from the community, chairman Pete Blackburn is one very happy chap: "The Mens Shed story is only really about to begin," he told members. "We've enjoyed fixing the fence at Childe

Road car park, making and installing the owl boxes and creating the nativity scene for Saint Mary's church. It's exciting to think of all the good opportunities which lie ahead for the community when the shed opens."

THE BORDERS

CLASSIC BIKE SHOW

On Sunday the 12th Lacon Childe School hosts the Borders Classic Bike Show that attracts classic machines from all over the midlands. Doors open at 10.00, entry is a very affordable fiver and nine times a TT winner Mick Boddice will be interviewed on stage and then hand over the awards before the show ends at 4.30. All proceeds go to the school, as usual, with the Parent Teacher Association making a donation to the County Air Ambulance this year. The All Day Breakfast is worth the visit on its own - the show is renowned for its catering and friendly approach.

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CATHERTON

COMMON UPDATE

Often people look at an area of Common such as Catherton and imagine it is an area of wasteland that no one owns, no one cares about and is not particularly important. Sometimes even to the extent that it doesn't matter if they burn some of their rubbish on it or leave their garden or household rubbish to rot down. In fact, commons are very fragile habitats that can easily be damaged by an act of carelessness and are usually rare and valuable. There are very few commons where the landowner is not known, in these cases the local authority looks after them.

I imagine most of you will be aware that Catherton Common is a very important Nature Reserve owned by Shropshire Wildlife Trust with a wealth of important habitats, birds, insects and animals. To mention but a few there are mires, wet and dry heathland, small pearl bordered fritillary butterflies, mats of sundew, curlews and a collection of almost all of Britain's amphibians and reptiles.

What is perhaps less well known is that the whole reserve is Common Land and

a lot of it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and that both of those designations have legal implications. The laws around Common Land and SSSI are quite strict and can be very complicated. Often activities or changes to the land such as digging holes, repairing tracks, cutting vegetation, etc require special consent from Natural England or the Secretary of State as well as from the landowner, even access across the land is very restricted and often requires special permission.

If you are planning any changes that may impact on Catherton Common please get in touch with SWT for help and advice. There is also a lot of information about Common Land and SSSI on the internet.

Clive Dean

SWT Reserves Officer South

SAINT JOHN'S DODDINGTON

We are back with our first event this month: Afternoon Tea with Produce Stall and Raffle: Saturday 4th September at 2.30pm in the Village Hall. Do come; we will put sensible Covid safety measures in place and will take cash and card payments. We are now back to two services a month – on the 1st & 3rd Sundays with

refreshments after. Our Harvest Service will be on 19th September at 3.00; decorate the church on Saturday 18th at 10.30am or just bring produce on the day. We'll auction it off at the end of the service and give money raised to charity. Last month we had a lovely afternoon with smiling faces visiting our stall at Doddington Lodge Garden Party. Thanks to the Lodge for the fête and making us so welcome. After a donation to their charity we raised £230 towards our own fundraising. A new greetings card is on sale - a local artist has kindly donated two lovely watercolours of the church that you will be able to purchase at our events and services. Our accessible path will be coming soon, and then we continue to work on repairing the church: we have grants in place but we need more to reach our target – if you would like to help us you can donate in church (using our contactless point is easy!), contact us, or make a donation via our homepage: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10505/ Email: stjohnsdoddington@gmail.com FB: @StJohnsDoddington
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Stepping Out! Who's Walking, When and Where.

ROCK PATHFINDERS

Walk dates and starting points for this month:

Thursday the 9th 10.30
from Droitwich Gateway
Car Park

Hanbury Road (B4090) WR9
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Thursday the 16th, 10.30
from Enville National Trust
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Susan Humphries

CM FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION

Many thanks to Graham for his interesting pieces that have regularly appeared in the Clarion and hopefully my contributions will live up to his standards.

A reminder to everyone, the monthly Parish Walks resume this month on Sunday September 5th. Meet outside the Market Hall at

10.00am and enjoy the Mawley Hall circuit.

Last month the work parties installed a dog gate alongside the stile at the top of the hill behind the brewery. A useful addition if you are walking towards Reaside Manor and on to Bayton. Repairs were also carried out on the bridge between the Glen Caravan Park and Green Lane. This is an interim repair due to the general poor condition of the bridge. Shropshire Council is aware that there are several bridges in the Cleobury Mortimer area that are in poor condition. Hopefully these will be replaced when resources become available.

A new footbridge has been installed near Milson Airstrip by Shropshire Council. Footpath 44 is now fully open for walkers after being impassable at this point for many years.

The combination of rain and sunshine has seen the rapid growth of brambles

and nettles on many local footpaths. It would be a great help if anyone walking could take along a pair of secateurs and snip back any vigorous growth when passing.

Walking has been a hobby of ours for many years so when retirement approached we knew that it would continue to be an important feature of our lives. One of the chief attractions that prompted our decision to settle in Cleobury Mortimer in 2012 was the easy access to the footpaths of the Shropshire countryside from our house. Once settled it was a logical step to join CMFA. The Social Walks are a friendly way to explore the area and the work parties contribute to keeping the footpaths clear for everyone to enjoy, residents and visitors alike. More information on the CMFA is available on the website cmfa.co.uk

Veronica Hargreaves



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Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster

With the upcoming COP26 UN Climate Conference in Glasgow in November, more focus is rightly being placed on what steps we can take beforehand to demonstrate global leadership in the fight against climate change.

The Prime Minister laid out his vision of a Green Industrial Revolution last year, and shortly thereafter published an Energy White Paper to set the framework for the next critical phase of renewable energy rollout. But there remain several detailed strategies of how to get there still awaiting publication, now expected in coming weeks, as part of the preparation for COP26.

Last month the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released their latest report, making clear the impact of human activity on global temperatures, and the vital need to take action to avoid a climate catastrophe.

As Chairman of the Environmental Audit Committee, I have been vocal in saying the government needs to meet rhetoric with action. The private sector, galvanised by a mix of greater awareness of environmental issues by senior management and the realisation customers expect companies to play a role in combatting climate change, is ready and willing to invest. But government needs to set a clear direction, to drive investment into net zero technologies.

Unfortunately, industry's confidence has taken several knocks by delayed strategies and some cancellation of policies. The Green Homes Grant voucher scheme for owner occupiers to make energy efficiency improvements for their homes, since cancelled, was overly bureaucratic, and proved difficult to access for both building contractors and homeowners.

Notwithstanding this, to its credit the government has outlined significant ambition on net zero. But there are deep rooted challenges. There remains a shortage of skills in green engineering disciplines, the green automotive sector and qualified installers for energy efficiency measures like heat pumps or insulation retrofits.

The Environmental Audit Committee has undertaken a number of inquiries to help

inform debate around achieving Net Zero Britain, and to provide recommendations to government on how to focus policy. Homes account for 20% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, but there is significant underestimation in government of the cost of addressing this, and we are still awaiting a Heat & Buildings Strategy.

To support the move to electric vehicles, we must invest in Gigafactory capacity for battery production and EV charging capacity, as other countries have. There have been some encouraging announcements on investment in battery plants recently. But grid connection and regulatory issues continue to hold back community energy schemes, as well as tidal power and further progress in our offshore wind sector – which has proven a real UK success story.

Of course, COP26 is an international conference, and fostering international commitments to combat climate change must be the focus. The UK has made admirable progress in cutting our emissions while growing the economy. So we are well placed to demonstrate to developing nations that combatting climate change does not mean curtailing growth or improving living standards for their citizens. The UK government must seek to be a benchmark to inspire others.

I have been promoting community engagement in COP26, including through presenting the COP26 President, Alok Sharma MP, with a community action plan from South Shropshire Climate Action. I have encouraged local schools to give pupils the opportunity to learn more about COP26 and the issues it is seeking to address. Next month I am hoping to arrange screening locally an educational film on the environment for young people.

This is going to be a major topic for coming months, so if you are interested in learning more about COP26, please visit <https://ukcop26.org>.

Philip Dunne

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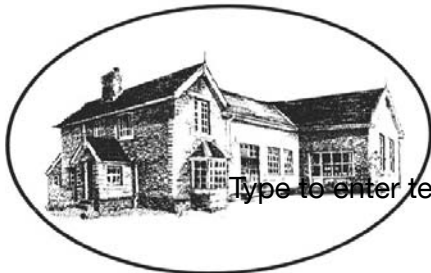
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POTHOLE OF THE MONTH



Turn down the Tenbury Road from the High Street and on the first bend lies this less than lovely depression in the surface, its actual depth less obvious after recent rain. But you'll feel it if you don't miss it and beyond is a scattering of other holes to make your journey through the bend less comfortable.

The hole in the foreground has been marked with the yellow that tells us it is due to be dealt with, but none of the other holes was marked when our picture was taken. After the recent heavy use of the road when the Stanbury Close site was being developed, this whole stretch of Tenbury Road

is less than welcoming and dealing with only one of a collection doesn't make much sense. But that seems to be as good as we can get right now.

CLEOBURY W.I.

The August WI meeting was based around a 'Walk and Talk History guide through Cleobury Mortimer', conducted by Dr. Robert Hodge. The information so fluently relayed was staggering. Did you know for example that Thomas Telford added the buttresses on the outside of the Church to stop it from falling down, or that on the south side of the nave you can still see some Medieval paintings, or that the High Street did not go past the Church but turned right down Lion Lane instead, or that there are over 70 different spellings of Cleobury in a variety of historical references? After a highly informative walk, we settled down to what the WI do best, a 'Bring and Share' BBQ at Judy and John Sant's. Thank you Robert, Judy and John for an evening of education and friendship. Our monthly walk in and around beautiful Cleobury was well attended.

The WI helped to provide tea, coffee and cake at the

Market Hall together with the Horticultural Society to celebrate our unique pleached Lime trees during the 'Shropshire Love Nature Festival'.

We are looking forward to welcoming Paul French on September 14th, to find out about mental wellbeing and the work of the Samaritans.

Gabby Franklin

ROAD WORKS

On Friday the 4th of this month there are short-term road works planned for the B4363 at Kinlet. It's for the replacement of studs, which more mature readers will remember as cat's eyes and the timetable is for work between 09.30 and 3.00pm, but do bear in mind that all such works are subject to weather conditions.

To explain that in good old plain English, it's on the stretch of the Bridgnorth road between Kinlet Kabin and the turn off for Netherton and Highley. If you need more detailed information, a call to the Shropshire Council Customer Services Centre on 0345 678 9006 will get you through to those who know more than you and I.

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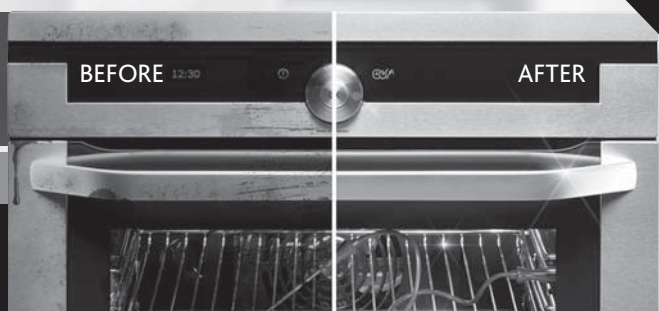
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Doddington Lodge Post

DODDINGTON LODGE SUMMER GARDEN PARTY



Following our Summer Garden Party on Saturday 7th August, despite the rain it was a great success. We are so pleased to announce that we have raised an amazing £2,305.10.

The Doddington Lodge umbrellas certainly came in useful but it didn't stop us singing & dancing in the rain. It was a day of celebrations and the local community coming together. With Tina Hobin Belly Dancing, live music by JDR, Shred Belly & Concordia Ladies Choir.

The fabulous raffle with amazing donations from many local businesses across the counties. The lucky winners won prizes such as, a day at the races, £200 Amazon Vouchers, Hampers, Jewellery, Dinner for two and so many more.

There was delicious afternoon cream teas and handmade cakes all created by our fabulous chef, Rachel. The BBQ was a sell out, especially our DLB gourmet burger created by Nick, our resident chef too.

A BIG thank you to all the entertainers, stallholders, Cleobury Mortimer Community First Responders & Fire Station that braved the rain and helped make it a great success. To all the Doddington Lodge Team that worked so hard to make it all happen.

It was such a community feel and monies raised will be equally distributed and donated to our local charity Connect For Life and our Residents new minibus fund.



www.doddingtonlodge.com | E: enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com | T: 01584 707084

Doddington Lodge Sensory Garden

We've all been enjoying our new & beautifully designed sensory garden. It came to life with the sun shining through the decorative & brightly coloured features, reflecting the patterns on the pathway. Chimes, wind charms, musical pipes, all creating a place for our residents to relax and to enjoy all the aromas from the planted herbs & flowers. Magical!



SPANISH DAY

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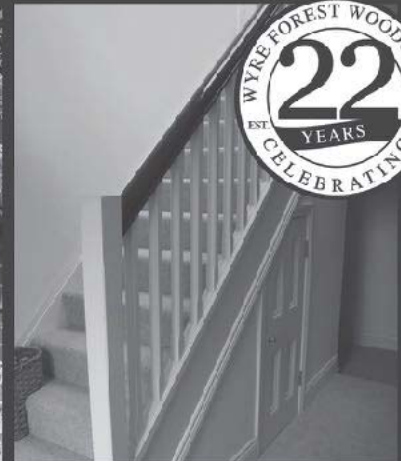
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Sunday 12th September – 10.00am Eucharist

Sunday 19th September – 10.00am Eucharist

Sunday 26th September – 10.00am Eucharist

St Michael and All Angels', Hopton Wafers

Sunday 5th September – 9.30am Eucharist

Sunday 19th September – 9.30am Eucharist

St John the Baptist, Doddington

Sunday 5th September – 11.15am Eucharist

Sunday 19th September – 3.00pm Evening Prayer

All Saints', Neen Sollars

Sunday 5th September – 11.00am Village Worship

Sunday 12th September – 11.00am Eucharist

Sunday 19th September - 11.00am Village Worship

Sunday 26th September – 11.00am Village Worship

St George's, Milson

Sunday 19th September – 11.15am Eucharist

St Mary's, Neen Savage

Sunday 5th September – 6.00pm Evening Prayer (BCP)

Sunday 19th September – 9.00am Eucharist (BCP)

St John the Baptist, Kinlet

Sunday 12th September – 11.15am Eucharist (BCP)

Sunday 26th September – 6pm Evening Prayer (BCP)

The Church Office is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9.00am-3.00pm

Contact details: Grace Johnson cleoburychurch@hotmail.com

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The Social Calendar for September

| Date | Time | Details | Telephone |
|------------------------|------------|---|-----------|
| Thurs 2 nd | | BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY | |
| Sun 5 th | | Sale of tickets for Ludlow Rotary Club Prize Draw starts today. PAGE 11 | |
| | 10.00 | CMFA Parish Walk starts from the Market Hall, Church Street. PAGE 21 | |
| Thurs 9 th | | GREEN GARDEN WASTE WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY | |
| | 09.15 | The monthly bus to Worcester is back, starting today. PAGE 9 | |
| | 7.30 | The Border Classic Bike Club meet at the Blount Arms. | |
| | 10.30 | Rock Pathfinders step out from Droitwich Gateway car park. PAGE 21 | |
| Sat 11 th | 1.00 | Neen Sollars Village Church Fete. Good family fun. PAGE 5 | |
| Sun 12 th | 10.30 | The Borders Classic Bike Show is at Lacon Childe School. Quality event. PAGE 17 | |
| Mon 13 th | 6.30 | The Creative Writing Group gather at the Library. PAGE 9 | |
| Tues 14 th | 07.30 | The Breakfast Club meet at the Golf Club. PAGE 17 | |
| | 7.30 | Cleobury WI meet at the Market Hall, Church Street. PAGE 27 | |
| Thurs 16 th | | BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY | |
| | 10.30 | Rock Pathfinders step out from Enville National Trust car park, Kinver. PAGE 21 | |
| Fri 17 th | 12.00 noon | Last chance to offer land for Neighbourhood Plan development. PAGE 13 | |
| Mon 20 th | | Ludlow Rotary Club Online Auction starts today. PAGE 11 | |
| Thurs 23 rd | | GREEN GARDEN WASTE WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY | |
| Fri 24 th | 10.30 | MacMillan Coffee Morning at Hopton Wafers Village Hall. PAGE 11 | |
| | | Royal British Legion Autumn Harvest Auction, Sports & Social Club. PAGE 17 | |
| Sun 26 th | 1.00 | Rock Church Harvest Lunch, with Scarecrows! PAGE 9 | |
| Mon 27 th | 7.30 | The Nearly Dead Poets Society meets at the Library, Love Lane. PAGE 5 | |
| Thurs 30 th | | BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY | |
| | | AND LOOKING FORWARD TO OCTOBER..... | |
| Sun 3 rd | | Ludlow Rotary Club Prize Draw today. Winner will be notified. | |
| Thurs 7 th | | GREEN GARDEN WASTE WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY | |

STOP PRESS! LATE NEWS!! SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 19TH!!!

The Great Global Greyhound Walk starts at the Sports and Social Club at 11.00 from the Sports and Social Club. It's raising funds for Candy Cane Rescue and Greyhound Protection UK. Entry fee £5.00 for families, all sighthound varieties welcome.

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HIGHWAYS DEPOT

Linda Price wrote to say that she supports Matt Sheehan's move against the closure of our local highways depot. Not a happy prospect for the winter! Here's what she said:

Like me, you have probably been stranded on the roads when snow and ice have taken the Highways Staff by surprise. However, in my experience they have been co-operative, such as one particularly icy January, when my father died, they agreed to provide salt to enable the hearse to start from our home in Bagginswood. I'm not convinced that staff driving out of Craven Arms depot will perform as well, even if they reach remote areas of south east Shropshire.

In my opinion, the decision has been made by people who have no experience of the areas we live in. I travelled between Bagginswood and Bridgnorth to school, which during heavy snowfall resulted in walking from Six Ashes to Bagginswood and being ordered to push a 52 seater coach up Nortons End bank. Having lived in Bridgnorth for

23 years and travelled to work in Shifnal, Telford, Church Stretton, Broseley and Shrewsbury, I have experienced some scary moments. With the proposed development in Bridgnorth and surrounding areas, I believe Shropshire needs a depot in this challenging landscape.

Far from being political, I am being practical. I now travel from Shrewsbury to Bagginswood at least once a week, if not more to care for my mother who continues to reside in Bagginswood. She needs support every week, not just in fair weather.

In summary, I wondered if it was possible to nudge a few readers into signing the e-petition, in order to bring the proposal to the agenda for discussion by people who represent the area? I must admit, I needed a push to remind me how to do this and the link was provided for me.

Linda Price

Editor's note: The e-petition was not in our Town Council report, but thanks to Bridgnorth councillor Julia Buckley, we can tell you that it's on: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committees/serVICES/>

<mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?Id=500000049>.

There are also paper copies for you to sign in the Cleobury Country Centre in Love Lane.
JR

FAREWELL AND HELLO

With the site sold, Mawley Oak Travel will cease to trade at the end of this month. But from that source new businesses emerge. Bethany Moule will be trading as Caynham Cars with a taxi service - telephone 077156 80477 and from the workshop Matt Gittins will be working as a mobile mechanic until he can get premises. He's on 07711 780838. We wish them both well.

With the coach service no longer available, it's timely to tell you that Whittles Coaches, a long established local company now based in Kidderminster, are advertising with the Clarion and happy to serve your needs. They also offer a highly regarded holiday service for those who don't want the bother of a long drive but prefer to let a professional do the work. The editor has asked for a brochure, so watch this space.....



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Simon Morton in the Garden.

Here's a fascinating fact to drop into conversation when the topics of the weather or which flavour of vaccination you got runs dry - a single bulb for the (admittedly rare) *Semper Augustus* tulip fetched a price of 10,000 Dutch Guilders in January 1637. For some context, the same amount of Dutch wonga would have been bought you one of the grandest homes on the most fashionable canals in Amsterdam, complete with coach house and 80-foot long garden.

For a single bulb.

While not on the same scale, bulbs have loomed large in my life for the last week, too. It all started when doing the 'big shop' in Kidderminster. There, amongst the usual Summer themed paraphernalia - water pistols, beach balls, blow-up unicorns - were bag upon bag of daffodil bulbs. Tantalising me. Taunting me.

In August. August!

That's right - the schools haven't even gone back, yet those clever retailers are already guilting gardeners into planning their bulbs for next year.

Of course, that feeling that you're behind on your homework comes with the territory as a gardener. There never seem to be quite enough hours in the day. Rare is it that you get a chance to put your feet up and actually enjoy your garden, as most of the time you're busy attempting to tick deadheading/ pruning/ digging/ weeding/ protecting/ mulching/ planning off your list. I acknowledge that this last sentence might sound like a little bit of a moan, but the fact is that, perversely, we gardeners rather like the enforced momentum that each season brings. The never-ending jobs keep us on the straight and narrow and out of the pub. No rest for the wicked and all that...

The only thing is (*and yes, I recognise that this may be an age-related condition*) is that I'm pretty convinced that it was only a few short months ago that I was wringing my hands in despair at the poor showing of my freshly dug tulip beds. A thousand or so bulbs were carefully placed into beautifully tilled patches of soil, each holding the promise of glorious blooms this Spring. After a soggy winter and a lot of waiting, the much-anticipated display was, on the whole, underwhelming. I took solace in the odd flurry of colour here and there, but on the whole, we'd probably be best to file the whole experience under the heading 'patchy'.

Ever the confident soul, I've managed to convince myself that the poor showing has nothing to do with my planting technique (*just how deep should they go? Asking for a friend...*) or the fact that the squirrels looked particularly well fed throughout the winter. Nope - let's blame it on the dodgy batch of tulips bought in a panic from an eBay seller with less than perfect credentials (*1 star is better than none at all, right?*).

Things could be worse - at least I didn't fork out 10,000 Dutch Guilders. Now that would have been tricky to explain away to my wife.

So with optimism that only a gardener can muster, here's hoping that by planning and buying way ahead (yes, in August), I can be assured of top-notch tulips to bring a little more colour in the garden at some point in 2022. It all depends, of course, on me getting them in the ground in time, but that's another story...

Simon Morton



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In September there is often some lovely, warm weather still to come but the shortening day length sends us indoors in the evenings and a heavy dew often greets us in the mornings. This is the month when many British plants and animals switch from the serious business of reproduction to strategies for surviving the winter.



All through the summer, bats have been roosting among the roof tiles and in the farm's out-buildings. Their foraging flights around the buildings at dusk are visible through our uncurtained windows, and sometimes, when insomnia strikes on a warm night, I wander into the garden to see the stars and watch the bats' rapid acrobatics as they home in on their prey using echolocation. 10 species of bat have been recorded in the Wyre Forest, possibly more, but I think most of the bats I see are tiny Common and Soprano Pipistrelles or Brown Long-eared Bats (like that in the photo). I have no evidence to say whether or not any of these breed at the farm, although a nice, warm loft makes for a very desirable bat residence, but the mature oak trees around us are very likely to provide suitable sites too. Features such as woodpecker or rot holes, torn branches, loose bark and dense ivy or honeysuckle growth, all

enhance a tree's attraction as a bat residence, and the older a tree is, the more likely it is to have them. The local woods are further enhanced by bat boxes, just in case.

From May to August females group together and seek out warm, secure maternity roosts in which to give birth to their single pup. The babies are suckled by their mothers for four to five weeks, after which they will leave the nest to forage for their food. Although bats may move to different roosts during the course of the year, the mothers are very sensitive during the breeding season and may abandon their young if disturbed.

At this time of year, with the breeding season over, the males and females share roosts and mate, but the sperm is stored by the female and embryo development only begins in the spring. Soon adults and young will be finding places to hibernate, which need to be cooler than the maternity roosts. Whether in buildings, trees or caves all bat roosts are protected by law and we are obliged to check for their presence before development or tree felling can go ahead.

September is a good time to get the garden pond ready for winter, before its resident creatures start to hibernate in the mud and surrounding stony crevices. Some of the plants, such as the water lilies, have put on exuberant growth and need 'a good hack'. It would also be a good idea to scoop out some of the sludge that has accumulated at the bottom....but maybe I'll leave that for another year!

Linda Iles

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So, Matt Hancock has finally thrown himself on his sword. Not for the various cock ups and the cronyism that probably cost many lives but for being caught *in flagrante* with his special advisor. Even then, Boris refused to sack him immediately (been there, done that?)

Are you old enough to remember the last time a minister stepped down after a cock up without being shamed into it?. I think it was when Argentina invaded the Falklands and ministers had ignored numerous warnings about Argentine intentions. However, in that case, as ever, it was the armed forces that had to suffer and die to sort things out.

The UK tourism industry is doing well out of the ever changing foreign travel bans/restrictions with bumper bookings for 'staycations'. The downside is that the large numbers of appalling scrotes who would have gone abroad to behave disgracefully are now doing this at home. There have been numerous reports of litter, vandalism, dog worrying and other unacceptable behaviour and even Punch and Judy operators being abused and sworn at in front of children when they took the hat round for donations.

None of this is helped by the fact that our overstretched Police Forces (I refuse to use the current term 'Police Service') have largely been turned into social workers by their management. In most European countries the Police have a more traditional approach to their duties and don't stand any nonsense. Start abusing them and you may well find yourself chewing on a riot baton in very short order..

I see that the long running inquest into the seven deaths in the Croydon tram crash in 2016 has been told by an accident investigator that the crash was caused by 'excessive speed'. Given that the speed limit on that stretch of track was 12 mph and the tram was doing about 45, this was not a difficult conclusion to reach. It may have been that the driver had fallen asleep and interestingly, no-one

representing the victims or the drivers was allowed to give evidence. This is strange because drivers had previously complained that their shift patterns were giving rise to excessive fatigue and this may have been a factor. Is there a cover up here?.

So, David 'Call me Dave' Cameron earned up to £7 million from his time advising Greensill Capital the gone bust investment outfit. The collapse is likely to cost us, the taxpayers, around £320 million so Dave has done considerably better than we have. Still, typing out all those begging E Mails to ex cabinet colleagues must have been tiring so it was only fair to compensate him for his efforts. Will he donate some of his earnings towards the debt?. Probably not.

Following my piece last month on action being taken against members of the House of Lords for failing to attend an obligatory anti bullying course. Four of their number have now been punished by banning them from all the (heavily subsidised) restaurants and bars in the building. The HoL authorities must have been on the course themselves as they know how to punish the famously foodie members where it hurts. Seems like a classic case of bullying to deprive frail elderly people of sustenance.

Apparently some souls are upset by the way I constantly criticise Boris but don't give Sir Kier Starmer the same treatment to which I reply 'Kier who?'. Given the shambles that is our Government, he has failed to score any telling blows although he has problems of his own with the Corbinistas, Momentum and other left wing groups constantly criticising him.

Jess Phillips, the fiesty Birmingham MP says that her first brush with senior politicians was when she was working for a charity and met Chris Grayling, then justice secretary. She remembers thinking 'If he can become secretary of state then I can be queen of the ***** world'. Good girl. *Ariadne J Grumpy*

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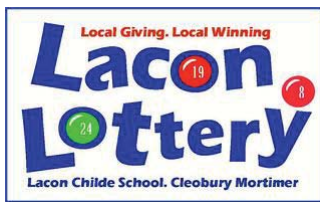
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Cleobury Clarion - Page 50 - September 2021



"We tried artificial flies. We tried lures.
We tried live bait. Nothing works ...
it's like they're psychic!"



"Blood-curdling screams. Hayes, will
do nothing to help us catch a fish."

First of all thank you to all the volunteer councillors who are working hard to enhance what we have and make sure what we have is looked after for generations to come.

The Town Council still has a vacancy for a Town Councillor. It is a voluntary position but working as part of a team to help our community grow and address issues we have in the Town. If interested then please contact the Town Clerk for further details. cleobury.clerk.matt.sheehan@gmail.com

Lots of work still going on with projects getting completed and some new ones being looked at. The issues we have in the street with the Crossing needing marking, Disabled bays, state of the road and Talbot car park are still being chased and we are sending a request to Shropshire Council and West Mercia police to raise serious concerns for people's safety in and around the town. So we are very active as always.

Also from our invitation and meeting with John Campion, we are applying for a grant to locate two vehicle activated speed signs to remind people of the speed limit. These will be located one by Curdale and the other before the Fire station and Nursery, where we see continuous speeding vehicles.

Another positive result from our meeting at Bridgnorth police station is that we are resurrecting an agreement from a few years ago that was never fully used but now is welcomed by our Police sergeant. The use of the Market Hall in the centre of town as a base for our local police to work and use the facilities, so they have their own set of keys. I know you will but please make them feel welcome as they will be there for anyone to raise concerns they have. You will know when they are there as the police car will be outside.

The Food bank is still busy and we are so grateful for the donations every week. The weekly fresh milk from Mawley milk, Doddington Heights who's residents donate loads every week and many more who show that we are a very caring community. We do need some more volunteers to help once or twice a month on a Friday morning, so please contact Matt Sheehan if you can help.

I have been asked by many people what can be done about some issues we have in the town and I always ask if they have reported it and usually not, perhaps only to me. One message that needs to go out is that the more people that report issues then the more chance there is of action being taken. If ten people complain to me and I complain, then that is only one complaint. There is a page on our Town Council website for reporting an issue, so please use it if you can, while also letting us know so we can report it too.

The streetlights that we own are now being marked with a column number and also a contact number for reporting it if it is not working. Please note the number of the column when reporting so we can make sure that the correct column is fixed. It also helps me as I don't have to go out after dark to make sure I have the correct one. Thank you.

Finally please be kind to each other and help when you can, but most of all stay safe!

M Sheehan Town Clerk
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Tuesdays - 9:30am-12:45pm, 2:30pm-9pm

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

The CCH has been a welcome place for visitors over the summer with 924 visits throughout July and into August. Climb61 now has 371 members with many children, adults and families returning week after week to enjoy our bouldering wall. Thank you to everyone that visits - You create the atmosphere!

As we start again for the academic year in September we will be starting new activities so please check in, either physically at the CCH or through our social channels.

Starting in September...

- **Rock Tots: Parent and Toddler Climb and Soft Play**
- **Kids Club Climbing (7-11 year olds)**
- **Youth Climbing Club**
- **Soft Play**
- **Men's Climbing Social**

Climb61 Session Times - To book: [**www.smyproject.org.uk**](http://www.smyproject.org.uk)

Mondays and Tuesdays - 9:30am-11am, 11:15am-12:45pm, 2:15pm-3:45pm, 4pm-5:30pm, 5:45pm-7:15pm, 7:30pm-9pm

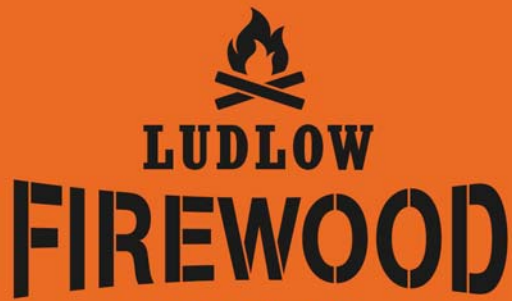
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All building work undertaken

The scams just keep on coming and crime never stops, never takes a rest, it's happening 24 seven. It would seem that the focus these days is on email and mobile phone scams and by mobile phone I mean texts or SMS messages that come through with a very genuine look about them. For the uninitiated, quite worrying. Despite the fact that major companies and big names seem to appear regularly on these message scams it is obvious that they are not doing enough about it, but as an individual if your awareness is sufficiently high, you won't be beaten by them. This month I would like to illustrate the level of sophistication with this live example that came to my attention a few days ago. The 'victim' was a local resident, who I will not name but this account was written in the first person. I have annotated where I think there are key messages which I have explained at the end.

Last week I fell victim to a very clever bank scam. I received a call from "my bank's fraud team" and so, I said I understand that the bank never calls a customer. He said it was urgent because my accounts were being attacked and they had been trying to get hold of me for the last couple of hours; read my messages. So I read my messages and sure enough I had two apparently genuine ^{1*} ones from my bank asking if I'd made transactions for two different very high cost purchases. I hadn't. ^{2*} This man assured me he was genuine and told me my full name, date of birth, postal and email addresses, and bank account numbers, etc. ^{3*} He said "I'll send your house phone an automated call, ring, ring, it came and sure enough it was my bank! ^{4*} He also sent me another message on my mobile which came onto the chat stream I'd previously had from my bank. More of my money was apparently being sent out of my accounts! I became stressed and confused. Then he told me where he reckoned the scammer had got my bank card details from and sure enough he gave me the name of someone I'd paid a small amount to a few weeks ago but the item I had ordered and paid for had never arrived. ^{5*}Due to the high number of people reporting scams I had not managed to report this crook and so when this chap mentioned the name I told him about the non-delivery. It all made sense to me. Then he asked me to take some details from him and gave me a name, sort code and bank account number which he asked me to pay a couple of thousand pounds to via the department he was going to put me through to, I was just helping him catch a bank worker who was putting money into his own account rather than paying into the account the paying customer

wants.^{6*}At this point I was not happy risking my money so I said my phone battery was dying and I cut him off. I rang the help number on my bank card and found that I was right that the bank NEVER phones customers, and that my accounts had all been targeted but the bank were suspicious and had sent me the two messages which I had seen while talking to this man. This whole saga lasted from 5:30pm until 1:25am the next morning! I hadn't eaten or had a drink since I got home that afternoon. I was a nervous wreck the next day, or should I say later that same day! I was lucky, my real bank refused to pay any of the transactions that I said I hadn't made, replaced all my bank cards immediately (I got the new ones the following morning!) So PLEASE don't get caught out like I did. The scammers are getting very clever at tricking us. If you get a call from someone saying they are from your bank, say thanks and put the phone down and call your bank yourself.^{7*}

NOTES:

1. **This confused the customer as it's not common for scammers to have that capability to send Text messages like this. In this case these were coincidentally genuine messages.**
2. **In this case the customer had not made the transactions but the scammer with her bank details had made them, presumably to have the goods sent to a different address.**
3. **The scammer most likely obtained sufficient details of the customer to convince them. This is done by crooks through 'data mining' and matching personal details to build a convincing profile of someone.**
4. **Getting enough personal data about someone makes it much easier for scammers to impersonate and break through their personal social media accounts.**
5. **The message here is if you have ordered goods and they don't arrive, the moment you become suspicious call and report it through the channels I have already written about.**
6. **The customer (victim) became suspicious enough to stop the call and then call a genuine number for her bank. Banks publish these numbers on all their paperwork. Call the number and ask to be put through to the Fraud Department.**
7. **As in 6. If in doubt stop and check with your bank or whatever using only a number you know is genuine.**

Nigel Reid



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I first met and wrote about Chris Smith and her art classes some years ago. She had a whole programme of evenings on offer for anyone who wanted to develop their artistic taste into the real thing. But it didn't flourish in the face of Covid-19 and the restrictions on movement and the threat of spreading the disease that we all had to face, so the idea went on the back burner. But when interviewing Chris about her work I visited the home she shares with partner Nathan Smith and was just knocked out by the decoration of their house, including a range of mementoes from their global travels.

So when this same Chris called in June and explained that she was planning to offer a painting and decorating service and could she please book an advert, it struck a real note. I needed the ground floor of my apartment painting and had even bought paint for the job, calling on my daughter-in-law's colour sense to help choose the right paints. All I needed was a known quality painter to do the job, instead of me trying to stir my ancient bones into

action. So would she like to call and give me a quote?

A few days later she was there, looking at the job and assessing what I wanted to see done. Did I want the ceiling painting? I didn't think so, but she pointed out that it would help freshen the look of the place. It's eleven years since it was first done and my idea of a fresh look was very far from what could be achieved with just one coat of white emulsion. I agreed.

Chris came back to me with a quote that seemed more than reasonable and once I'd agreed that, she followed up with a programme of day-by-day work. Never mind the detail, the final line was worth space for a quote on its own: "August 12th - Finish walls & clean up. Make sure Jim's happy." If that didn't seal the deal, nothing would.

So she arrived at 4.00 on Monday August 4th and just got on with the job and no time wasted. Her artist's eye came into the discussion as she looked at the staircase and its natural coloured varnish. "Would you like the handrail in the same gloss I'll be using on the skirtings?" she asked. I wish I had that eye for colour

balance: "Yes please." And it does add to the effect of the overall scheme.



Chris doesn't just do inside work, she'll happily take on house painting of almost any sort.

Her standard of work did impress, with two hours spent taping along the carpeted areas to keep the paint off the pile. "Saves time in the long run," was her logical reason.

She finished on time, the job making my ground floor much warmer and tidier. I was well pleased and happy to settle the bill with not one query or moan. It's no surprise she's booked into the New Year and I've asked for a further quote when she's available. She smiles, chats and gets the job done. Great!

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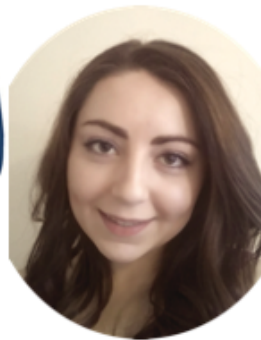
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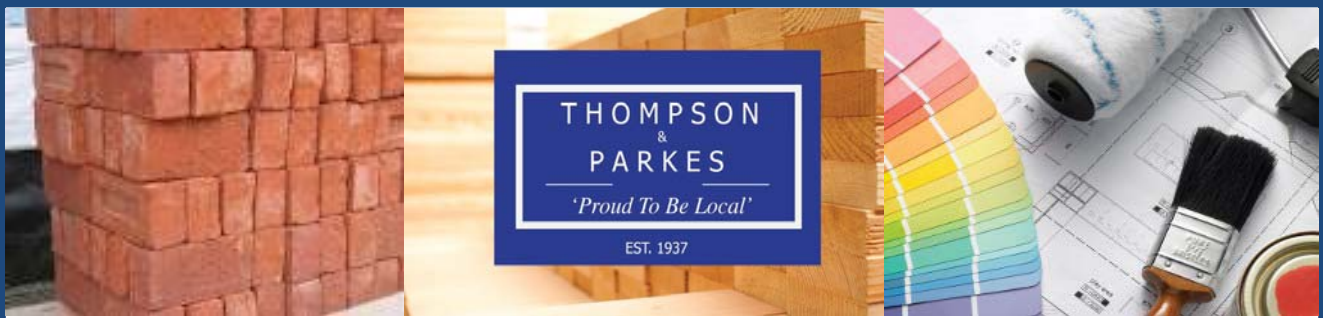
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