

The Cleobury Clarion

SERVING CLEOBURY COUNTRY

MARCH 2021

WE ARE NOT AT A STANDSTILL

In a lockdown there is an assumption that all of us who can't get to work or are not in a vital job will do as we're told. Stay at home, do little or nothing unless you can work from home, and wait for the next set of instructions from on high.

But people have plans and want to get on with them. So at the Cleobury Hub the long wait for a climbing wall is over. On Page 27 you'll find details and a picture of another great move forwards in the hall.

At the eastern edge of town the bend at Newbridge is to be resigned and the road surface attended to. Road closure and diversions scheduled for a week as what some see as an accident black spot is altered.

Lots of people are out just walking, on pavements and signposted footpaths. And you don't have to wear a mask to do it.

On Page 13 Leo Smith reminds us of the need to protect and preserve precious wildlife, the charismatic curfew in particular. Clee Hill Community Wildlife Group need volunteers to help with their bird count that is a vital part of protecting.

COVID-19 has dominated headlines in recent months, but let's not forget the huge threat to our future that climate change is bringing and does not hesitate and wait for us to catch up on its progress. The formation of the local Climate Action Group is detailed on Page 11, a body whose work all of us with children and grand children should support. Young people are the future

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Pages 36 and 37 this month have been cleared and the space handed over to the team working on this vital aspect of the town's future.

Their efforts haven't always pleased the whole town, but to their credit they have listened and the result you can see in the three maps representing how future development is proposed. And please do not waste anyone's time with shouting that there is no need for development - we need to recognise that the town will continue to grow. Just as it has in the past, but with a lot more thought and consultation with us inhabitants than was offered before. We are fortunate in the care and time these volunteers give so freely.

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The Cleobury Clarion, March 2021
Volume Sixteen - Edition Eleven



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*Protecting our Wildlife.
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*'In Business', Andy Smith of
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ASKING VERY POLITELY

Diane Waddington, treasurer of the Friends of Saint Mary's Church, has written to members explaining that the committee is reluctant to ask for annual subs when there is no activity in the current lockdown. But if members feel they want to support the body's work, as they have quite a list of projects to tackle when circumstances and finances permit, the committee would be very grateful. It's a model letter, giving a gentle nudge. Being a sucker for such a gentle approach, the editor has sent a modest cheque. After all, we are lucky to have such a fine building as the town's landmark and it does need proper maintenance.

THE MEN'S SHED

The drive to raise funds for the shed and its operation once the place is ready to be opened up and members welcomed, is a constant process. Bill Duley is currently the driving force behind this and he's just had confirmation from the National Lottery that his application for £1,800 to

finance the purchase of a shipping container has been agreed.

It will be a reconditioned and weatherproof unit and used to store materials and projects in process. The whole Shed development promises to be quite a place when it opens.

Peter Blackburn, chair of the Men's Shed committee is looking for a volunteer to help the vital business of meetings progress. He writes:

Can you help?

Since our dear friend, secretary and a founding Trustee Keith Martin (RIP) passed away just prior to the first lockdown, we have struggled to find anyone to do jobs like taking the meeting minutes, etc. If there is anyone reading this with a bit of spare time, administrative skills and a heart for the Men's Shed (ladies welcome, by the way) then please get in touch at: chair.cmms@gmail.com

MARGARET THE FRIENDLY OWL

Spring is in the air. From late January a tawny owl has been talking or hooting to Helen as she walks her dog in the Skate Park. She christened her owl ,

Margaret and they talk at quite close quarters while Margaret perches half way up a tree. It is obviously her territory but she is prepared to share it with a friendly dog walker. Recently Margaret has been joined by Norman and they talk among themselves as well as with Helen. Let's hope that the pair nest using an owl box installed earlier this year, raise owlets and that they all pass on their keenness to talk to humans, for generations to come.

NO COMMENT



Well, what can you say about this notice, spotted lying in the Manor House garden.



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IN PRAISE OF THE VOLUNTARY CAR SERVICE

The writer of this letter asked not to be identified and we publish a good story in the manner requested.

I received my appointment for the Covid 19 vaccination with some trepidation. It was an early evening appointment at Bridgnorth Medical Centre. How to get there with no car or public transport?

I contacted our local Voluntary Car Scheme, who fixed me up with a driver to get me there. He arrived on time to collect me. I was feeling very nervous about it all but he was friendly and courteous and, I could see, a good driver and got us confidently to Bridgnorth. When we arrived it was total darkness, the rain was lashing down in torrents and there was a bewildering array of lights I found awesome.

My driver held up a large umbrella and steered me safely across to the Medical Centre, where he said he would have to wait by the door as he wouldn't be allowed in. I thought this was awful considering the weather and hoped I wouldn't be long.

It took place quite quickly as there were not many people in. The medical staff were all very pleasant and my vaccination over, they asked me how did I get there? I told them about our Voluntary Car Service and that the driver was outside by the entrance, waiting for me. There was a hurried conversation amongst

them and in a few minutes they had brought my driver inside the hospital for him to be vaccinated as well. I thought this was a very good idea for the medical team to do this. I think they had decided that he was doing a front line job and needed protection at once. So we both had vaccinations and in future he would not have to wait outside for his patients.

We arrived back in Cleobury Mortimer, where the rain had turned to snow, but my driver waited until I was safely in my home before driving away. I felt that what I had expected to be a fearsome event for me had been made easier by the care my voluntary car driver had given me. Well done Cleobury Mortimer Voluntary Car Service and the NHS staff at Bridgnorth Medical Centre. Thank you!

From a grateful senior citizen of Cleobury Mortimer.

AN APPEAL FOR CHARITY HELP

Although we collect mainly children's clothes, we are often given toys, some of which are broken or need tidying up to make them more presentable. So an adaptable person is required, who would like to help resurrecting these toys. I have space in my garage or you can take the stuff away to work on it.

This is all for charity, so payment would be a cake and coffee/tea every time you are at our house, along the Tenbury Road.

Balmeruk@gmail.com or 07976307889.

TRACEY'S COVID SERVICE

Tracey's fruit, veg and sweet shop on the High Street has a rather handy special service during lockdown. She's offering free delivery and you can pick up an order form at the shop, for your own use or for a neighbour who can't get out on their own.

There's a big range of fruit and veg and you can add a few sweets if that's your taste. Free range eggs, too, at £1.20 for half a dozen. Pay by cash, card or bank transfer.

She's on CM 270943 or mobile 07376 282 444

ROAD CLOSURE AT STOTTESDON

Thank goodness for this news item. Station Road in Stottesdon is to have resurfacing and drainage work carried out, starting on March 1st and scheduled to last until the 19th. The scheduled working hours are from 9.30 in the morning until 4.00 in the afternoon, which should mean minimal inconvenience for those commuting from the village to distant work. That stretch really has been in a dreadful state, particularly out at the edge of the village as you head for Cleobury North.

If you need more details, Customer Services on 0345 6789006 is the contact number or you can check the map for the work on streetworks@shropshire.gov.uk. We have said quite a lot about the county's shabby roads, but let's be grateful for this part of an overdue remedy.

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POTHOLE OF THE MONTH



Our thanks to Ian and Jane Ludford for this prize example of highway neglect, just beyond the housing area on the Catherton Road. They were out walking and thought it was worth recording and sending in to us. This is the second example we've had from that area, and if you feel brave and venture out towards the common just take it easy, because there are stretches that are downright dangerous.

The not-quite lovely Ariadne Grumpy mentioned the award of 'Private Eye' magazine's Consultant of the Year prize to Shropshire Council in the last issue, after they appointed the successful pothole spotter to

the job at a rate of £1,000 a day. If only they'd asked, the editor would happily have taken on the job for half that wage.

This is a big hole and if you drive down the road at night, there's a fair chance you'll find it and certainly feel it. If your car has alloy wheels, there's a strong chance you'll damage one or possibly two with the impact. There's also a risk of a tyre being damaged beyond repair and they don't come cheap these days. Come on, Shropshire, this is costing innocent people money! Let's have some effective action, please.

LOCKDOWN BLUES

David Walford puts lockdown feelings into a blues lyric:

I've got the lockdown blues
From my head to my toes
I'm hitting the booze
On a fantasy cruise
I've got the lockdown blues
Tapping my shoes
To the lockdown blues
Tapping my shoes
To the lockdown blues

Typical poet, can't let an emotional moment go to waste. And his son has set it to music.

DRINK DRIVING

A worrying report in a recent edition of the petrolprices.com blog, states that in 2019 deaths in driving accidents where one or more had been drinking hit the highest figure since 2009. 280 people killed was 17 percent higher than the total in 2018. Admittedly that is a great deal fewer than was normal before drink driving penalties were launched, but it's far from good news.

A spokesman for the RAC suggested that adoption of alco-locks in vehicles of drivers with a drink penalty would help. These drivers would have to take a self-breathalyser before starting the engine and if they failed the test, the car's ignition locks up for 24 hours and they don't drive. They are in use in both France and the USA already.

The suggestion in the report is that England and Wales have one of the most lenient alcohol limits in Europe, though Scotland's limit is more strict than ours. If this trend continues, expect action to curb it. Speaking as a reformed character, I lost a friend to a drunken driver. Such a waste of life. JR



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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.

Contact us

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.

NEW BUSINESS - YOUR PAPER TO YOUR DOOR

Call it old fashioned if you like, but the service Laura Callwood is now offering has that personal touch we've come to expect in this civilised part of England. She delivers papers, daily and weekly, plus magazines, to your door.

It started when Sean Boden found that delivering papers as well as all the household goods he handled was getting to be too demanding. He let it be known that he wanted to pass the newspaper service on and Laura recognised a business opportunity. The lady is clearly no fool and she's a real worker.

She's up at 5.00 every morning (didn't you know there are two five o'clocks in a normal day?) collecting the papers, working her way through Cleobury and then off up to Clee Hill for another delivery session. She's a determined character and when the roads up on the hill were impassable, she humped the load and got on; it took her four hours. Every day, Monday to Saturday, this 22 year old got through and delivered.

She's clearly made of good stuff.

You'll find her contact details amongst our Small Ads, that great source of helpful, capable people. It's this sort of personal service that makes Cleobury Country such a good place to live.

SOUTH SHROPSHIRE CLIMATE ACTION

South Shropshire Climate Action was set up in November 2019, following a large public meeting in Craven Arms of concerned citizens. The first activity was a very successful online conference in September 2020 which strongly supported the idea of local action to combat the twin threats of Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss. Philip Dunne, the local MP, attended both meetings and encouraged the initiative which covers the whole of the Ludlow constituency. A similar campaign is taking place in the rest of the county by Shropshire Climate Action Partnership (SCAP) and the two organisations are working closely together.

SSCA's objective is to create an action plan for the achievement of Net Zero Carbon emissions in South

Shropshire by 2030 and, in conjunction with others, to implement the plan as far as possible.

There are three working groups focussing on Buildings and Energy, Transport and Land and Biodiversity – plus a fourth group concentrating on Communities and Education including the creation and maintenance of a website, so that materials are available for community groups and schools.

We are contacting local organisation of all kinds to see how we can learn and help with mitigating the climate and ecological crisis. If you would like us to be involved in your climate emergency discussions, please get in touch at info@southshropshireclimateaction.org. Our second online conference is planned for May 22nd. There is still time to join one of the working groups. And we would be pleased to hear from you if you would just like to know more.

Lorna Taylor

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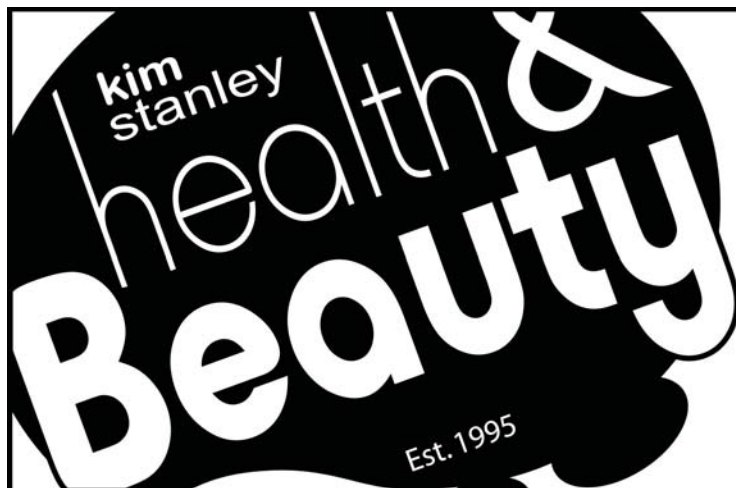
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PRESERVING AND PROTECTING WILDLIFE. LEO SMITH REPORTS:

Clee Hill Community Wildlife Group has been monitoring local Curlews, Lapwings and other birds since 2012. We are planning on starting the 2021 survey at the end of March. It will be conducted in accordance with whatever Government Coronavirus restrictions are in place at the time, but as survey visits are usually made by people on their own, or by couples, and can be done as daily exercise, we should be able to do it.

We need more helpers, so if you have some time to spend monitoring the iconic birds around here, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

The area is divided into survey squares, each of 2x2 kilometres. Participants take on one of these survey squares and visit it three times, on dates to suit you around 1st April, 1st May and 15th June, about half a day each visit, so it doesn't take much time. It's easy to do, and participants are provided with simple survey instructions and a map to record sightings on. If possible we'd also like you to record Kestrel, Cuckoo and other target species, but that's an optional extra.

We normally hold a meeting in March to recap on last year's results, and explain what's involved to new participants. However, we won't be able to do that this year, but the briefing will explain everything you need to know. There will be a practical (socially-distanced) training session, explaining how to go about the survey, and record what you see, in early April, if you feel you need it. It will be combined with a Birdwalk for anyone else interested in coming along.

You can choose your own square, and do more than one if you want, but we have to try and get all the squares covered, so we would appreciate it if you'll be a bit flexible, and tell us the rough area that you'd like to do, and we'll choose a square for you

The reports of a full survey in 2019, and the more limited survey we did in 2020, can be found on our website www.shropscwgs.org.uk

Curlews should be returning to the area in early March, and we will again be trying to find all the breeding pairs before the end of April. We would be grateful for the help of Clarion readers. If you see or hear a Curlew, please tell us.

From early May onwards, we'll be working with Shropshire Ornithological Society, with land-owners help, to find all the nests, put an electric fence around them to protect the eggs from predators, and then fix radio-tags to the chicks and track them to see how they use the landscape, and what happens to them. Not enough young birds fledge to replace the older birds dying off. We need to know why.

This innovative research is expensive, and we need to raise more to carry it out. We have sent an appeal to all our members and supporters, and we would be very grateful for support from other Clarion readers too. You can find more information, including details of how to make donations and where to send them, on our website www.shropscwgs.org.uk

In spite of the restrictions, our Curlew coverage in 2020 was not much worse than in previous years. We found 8 pairs, so sadly many of the 13 pairs we found when we started in 2012 have already disappeared.

In Shropshire as a whole, the population has declined by about 10% in the last 10 years, and by 80% since 1990. At the current rate, numbers will halve in about 12 years, and be virtually extinct in 25. There is a real danger that we will lose these iconic birds for ever, unless we can find out why they are disappearing, and take action to halt and reverse the decline. Remind yourself of what we might lose, by listening to the Curlew's evocative and mournful song on www.british-birdsongs.uk/curlew/?type1585

If you want to help with the survey, or report a Curlew, or find out more about the Appeal, please contact Chris Bargman 01299 270514, email chcwgs@shropscwgs.org.uk

Leo Smith

Here By You is a support and companion service offering company and accompaniment in and outside of the home. My name is Leah. I am caring, reliable and trustworthy. I can provide support and help to anyone needing assistance. I charge a reasonable hourly rate and cover Cleve Hill and the surrounding areas.



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Assistance with paperwork of any kind.
Light household duties



Accompaniment may include:
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Please note I offer a support and companion service. I am unable to provide 'personal care' for individuals.

Covid guidelines adhered to. DBS checked for your piece of mind. References available.

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Roy Burrows - An extract from the eulogy at his February funeral.

Roy was one of three boys born at home in Harlesden, London on 13th November 1920, a cockney who never lost his accent. Roy did not say much about his childhood; he was left handed but remembered being hit with a ruler if he used his left hand at school.

Roy started working for the Swiss engineering company Muller in 1936 aged 16. Muller moved to Cleobury in 1940 from bomb torn Park Royal in London, many workers moved up to the sticks as they called it. Muller supplied the war effort; workers were exempt from joining up but never the less their work played an important part in the war.

Initially workers were bused up on a Sunday afternoon and taken back on a Friday afternoon by a local coach company, the driver was Cyril Breakwell. Accommodation was eventually found near the Hop Pole pub in Bewdley. The factory did shift work, when one got up to go to work the other came home to sleep in the shared bed. Eventually Muller built flats and houses in Cleobury for their workers.

Many of the workers met and married local girls and made Cleobury their forever home. Roy married Dora Edwards in December 1942, and they set up home in a Muller flat at Curdale Close. Dora also worked in the factory. In 1951 Kevin was born and in 1963 they moved to Lower In hedge, a Muller new build house. They bought a caravan at Aberporth, which they used a lot as did the wider family. Stacey and Paul have fond memories of holidays at the seaside.

Roy helped with the company Fire Brigade and organised the Muller Children's Christmas Parties. He was the longest serving employee of Muller giving 50 years' service, he continued as a part timer in the gatehouse until he finally retired in 2005 aged 85. He was the last survivor of the workers who moved up from London.

Locally he joined the British Legion and the Buffs, we thank them for support shown to him over the years. Roy was well known for his daily walk to get the papers. When his mobility declined he would ride his mobility scooter, it did not matter what the weather was he had to go and get the papers. Dora died after a short illness in 2011, and the family thank all the neighbours for supporting Roy, he appreciated their regular visits at this difficult time.

Roy was befriended by Ruth and Robin, and they took him to the weekly Friendship Club at the Parish Rooms, if they were unable to provide transport others from the club would give Roy a lift, yet more support shown to him locally. Ruth tells me he did not like to lose at dominos but he enjoyed the company and the refreshments.

In 2019 he decided it was time to move to a bungalow at St Marys. Thanks to Jo the warden for helping him settle into his new home. Roy embraced his new social life with coffee mornings, Age UK Lunch, games mornings, Christmas parties and other social events; he was a people person. Roy kept Kevin and I quite busy as we were the main taxi service. When we picked him up from his social engagements we noticed at times he was the only chap there, all the ladies seemed to know him well and they all had a jolly time, he thoroughly enjoyed his trips out.

Health problems meant Roy had to remain in bed for the last 6 months of his life, he accepted his lot and thanks to his live in carer Billy he was well looked after and they formed an obvious close friendship. We thank Billy for his care and concern for Roy, we know it was more than a paid job for Billy. We thank the various care companies who provided backup care over this period and Cleobury doctors and chemist for their help in sorting out his issues.

All the residents at St Marys welcomed Roy and during the last 6 months of his illness they did window visits which he appreciated. He especially enjoyed the 100th window Birthday Party and his window Christmas, thanks to those who came to stand in the front garden. Many people who knew Roy have said, he had a lovely sense of humour, looked smart and appreciated what people did for him, to the end he was always saying thank you to the carers.

Lastly the family thank our friend John Barnes for tracing Roy's nephew Terry in time for Roy's 100th Birthday. Terry and Roy spoke on the telephone but Covid meant we could not meet up. Someone had to fight Roy's corner, when Social Services said it could not be done I did not take no for an answer and funding was found to care for Roy how he deserved to be cared for at the end of his life.

Rest in peace dad.



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Sadly, a Page of Memories

A poem for Roy Burrows, from his grand daughter Stacey Childe. A piece written from the heart:

Grandad

Our memories will forever stay with us,
Of how you never wanted a fuss.
You opened all your presents,
Methodically and slow,
Always had a gadget to help,
And never told us no.

Your green Skoda, the mobility scooter,
"I'm going up the street"
Always seeing someone you knew,
And buying us a treat.

Making a cuppa with coffee mate,
Always cakes on top of the bread bin,
Feeding the birds on the patio,
And the hope of a lottery win.

Sitting in your chair, taking it all in,
Chats about the weather,
Watching the Grand Prix or snooker,
It was time spent together.

Going out for family Sunday lunch,
You liked to have beef, sometimes with mustard,
We always joked about your pudding,
We knew it would be apple pie and custard!

Your 100th birthday, through a window,
You had cards and presents galore,
Two birthday cakes, a special card,
You couldn't have asked for more.
Our memories will forever stay with us,
Of how you never wanted a fuss.

BARBARA MUMFORD

To me she was always Mrs Mumford, the quiet spoken lady who helped her husband run that lovely ironmongers shop on Church Street. She was from Ludlow, as was Basil, her husband of 61 years who quit this world in 2014. They were married in 1953 and Basil came to Cleobury Mortimer to manage the shop for Frankie Roberts, whose main business was in Ludlow. Stewart Mumford tells of the day Frankie came through the door at Cleobury and told Basil: "You're buying the shop. I've got all the money side sorted out."

There was a gentle atmosphere about the place and what many today would call an old fashioned way of trading. The shop closed its door for lunch time and the display of brooms, buckets, spades and a range of goods stayed on display outside. If you needed it that day, you came back at 2.00 to find the place open.

Sadly Mrs Mumford fell victim to COVID-19, a lady who deserved a better fate after giving so many years serving this community, even if her essential part of the Mumford tradition was not visible to most of us. Our sympathy goes to Stewart and to Barbara's grandson Tom.

SHEILA WHITEFOOT

Such sad news to hear that Sheila Whitefoot, a true part of Old Cleobury and its traditional way of knowing and helping your neighbours had died in February, apparently of a heart attack while she was in hospital.

Sheila was a warm hearted lady who enjoyed a joke and loved to offer some of the local gossip that came her way. We are sure that all who knew Sheila and shared a laugh with her will remember her kindly and send their condolences to her family.

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WANTED

Carolyn Balmer, the better half of one pair of the local do-Gooder's in Cleobury Mortimer, is asking for ladies under-wear, bra's pants, toiletries new or opened, and sanitary products etc, and babies nappies etc, some of which will go to local ladies refuges, the Bewdley Baby Bank and some abroad. So ladies if you have anything that fits our requirement and no longer fits your requirement, would you leave them in the Market Hall in Cleobury M. Many thanks, we and they would be so grateful.

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

BAYTON WALKS

Susan Sharp writes to advise us that in future she will be reporting on the Bayton area, where she is the Footpath Warden. This is the first of her reports in that capacity:

Last year, while out walking, I met several people who told me that they stayed on the lanes as they were not confident about finding our footpaths.

To try to help with that, I have created a set of 18 walks using our footpaths and into the neighbouring parishes of Mamble, Neen Sollars, Cleobury Mortimer and Rock. They vary from 30 minutes up to three hours and I have included information about stiles and access for dogs.

If you have a phone app, they are available on Viewranger. They are not published but are on a private share basis so you would need to give me your user name. Or I have created printable versions which I can e-mail for you to print at home.

They all start from Bayton Church but can be adapted if you live elsewhere in Bayton.

During January and February, many of our field paths were unpleasant to use due to waterlogged ground. I hope by mid March things will have improved so that these walks can be enjoyed.

*Susan, Bayton Footpath Warden
susanjsharp44@gmail.com*

DOG WALKING

ACROSS FARMLAND

Rachel Robinson explains a problem we would all recognise:

We are so blessed to live in such a beautiful part of the

country and through lockdown it's been great to see more people out and about enjoying walks making the most of fresh air and scenery. The vast majority of folk are very careful not to drop litter, stick to the footpaths, keep their dogs on leads and clear up any dog poop. Unfortunately we have had a few incidents of dogs being allowed to run loose through planted fields, which not only causes damage to the crop; if the dog defecates out of sight, or its poop is not cleared up from footpaths, it can lead to cattle picking up an infectious disease called Neosporosis. Neosporosis is caused by a parasite transmitted by dog faeces; it is the most commonly diagnosed cause of abortion in cattle and it can affect sheep too.

So please, enjoy the glorious South Shropshire countryside, but be mindful of crops and livestock by keeping your dogs on a lead, stick to footpaths and clear up after your dogs and dispose of the poop bags in designated bins or when you get home.

Thank you

Rachel Robinson

CMFA

There is a constant need to keep our footpaths clear of growth. Hedges growing across stiles and gates, bramble

engulfing paths and the explosion of growth in the early summer, nettles, bracken, balsam etc.

This is an important part of our work, but it does not lend itself to working in teams. We have a footpath guardian scheme where individuals and couples undertake to look after a stretch of footpath. It is just a couple of hours work a year and can be done while out walking. It only requires the use of secateurs and shears and possibly other tools (which can be provided)

Recent publicity on our Facebook page has led to some new volunteers joining us, but more are always welcome, especially in the more outlying areas of Neen Savage & Hopton Wafers.

Please get in touch if you feel you would like to take part.
Footpaths.cmfa@gmail.com

Sadly, we are still unable to offer our monthly led walks but we hope that many Clarion readers will make their own way, especially as there are signs of Spring around us. A great walk in March would be to leave Cleobury via Cleanly Seat and on to Musbatch where there is a great display of daffodils. You should come across young lambs so dog owners please keep your dogs on a lead. Take the stile on the right (rather than the very muddy bridleway) and descend to the river. Cross on the bridge by the spectacular ford and return to Cleobury past Neen Savage church and Walfords bridge. This is the short version of walk 18 on our website www.cmfa.co.uk

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Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster

The effort to vaccinate the public against COVID-19 continues at truly remarkable pace. I write in mid-February, so cannot reflect on the PM's statement about the route out of restrictions.

So instead, I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in the rollout of the vaccine in South Shropshire. I received my jab at Ludlow Hospital last month, and having been forced to shield for much of the pandemic, I joined in the enormous sense of relief felt by all who have been vaccinated against this wretched virus.

As I write, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin have administered over 40,000 doses in the past week alone. So I am deeply grateful to our local GPs, but also NHS staff, Shropshire Council staff, RAF medics at Ludlow Racecourse, volunteers from Shropshire Fire & Rescue, and many members of the community including retired clinicians, and public spirited folk, braving the chill and wet weather to help get the most vulnerable in our community vaccinated.

I also want to thank the generosity of those supporting the vaccine programme. I know local businesses and individuals have been coming forward to offer snacks and hot drinks to health staff, which really does reflect the best of our community, not least during February's cold snap.

The immense progress the country has made towards vaccination allows us to plan further ahead, and last month, the government confirmed that Local, Mayoral and Police & Crime Commissioner elections would go ahead as planned in May. In Shropshire, that means voting will take place to elect all local Shropshire Councillors, and the Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, as well as local town and parish councils.

When the pandemic hit last year, some elections were postponed. But we know much more about COVID19 now, and other

countries have shown successful elections can take place within covid-secure guidelines – including in Ireland, France, Portugal, Israel, South Korea, and the United States. We will have reached all nine cohorts of the vaccination programme by the Spring, which means everyone over 50 will have been offered a vaccine. So we can commit to go ahead with these polls with confidence.

The government is working with the Electoral Commission to ensure a safe election. The changes for voters and election staff will be similar to those made for workplaces up and down the country during the pandemic. Voters (and companions of disabled voters) should bring their mask, as they would wear in any indoor public place, and are encouraged to bring a pen or pencil with which to mark their ballot paper.

But if you are concerned, please consider applying for a postal or proxy vote ahead of the polls. You can find more information on how to apply at <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/elections-and-electoral-registration/voting-and-elections/postal-and-proxy-voting/>.

The pandemic does of course mean quite a significant change for those campaigning. You may not receive a knock on the door from rosette-wearing candidates, and as I write, political campaigning is not considered essential activity, so you should not get leaflets through your door unless they are posted via Royal Mail – though one party has irresponsibly chosen to ignore these rules in parts of the county.

But these elections are important – they will determine your voice in town or parish councils, in Shirehall, and the oversight of your local Police service. So it is right we do not delay democracy any longer than we must, and voters can head to the polls with confidence on 6th May.

Philip Dunne

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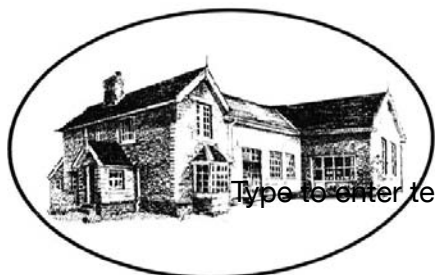
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Cleobury Community Hub

Thank you for your continued interest in the Community Hub, we hope this update finds you well, and we can't wait to catch up in person soon!

News and Events

As we all know the lockdown continued through February, and as such, although we would have legally been able to remain open for milk and takeaways the Hub remained closed. The Hub and it's Cafe have never been about income generation, but as a tool to allow community interaction and engagement. However on a more positive note, Government guidance is due for review, and plans are already in motion to reopen the Hub for milk and takeaways as soon as there is an easing of restrictions. Hopefully you have noticed the addition to the decking making it a bit more weatherproof! Please keep an eye on our social media for further updates.

Although closed the Hub has been in no way silent. We are pleased to announce work started on the climbing wall, and the wall should be complete by the time you are reading this. We are so grateful to those who have supported us – either financially or by sharing the excitement and not thinking it is a completely mad idea! As you can imagine details need to be finalised on its use to ensure we remain Covid Safe, more details will be posted soon. We can't wait to spend some time climbing with you soon!

FB @CleoburyCommunityHub / Insta @saintmarysyouthproject

(the almost finished climbing wall – awaiting climbing wall holds to be attached to allow either short vertical climbs, or longer challenges moving all around)





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THE SHOEBOX REPORT

Thank you for your support with Shoe Boxes. Hopefully you will be able to contribute again this year.

Despite the ramifications of COVID-19 restrictions, we still managed to collect the Shoeboxes as normal. Total numbers were down a little on 2019 but those sent to Eastern Europe delivered a lot of happiness and joy. The last shipment, after a frustrating journey, arrived in Moldova at the end of February and all boxes have been successfully distributed by our partners. Normally they would be augmented by a team from the UK, this time it was not possible due to travel restrictions but hopefully this year we will be able to meet the boxes at their destination. Other destinations benefitting were Belarus and Romania.

Slowly we are changing to pre-printed standard boxes, flat packed, at a cost £0.35 each. There seems to be a shortage of shoe boxes from shops in some areas. As well as overcoming this problem it enables us to pack far more boxes into a container and spreads our shipping cost further. We ask for

a donation of £2-50 for each box and will not be increasing it this year. If you are able to please Gift Aid this it increases the total to £3-12.

A lot of boxes last year did not include this contribution which puts a strain on our funds, so if you can add the £2-50 it would be greatly appreciated. Also, when including pre-owned soft toys can you please wash them. Plans for the 2021 season are being formulated so further detail will follow.

As far as box contents are concerned there are no changes envisaged. Go to www.teams4u.com for up-to-date information.

Once more thanks for your willing help.

Jenny Vanderhook

Dave Pearson

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust are looking for people to join their Response Volunteer Scheme at Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals. People who can respond to service pressures to provide support for both wards and departments.

Volunteers are assigned to a hospital, not to a ward or department, and they will carry a mobile phone so that staff can

contact them to provide help when and where it is most needed. They will be able to do jobs like pharmacy runs, support of the discharge team and delivering patients' belongings and messages to the ward.

It sounds like vital work, helping the NHS staff in their duties. If you're interested and want to find out more, contact the Public Participation Team on 01743 261473 or email sath.members@nhs.net

MORE ABOUT ARIADNE

Dear Mrs Grumpy explained the origins of her name in the last issue, while bravely telling about her doubtful mother. One suspects the old girl is spinning in her grave at that revelation.

The name came out recently when I was playing one of the family collection of CDs. 'Into the Labyrinth' by Dead Can Dance, an Melbourne couple, Lisa Gerrard and Brendan Perry. Never a big name over here, but their haunting music is worth a listen. Track 5 is 'Ariadne', a wordless vocal with orchestral backing, but for a more familiar song Track 3 is Lisa with 'The Wind That Shakes the Barley'; the best version I've ever heard.
JR



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The March Bin Collections

Offering dates for possible events when the situation on social mixing remains so limited is confusing at best. So we will not print dates until the position becomes clear. But the matter of bin collections remains as reliable as ever, so we will list the dates published on the Shropshire Council's website. And let us combine that with praise for this essential service that is too often taken for granted. Bin men, we salute you!

**Mon 1st to Fri 5th: Road closure at Bridgnorth Road junction.
Diversion will be signposted.**

Thu 4th: BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED

Thu 11th: GREEN GARDEN WASTE WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED

Thu 18th: BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED

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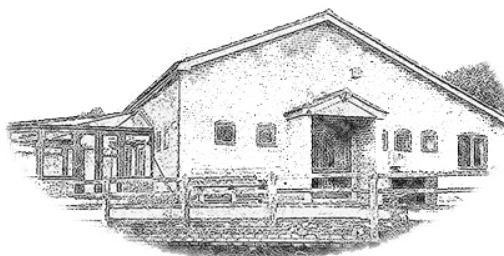
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Cleobury Mortimer Benefice

Church Services in Cleobury Benefice

Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving for our Health and Social Care Workers

We are proposing to hold a simple online service of prayer and thanksgiving for our health and social care workers at 7pm on Sunday 28th February for approximately 30 minutes.

The service will include prayers, readings and space for quiet, to hold in our hearts those in our community and beyond, who have worked and are working incredibly hard in unprecedented conditions for all of us and those we love.

Meeting ID: 406 797 7835

Passcode: 1iaA3z

A service of prayer for our schools will be held soon, details will be published on Facebook and on the website.

Cleobury Benefice Prayer Space

We would like to offer a time when we can come together across our benefice to informally pray. It allows us to share in community what is in our hearts either through direct petition to God or silently in quiet contemplation. Most importantly it moves us away from self to discerning and desiring God's will in our lives.

We meet for 20-30mins every Wednesday on Zoom at 5.00pm.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/4067977835?pwd=ZStVMXJIRnE5L1YwNGIYUG9sYzhzQT09>

Meeting ID: 406 797 7835

Passcode: 1iaA3z

Services across the Benefice

Our normal services are now being offered on Zoom for anyone who would like to join us.

The Services are: Evensong every evening at 6.00 pm in modern language

Eucharist every Sunday at 10.00 am

Eucharist every Wednesday at 10.00 am

Eucharist every Thursday at 12.00 noon

Evensong every Sunday at 6.00pm according to the Book of Common Prayer

If you would like to be part of any or all of these services please access Zoom and request to "join the meeting" then input number 2636386004 which should take you directly to the service.

We look forward to seeing you.

Please keep looking at our Facebook page, website and the noticeboard for up-to-date information. Although we are in lockdown, we are still available to talk and listen for whatever reason (big or small).

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Rector: Preb. Ashley Buck (07477 165602)

Curate: Rev'd Joe Simons (07516 381857)



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COMMUNICATING

I've been a fan of Marks and Spencer for many years, even though their image has faded on occasions when some of their claims have fallen a bit flat when put to the test. Like my late wife listening to one of the senior board members claiming in a TV interview how they always made sure they had enough stock to meet demand. "They might have them in Oxford Street, but they've never got stock in Kidderminster," was her indignant response. Can't remember just what was out of stock, but its absence was enough to upset the lady.

But I've remained loyal, scanning their delicatessen offerings in both Bridgnorth and Kidderminster to find a treat for a dinner guest. They are good at food. And to complement the dishes that made this non-cook look less of a dumbo, I decided to give the appearance of my dining table a lift; something like a throw across the centre and place mats and coasters that did not look like a hand-down from dear old Grandma.

Their website offered an attractive range and I opted for place mats and coasters in natural dark wood and a throw in a fabric that included a metallic element. A touch of the plastic currency and my order was placed. But next day came a message that the place mats were not available and that part of the order had been cancelled and my Visa account credited. The next day the fabric throw was the problem and that too had been cancelled, with a credit to match. Good honest way of dealing with my payment, but my table didn't look too good.

A week later I ordered the throw again, as it was still on the website and did look just right. I also ordered a set of place mats and coasters in a different style. Next day a message again that the throw was not in stock. Determined to get one, I called M&S to say do not cancel this order and that I would wait.

It took half an hour to speak to a human being and explain that I did not want the order cancelled. Assured that the message would be passed on, I felt happy. For a while.

Next day another message, telling me that my order for the throw had been cancelled. I was not inclined to spend another half hour on the phone, so went to the customer line on the website, where you face a range of boxes to tick but no facility to lodge a complaint. I was not impressed and on Saturday morning drove into Kidderminster - never a warming experience - and used the free parking at Sainsbury's. At their Habitat section I picked up a throw, added some interesting bits from their deli section and drove happily home.

I don't want to simply knock Marks and Spencer, who run a highly regarded business. But I do find that moving to automation of dealing with enquiries or queries leaves customers like me less than happy. Much better to speak to a human being with proven tact and training.

Still loyal to M&S? Of course I am, but not quite so blindly trusting as I once was. And they are good at food, no question.

Jim Reynolds

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Here are the detailed site boundary maps for the Ludlow Road, Tenbury Road, and the expansion of the *employment zone at Newhouse Farm, Tenbury Road (below):

[*Please note the employment zone size is unchanged at 1.3 hectares, the area originally to the south has been moved to the wider side due to the steep incline of the southern bank].

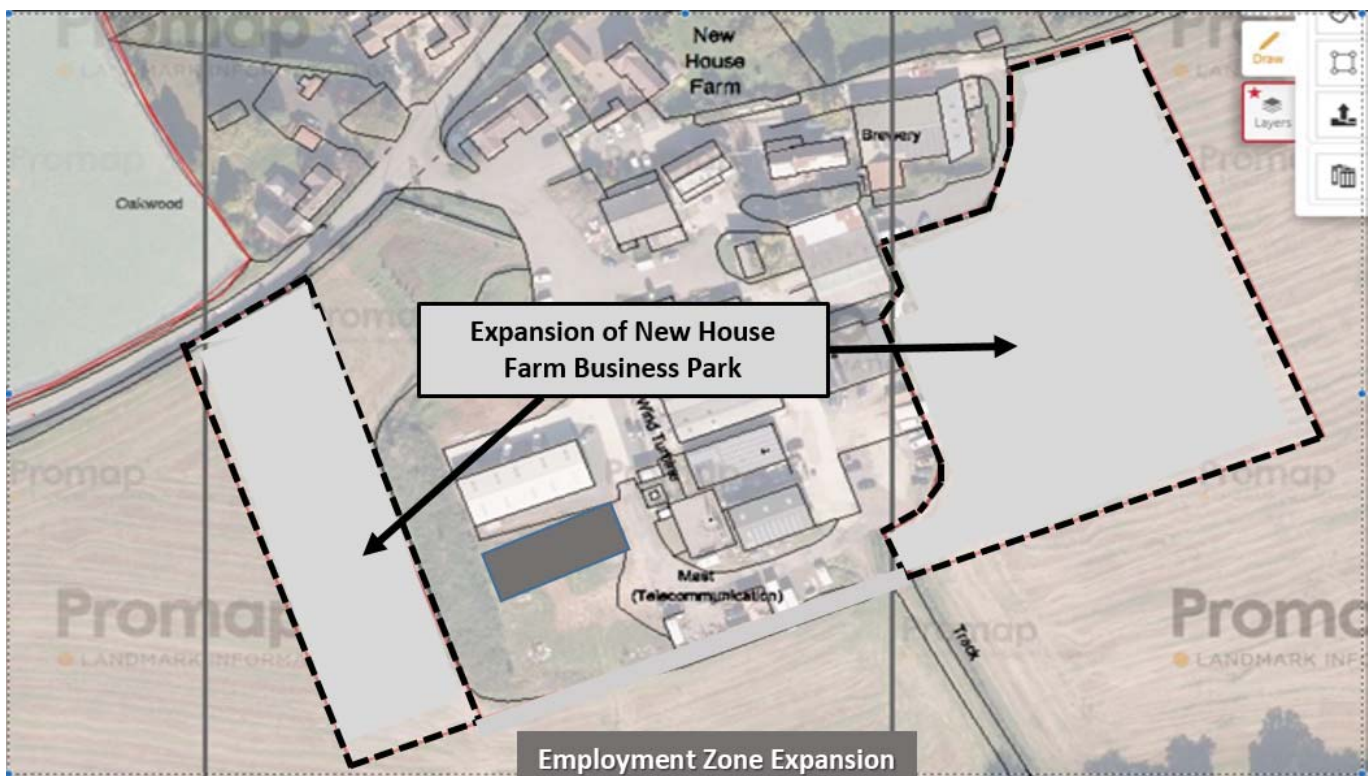
Newhouse Farm, Tenbury Road has been identified to accommodate 1.3 Hectares of additional Employment land. The below plan identifies 2 areas totalling 1.3 Hectares, the narrower area (Tenbury side) appears suitable for low-rise starter units developed in a courtyard style, these smaller units can be used for craft production, services, small retail and

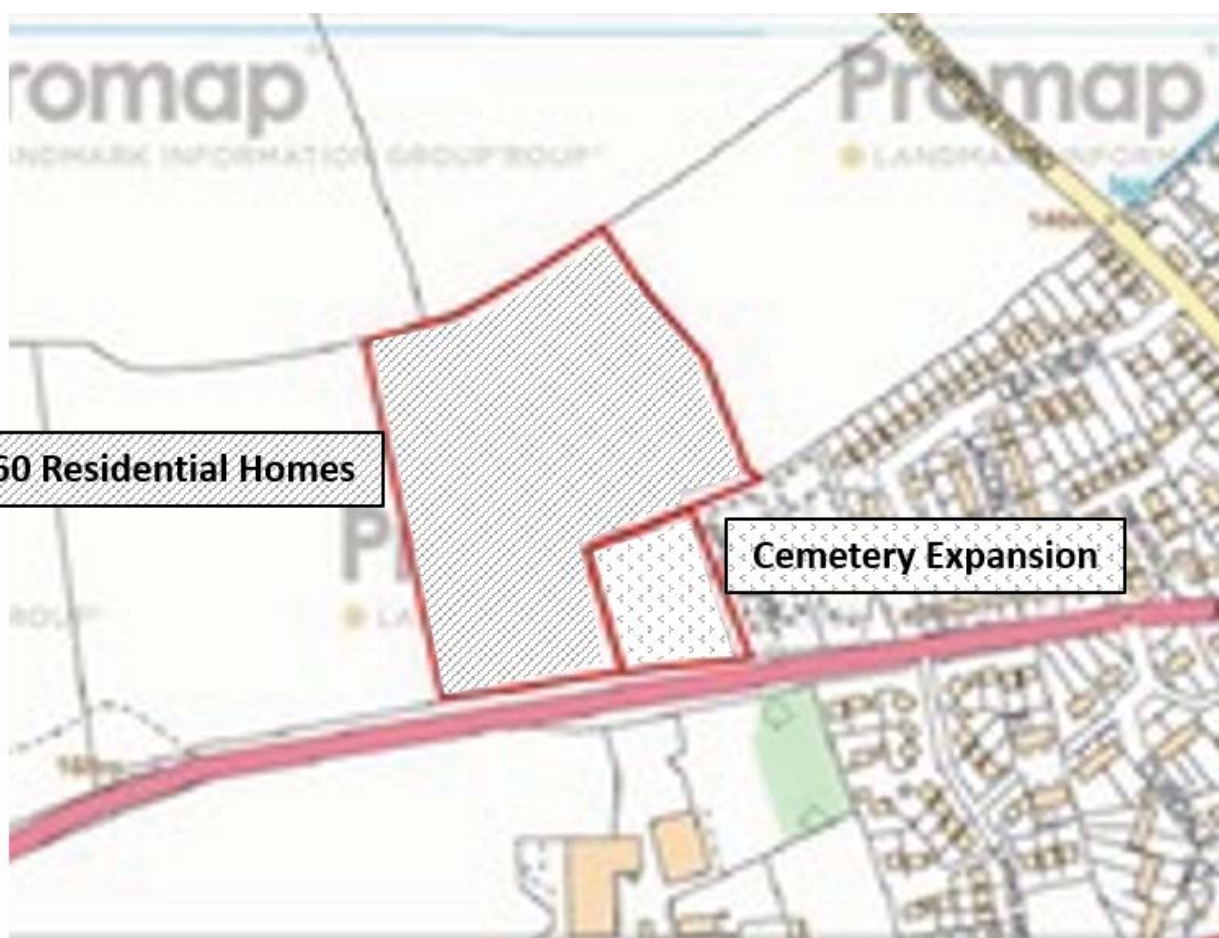
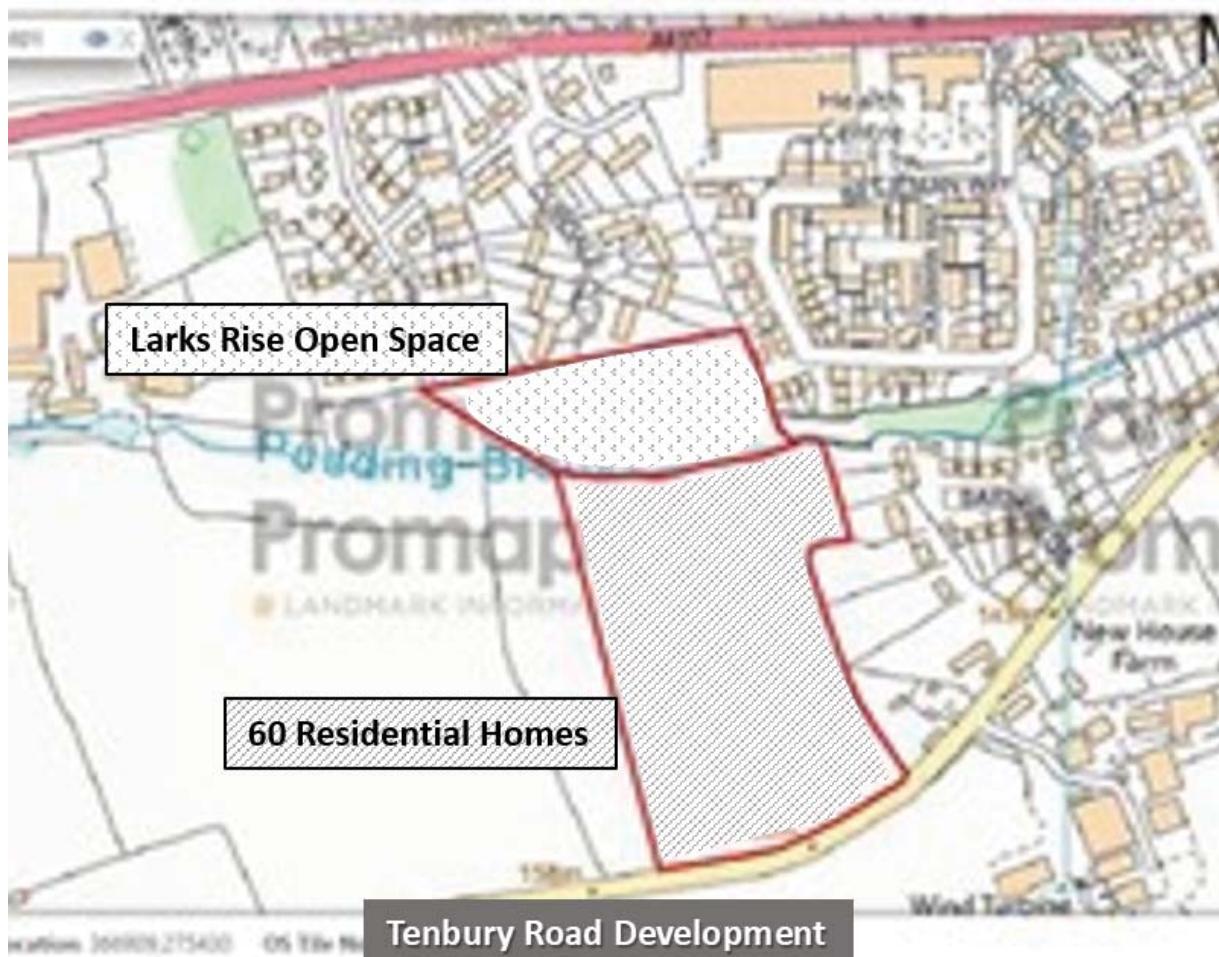
any use complying with Class E. The larger area is to provide larger B2/B8 Industrial units to complement the existing commercial buildings on the site. Within the development it is envisaged that access from the Tenbury Road will be improved.

Patrick Buck joins the NDP Steering Group: Hello, I'm delighted to join the Steering Group and I look forward to getting any suggestions on the developments in town from everyone, especially communicating with the younger generations of Cleobury. If you have any suggestions please feel free to contact me . I look forward to hearing from you at:

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Patrick





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Goodbye old friend

I was resigned to the fact that this day would eventually arrive. Each creak, groan and stumble signified that my trusty gardening companion was on the way out. It was really just a matter of time. And so, after almost 20 years of reliable service, my wheelbarrow made its final squeaky journey to the compost bin and, um, died.

Over time, you build a strange relationship with garden tools. I've read of gardeners forming unfeasibly strong attachments to trowels, spades and dibbers and, odd though it may initially appear, I *get* it. The easy familiarity of a tried, trusted and rusted old friend is all part of setting the gentle pace of garden life. New fangled items (of which there are plenty online and in your local garden centre) might be fun for a short while, but nothing compares to the hard-earned connection you build over time with your 'weapon of choice'.

That's not to say that I've not looked beyond my own faithful companions. In particular, my eBay purchase history is testament to my roving eye and an ongoing fascination with grabbing a garden bargain. I'm first to admit my experience with the auction website is something of a mixed bag. The problem isn't with eBay or the sellers on the platform – they've been above board and fair on each and every transaction – the issue lies 100% with me. Despite severe warnings from my wife, I simply cannot resist the allure of a (perceived) bargain. A passing browse leads to furtive interest, which inevitably descends into an addiction-fuelled bid... and then counter-bid. The TV programme *Salvage Hunters* has a lot to answer for.

As a result, my personal boulevard of broken eBay dreams is long and winding. For example, there was the bargain lot of terracotta pots that I travelled to the middle

of Norfolk to pick up, only realising when I met the seller in a lay-by (never a good sign) that the pots were minuscule. I mean REALLY tiny. My dreams of a patio overflowing with bloom filled pots quickly evaporated. It's difficult to get the desired effect when each pot is dwarfed by an individual tulip bulb.

Then there was the classic Atco mower I travelled to Essex to pick up. Like a Tinder love story, its picture online didn't do it justice - this engineering masterpiece of yesteryear was an absolute cracker. Visions of us walking up and down the garden in harmony as we created perfectly straight lines were dashed as soon as I got home. It's never run for more than an hour without spluttering to a halt, despite me throwing money at local mower repairer to breathe life into it.

Oh, and then there are the 1800 tulip bulbs I ordered (and tirelessly planted) last year. At the time of writing, no sign of any growth from any of the beds they've been planted in. Not a sausage. Nada.

Despite these frustrations, I still love eBay. Every duff purchase has been cancelled out by a winner - from knackered old water tanks converted to raised beds to the vintage florist pot stand - my garden is all the better because of it.

As for my replacement wheelbarrow, I've 'gone large' and shelled out for a fancy new two-wheeled affair. It's perfectly balanced, ergonomically designed, and light as a feather...but not a patch on my old friend. Ask me in 20 years, and I'll let you know how we're getting along...

Simon Morton

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March in the Wyre Forest

Linda Iles

There are vandals in the forest. It's shocking isn't it? For the last three years staff of the Wyre Community Land Trust and volunteers organised through Unclys Farm have been working in the oak woods in Lord's Yard Coppice. Areas which have been thinned out have been under-planted with a variety of native trees which will contribute to a more varied, resilient and wildlife-rich forest. The new trees are protected by translucent plastic tubes held vertical by wooden stakes – but something seems to find these new forest features irresistible. Numerous times we've been back to re-fix tubes, knock in stakes and even replant the trees. Whatever is causing the damage likes chewing the cable ties holding the tubes to the stakes, enjoys pushing the stakes over and has a taste for young trees. The finger of suspicion has been pointed at Grey Squirrels but I have doubts that they can push stakes over, so my money is on Fallow Deer. It's a mischievous side to these animals that I haven't heard about before.

This month I hope that small groups will be able to resume the tree planting at a safe distance from each other. Being involved in work like this is a good social experience (even at a distance) and gives the satisfaction at the end of the day that much good will come of it over many years to come.

My attention has also been drawn to some other excellent work going on at Far Forest Lea Memorial School. A small shelter that was beginning to rot away has been given new life with timber supplied free by the WCLT and under the guidance of local builder and friend of the school, Ron Clowes. Help came from an unexpected source in the form of striking gas men, who wanted to get stuck in to community

projects. As soon as something near normal school routines return the new Forest School can begin. The shelter, a storage shed and a fire circle will all be used to encourage children to explore and learn out of doors, finding out about the world by play.



The Far Forest school shed after some enthusiastic work by the pupils and guidance from Ron Clowes.

Talking about happy sounds out of doors, the bird song that really became noticeable last month is increasing in volume and variety and you may hear one of the first summer migrants, the Chiffchaff, adding its onomatopoeic two-note call. I say migrant but it is increasingly spending the winter here too. It should benefit from the more open woodland and mown rides in this part of the forest where a variety of flowering plants will provide homes for the insects and spiders it needs to breed successfully. Meanwhile I shall be tramping about, looking for frogspawn in my local ponds and adding to the annual record of the return of spring.

Linda Iles

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Anyway, we are persevering, and have found new outlets, would you believe we took 20 boxes to a charity in Liverpool and 5 lots to various refugees in Kidderminster. So please keep coming with your clothes, children's and adults, soft toys for the Teddy Trust. We are looking for some one to help us with the toys we are given that are broken and need tidying up. So give us a call please.

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We continue to beat ourselves up about our colonial history and how bad things were under we brutal Imperialists. Sadly, I suspect things haven't been a bed of roses since independence in many places but for those who hanker for the old days of foreign rule, (and I suspect there are more than a few), rescue is at hand as many of these countries are now being re-colonised by China. True, they are using cheque books rather than gunboats and 'priming' local politicians rather than shooting them. They then lend sums that the countries cannot afford to pay back in order to fund infrastructure projects (run and staffed by Chinese companies) and secured against assets such as mineral wealth. When the inevitable default occurs, they secure the assets in question – genius!. This is not going down well with the general population which doesn't benefit, and there have already been riots in places. Perhaps things weren't quite so bad under the Brits - even Fidel Castro is on record as saying that although he hated all colonialists, he hated the British less because at least they had tried to leave their former colonies in decent shape.

There seems to be no end to the energy expended by Wokedom to delete any reference to those who had any connection with slavery. One recent case involved a demand to change the name of a street because it was named after a local benefactor who was rumoured to have been involved in slavery several hundred years ago. Turns out he hadn't as the guilty party was from a different generation of a different branch of the family. Still, why let the facts get in the way of a good rant? I don't!. So, WokeWarriors, when you slide into your shiny Volkswagen/Audi/Seat/Skoda, spare a thought for the Uighur slave workers now labouring in the giant VW factories across China which produce half of all their cars shipped worldwide. Not to mention those in Leicester sweat shops.

Our Police seem to be behaving with remarkable restraint given the provocation they receive from various groups of Covid deniers

and those who think that the lockdown is just for other people. Contrast this with Moscow where a reporter noted that Police had attended a rally consisting of a few hundred people in support of the jailed Alexei Navalny and arrested several thousand of them... He is a brave man and I worry that his chances of getting out alive are slim given the regime's previous efforts to finish him off (hit by a rogue meteorite whilst in the exercise yard perhaps?).

Good news that more Cadburys Dairy Milk production is being moved to Bournville from Europe to balance work lost when the new owners shut the factory in Bristol that they had promised to keep open. A little information for US executives: the name is pronounced 'Cadburys' not 'Cadberries'. And another thing: Can you stop producing all the daft flavours you have introduced and bring back proper fillings like Turkish Delight?.

Vaccination update: Looks like Boris has made good on his promise to vaccinate the 15 million or so deemed to be at greatest risk. Mind you, this seems to have been done by relying on the NHS and armed forces rather than giving the job to his mates in the private sector to mess up at vast expense. I went to Ludlow with the Dragon Lady for my first jab and was impressed with the efficiency of all the staff and helpers involved. Only one complaint – we didn't get a sticker or lollipop for being brave and not crying.

I see Facebook is squaring up to the Australian Government over a new Law requiring them to pay for news content sourced from press and broadcasters. In retaliation, Facebook has withdrawn these services (and others) from local customers, an action that is being viewed as high handed and arrogant, especially as Google have agreed to pay for such content. I'm not bothered personally as I don't 'do' either Fakebook or Twitter but this is a battle neither side can afford to lose as other Governments across the world watch to see if they can follow suit.

Ariadne J. Grumpy

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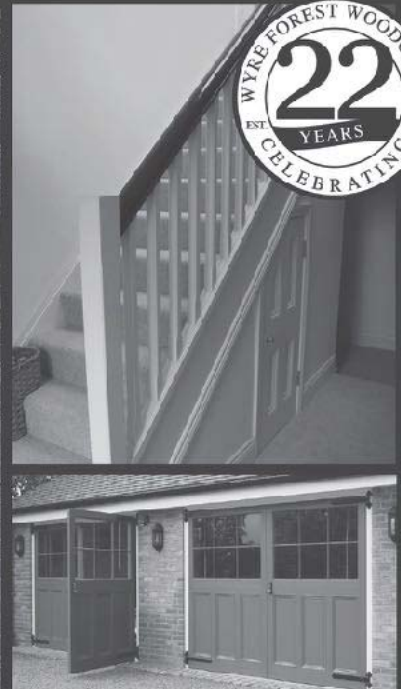
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Cleobury Clarion - Page 50 - March 2021



"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."



March 2021 CMTC Report

First of all, a 'thank you' to all the volunteers that help us move forward in our community. Those who go out litter picking, those who go out picking up dog mess, and those who give up their time to help others, like the Foodbank. I know they do not do it for recognition but sometimes a simple thank you does go a long way.

There is a new litter picking group run by Helen Morris who came to our council meeting for help and we were only too pleased to help with supplying equipment. Another project started by Ben-Leigh-Perry is going out and picking up dog mess left by other inconsiderate dog owners around Cleobury. Led by dog owner Ben and helped by myself, also a dog owner, this will be another volunteer group that the Town Council will look at supporting at the March meeting and hopefully by using the CCTV together with reporting offenders, we can get some fines handed out to help deter this ongoing offence.

Now that the final group of Xmas lights have been taken down, by volunteers, our local window cleaner Kirk Williams, Dave Taylor (Tink) and Cllr Neil Tysall and wife Deb in the bitter cold of a Sunday morning, we can now start the annual work of the lime trees pollarding in the main street. This will be starting on Thursday 4th and Friday 5th March then completing on Thursday and Friday the following week. This is so we can have the same people as usual that make such a good job of it annually. Please keep this in mind when parking in the High street on those days.

Another project we have been chasing is the dangerous bend at the bottom of Cleobury at Newbridge corner and we are pleased to say that work will be starting on the March 1st and is expected to last for up to 5 days.

The normal working hours will be between 20:00pm to 06:00am Monday to Friday. During the road closure, traffic will be diverted via a fully signed route. Provisions will be in place to allow access for Emergency Services, Residents, and Businesses. Work includes carriageway resurfacing/construction, replacement of damaged kerbs, vegetation clearance, proposed road markings and proposed traffic signs. As the moving of the speed restrictions signs was not on the list we have pushed for that to be looked into at the same time, hopefully moving it past Castle Toot.

The Foodbank continues to be well used and thankfully well supported. We have money donations, milk every week from Mawley Milk, food donations from the public and Shop and Save who put together some food parcels. Maria from Hopton has started a collection point, and we thank her and are grateful to the Hopton Wafers community. The Foodbank is open every Friday morning at the Market Hall from 9.30am to 11.30am which is for **anyone** in need to use.

We also supply a voucher to be used in our local shops for fresh fruit and vegetables which helps them too. Our volunteers are from as far as Bliss Gate and we value the time they give to help out every week as this has proved to be well needed and those that have used it until on their feet again have told us how grateful they are, with some now donating back.

It is especially rewarding to see the happy faces of all the children, and we would like to let all of you that donate and help in any way know that **IT IS REALLY APPRECIATED. THANK YOU!**



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Welcome to the March edition of ways to be aware of and beat the scammers.

Last month we looked at how email is a favourite tool for scammers and this month I want to look in more detail at some of the methods. Basically, there are several methods used by scammers and in order of frequency I would suggest that Door to Door is the least frequent while email is the most frequent. In between you have telephone and good old snail mail. With door to door, everyone is a potential victim, but it is time consuming for the scammer and a higher risk of being caught. However, it still happens with the usual approach being that someone knocks on your door and claims to be working in the area and offers a service that you either did not know you needed or were fooled into thinking you needed it. Variants of this involve two persons, one of which either keeps you talking at the door while the second one finds a back entrance and quickly looks for any valuables that could be stolen or just reconnoitres for an opportunity to return and burgle at a later point. This is a favourite of scammers preying on older, single residents. But as I said the risks are greater of being seen perhaps by a neighbour who is looking out for you.

Email and telephone scams are by far the most frequent as technology allows the scammers working literally from anywhere in the world, to send out thousands of emails per day or automate thousands of telephone calls per day. The calls can be to mobile numbers or landline numbers. Some of the telephone calls, while appearing to come from well spoken English voices are usually pre-recorded and originate from call centre type bases. The way it works is that the scammers have usually obtained lists of telephone numbers legally or sometimes illegally and these numbers are programmed into a computer or several computers and the computers start ringing the numbers. If after a predetermined time the phone is not answered the computer just moves on to the next number. If the call is picked up, it can either be your answering machine or by yourself. The computer will play its pre-recorded message which can sometimes be quite threatening e.g. "This is the Police and

you have not paid a fine (for something) and if you don't respond to this call, we will come and arrest you". For an elderly person or anyone this can be very intimidating and it's easy to fall into the trap. The trap is set when at the end of the message you are asked to press a number on your phone to be 'connected' to someone who can help you. If you do press the number the call is immediately flagged up to an operator who takes the call from the computer and starts the scam. This could be as simple as explaining the perceived threat and assuring you that by paying a sum of money over the phone, that everything will go away. Naturally you are asked for a credit or debit card to pay it and the scammer takes all the details including the 3-digit code on the back of the card. They now have the ability to clone your card, and suck as much money as they can out of you account until you spot it, which could be several days later. A variant of this is a much more pleasant message, perhaps suggesting you have won a prize. You are invited to press a number on your phone to be connected to an operator who will 'verify' your details, but in reality, you may have been connected to a high-cost premium line which runs up a hefty bill on your account. The benefit for the scammers is that they get a large premium payment for each call and you get a huge bill from your phone company or mobile phone company.

One of the features of these types of scam is that they follow the trends of the day. For example, at this time of the year, if you do self-assessment online for your Tax Return, you may get a scam call or email allegedly from HMRC telling you that you have underpaid and to avoid a fine must pay a balance immediately. So you will be asked for Credit or Debit card details to 'clear the problem'. One celebrated scam happened a couple of years ago involving a gentleman who was estranged from his wife and children and had failed to respond to a court order for child maintenance. Eventually he resolved that he would pay it and by pure chance received a scam call supposedly from HMRC. The scammer did not actually specify how much he had to pay but the gentleman knew it was

Continues on Page 55.....



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just over £9000! The scammer coolly asked for his debit card details which he gave over the phone and was asked to wait a few seconds while it was processed. The scammer came back to him and asked him to repeat the details as the scammer had entered them incorrectly. This was done and the scammer said thank you, everything is now cleared. What the gentleman did not know was that the payment had cleared the first time and cleared a second time when the scammer asked to repeat it. Only when he checked his bank account the chap discovered he had lost over £18,000. His ex-wife had still not received anything of course. His bank refused to compensate saying that he had willingly passed his details on. Since then, most Banks have signed up to legislation to cover the costs of these scams on innocent people, but the scams go on. Keeping up with modern times

there are scams around the COVID-19 vaccination with people getting calls and emails suggesting that they can jump the queue for vaccinations by paying a small amount of money. It's not true, the Government has gone to great pains to advise the public that the NHS is FREE, but sadly the message does not always get across.

A number of readers have sent me details of scam calls and emails that they have received and I will cover some of them in next month's article. In the meantime, the advice is following the old adage, "If it's too good to be true, it's most likely is not true" BE WARY, DON'T JUMP AT SOMETHING UNLESS YOU ARE SURE OF ITS SOURCE, STAY SAFE AND PROTECT YOUR MONEY.

Nigel Reid

More Clarion Clippings - The Local News

DODDINGTON CHURCH NEWS

Thank you to the editor for his article "Christmas Goodwill up on the Hill" last month. It may seem a long time since Christmas, but due to popular demand, our star is still shining! We decided that a good time to switch it off would be when the clocks go forward and the evenings get lighter. We just wanted to mention the local businesses who were generous in donating funds or services towards getting the star up on the tower: Doddington Lodge Care Home, Clee Hill Quarry, Clee Hill Plant, Mrs Lunnon and Cleobury Accident Repair Services. And we also must thank Doddington Lodge who generously held a raffle in aid of St John's and the Community First Responders raising an amazing £400 in total – their

support for the community is very much appreciated. As I write this, we don't know when we will be able to start our Events and Services again, but rest assured that as soon as it is safe, we will, and that we are still working towards raising the funds to do the repairs to the church so desperately needed, as well as improving access.

Celia Gibb 01584 318036

THE READING GROUP

'Midwinter Break' by Bernard MacLaverty. Varied degrees of interest in this book, though no one has said they disliked it. A retired couple, Stella and Gerry Gilmore, head to Amsterdam for a short winter break. The story investigates their relationship, the complex subject of love plus the difficulties of getting older, mentally and physically. Overshadowed by

the tragedy of the troubles in Northern Ireland, Stella is now looking to devote her life to faith. Meanwhile Gerry has taken to drinking, more than is good for him. We get to know the characters intimately and the small routines of life are nicely observed. The huge emotional struggles going on in the Gilmore lives is written with sympathy and contrasts beautifully with the mundane. Towards the end you feel that perhaps love is lost but want to know if and how it can be resolved. As one member remarked, A good book leaves you wanting to know more.

Deana Kimber 271754

SILLY BIT

'Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other.'
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In Business - Kidderminster Self Storage

Andy Smith has come a long way since he raised enough money 22 years ago to buy a van and start his own business. In those days he was offering delivery and removal services and making contacts with people who liked his honest, straight talking style.

Looking for something better, he realised that people were looking for storage and his brother persuaded him that was a better future. There was a new venture opening on the Stourport Road in Kidderminster, and with a loan he was one of the first to take space in Finepoint Way 15 years ago.

Joining him from the start was Mark, still working with him. The business has grown to the current level of 192 units, of various sizes, with an impressive 94 percent of that space let. Eight years ago Ian joined the company and those three are the total staff. It's not

an overstaffed ego trip for Andy, he still works six days a week, and the place is open from 8.00 til 5.00 Monday to Friday and 9.00 to 12.00 noon on Saturday.



Relaxing at home in Cleobury, the successful Mr Smith.

He's built the business on a reputation for service and keen pricing and is proud to tell you that his prices haven't gone up since he started the storage company.

Experience and common sense really do work well, as he's shown. He supplies packing cases and materials from stock. If you need bubblewrap for something delicate, it's there along with tape. If you need a padlock for your unit, he supplies one for free - unusual in this trade. And insurance is part of the deal, not an extra charge. It's no surprise to learn that he has customers coming back time and again.

Business is mainly local, as far as Hereford or Malvern, but this advertising is all with local newsletters like the Clarion. When he tells you what he used to spend compared with local cover, you can see the logic of his choice.

The whole philosophy of Andy's operation is common sense economy and courtesy to the customer. He's come a long way from that first van.

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Community Contacts for Clarion Readers

CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR	Theresa Parfitt	07703 965 064	theresa.25016@hotmail.co.uk
CLEOBURY COUNTRY CENTRE		01299 272300	In Love Lane, 9 to 5 Mon to Fri.
CITIZENS ADVICE		08444 991100	Advisors on line 10.00 to 4.00
CLEOBURY CARERS	Janet Manley	01299 272841	
CLEOBURY COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES	Katja Ward	01299 270018	10.00 to 12.00 Weds
CLEOBURY MORTIMER LIBRARY		01299 272301	Open 9 to 7 Mon, 9 to 5 Tues/Fri and 10 to 1 Sat.
LOCAL POLICE	Constable Anne O'Leary		ann.oleary@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
CLEOBURY MORTIMER GUIDES	Dorothy McBride	07761 976610	
CLEOBURY MORTIMER SCOUTS	Lowri Hughes		cleoburybeavers@gmail.com
CRIMESTOPPERS		0800 555 111	Free Police contact. Talk in confidence, to report any crime.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE		0800 783 1359	Women's Aid, 24 Hour support:
HOME FROM HOSPITAL		01584 878046	Help over the first weeks back home from Age UK
MARKET HALL	Ali Sheffield	07752 542 853	markethall@cleobury.org.uk
MEDICAL CENTRE		01299 270209	Out of surgery hours, use the Shrop Doc Service.
SHROP DOC		111	Service available evenings and weekends
THE PHARMACY		01299 270219	Closes for half day on Saturday. Delivers prescriptions
NEWLIFE CHURCH	Pastor E Stirrup	01562 630595	Sunday services at 10.30
NIGHTINGALE NURSING FUND	Rosemary Abbiss	01746 718451	
TOWN COUNCIL	Clerk Matthew Sheehan	01299 271154	Cleobury Country Centre 9 to 2 pm, Mon to Fri. www.cleobury.org.uk . Council meets in the Centre on the first Monday of the month
POST OFFICE		01299 270211	In the Select and Save Grocery Store, Church Street
SAINT MARY'S YOUTH PROJECT	Mark Greaves	07828 116810	mark.stmarys@live.co.uk
SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL		0345 678 9000	
SOUTH SHROPSHIRE YOUTH FORUM			richard@ssyf.net .
VOLUNTARY CAR SCHEME		01299 666119	Mandy Smith
WASTE DISPOSAL		0345 678 9007	The contractor is Veolia
WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCIES	Severn Trent	0800 783 4444	

Collect the Clarion in Cleobury from: Select and Save Grocery, Butler's Store, Cleobury Cafe, The Severn Hospice Shop, Mid Counties Co-op, Purslows, The Library and Swift's Bakery Tea Room.

Out in Cleobury Country at: Heath Farm Meats, **Bagginswood;** **Clee Hill Stores;** The Village Store, **Cleobury North;** **Clows Top Stores;** The Sun and Slipper, **Mamble;** **Hopton Bank Service Station;** Bennetts End Inn, **Knowbury;** **Ludlow Library;** **Mawley Oak Garage;** The Colliers Cafe & Shop, **Rock;** The Fighting Cocks, **Stottesdon;** The Duck Inn, **Chorley;** The Live and Let Live, **Neen Sollars;** The Eagle and Serpent, **Kinlet;** Parker Motors, **Ditton Priors.**

Copies are also available from the Parish Churches in: Cleobury Mortimer, Bayton, Doddington, Hopton Wafers, Milson, Neen Savage and Neen Sollars.

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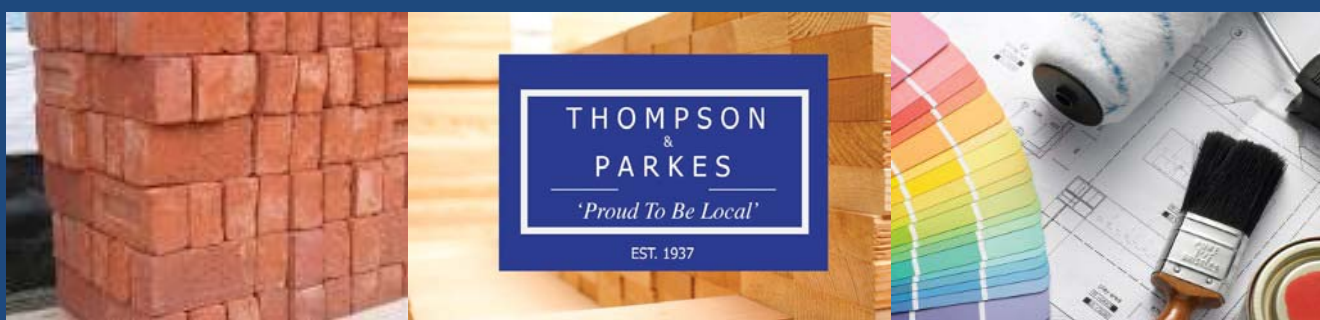
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