

The
Parishioner
YARPOLE LUCTON CROFT BIRCHER BICTON

March 2026

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And all our regular features





Thanks to the following for their photos

Front cover: Thomas Mangnall - Yarpole under rainbow

This page: Jennifer Banks - Looking south from Croft Castle;

Carol Clare - Sunset over the community field;

Keith Smith - The sky over Bircher

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Greetings to all our readers and welcome to an absolutely packed issue of the newsletter. It was a real challenge to fit everything in this month.

Did you know that the newsletter reaches your letter box every month thanks to a team of volunteers, led in recent years by Josie Woodfield and Nic Treece? We are grateful to all of them for their input and special thanks are due to Josie and Nic for co-ordinating the effort. Josie is now standing down and we hope that one of our readers will volunteer to step into her role so that the operation continues to run as smoothly as ever.

Those of you living in Lucton may be aware that your newsletter was, until recently, delivered every month by Paul O'Reilly. Thanks are due to Paul and also to Morwenna Lloyd who took on the role at the end of last year. It's a big round and Morwenna would welcome some assistance.

If you would be willing to get involved, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Lynne

The Parishioner needs 2 volunteers...

Delivery Co-ordinator Can you spare a couple of hours 5 times a year? This is a shared role, so you will only be needed in alternate months, but your own transport is essential to enable you to distribute the newsletter to members of the delivery team across the parish.



Lucton Delivery Team Can you spare a couple of hours at the end of each month helping to deliver *The Parishioner* to households in and around Lucton?

Please email us at newsletter@yarpole.org for more information about these roles.

To send in articles and news items, please e-mail us at:

newsletter@yarpole.org

Or leave in the box at the shop

The deadline for all submissions is

THE 10th OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH

There is no newsletter in January or August

ADVERTISEMENTS

To place a commercial advert in *The Parishioner*, please email newsletter@yarpole.org and we'll send you more information

Prices start at £5 for a ¼ page ad

We also print small ads for parishioners for which we suggest that a small donation is left in the yellow collection box in the shop.

Audio version of *The Parishioner*

The Parishioner is also available by email in audio files for parish residents with sight problems. If you'd like to receive it in this format, or know someone who would, please let us know at newsletter@yarpole.org.



Stay in touch: Yarpole WhatsApp Group

Share local information & news, relevant to our community, via the Yarpole WhatsApp group. We now have over 150 members!



Calling Facebook Users

To get Yarpole news on Facebook, search for 'Yarpole Community'. See what's on! See what matters in Yarpole! Contribute to the page. Like us and become a friend.



Yarpole Welcome Packs

If you are aware of new residents who have moved to the parish, or if you have recently moved yourself and haven't received one, please get in touch with Sue Langley:

susanmarylangley@gmail.com.

Don't miss out on what's happening!

To be added to the events mailing list, email events@yarpole.org.



HOME CLEANING SERVICE

Standard house cleaning- mopping, hoovering, dusting, bathrooms, toilets, kitchen.
Deep cleaning- fridge, kitchen cupboards, drawers, inside windows

MY SERVICES

- House Cleaning
- Ironing
- Deep Cleaning
- Office Cleaning

CALL NOW

Please contact me on: **07548 023840**



Wonder Women with Sarah Hagen

A celebration of forgotten female composers

Performance and afternoon tea

15 March 3pm, St. Leonard's Church



"Why hurry over beautiful things? Why not linger and enjoy them?" So pondered Clara Schumann, remembered as one of the finest pianists of all time. Pianist and humourist Sarah Hagen delves into the remarkable stories and piano music of forgotten female composers from the classical repertoire. This recital will highlight piano works by 18th and 19th century composers, including Clara Schumann, Cécile Chaminade, Delphine von Schauroth, and others. Included will be stunningly gorgeous music by Marianna Martines, who moved in the same circles as Haydn and Mozart, and often joined Mozart in piano duets at the musical soirées she and her sister held in their Viennese home.

Tickets, £12, from www.artsalive.co.uk
or call Jeanette Kinsey on 01568 780849 or WhatsApp 07896 622005
Tickets will also be available from the shop.

This afternoon's programme seems particularly suitable for Mothering Sunday, where the aim is to celebrate all women. Afternoon tea will be served in the interval. Payment for the tea will be by donation with a recommended minimum of £5 per person. Profit from this is separate from the ticket sales and will be shared between St. Leonard's Management and the PCC.

If you would like to help with the tea, please let Jeanette know. Please also inform her of any dietary requirements.

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/ceqAyaXyZSk?si=37Q-xqe55vjO9gx>

COMMUNAL CRAFTERS

Next meeting:

Monday 16 March 1.30 - 3.30pm

At Yarpole Parish Hall, Green Lane, HR6 0BL

Cost: £3 towards the hire of the hall

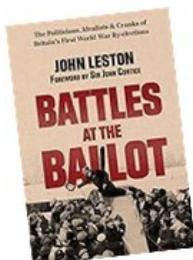
We are a friendly group of crafters of all abilities who meet once a month to craft together and learn new skills

NEW MEMBERS VERY WELCOME!

Please contact Sue Beagley on 07816 060746

Yarpole Living History Group presents

BATTLES AT THE BALLOT



A talk by author John Leston about his book, published in May 2025.

The never-before-told history of WWI's political home front, when a truce between the main parties opened up 29 parliamentary by-elections to a hotchpotch of idealists, single-issue fanatics, failing politicians and chancers.

In a light-hearted but insightful review, John's assessment of the politics of these elections is leavened by remarkable and amusing anecdotes. His cast of characters includes a man who went on to defeat Churchill; the person who obtained a reader's ticket at the British Library for Lenin and the dog owner who defined the breed characteristics of the Airedale Terrier.

Closer to home, he covers by-elections in Tewkesbury (where local feudal power outgunned the campaigning might of Lord Northcliffe and the *Daily Mail*) and South Herefordshire (which saw the electoral debut of the National Farmers' Union).

TUESDAY 24 MARCH YARPOLE PARISH HALL HR6 OBK 7.00pm

Police Community Support Officer meetings



Our local (Leominster) PCSO Steph Harper aims to visit the Gallery Café every 5 weeks on a Friday at 11.00. Her next visit, all being well, will be on **Friday 13 March**. Join her in the café for coffee and chat.

Pete Lloyd

Spring Plant Fair

In Aid of Charity

29 April 2026 10.30am– 4.00pm
Garnons Estate, Byford, Hereford, HR4 7JX

A special day for gardeners!

Discover beautiful, interesting and unusual plants, meet producers of garden-related products, while exploring the rarely opened, beautiful Garnons Estate woodland and kitchen gardens (Sorry, no dogs except assistance dogs)

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www.thecartshed.co.uk



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WHAT'S ON

Choral & orchestral music for a Spring evening.



SOUNDS of SPRING

with **The Marches Sinfonia** and Robert Pritchard - baritone
Conductor - Simon Harper

Vaughan-Williams
Five Mystical Songs
Rutter
A Series of Thyme
and pieces from Howells, Delius
& local composer Simon Peberdy

Saturday 7th March

St. Andrew's
Presteigne 7.30pm

£15

Tickets [from www.kingtonchoral.org.uk](http://www.kingtonchoral.org.uk)

WHAT'S ON

St. Leonard's Church and Community Hub

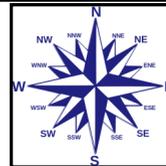
Our church and community hub is a superb venue for your next celebration or special event – whether it be for an exhibition, an illustrated talk, a musical soirée, a family gathering, a special anniversary or a public event.

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For booking enquiries email us at: yarpolechurchbookings@gmail.com



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07915886265 or fb page



Walking Group

We meet regularly on the 2nd Friday and 4th Sunday of every month, normally at 10.30 by the church.

March walks: Friday 13 & Sunday 22

All are welcome to join our walks but please phone to check details, if you are not on the email list.

Contact: **Viv 01568 782271** or seiftonbatch@gmail.com

Arts Society Lectures

Lively and interesting illustrated lectures on arts-related topics at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, 2.15pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Lectures from nationally recognised experts take about one hour.



Next meeting on **Wednesday 18 March 2026**

**Capability Brown and the Making (and Death) of the English Landscape
James Bolton**

Visitors are welcome, paying £8.00 on the door. Membership, which buys you eight lectures and reduced fees for outings and study days, costs £45.

More information: <https://www.theartsocietytemevalley.org.uk>

For help with transport contact:

Membership Secretary Jeff Walker on **01694 781489**

Come and
Be Still



Some music, a reading, a prayer and time for your own quiet reflection.

Monthly, on the first Wednesday, 5.30 - 6pm.

St. Leonard's Church, Yarpole.

All are welcome



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FOLLOW US ON:



Flicks and Food



Benedict Cumberbatch, Ncuti Gatwa, Allison Janney

15

The Roses

A modern reimagining of the 1989 classic *The War of the Roses*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Olivia Colman. A picture-perfect couple's marriage spirals into a fierce, darkly comedic battle for their dream house after his career tanks and hers soars, igniting a tinderbox of hidden resentments and competition.

**Yarpole Parish
Hall**

HR6 0BL

**Saturday
11 April**

7.30 pm

Tickets

Standard: £5.00
Under 18s: £4.00

Enquiries: 01568 780250

This is a Flicks & Food event. Food £9. Film £5. £14 for food and film. Food at 6.30pm, film at 7.30pm. Food must be booked in advance by phone - 01568 701996 or 07531 599700.



Information and Tickets at www.artsalive.co.uk

**FLICKS
IN THE
STICKS**

EVENTS DIARY FOR MARCH

Events this month

Date	Venue	Event	Time
Tues 3	Parish Hall	Parish Council meeting	7.00 - 9.00pm
Wed 4	St. Leonard's	Be Still	5.30 - 6.00pm
Tues 10	Gallery Café	Tasty Tuesday	1.00pm
Fri 13	Various	Walking Group	10.30am
Fri 13	Gallery Café	Police Community Support Officer meeting	11.00am
Sun 15	St. Leonard's	Wonder Women (see page 5)	3.00pm
Mon 16	Parish Hall	Communal Crafters	1.30 - 3.30pm
Sun 22	Various	Walking Group	10.30am
Tues 24	Parish Hall	Battles at the Ballot (see page 6)	7.00pm
Fri 27	Parish Hall	4Cs	11.00 -12 noon

Regular Weekly Activities

Date	Venue	Event	Time
Mondays	Parish Hall	Move it or Lose it!	11.00-12 noon
	Parish Hall	Zumba	6.00-7.00pm
Tuesdays	Parish Hall	Move it or Lose it!	11.00-12 noon
Wednesdays	Parish Hall	T'ai Chi	10.00-11.00am
	Parish Hall	Art Group	2.00-4.30pm
	St. Leonard's	Birchpole Singers	7.15-9.15pm
Thursdays	Parish Hall	Pilates	10.45-11.45am
Fridays	Parish Hall	Bowls	7.30-9.30pm

Please note: There will be no regular activities in the Parish Hall between **Tuesday 31 March and Thursday 2 April**. (A Brownies Residential is booked.)

See 'What's on' pages for more details of events
Check www.yarpole.org for up to date information and any changes

LOCAL NEWS

Litter Pick



8 volunteers joined a productive litter pick organised by Di Hill on 24 January. Target areas included 2 lay-bys on the B4362, Gorbett's Bank and nearby verges. The yield of 12 sacks included an alarming number of Strongbow cider cans.

Please send suggestions for future litter picks to the Parish Clerk, Mrs Maggie Brown, 07398 222310
clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk

How to Report a Pothole

- Log onto the Herefordshire Council website: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/travel-and-transport/roads/report-a-road-problem/>
- If you already have an account, log in. If not, you can either sign up or continue without an account. This will take you to the next screen which includes a Highways Map.
- Find the location of the pothole you want to report on the map. Right click to drop a yellow pin marking its position.
- Provide additional details to help locate and describe the issue. If you have the **what3words** app, you can use it to pinpoint the precise location. Every 3 square metres of the world has been given a unique combination of 3 words. It's the easiest way to find and share exact locations (so useful if you have a breakdown!) The app is free to download from the App Store (iPhone) or Playstore (Android).
- The next screen will invite you to upload a photo (optional) and submit your report.



Dear Editor.....



Further to Councillor Hill's request for persons to adopt the grit bins that have so helpfully been provided and filled around the village, I am reminded that the national press has published articles about the naming of gritting vehicles by enthusiastic locals.

Perhaps we should consider naming our bins. How about: "*Grit Expectations*", "*Nicholas Grittleby*", "*Little Dogrit*", "*Martin Chuzzlegrit*"? For those with a more up to date taste in literature how about "*The Salt Path*" or "*Ice Station Debra*"?

Yours faithfully, David Cheshire

LOCAL NEWS AND NOTICES

Thank you

Val and Jim have been overwhelmed by birthday wishes, cards, videos and greetings, at a rather critical time. Val wasn't able to celebrate her big birthday properly, so must reluctantly remain 79 until further notice. The NHS is good at putting bits back together again and declaring the engine fit for purpose, but motoring only happens when friends, neighbours and fellow villagers put their weight behind it. The wrap-around warmth, prayers, thoughts, messages and boundless support are what was needed to get going. We could not have asked for more. We could not have received more. Thank you.

Val and Jim Ainsworth

MORTIMER MEDICAL PRACTICE

Patients' Participation Group (PPG) February 2026

General Information The surgery would like to let you know that telephone calls are currently taking longer than usual to be answered as the team are working hard to support patients without internet access or need help completing the online request form.

Please note, requests sent by email will be returned and you will be asked to complete an online Anima form instead.

If you need a medication review, please use the 'Admin Request' option on Anima. This is the quickest and most effective way to make sure your request goes to the correct team.

Staff Training Days Thursday 16 April and Tuesday 14 July. Surgeries and Dispensaries will be closed from 12 noon. You can still submit an Anima request during this time.

Bank Holiday Closures Good Friday 3 April 2026 and Easter Monday 6 April 2026

Missed Appointments Again, in January, there were **100** appointments that patients did not attend, equivalent to 1.5 days of wasted time. Please let the surgery know as soon as possible if you cannot attend.

Anne O'Brien 07581 402274 anne.ppg@yahoo.com

Vacancy

The Parish Council is looking for a new councillor to represent Croft & Yarpole Parish.

No previous experience needed – just an interest in the community.

Applications will be considered at the next meeting.

For more information or an informal chat, please contact Mrs Maggie Brown

Email clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk Phone 07398 222310



LOCAL NEWS AND NOTICES

Flood Protection

Is your property at risk of flooding? The Parish Council has **50 Aqua-Sac®** provided by Herefordshire Council. Lightweight and easy to store, when submerged in water for 5 minutes they absorb about 13 litres creating an instant, self-inflating “sandbag”. If you would like a share of these Aqua-Sac® please let me know. Further details on their use are available online or can be supplied by me.

Be prepared!

Emergency Bag

Herefordshire Council has provided a holdall for use in emergencies. The bag is currently stored at the Men’s Shed, for which the group is thanked. If you use this bag, please tell the Parish Council! Contents of the holdall are: 2 x Hi Vis Jackets, 1 x First Aid Kit, 2 x Foil Blankets, 1 x Torch, 1 x Document Bag, 1 x AM/FM Radio, 1 x Whistle. Herefordshire Council is thanked for providing this equipment along with the Aqua-Sacs.

Mrs Maggie Brown. clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk 07398 222310

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YARPOLE COMMUNITY SHOP

March 2026



Less well-travelled potatoes

It is worth considering the impact of where our money goes when we buy fresh fruit and vegetables from the supermarket.

Smaller greengrocers and suppliers are struggling in the current economic climate but here at Yarpole Community Shop we are proud that we continue to support Paul and his team at Cherries and Berries who are now fourth generation greengrocers supplying people and communities in Herefordshire.

The cuts supermarkets make to the selling price of fresh produce in order to maintain customer loyalty affect both farmers and suppliers.

So, we are fortunate that we are supplied by such an excellent local greengrocer.

Each week - Friday during term time and Thursday in school holidays - he hand-delivers our order and works tirelessly to always buy and source as locally as he can, rather than, as the supermarkets do, buying around the country, shipping to a central distribution point and then back out again to individual supermarkets.

Then the wonderful "A Team" of Anne and Audrey give up their time each week to price up the fresh produce to ensure it remains competitive without compromising on what is fairly due to those who grow and bring us our fresh produce.

So, if you can, do consider buying your fresh fruit and vegetables from local greengrocers and small shops as the money is then going straight back to supporting the small local suppliers as well as the farmers themselves.

New committee members

Following a number of appeals we are delighted that we now have three new volunteers who are interested in joining the committee. This will give us the capacity to develop a strategy for when Lindsay & Toby stand down later this year. A very warm welcome to them.

Rowena and Jon



Services include:

- Neuro Vascular assessment
- Diabetic foot health checks
- Nail cut & file
- Treatment of corns & callus
- Verucca treatment

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GALLERY CAFÉ



March 2026

Tasty Tuesday will be on Tuesday 10 March at 1.00pm

Look out for the menu

Please book by 3.00pm on Friday 6 March.

Please inform us of any allergies; we are happy to cater for individual needs where possible. To book please email or call the café during opening hours or drop in to see us in person. There will be a booking sheet on the tall cupboard.

Spring at the Café

We are looking forward to the better weather and even sitting outside with our coffee!

Look for seasonal treats and always good company.

The Gallery Café is open every day except Sunday, so you can meet friends, old and new, and enjoy our excellent cakes, scones and lunches

A volunteer is now needed to help on Thursday lunchtimes: 12 - 2.00pm

Please get in touch! gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com

Thank you to all the people who support the Café

Gallery Café Opening Hours

Monday – Wednesday 10.30 -12.30 for drinks & cakes

Thursday – Friday 10.30 -3.00, serving lunch 12-2pm

Saturday 10.30 -12.30 for brunch

For enquiries/bookings, drop in to see us in person or

email gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com, or phone 01568 780594 (opening hours only)

Check www.yarpole.org or <https://www.facebook.com/GalleryCafeYarpole/>

SHOP AND POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS

	Shop	Post Office
Monday - Friday	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 12noon
Saturday	9.00am - 1.00pm	9.00am - 12noon
Sunday/Bank Holidays	closed except for pre-ordered newspapers	

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What is Lent about?

When most of us think about Lent we think about a 40-day period before the Easter season when we try to give up something in our lives that we normally enjoy. It may be that we give up chocolate or alcohol or something else that we like. But how often do we stop to consider what Lent really means.

The 40 days of Lent represent the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting and praying in the wilderness. Jesus did not just give up one small thing, he gave up food, shelter and the company of others. As if that was not enough, in his hunger, he was tempted to give up his fasting by the devil, who offered him bread.

In Matthew's Gospel, he tells us the Jesus responds to the devil by saying:

Man does not live on bread alone

But on every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4: 4-5)

What Jesus is telling us is that we do not need to rely on worldly things, if we put our trust in God, God will care for us. Not on a physical level, but on a spiritual level. If we put our faith in God, we will be saved.

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, so that he could spend time away from the world and all its distractions; spend time in prayer and contemplation, in preparation for his ministry and his ultimate sacrifice for us.

Part of that preparation was to face the temptation of evil, but resist it, demonstrating his power and commitment to God, and to fulfil scripture.

So what does this mean for us? As Christians we too should see Lent as an opportunity to spend time in prayer and reflection, turning away from worldly things that may distract us from the path that God wants us to take. We too will experience temptation, as we do every day of our lives. The temptation to be selfish, greedy, angry, hurtful and unkind. We should always strive to resist these things, but in the season of Lent we should strive even harder to give up our self-serving wilfulness. We too should let the Holy Spirit lead us from these things to our own wilderness, where we can spend time with God.

Yes, I know it's a lot harder than just giving up chocolate!

Father, we pray that we may have the courage to walk in the wilderness with you and your son. Help us to recognise that spending time away from the world is not really a wilderness, but a precious place where our souls will be nourished by the presence of your spirit.

Jane Higgins Local Minister

This is the link for the Diocese of Hereford where the parish magazine article, and other material, can be viewed: <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/news/parish-newsletter/>



'If we shield ourselves from all feedback, we stop growing.'

Brené Brown, Research professor and best-selling author

At the time of writing (early February) the response to date to our survey on the Gallery Café Improvement Project has been really positive. 46 replies have been received, and the feedback is very reassuring, highlighting the Gallery Café's many strengths but also giving us constructive suggestions for improvement. Thank you to everyone who has shared their thoughts. A more detailed report will be provided in the April newsletter.

Through the year we also receive feedback on our church and community hub from our many visitors and it is clear that St. Leonard's – with a thriving place of worship, a community resource hosting our award-winning village shop and Post Office and our ever-popular Gallery Café – is admired by many. But why listen to me? Please see the selection of comments below from our visitors' book. Happy Reading!

'A wonderful, inspiring community project.' (Pembrokeshire)

'So impressed with your efforts – long may you prosper.' (Paisley, Scotland)

'Enjoyed a good holiday in Yarpole. Fantastic shop!' (Lancashire)

'What a wonderful use of space and local initiative.' (Northampton)

'We are bowled over by what you have achieved.' (Gloucestershire)

'Très intéressante. Une exemple à suivre.' (Agen, France)

'Amazing Bell Tower and lovely community idea.' (Galway, Eire)

'I was christened here in 1973 so was just visiting from Solihull. Beautiful church.'

'Returned to the church of my baptism.' (Sydney, Australia)

'Found the grave of my ancestor. Thank you for your inscription in your book (sic).' (Shrewsbury)

'Love the countryside and most friendly people. Precious memories to go back home with.' (Canada)

'What a lovely, vibrant place which keeps its peace. A place for all.' (Gloucestershire)

It has been said that we often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude. Visitors clearly appreciate the wonderful locality in which we live. Its natural beauty is enhanced by the tremendous efforts, creativity and initiative of many people in our community. A big thank you to everyone who makes a contribution to our community life; we are truly blessed.

Gordon Ewing, Trustee

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PARISH HALL

March 2026

Parish Hall activities are listed on the Events Calendar (on page 10 this month). To make a booking please contact Dave Bradford on 07974 193294 or parishhall@yarpole.org or go to www.yarpole.com and click on 'Church & Parish Hall bookings' to book online. If you are interested in joining one of the classes please email Dave, who will put you in contact with the class organiser.

Parish Hall future dates

11 April: Flicks & Food: The Roses

3 June: Parish Hall AGM

27 June: Summer BBQ and Ceilidh

The Parish Hall Committee works as a team to ensure the smooth running of the Hall itself, that the regular classes continue and are supported, and to organise regular social events for the community which also raise much needed funds for our Parish Hall.

Two long-standing Committee members are stepping down, Jill Grant our former Chair and Janet Owen our Secretary. **We would really welcome new Committee members to join us to help with the running of the Hall.** We are a friendly Committee; we support each other and work well together to provide the community with this invaluable resource. Without a Secretary we cannot function, so we are looking for someone to take over the role in June. For this role in particular you do not need lots of experience, just to be computer- and internet-capable and have a willingness to muck in! Everything is all set up and ready for somebody to take it over and you will have lots of support.



HELP WANTED!

If you think you might be able to help and would like to join the Committee, please contact Amanda, our Chair, on 01568 701996 or email: parishhall@yarpole.org for an informal chat, to find out more about the what we do and the Secretary role, if that interests you, before making any decision.

The Parish Hall is an important part of the community, is well-used for regular classes and private functions, however we need a Secretary and new Committee members. We meet approximately every three months, so nothing too onerous!

We look forward to hearing from anyone who thinks they might be able to help us.



Don't forget that books and DVDs can be taken out from the Parish Hall Library whenever the building is open. Just sign the book and there is no time limit.

Yarpole Men's Shed



It's good to talk. That's what we're here for; to create a space where men can meet, talk and work together on projects that benefit our community.

Through talking we share our ideas, our knowledge, our experience and our stories. Friendly banter and a good laugh are sometimes just what we need to lift our spirits and support our wellbeing. Through our conversations we connect with others, make new friends and broaden our social circle. We also become part of a supportive group where we can help each other out if there is something we need.

Plans for 2026: Completing the internal fittings for our Shed and the provision of electricity will provide the facility for members to meet more often and work together on our various planned projects.

New members welcome! Membership is open to men residing in Yarpole Parish and surrounding areas. Whether you are interested in helping with community-based projects, just socialising or feel you would like to get involved in developing the group's activities, we would like to hear from you. Here's how to find us:

- **Via email:** yarpolshed@gmail.com

- **At our Shed:** Our Shed, located behind The Bell, is open every Wednesday between 10.00am & 2.00pm. Shed members meet here to work on one of our current projects or to just get together for a cup of tea and a chat.

- **At a social evening:** We meet at The Bell on the third Thursday of each month at 7.00pm. This is a good time to come along, meet some of us and find out more about The Men's Shed and what we're doing. If you're feeling bored, lonely, generally fed-up or just looking for a new interest, come and have a chat. It's good to talk.

Trevor Edwards



200 Club winning numbers for February:

91 - £50 107 - £20 138 - £10

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Yarpole Group Parish Council

Firstly, please note that the March meeting date has been changed from 3 March to **10 March**.

At the meeting on 3 February, Cllr Grant was formally thanked for his commitment and work as a Parish Councillor. I now know that Duncan joined the council in 2000, a correction to the year mentioned in last month's edition.

Whether litter bins in lay-bys attract more litter than they prevent was discussed. A bin at Rosebank lay-by, between Bircher and Orleton, is misused, with rubbish left around the bin not just inside it. Councillor Hurcomb offered to find out how often it is emptied and whether it could be removed on a temporary basis to monitor littering behaviour.

Three requests from the Parish council

Balfour Beatty - to paint a white line on the edge of the highway next to a ditch on Highwood Lane, from B4362 to Croft Lodge to highlight its existence to drivers.

The Flood Risk Team at Herefordshire Council - to assess a tree, growing in/by the stream along the C1039; and advise who is responsible for its removal.

The Lengthsman - to remove branches obscured in piles of leaves next to Leys Lane.

A pedestrian gate has been fitted at the Community Meadow, to enable access (avoiding steps) if the main gate is closed.

Defibrillator consumables (pads and batteries) at the Parish Hall and the Church will now be funded by the Parish Council. A public training session will be arranged. It was noted that a defibrillator for Bircher is in the budget for 2026/27.

Oil (possibly kerosene) in a Yarpole watercourse. Environmental Health visited on 4 February and will be writing to householders. It is possible a householder is unaware that their oil tank is leaking. I believe the stream is a tributary of the River Lugg and it is hoped further pollution can be avoided.

PCSO Maddox from The Leominster Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) reported an increase in thefts of hand and power tools in the spring. Property marking events will be publicised through Neighbourhood Matters (<https://neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>). Police surgeries at St. Leonard's Church allow residents to raise concerns. Please report any suspicious activity, such as unfamiliar vehicles or individuals in the area, to the SNT by calling 101 or email leominster.snt@westmercia.police.uk. Night-time operations are being conducted in the locality, and an increased police presence may be observed.

No objections raised to two planning applications. [P260003/FH](#) Hazeldene, Yarpole, erection of a single storey rear extension, and [P260037/L](#) Croft Castle, works to lay hardcore, bitumen and chippings over existing hoggin path.

Do come along to a meeting or contact the council with questions or concerns. Upcoming meeting dates are 10 March (new date), 7 April, & 5 May, all at 7.00pm at the Parish Hall.

Mrs Maggie Brown, Clerk. clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk 07398 222310

June Galliers 1940 - 2025

We are sorry to report that June Galliers of Bircher Common, has passed away. She and her husband Ronald were married for thirty-six years. Ron was a consultant engineer and June worked in a hospital as a medical technician.

They took early retirement and in 1989 they moved to Ashtree Cottage, Bircher Common. They had a wonderful life there, together. Everyone liked them. Ron built a workshop and June tended the garden, growing flowers and fruit and vegetables.

They loved dogs and they always had labradors, taking them on long walks on the Common every day. They always went to Cornwall for their holidays and sometimes took the dogs with them.

June was very active; she liked walking, swimming, and horse-riding, and also cooking.

Ron passed away in 2018 and June's brother, Peter, went to stay at the cottage to look after her, taking her to garden centres and to the shops and restaurants in Hereford and Ludlow.

June remained active almost to the end. She passed away peacefully in Leominster Community Hospital on 12 May 2025, aged eighty-five. By her wish she was laid to rest next to Ron in Humber Woodland. They are now together for all eternity.

Based on an obituary submitted by June's brother, Peter Johnson



Herefordshire Wildlife Trust News

At the very end of January, Terry of the Herefordshire Ornithological Club (HOC) spoke to us about birds and their habitats within Herefordshire. We were treated to beautiful photos from HOC former chair, Mick, illustrating the high variety of bird species inhabiting our county's rivers, gravel pits, uplands, and its amazing woodlands; the latter are home to rare warblers and tits.

Sadly, modern farming methods have severely reduced nesting sites and food sources, which explains the virtual elimination of lapwing, curlew, and kestrel from our lowlands. On a more positive note, many rare species, such as the goshawk and purple heron can be spotted occasionally in the county.

During February, wildlife trust members did their bit to help our feathered friends by putting up bird boxes in the local cemetery, being careful to keep away from the graves themselves.

Our next talk is titled 'Seeing is Believing!' Branch member Martha, an insect specialist, will tell us all about bees, including how to help this endangered insect. This talk is suitable for all the family. Sat. 21 March, 2.30pm, Forbury Chapel, Church St. Leominster. Members £2; non-members £3. Accompanied children free.

Diana Emes, Communication Secretary, leominsterbranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk

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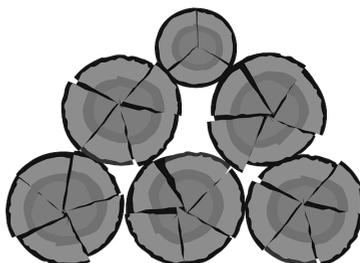
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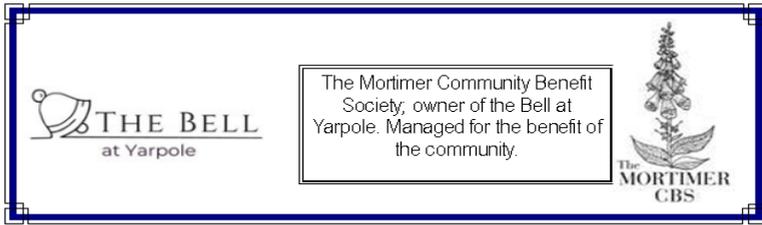
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Changes at the Bell are coming.....

Mike, our chef, is leaving. He has decided that it is time for him to set up on his own. His last working day will be Sunday, 15 March. We shall miss his support of the volunteers and the community project.

Our tenants in the flat have also indicated that they intend to leave in the near future.

The consequence of these events is that the Bell is not able to continue as it has been for the last 2 years. This is an opportunity for change, and we would welcome suggestions on how to move forward. The committee has decided that the next step (to reduce the workload on us) is to look for a new tenant to take over the running of the Bell. With 2 years of trading figures we are now in a better position to help the next tenants to succeed.

In the short term we will be looking to replace Mike. The Bell now has a regular clientele and a local reputation which we do not want to lose. We continue to get 5* reviews. However, this will not be a long-term solution; the personal commitment from committee members is too great for this to be a sustainable option.

The future success of the Bell as a village pub very much depends on the level of support it receives from the local community. Our takings confirm that the village cannot support the pub. 70% of our visitors are from outside the parish. As our tag line below states 'Use Local. Or Bye Bye Local'. The Bell will not survive unless it receives regular local support. This is particularly necessary over the winter months when trade is generally poor.

We will continue to inform parishioners and shareholders via our website and Facebook.

There is still time to book for Fish & Chips Monday on Monday, 2 March between 6pm and 8pm.

Our midweek social evenings continue; many of which are accompanied by live folk music in the Cider Barn. Come and join us.

Sunday, 15 March is Mothering Sunday. Why not book a table?

We are looking for staff. We need front of house and kitchen and pot wash staff. We are unable to employ anyone below the age of 16 due to the legal requirements surrounding youth employment. If you are interested, please either speak to us directly or email us at dine@thebellatyarpole.co.uk.

Julian Stokes

Use Local. Or Bye Bye Local.

What's in a Name?

Some people are just born into a certain life, aren't they? At my school, we had a woodwork teacher called Mr Sawyer (affectionally known as "Tom" by the boys). Bob Flowerdew and Pippa Greenwood, couldn't have been anything else but gardeners.



But what if your given name was Brilliana? You could hardly be a shrinking violet, could you? Lady Brilliana Harley (1598-1643) was most certainly a shining local light during the bloody Civil War of the mid-seventeenth century.

While her husband Robert was in London on Parliamentary business, he left Brilliana, his third wife, to maintain and administer their home: Brampton Bryan Castle, just 10 or so miles north-west of here. A supporter of the Parliamentary and Puritan cause, on 4 March 1643 she received a royal summons from his majesty King Charles I that "Dame Brilliana Harley and all others within or about the Castle...be taken and proceeded against...as Persons guilty of high Treason." She refused to hand herself over, and on 26 July, the castle was besieged by Royalist troops. Her livestock was plundered, and ditches and fortifications were built around the castle, which was itself bombarded by cannon from the church roof.

Several members of her entourage were shot and injured, and her cook was killed, but Brilliana refused to surrender. On 22 August, she wrote in her diary that, "A small party of men sallied out upon the enemy and slew some of them, and fired a house where they kept their wildfire (probably gunpowder), very much to our advantage."

Three days later, she allowed Royalist Sir John Scudamore to enter the castle for negotiations, but she made him climb up a rope ladder to gain entry and the discussions got nowhere.

The siege was finally lifted on 9 September, when the Royalist troops were called away south to the Battle of Newbury.

A prolific letter writer, she compiled hundreds to her husband and son Ned. In her letter of 9 October 1643, she wrote: "My Deare Ned...I wish you were at Brompton. I am now again threatened; there are some souldiers come to Lemster and 3 troopes of horse to Heariford with Sir William de Vavasor, and they say they meane to visit Brompton again, but I hope the Lord will deliver me." Sadly, this was to be her last letter. The anxiety and privations of the siege left her weakened and, on 29 October, she died of "a great cold, an apoplexy and deluxion of the lungs".

The castle finally surrendered on 17 April 1644, and Brilliana's younger children, Tom, Dorothy and Margaret were captured. Imprisoned in Ludlow and Shrewsbury, they were finally released when Shrewsbury fell to the Roundheads on 22 February 1645.

The Harleys, still live in Brampton Bryan, and have continued the family tradition of giving the name Brilliana to their eldest daughter. The latest Brilliana is a senior heritage consultant in London, which I think is just, well....brilliant.

Paul Humphrey



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**Yarpole Talk
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11 March 2026

St. Leonard's Church, 2.00pm

All welcome and refreshments available

Come and find out what we have been doing this year!

Thank you for supporting the Quiz, we had a great night, a super quiz, delivered by Richard and Liz and we all exercised our brains.

The funds raised will pay our insurance and telephone costs for next year.

THE 4Cs and Move It Or Lose It (MIOLI)

Once more, it is a pleasure to report that MIOLI continues to be a very popular village activity, with sessions under the direction of our qualified leader, Kath, each Monday and Tuesday at 11.00 till 12 noon in the Parish Hall.

Fun, company, exercise, and all the health benefits they bring are available on your doorstep.

If you'd like to join us, ring Anna on 780321, and leave a message. Or just turn up! Men, are you listening? Our 6 men need your backup. Try us!

4Cs offers Company, Chat, Coffee (or tea) and always CAKE. Join us on the 4th Friday of each month, 11.00 till 12 noon, Parish Hall, for a varied series of speakers.

27 March - Sue Beagley and our local crafters will impart some secrets to us.

24 April - Clare Powell's rearranged talk on Living with Dementia.

Need a lift? Contact Avis on 01568 780874

Windows

Look into the window of your mind
and what can you find?
Confusion and doubt and thoughts
that flout the convention of thinking.
Why should this be?

Look into the window of your heart.
Then you can start to sift out
The longings and fantasies
Fears and emotions, tears and regrets
How did we live?

Look into the window of the world
Despair at the torment and strife
Unkindness that is rife throughout
All our global horizons and beyond
It just cannot be.

Look into the window of the future,
Whatever lies ahead?
No famine, no wars, no hatred, no sin,
It is our choice, let us hear your voice
It is of our making.

Look into the window of this place
And what can we see
Quiet and peace, smiles on each face
Joy and love, as we share an embrace
This is how it is.

Carol Clare



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The Curious Gardener - The Mystery of Garden Sheds

Last month I wrote about the interesting items that one comes across when digging, and how a former colleague made an explosive discovery in her veg patch. That put me in mind of another surprise discovery, this time in a garden shed.

Garden sheds seem to attract miscellaneous items as magnets attract iron filings. Got an item that you don't know what to do with? Stick it in the shed. The broken spade that you never got around to taking to the tip, old cans with an inch of paint left in the bottom, umpteen bags of aged garden fertilizer ten years past their use-by date – they all end up in the garden shed. But the most unexpected find that I ever heard of turned up in a garden shed belonging to a resident of the housing association I used to work for in Leominster.

A team of contractors was renovating some of the housing association properties that had been built before the war. One of them was still occupied by the woman who had moved in when the house was new. When her husband died she had left the shed untouched, partly through nostalgia and partly because she couldn't face dealing with the huge pile of stuff heaped inside. The contractors had to move the shed before they could start work on the house, so they began by emptying the contents onto the lawn. To their amazement, in the far corner they found a WW2 bomb. They summoned the resident, who explained that her husband had found it during the war and had kept it as a souvenir. One of the contractors, a young man with an entrepreneurial spirit, declared that he thought he might be able to get some money for it on eBay. The woman said she had no use for it herself, so at the end of the day the contractors' van drove away with the bomb in the back.

The next day the householder looked out of the window to see that the contractors were back – and the bomb was back on the lawn. The young man's boss had told him that it was illegal to sell bombs on eBay, and that it needed to be dealt with by the police. The woman duly rang Leominster police station (it was still manned at that time) and had great difficulty persuading anyone to take her seriously. Eventually two friendly policeman arrived and, having examined it closely, agreed that yes, it was a bomb. The resident explained that she really didn't want it, so the policemen told her not to worry, they'd take care of it. They struggled to pick it up, not being as young and muscular as the contractors, but eventually they managed to load it into their car and they drove off.

Half an hour later they were back – and yes, so was the bomb. With much effort they got it out of the boot and replaced it on the lawn. They explained that the station sergeant had told them that they didn't want bombs in the police station, and that it really was a job for the army. The woman objected that she didn't know the phone number for the army, and she'd had enough of the bomb disappearing and then coming back again. The policemen kindly offered to contact the army on her behalf, as soon as they'd finished their other duties.

Later that afternoon the bomb disposal squad arrived with sirens blaring, evacuated the estate and dealt with the bomb. They clearly appreciated the urgency of the situation even if the contractors and the policemen didn't. It just goes to show, you never know what you might find in a garden shed.

Sue Russell



ORLETON AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB



All you want to know THE RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

On Tuesday 27 January we welcomed again Tamsin Westhorpe, author, and proprietor of Stockton Bury Gardens. She has been a judge at Chelsea for ten years.

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show was founded in 1913 and occupies a 23-acre site. Described by Tamsin as the Paris catwalk fashion show of the plant world, it exists to fulfill the following functions: - to promote cutting edge design, introduce new plants, products and innovations, promote the industry, create discussion, raise awareness of causes and encourage new gardeners. The Great Pavilion is large enough to accommodate 5,100 red buses and 168,000 visitors attend each year.

It is a great privilege to be asked to judge Chelsea, and it is a voluntary role. The judge designate will do little during the first 2 years except watch and listen. Judges must possess a skill set comprising gardener, landscaper, designer and plant- person. There are judges for different categories – show gardens, small gardens, trade stands – and they are not permitted to cross over. Judging requires 2 days and takes place over the weekend. A maximum of 36 marks is awarded. A gold medal requires 30 to 36 marks and surprisingly there is not a set number of medals for each category, Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver and Bronze. Other categories include Best in Show, People's Choice and Construction Award. The judging panel is anxious that exhibitors should do as well as possible and feedback is always given.

Creating a Chelsea garden is not for first timers. It is a 15-month process and selection involves factors including design, budget, sponsorship and carbon footprint. Plant health is critical; some trees are quarantined for over a year, and a list of proscribed plants is issued to designers. Show gardens are built in 19 days, remain on site for 30 days and are dismantled in 5 days. The judges must consider how well the brief is interpreted, overall impression and construction; hard landscaping must conform to building regulations and the planting design, association and implementation. The head must rule the heart; these gardens have to conform as after the Show they will be dismantled to give pleasure elsewhere. The RHS checks that this is done.

Tamsin's illuminating insight left us with renewed admiration, not only for those who create these amazing gardens, but for those who judge them with meticulous care.

Ghislaine Arundale

On **Tuesday 31 March**, Marion Stainton will present **Raised Bed Vegetable Growing** covering why and how to build and use raised beds. Also soil management, crop rotations, pest & disease management and some design ideas and alternative versions.

Orleton Village Hall - doors open 7.15pm for 8pm start.

Non-members welcome at £2.50 per person which includes tea or coffee.

Annual Membership £15.00. www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk.

Why be a Parish Councillor?

I joined the Parish Council early in 2025 and am now Chair. I have a longstanding interest in the challenges facing our county. I have been involved, over the years, in several groups considering how Herefordshire might best address its future and maintain its diversity. Joining the Parish Council felt like a natural extension of this activity, focussing on our parish and how developments across the county might affect us all. At present I also run Yarpole Flicks In The Sticks and am a governor for our two federated local primary schools at Shobdon and Luston.



Hetty and I moved to Yarpole 16 years ago having sold our family home outside Bromyard. We've lived in North Herefordshire since 1978, first in Eardisley before two other moves led us to Bredenbury where we brought up our son and daughter. We'd known Yarpole for many years, having friends in the parish. We rented first and, having settled into the community, bought our current home.

As well as living in Herefordshire for the whole of our adult lives, we have both worked in the county. I trained as a social worker, seconded by the local authority, and then worked in Hereford for many years before moving to other posts in the region. I finished my career back in the county as a member of Herefordshire Council's Management Board, responsible for children's social care. My childhood was also spent in villages. Over the years I've seen huge changes in rural life. I've seen Herefordshire communities change radically, from places of employment where housing was available to all, into a radically different landscape where there is little work and house prices are beyond the reach of most local people. Many villages are much less socially diverse than they were, with young families unable to buy a home. Public transport has withered and young people often leave the county for work. Within the county as a whole, employment opportunities have radically reduced over the years and this has fuelled the hollowing out of communities along with the rise of property prices. The impact of these changes can be felt across the board. They were a key factor in the recent challenges faced by Herefordshire Council because essential public sector workers were unable to access affordable housing.

I believe that some of these changes are reversible if planning within the countryside reflects the needs of the whole community rather than a privileged few. This belief prompted me to apply to join the Parish Council. Together we can ensure that we have a vibrant community supporting all of its residents, young and old, in a place that we cherish.

Adam Scott

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How to Access Care and Support If You Need a Bit of Help

As we get older, everyday tasks can become more challenging. Preparing meals, getting washed and dressed may start to feel harder than they once did. When that happens, a little extra support can make a big difference. The good news is that help is available, and you are fully entitled to ask for it. Knowing how the process works can make everything feel much more manageable.

Your Right to an Assessment

Every adult in the UK has the right to request a *care needs assessment* from their local council, no matter their income, savings, or personal circumstances. In Herefordshire, this assessment is carried out by the Adult Social Care Team at Herefordshire Council. A care needs assessment is a conversation with a social worker or trained assessor. They will talk with you about the difficulties you're experiencing and the type of support that might help. It isn't a test! The aim is simply to understand what you need to stay safe, comfortable, and as independent as possible in your own home.

What Happens Next?

After the assessment, the council will create a *care plan*. This outlines the support you should receive based on your needs. It may include help with personal care, assistance with household tasks, equipment to make life easier, or regular visits from a carer. The care plan is centred on your wellbeing. You'll have the chance to discuss it, ask questions, and make sure it reflects your preferences and daily routines. The goal is always to help you remain at home for as long as possible, living safely and with dignity.

Understanding the Financial Assessment

Once your care needs are identified, the council will carry out a *financial assessment* (also known as a means test). This looks at your income and savings to find out if you qualify for financial support towards the cost of your care. If you are eligible, the council will tell you how many hours of support they can fund. If you do not qualify for full funding, you may still receive partial support. You can also choose to pay for extra hours yourself if you feel you would benefit from additional help.

Choosing a Care Provider

Once you know what support you're entitled to, you can choose a care provider. Care agencies vary in size, availability, and the services they offer, so it's often helpful to speak to more than one. Most providers will arrange a visit to meet you, discuss your needs, and explain how they can help. This is your chance to ask questions and get a sense of whether they're the right fit. A good provider will take time to understand your routines, preferences, and what matters most to you. A good place to start looking would be Herefordshire Council's Talk Community Directory (<https://www.talkcommunity.co.uk/support-and-care/care-options/>), or call 01432 260027.

It's worth remembering that some providers may not have capacity to take on new clients at certain times. If so, they will let you know straight away so you don't waste time waiting for a service that isn't available.

You're Not Alone

Asking for help can feel like a big step, but many people reach out for support every day. The system exists to help you live well, stay independent, and feel confident in your own home. Whether you need a little help or a lot, contacting the Adult Social Care Team is the first step towards getting the support you deserve.

Herefordshire Council's Adult Social Care Team: 01432 260101

Euan McPherson, Chief Executive, Services for Independent Living



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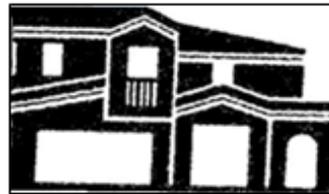


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Hello everyone! Welcome back to 'Lisa's Book Nook'. I cannot believe we are already in the second month of 2026! Time certainly feels like it is flying by. Having said that, what a wet and miserable few weeks we have had! Will the rain ever stop? However, it is not all doom and gloom, as the bleak weather has allowed plenty of time for reading. I have already read several books this year, and I thought I would recommend a few of them to you today. As always, I hope you enjoy my selections.



Margaret Beaufort: Survivor, Rebel, Kingmaker by **Lauren Johnson** - Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VII of England, has a somewhat mixed reputation. Her name has been tarnished in recent decades due to her portrayal in various works of historical fiction, alongside unfounded accusations which claim she was responsible for the murder of the Princes in the Tower. In this engaging and much-needed new biography, historian Lauren Johnson aims to set the record straight and bring the real Margaret Beaufort out of the shadows and into the spotlight. It is fair to say she succeeds in her goal. This is a beautifully written and thoroughly researched book that does what a lot of other biographies fail to do; it puts Margaret firmly in the context of her time and does not try to look at historical events through a modern lens. As a result, Margaret appears less as a scheming and overbearing religious fanatic, and more as a strong, resilient, and determined woman doing her best to survive in a turbulent and uncertain world. I found myself engrossed from the first page to the last and would recommend this to anyone interested in late medieval history.

The Two Hundred Years War: The Bloody Crowns of England and France, 1292-1492 by **Michael Livingston** – It is fair to say most history lovers have heard of the Hundred Years War between England and France. Here, Michael Livingston challenges everything you thought you knew about this conflict by questioning whether it lasted for far longer than previously thought. By focussing more on the French perspective than that of the English, he widens the scope of the war and proves that not only did it last for close to two hundred years, it was not confined solely to France and England either, as other countries and territories were also involved. As with all of Michael Livingston's books, this is very well-written and laid out in a clear and concise way, meaning even a complete newbie will find this complicated period of history easy to follow. It also raises plenty of questions and makes you think twice about any pre-conceived ideas you might have had, so there really is something here for everyone. For me, it is essential reading for any history lover.

I am Heathcliff by **Various Authors** - As a new film adaptation introduces Emily Bronte's classic novel *Wuthering Heights* to a whole new audience, it seemed the perfect time to recommend this collection of sixteen short stories, all of which take their inspiration from Bronte's Gothic masterpiece. Each story captures all the pain, turmoil and yearning found in the original novel, whilst also exploring a variety of themes. As is often the case with short stories, there were some that I enjoyed more than others, but that is in no way intended as a slight as they all have their strengths. One thing to bear in mind is that a few of the stories are quite dark and disturbing in nature, meaning some readers might want to steer clear. However, if you love *Wuthering Heights*, as I do, you will find plenty to enjoy about this book.

Lisa North

The Patient

It is amazing how, when you need urgent medical attention, there is a big building ready and waiting, filled with huge machines, umpteen different departments from cardiac to cancer to neurosurgery to orthopaedics to gynaecology, and lots of specialist staff who all contribute to an assessment, diagnosis and treatment. Sitting there, just waiting. It would be a shame not to take advantage. So I did.

The surgeons were brilliant: they opened me up, did something whilst I was unconscious, sewed me back up again without leaving any tools inside, then cleaned up after themselves. Just like any good plumber.

The troubles come later. 'I need to give you an injection.' 'I need to take your blood pressure.' 'I need a blood sample.' 'You need to take these pills,' says one nurse, 'then I'll leave you alone for two hours.' 'You need to take these pills,' says another ten minutes later, with different pills. And so it continues throughout the day and night.

'Can I look at your bottom now?' Rather you than me.

JAMES!' booms a voice from nowhere, interrupting a short, but sound and well-deserved sleep. On arrival I was asked whether I wanted to be called Jim or James, and 'Jim' was printed clearly by the bed. 'JAMES, WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO GIVE YOU AN ENEMA NOW?' What a question.

Then the real medicine. Val and the girls walk in, the world lights up with chat, laughs, questions, fussing off the scale. This is why I need to get better.

Hospital food is an oxymoron. Food-like substances are prepared with no regard for any known culinary or gastronomic principles. Everything is mush, only of slightly different colours, and is assembled according to how it conforms to a table of carbs, fats, proteins, vitamins and so on, which means a dietician somewhere thinks it must be doing me good. And it always sounds better before it arrives. One example was 'battered haddock' with optional chips and mushy peas. I thought it was optimistic, because fish frying requires fat at the right temperature and, even if cooked in advance, still needs heating properly before serving. What came was not battered but breaded: a mushy fishy-type paste extruded into a thin escalope cartoon-fish shape that could have been any species or several, and dryazabone. You wouldn't feed it to your cat, if you love your cat. And all done by a multi-national corporation on a risible budget that would shame the workhouse. The King might have been enjoying his boiled egg and soldiers, but I didn't see any.

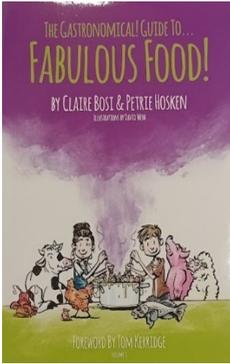
'I'm just going to remove your catheter.' OK. Aaaaaarrgghhh!

'I'm going to insert this endoscope up your back passage.' You'd better check there's nothing still in there first.

There is no respite; sleeping for more than an hour is not an option. As a senior member of the surgical team observed, surveying the ward 'This is *terrible*.' Good food and good rest are essential for recovery, and neither was available. His advice was to get out of there as fast as I could. In sum, excellent surgery, mixed back-up; and I'm glad it's that way round.

That was all on account of a colon obstruction. Meanwhile, reports are coming in of an accident in the pancreas area. More later. Mind how you go. Enjoy life.

Jim Ainsworth



Get your copy of the fabulous, glossy, hardback book “*The Gastronomical Guide to Good Food*” by Claire Bosi and Petrie Hosken for a knockdown price of £5 (RRP£20). Would make a great present. Limited quantity available.

“Learning to feed yourself as a kid is one of life's greatest blessings. Here's how to do it.” Jim Ainsworth

This is being sold by the PCC as a Lent fundraiser to raise money for Shelterbox supporting homeless people in crisis-hit areas. It will be on sale at village events in March or you can email R.Stimson@btinternet.com to reserve a copy.

Donations also welcome. www.justgiving.com/page/jane-higgins-1-tent-for-lent

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**Croft with Yarpole and Lucton
Parish Church Services for March and April 2026**



Date	Service	Church	Time
March 2026			
Sunday 1 March	Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	Croft	9.30
Monday 2 March	Lent Wise – Lenten study course	Yarpole	19.30
Wednesday 4 Mar	Be Still	Yarpole	17.30
Sunday 8 March	Holy Communion Common Worship	Yarpole	9.30
Monday 9 March	Lent Wise – Lenten study course	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 15 March	Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	Yarpole	08.30
	Celtic Worship	Yarpole	15.00
Monday 16 March	Lent Wise – Lenten study course	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 22 March	Lay-led service	Yarpole	9.30
Monday 23 March	Lent Wise – A Lenten study course	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 29 March	Palm Sunday - Group Service	Yarpole	10.30
April 2026			
Wednesday 1 April	Be Still	Yarpole	17.30
Friday 3 April	Good Friday Meditation	Yarpole	11.00
Saturday 4 April	Easter Eve Service	Croft	18.00
Sunday 5 April	Easter Sunday Service	Yarpole	9:30
Sunday 12 April	Holy Communion Common Worship	Yarpole	9:30
Sunday 19 April	Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	Yarpole	8:30
	Celtic Worship	Yarpole	15.00
Sunday 26 April	Lay-led Service	Yarpole	9:30

Anyone wishing to contact a priest please phone or email:
Rev. Matthew Burns on 01568 614399, teamvicarwest@leominsterteam.org.uk

To book a funeral, interment, wedding or baptism and for other information please phone: Priory Office
01568 612124

Monday to Friday 9.30 – 1.00pm

Churchwardens: Jane Higgins (01568 708390) Anna Morley (01568 780321)



Old St Peter's Church
Lucton



St. Leonard's Church
Yarpole



St Michael
& All Angels Church