

# The Parishioner

YARPOLE LUCTON CROFT BIRCHER BICTON

September 2026

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## And all our regular features





Thanks to the following for their photos:

Front cover: Tim Ware - Sky over Yarpole on August 12 , the evening of the eclipse

This page: Carol Clare - Harvest all done and the Adopt a Grave summer clear-up

Maura Bowden - Security chick/escapee in Orleton

# FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Welcome to the September edition of The Parishioner.

As ever, we are very grateful to everyone who has contributed towards The Parishioner's printing costs. I'd especially like to thank those who have contributed anonymously and therefore not received a personal thank-you. If you would like to make a donation, please see the notice in the box at the bottom of this page which gives the various methods of making a payment.

Our team of readers for the audio version of the newsletter has now produced eleven editions and these have been very well received. We are extremely grateful for all their work. We would like to recruit more members to the transcription team. It is an extremely worthwhile job making The Parishioner accessible for people with sight problems in the parish. For more information about the role, please see page 12.

Finally, we have been advised that one of our advertisers, KC Electrical Services, has ceased trading and their advert no longer appears in the Parishioner.

Let's hope that by the time the next Parishioner comes through your letter boxes we shall have had a considerable amount of rain and that we'll all still have some plants left in our gardens!

Hetty

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

**[newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org)**

**Or leave in the box at the shop**

**The deadline for all submissions is  
THE 12th 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](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org) and we'll send you more information**

**Prices start at £5 for a 1/8 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.**

The newsletter is funded by adverts and donations. We are always pleased to receive donations. These can be paid by bank transfer (CAF Bank, sort code 40-52-40, account 00013394, reference DP), cheque made out to **Croft with Yarpole & Lucton PCC**, or by cash. Envelopes to A Scott, Undercroft, Green Lane, Yarpole, HR6 0BJ) or left at the shop. A year's supply (10 copies) costs each household just under £10.

## 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](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org).



WhatsApp

## Stay in touch: Yarpole WhatsApp Group

Share local information & news, relevant to our community, via the Yarpole Whatsapp group. We now have over 180 members! To join send a message with your mobile number to: Katie Daniels **07786 515922**



WhatsApp



## 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](mailto:susanmarylangley@gmail.com).

## Don't miss out on what's happening!

To be added to the events mailing list, email [events@yarpole.org](mailto:events@yarpole.org).



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Freeview

## WHAT'S ON

## WHAT'S ON

### 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 4 September. Join her in the café for coffee and chat.

Pete Lloyd

### COMMUNAL CRAFTERS

Next meeting:

Monday 14 September 1.30 - 3.30 pm

Creative mending

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

or email [suebeagley@aol.com](mailto:suebeagley@aol.com) for info.

Come and

**Be Still**

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

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

St. Leonard's Church, Yarpole.

All are welcome



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## WHAT'S ON

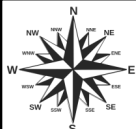
## WHAT'S ON



★ **New Term - New MD**  
**Birchpoles** ★  
**Love To Sing Choir**  
**Do you love to sing?**  
 Come and be part of  
 something amazing!  
 Every Wednesday Term Time  
 7:15-9:15pm (Adult Choir)  
 Refreshments included  
**St Leonard's Church, YARPOLE**  
**£5/ session Contact details**  
**07915886265 or fb page**



**DR ELLIE CHOWNS MP**  
**PUBLIC MEETING IN LEOMINSTER**  
 **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2026**  
 Doors open at 6.15pm for refreshments  
 **John Abel Room, Grange Court,**  
**Leominster, HR6 8NW**  
**Q&A 7PM-8.30PM**  
 Contact Ellie's office for accessibility information.



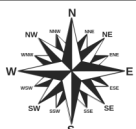
### **Walking Group**

We meet on the 2nd Friday and 4th Sunday of every month, at 10:30 by the church. Our walks are normally about 3-5 miles.

**September walks: Friday 11 & Sunday 27.**

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

Contact: **Viv 782271** or [seiftonbatch@gmail.com](mailto:seiftonbatch@gmail.com)



### **Gentle Walks Group**

Gentle walks take place regularly on the 1st Friday and 3rd Sunday of each month. All walks will be short, gentle and close to the village. All are welcome to join. There's no need to book in advance, just meet outside St. Leonard's at 10.30am.

**September walks: Friday 4 & Sunday 20**

For more details, please email [newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org).





Phoebe Dynevor, Matthew Goode, Kerry Fox



# The Colour Room

A British biographical drama chronically the life of Clarice Cliff - a young determined, working class woman, who breaks the glass ceiling and revolutionises the workplace in the 20th century.

**Yarpole Parish  
Hall**

HR6 OBL

**Saturday  
3 October**

7.30 pm

**Tickets**

Standard: £5.00

Under 18s: £4.00

This is a Flicks And Food event. Food at 6.30. Film at 7.30. Food £10. Film £5. Food must be booked in advance: ring 07788 547255 or 01568 701996. Film only does not require booking.



Information and Tickets at [www.artsalive.co.uk](http://www.artsalive.co.uk)

**FLICKS  
IN THE  
STICKS**

It's All About To Sing

# Love To Sing

Presents

## *Songs From Broadway* **& BEYOND**

28

Come & Join our Love To Sing Family for an evening of entertainment including songs from all your favourite musicals.

**SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**

**St.Leonard's Church, Yarpole**

**3:30pm**

28  
Birchpoles

Love To Sing  
Family

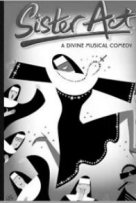
TICKETS £10

CASH ONLY

CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE



Try not to sing along!





**Monty Don in conversation with Mary Rhodes**

Weobley Church

Friday 11 September 2026, 7pm

Tickets £30 to include light refreshments



Monty Don (BBC Gardeners World) will be ‘in conversation’ with Mary Rhodes (BBC Midlands Today), talking about a life in gardening, emotional well-being and living well. Enjoy an evening in the beautiful Church of St Peter & St Paul in Weobley.

Tickets and more information: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GHUO>



herefordshire art week

Sat 5 - Sun 13  
September 2026



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Brian North - Goldeneye, Bodenham Lake

## Arts Society Lectures



Illustrated lectures on arts-related topics at Ludlow Assembly Rooms

Next meeting on **Wed 16 September 2026, at 2.15 pm**

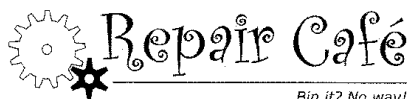
Fancy Liquors and Sky-High Kickers: The Invention of Can-Can, 1830-1950

Jonathan Conlin

Visitors welcome, £8.00 on the door. Membership £45.

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

For help with transport contact Membership Secretary Jeff Walker on **01694 781489**



*Bin it? No way!*

First Saturday of the month 10.00 - 12.00 (last repairs).

Next session: **5 September in the Community Centre, School Rd, Leominster HR6 8NJ.**

Online bookings open two weeks before: <https://leominsterepaircafe.org.uk>

Refreshments available.

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# EVENTS DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER

## Events this month

| Date   | Venue         | Event                                    | Time            |
|--------|---------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Tues 1 | Parish Hall   | Parish Council meeting                   | 7.00 - 9.00 pm  |
| Wed 2  | St. Leonard's | Be Still                                 | 5.30 - 6.00 pm  |
| Fri 4  | Gallery Café  | Police Community Support Officer meeting | 11.00 am        |
| "      | St. Leonard's | Gentle Walking Group                     | 10.30 am        |
| Tues 8 | Gallery Café  | Tasty Tuesday                            | 1.00 pm         |
| Wed 9  | Parish Hall   | Private Event                            |                 |
| Fri 11 | Various       | Walking Group                            | 10.30 am        |
| Mon 14 | Parish Hall   | Communal Crafters                        | 1.30 - 3.30 pm  |
| Sun 20 | St. Leonard's | Gentle Walking Group                     | 10.30           |
| Fri 25 | Parish Hall   | 4Cs                                      | 11.00 - 12 noon |
| Sun 27 | Various       | Walking Group                            | 10.30 am        |
| "      | St. Leonard's | Love to Sing concert                     | 3.30 pm         |

## Regular Weekly Activities

| Date       | Venue         | Event                        | Time             |
|------------|---------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Mondays    | Parish Hall   | Zumba                        | 6.00 - 7.00 pm   |
| Tuesdays   | Parish Hall   | Move it or Lose it!          | 11.00 - 12 noon  |
| Wednesdays | Parish Hall   | T'ai Chi                     | 10.00 - 11.00 am |
| "          | Parish Hall   | Art Group (from 9 September) | 2.00 - 4.30 pm   |
| "          | St. Leonard's | Birchpole Singers            | 7.15 - 9.15 pm   |
| Thursdays  | Parish Hall   | Pilates                      | 10.45 - 11.45 am |
| Fridays    | Parish Hall   | Bowls                        | 7.30 - 9.30 pm   |

See 'What's on' pages for more details of events

Check [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) for up to date information and any changes

## LOCAL NEWS AND NOTICES

### Can you help the newsletter to be more accessible?

Our transcription team is in need of new members.

It's a very worthwhile job enabling those with visual impairments in our parish to be able to enjoy the newsletter each month.

We have a team of readers who take it in turns to read out the newsletter.

The copy is supplied in paper format and it's just a few hours work, about once or twice a year, to read it out.



All you need is a mobile phone to record it.

Training and support is provided.

If you are interested, email

[newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org)



Or talk to Hetty, Lynne, or Dave or Lesley Bradford when you see us around the village.

### Herefordshire Council: help for Low-income households using oil and LPG THIS SCHEME IS STILL OPEN - ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

We want to remind you of the availability of this financial support and to offer help to any Parishioner who wants to apply. Contact YPGNS on 07885 525776 and leave a message and we will get back to you.

Eligibility for financial support through the fund is based on criteria aligned to the Council's existing Warm Homes Local Grant programme. Households receive funding covering a proportion of the difference in cost between their previous average bills and the current price:

| Total household gross income | % of increased bills paid                         |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| £36,000 or below             | 100%                                              |
| £36,000 - £50,000            | 50%                                               |
| More than £50,000            | None automatically paid, but exemptions available |

You can contact the Council for more information and to apply by email: [warm-homeslocalgrant@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:warm-homeslocalgrant@herefordshire.gov.uk) Residents who are digitally excluded can also access support and make an application by calling Customer Services on 01432 260000. More information is available online at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/community/help-with-the-cost-of-living/crisis-and-resilience-fund/>



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www.osteopathicclinic.co.uk





# YARPOLE COMMUNITY SHOP

**September 2026**



## **Prescriptions**

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board have terminated the arrangement which allowed Yarpole Good Neighbours Scheme to collect prescriptions from Kingsland pharmacy so that they could then be collected by patients from the shop. The pharmacy is now only allowed to release medication to an individual collecting on the patient's behalf on the condition that it is then handed directly to the patient. The shop is no longer allowed to store prescriptions for collection.

To help those few patients who are unable to collect prescriptions from Kingsland in person, and who do not have a relative or friend that they can call on, we have set up a "buddy" system comprising a few volunteers who are willing to collect on behalf of an individual. Please let Rowena know if you need the help of a "buddy" to collect your prescription and she will make appropriate arrangements.

## **New Bakery**

We have been delighted to receive a weekly delivery of the wonderful home baked breads and cakes from the Small Bakery in Orleton. Freshly baked on the day of delivery by Andreea, using only organic flour and no additives, preservatives or chemicals. Her signature focaccias are delicious - try them warmed in the oven for a light supper. As well as a wholemeal or granary loaf we also get her milk bread which is similar to a light brioche - absolutely delicious.

The doughnuts arrive warm and are filled with either a jam or chocolate or custard filling. Pre-orders for these are already being taken! Lime drizzle coconut cake slices, cherry bakewell and Battenberg have all been tried so far and her raspberry brioche frangipane rolls are a lovely treat with a coffee! We order different items each week so come along on a Tuesday and see what has arrived - or put a request in and we will order accordingly!

## **Post Office news**

We are pleased that we can now take orders for all currencies in the Post Office. Previously customers had to go online to order for all currencies except euros - however we can now do this for you to save you the bother.

The ordered currency will be available for collection the following morning after 11:00. Euros continue to be available for immediate purchase.

Jon & Rowena



# GALLERY CAFÉ

September 2026



**Tasty Tuesday will be on TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER at 1.00 pm**

**Look out for the menu**

Please book by 3.00 pm on Friday 4 September

Please inform us of any allergies; we are happy to cater for individual needs where possible. To book please email: [gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com](mailto:gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com), call the café during opening hours on 01568 780594 or drop in to see us in person. Booking sheet will be on the tall cupboard.

## **September at the Café**

We are looking forward to having Jackie back at the café

**And thank you for your support whilst Jackie has been away, especially to the volunteers.**

**Please see [yarpole.org](http://yarpole.org), Facebook and posters for updated opening information.**

*Meet friends, old and new, and enjoy our excellent cakes, scones and lunches – and the famous bacon rolls!*

The Gallery Café supports the work of St. Leonard's Management in caring for the church and keeping it open.

*Welcome to our new volunteers!*

*Please get in touch if you are interested in joining our team (email address below)*

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 - 2.00pm

Saturday 10.30 - 12.30 for brunch

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

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

Check [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) or <https://www.facebook.com/GalleryCafeYarpole/>

During September, please check opening hours before coming.

## **SHOP AND POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS**

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

**Tel: 01568 780148 Email: [yarpolshop@mail.com](mailto:yarpolshop@mail.com)**

**Website: [www.yarpole.com](http://www.yarpole.com)**



## CHURCH MATTERS

The current hot dry weather that we have been experiencing over the last 2 months has reminded me that as part of God's creation we are all dependent on nature and the planet. As our climate changes we are all beginning to feel the consequences of global warming. Drought and wild fires are no longer restricted to other countries far away. Also, it is becoming clear that it is not only humanity that is suffering the consequences of these changes, but also other creatures and habitats.

Earlier this week I was out walking my dog and found two baby hedgehogs on the footpath. They were struggling to move and there was no sign of their mother. I managed to take them to a rescue centre in Shobdon, but it made me realise how fragile their life is and how much our actions can impact on them and others in the world.

Whilst we should all do our bit to reduce our impact on the planet, the reality is that as individuals there is a limit to what we can do to change the world that we live in and the impact on others. However, what we can do is take time to reflect on what we say or do in our day-to-day lives and consider how our actions may impact on others, either for good or bad. We cannot make big changes in the world, but the little things we do and the love and kindness we show others will make a difference and if we all make a positive difference, that will amount to something bigger in the world.

*Dear Lord, help us to make the small steps to make a difference to those around us.*

*Help us to consider the impact of what we do on other people and the world we live in.*

*Help us to realise that we have a shared responsibility towards each other and towards your creation.*

*Lord as we take each small step on the path you have shown us, help us to work together so that those small steps become big strides towards good.*

*Amen*

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/>



It was lovely to see the church and bell tower decked out for the wedding in June. It looked wonderful and many people commented on how good a venue it was. We have already had an enquiry about next year, so hopefully this will become a more regular feature of our summers, assuming we can fit them around the usual services and events in the church.

The Gallery Café staff have kept things going brilliantly over the summer, and deserve our thanks for their efforts. The new coffee machine has been well received, despite the usual teething issues which we are working to resolve, and we look forward to more visitors enjoying a range of different coffees for many years to come. We are continuing the process of grant applications with a view to extending the kitchen area – hopefully we will have good news to share on this in due course.

At the request of various members of the community, we have replaced the paper towels in the church toilets with hand dryers. These should lower running costs, reduce waste, and improve the experience for all visitors and volunteers in the building.

We are investigating how best to improve the broadband and Wi-Fi access in the church. We have found that the current system struggles with increased numbers, especially at events such as *Made in HR6*, so if possible we would like to change to a fibre line into the church.

We do have a number of mobility aids available in the church, including wheelchairs and walking aids. There is a signing out sheet to use these; please ask in the shop for more details.

We are sorry to bid farewell to Gordon Ewing as a trustee, who has stepped down after two years of sterling service. We are very thankful for all he has done and wish him all the best for his next endeavours.

William Talbot Ponsonby - Trustee

## **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.**

**With flexible space, outstanding acoustics, an atmospheric setting and superb support from a team of volunteers, it is a unique location for you.**

**For booking enquiries email us at : [yarpolechurchbookings@gmail.com](mailto:yarpolechurchbookings@gmail.com)**

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## PARISH HALL

September 2026

### Can you help our Parish Hall and keep our fundraising events running?

Over the past six months, a few long-standing Committee members have stepped down, so we are now actively looking for new people to join us.

We know how much the local community values and enjoys Flicks & Food, along with the other fundraising events we run throughout the year. These events simply would not happen without the committee and the friends who help to organise them.

While we would be delighted to welcome new committee members, there are also plenty of ways to get involved without joining the committee. Help with setting up, clearing away, cooking and serving food would make a real difference. Our food offerings are a big part of Flicks, and we would especially welcome more volunteers with this.

We are always glad to hear fresh ideas and new input, so if you think you may be able to help in any way, please speak to one of the Committee: David Rackham, Ali Williams, Tony Kinsey, Julia Marshall, Jeremy Gray, Lynn Ashton or Amanda Hordern.

Parish Hall Committee

### Parish Hall future dates

3 October: Flicks & Food - The Colour Room

21 November: Flicks & Food - Addicted to Sheep

12 December: Christmas Ceilidh. More information nearer the date.

Parish Hall activities are listed on the events calendar (on page 11 this month).

To make a booking please contact Amanda Hordern on 01568 701996

Or email [parishhall@yarpole.org](mailto:parishhall@yarpole.org)

Or to book online go to [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) and click on 'Church & Parish Hall bookings'.

If you are interested in joining one of the classes please email Amanda, who will put you in contact with the class organiser.





## PARISH HALL

September 2026



Don't forget that books can be taken out from the Parish Hall Library whenever the building is open for an event. Just sign your book out in the register and there is no time limit. DVDs and blu-rays of recent Flicks films are also available to borrow.



### 200 Club winning numbers for July & August

July: 87: £50 119: £20 107: £10

August: 127: £50 48: £20 107: £10

A big thank you to everyone who has either renewed for a further year or joined us this year.

Subscriptions were down again this year. However we have taken the decision to keep the prizes as last year, with the top prize still £50, second prize is £20 and third prize is £10.

Jan Tandy – Lottery Administrator



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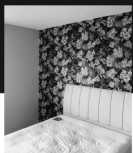
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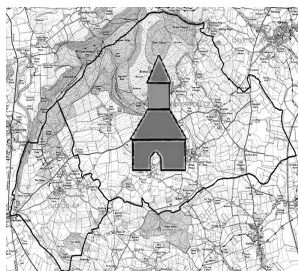
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## Yarpole Group Parish Council

As there was no scheduled meeting in August, this month's report refers to the July meeting.

The Parish Council was pleased to welcome Cllr Peter de Groot who was co-opted as the ninth member of YGPC. One vacancy remains. Would you be interested? Please be in touch for further information. Why would you join? To represent local views and have a say in decisions that affect the parish.

Since the July meeting, the Tree Warden, Tim Ware, has resigned his voluntary position advising the Parish Council on tree related issues. He is thanked for his dedication, and for his useful reports. Cllr Hurcomb explained to members that, unlike planning applications, applications for works to trees in the Conservation Area cannot be refused. Information from [planningportal.co.uk](http://planningportal.co.uk). *The local authority can reply by providing a Tree Preservation Order or by allowing the work to go ahead. As it is not an application for consent, it cannot be refused or accepted with conditions.*

Reflecting on the year to date, the Parish Council has held an Annual Parish Meeting, providing an opportunity for residents to raise matters of interest/concern; responded to planning applications and consultations; installed slabs beneath the picnic table at the Community Meadow; bought replacement battery packs and pads for defibrillators at the Church and Parish Hall; arranged drainage works and improvements to Public Rights of Way using grants from Herefordshire Council (see below); completed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) having gone through an Internal Audit, an independent check of council systems, controls and procedures, and an External Audit, checking the AGAR and providing external assurance that it has been properly prepared.

Discussions over the next six or seven months are likely to include consideration of a professional report on the playground in the Community Meadow; planning the 2027/28 work schedules for the Lengthsman, including road sweeping, verge mowing and drainage days; agreeing the Meadow's grounds maintenance programme; and examining the draft Budget ahead of setting the Precept at the December meeting.

**Come along, have your say during the public session, and listen to the debate.**

Drainage. Two new assets will be installed, a) a grip and concrete surround to take water into a ditch rather than down the C1043 towards the poultry houses and b) a gully surround being installed on Leys Lane.

Public Rights of Way (PROW). Three improvements have been agreed a) build up an area on the YP7 to make it less slippery, b) replace a stile with a gate on the YP4 at Bircher, to improve accessibility and c) replace bridge deck boards on the LK11. Two concerns mentioned to Herefordshire Council a) crops preventing access to the Right of Way beyond the damaged bridge (LK11) and steps needed from the C1040/B4362 to LK14A. A map showing paths <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/travel-transport/highways-public-rights-way-map>. Thanks are due to the Parish Footpaths Officer, David Teale, for his assistance.

Parish Council meetings are scheduled for 1 September, 6 October, 3 November, and 1 December, all at 7pm in Yarpole Parish Hall. Residents are encouraged to attend. To receive a copy of the agenda, subscribe for updates on the website [www.yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk).

Maggie Brown, Clerk. [clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
24

It feels like an age since I last wrote for the Parishioner but it was only June! Since then we have enjoyed exceptionally warm weather and I am sure, like me, you have all been desperately trying to keep the garden alive during the last few months. The warm weather has many perks but one of my favourites is certainly that the number of potholes decreases dramatically. That also makes it the perfect time to get on top of the road repairs and I have spent many hours out and about reporting defects to try and ensure our roads reach the winter (and the inevitable rains to come) in the best possible shape.

In that spirit I am pleased that the much anticipated surface dressing work in Bircher has finally been scheduled for October. I have been in touch with a number of residents there who have asked for additional curbing and improvements to the drainage which I will try and get included with the works scheme. Whilst we are talking about Bircher, I am aware that both the cattlegrids on to Bircher Common (Welshman's Lane and Leys Lane) require emptying and both of these have been reported to the Council and I am anticipating works will occur soon if they have not already happened by the time you read this.

Since I last wrote, the new public realm contract with M Group Highways has started and is now in its third month. Whilst I am the first to admit there have been a few teething problems, these have been addressed as and when they have arisen and I have seen first hand how the quality of the pothole repairs has improved (look out for square patches and tar edges). One of the teething problems we have experienced was around litter bin and dog poo bin emptying. This was an issue in Yarpole with the bin near the church overflowing and unemptied with a wedding on the horizon. Thanks to the Parish Council, a diligent local resident and myself we managed to co-ordinate the bin being emptied prior to the happy day although the argument with Herefordshire over who pays continues.

In my last article I said that one of my priorities would be seeking to raise (and improve) the mobile phone signal in Yarpole and the surrounding area. Since then the Cabinet Member for Finance has met with Worcestershire County Council Officers who have mapped the signal blackspots in Herefordshire and Worcestershire and I am pleased to say they have some really smart ideas on how we can improve the situation in Herefordshire. I will keep pressing for Yarpole to be included in any activity to come.

Our new Chief Executive, Paul Satoor, has hit the ground running and he is currently visiting each of the wards in Herefordshire (there are 53). I am looking forward to driving him around Bircher Ward and I will be sure to make a stop at St. Leonards for him to see what a fabulous community initiative it is.

As always if you have any concerns, issues or would just like a chat then please do get in touch.

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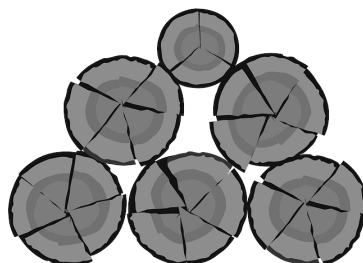
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Haven't we had a wonderful summer! We've had the sharing platters that we served at lunchtime and on Monday and Thursday evenings, going down a treat in the sunshine.

Why not pop down the pub and see what's in store this month?

After securing a new fish supplier we're hoping that our fish and chips night might be a regular event.

We have been enjoying getting lots of new real ales at the bar; if you've got a favourite brew why not contact us and let us know and we'll see if we can get some in?

Just remember, we are open six days a week, closed on a Wednesday, The kitchen does not cook on Tuesday.

Feel free to pop by and ask about our upcoming menus or what we are cooking on Sunday.

Thank you to everybody that has shown up and supported us in our new venture. It is greatly appreciated.

See you soon!

Michelle and Blaine

## Opening times

**Monday** – 4pm till 10pm.

**Tuesday** – 4pm till 10pm. Kitchen closed.

**Wednesday** – closed.

**Thursday** – 4pm till 10pm.

**Friday** – 12 midday till 10pm.

**Saturday** – 12 midday till 10pm.

**Sunday** – 12 midday till 10pm.

**For bookings or any queries please contact us on 01568 601110.** The sharing platter does not need booking, but please book for Friday & Saturday evenings and Sunday lunch. Phone to check hours.



**The Mortimer Community Benefit Society**  
**Special Members' Meeting**  
**Thursday, 15 October at 7.00pm at Yarpole Parish Hall.**

We have previously held our Annual Members' Meeting in October, however, at last year's AGM, members agreed to change our financial year-end from 30 June to 30 December. As a result, we do not yet have completed accounts for members to approve, so our Annual Members' Meeting will now take place in late February or early March, when the accounts will be available.

In the meantime, so much has been happening that we feel it is important to update our members. The Bell continues to go from strength to strength under the excellent stewardship of Michelle and Blaine. As the owners of the Bell at Yarpole, you have helped create a thriving community pub that we can all be proud of.

The committee has been able to step back from the day-to-day running of the business, allowing us to focus on our role as custodians of the building and ensuring its long-term future. There are still projects ahead of us, including giving the outside of the building the fresh coat of paint it now needs.

Our financial position remains stable. We are delighted to be able to repay the Shop loan in full in November, and we continue to make regular repayments to Border Oak. This will be our only remaining loan and is on track to be fully repaid in 2027. At the meeting we will present draft financial figures to date.

The meeting is open to everyone, and we hope as many members as possible will attend. Members will also be asked to approve the committee for the coming year. Should you have any questions for the Board please email them to me at [chairman@themortimercbs.org](mailto:chairman@themortimercbs.org)

Several long-serving committee members, including myself as Chairman, will be standing down. This presents an excellent opportunity for new people to help shape the future of the Bell. To meet our legal responsibilities, we must have a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, together with at least three other committed committee members. Without this team, we will not be able to continue managing the building and its grounds on behalf of the community. If you have ever thought about getting more involved, now is the perfect time. Fresh ideas and new volunteers will help ensure the Bell continues to flourish for many years to come.

We would also warmly welcome newcomers to the village to become shareholders. By investing a minimum of £100, you can become part-owner of this unique community asset and help secure its future. We would love it if you invested more; up to a maximum of £10,000. Simply complete the online application form at [www.mortimercbs.org](http://www.mortimercbs.org).

Whether you have questions, ideas, or simply want to hear how the Bell is progressing, we would be delighted to see you at the **Special Members' Meeting on Thursday, 15 October at 7.00 pm.**

**Your Pub. Your Community. Your Future. We hope to see you there.**

Julian Stokes

# MORTIMER MEDICAL PRACTICE

## Patients' Participation Group (PPG) September 2026

### Something a little different this month –

Did you know Mortimer Medical Practice supports Queenswood Park Run?

Parkrun is a free, community event where you can walk, jog, volunteer or spectate. Parkrun is 5K and takes place at 9am every Saturday morning. It is positive, welcoming and inclusive;

there is no time limit and no one finishes last.

It takes place at Queenswood Country Park & Arboretum, Dinmore Hill. The event is free but you do have to pay £1 to park, although you can stay as long as you like! Many have coffee in the café afterwards.

It's not a race, you complete the two lap course, through the woods at your pace, supported by marshals along the way. They have 'park walkers' that you can walk with if you want some one to chat to along the way. There is a welcome briefing before the start.

More information available at <https://www.parkrun.com/> or you can give me a call. I don't go every week but have completed a few parkruns.

### And a little bit of news from the practice:

Gill Yip is the interim Practice manager.

Charlotte Goodwin returns to the nursing team.

Dr Corbett has now retired.

The practice now has just 2 partners (Dr Kemp and Dr Cadman-Davis). Dr Kemp is now the senior partner. A new staffing structure is being looked at.

Anne O'Brien 07581 402274 [anne.ppg@yahoo.com](mailto:anne.ppg@yahoo.com)



## News from the Leominster Area Branch

### Insect Trails Meeting on the Grange

A group of us went exploring through the community orchard and into the Priory Church ground searching for bugs. Our member Martha had designed an illustrated identification guide with fun facts for us.

- Did you know that Insects make up about 90% of all species of animals on the planet, with an estimated 10 billion insects for every human alive?
- The total weight of all insects is approximately 70 times more than all the people on Earth!

Everyone enjoyed the experience and despite a windy day we saw a lot of butterflies and moths, plus ladybird larvae on leaves. We look forward to a similar expedition around Grange Court searching for moths on September 4.

Find more information on our Facebook page (Leominster Area Branch | HWT) or email [leominsterbranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk](mailto:leominsterbranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk)

Diana Emes - Communication Secretary

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**The Help with Heating Scheme is still open – see our article on page 12**

### WHAT'S ON AT 4Cs?

Join us on the 4th Friday of each month at 11.00 for coffee, (or tea) cake, chat and company in the Parish Hall.

Dates coming up....

September 25...Let's Play BEETLE!

October 23rd...Cerebral Palsy...a presentation by a member of ECHO

November 27th...The history of Tartan...by Gordon and Sandy Ewing

December 11th...Christmas event

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### MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

MIOLI continues apace. Join us on Tuesdays at 11.00, Parish Hall as usual.

Val Ainsworth

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# Yarpole Men's Shed



## MEN WANTED

**To join us in our community projects, club administration and social activities.  
It's not only about DIY.**

Although the Men's Shed is recognised locally for its work on community projects our real purpose is to provide a companionable space for men to get together, chat, socialise and support each other. Our members come from a wide variety of backgrounds and their interests are many and varied, so this month we thought it might be useful to pass on a few hints and tips on topics you may not expect from us!

### **The many uses of white vinegar:**

A versatile product around the house. In the washing machine try replacing fabric softener with white vinegar. Just put the same amount of white vinegar in the fabric softener compartment and wash as usual; it can enhance the whites and soften the clothes. Also, for window cleaning it can bring glass up clean and streak free when diluted one to one with water.

### **Candle wax:**

Got a sticky drawer runner? Rub candle wax on the runner and it should slide more easily. Another use (this is a DIY tip) is to coat the threads of screws with candle wax before screwing into hard wooden surfaces; it will make the screws easier to put in.

### **Cooking oil and sugar:**

If you've got paint or stubborn grease on your hands a little cooking oil mixed with sugar rubbed into your hands until the paint or grease is removed will often do the trick. Wash and rinse hands afterwards and apply some hand cream.

We're planning an Open Day at The Shed in October with a table-top sale of unwanted tools and equipment. If you have any DIY questions or possibly want some more household hints and tips, look out for the October issue of The Parishioner. We're not only about DIY!

**Get in touch with us on email:** [yarpoleshed@gmail.com](mailto:yarpoleshed@gmail.com)

**Visit us at our Shed:** Our Shed, located behind The Bell, is currently open every Wednesday from 10.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. 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.

Trevor Edwards



# THE CURIOUS GARDENER

## Trying something new

Isn't it fun when you have success with a plant you've never tried before?

Say 'foxglove' and I expect we all think of the wild flower that colonises woodland clearings. Years ago I tried growing an 'improved' cultivated version, but I wasn't impressed. The individual flowers were set all round the stem and were bigger and more closely packed together than the wild version. The result looked like a blimp: inflated, fat and graceless. Since then I have tried several other species of foxgloves, but never felt that they really earned their place in the garden. Until now.



Last year I sowed some seeds of *Digitalis ferruginea*. It's native to southern and eastern Europe and is commonly known as the 'rusty foxglove'. Nothing happened for quite a while, and eventually just a single seedling appeared. It didn't seem in any great rush to get bigger, so I didn't plant it out for eighteen months or so. But when I finally put it in the ground it didn't waste any more time. It swiftly made a big rosette of large, dark green, shiny leaves that were so handsome I began to think that even if it didn't flower it would still be worth having. But then the flower spike began to develop. Up, up it went until it was taller than me. It paused for a while until the flower buds were ready – and then the show started.

The individual flowers were small, but tightly packed all round the stem. Each little bell was cream on the outside, and on the inside a deep honey colour finely veined in dark red. The bells opened from the bottom of the spike upwards, and when the main spike had almost finished the subsidiary spikes started opening, prolonging the display. The bees loved it too. We had some damaging winds while it was in flower, but the spike just bent with the wind and then sprang back upright again. What an absolute cracker! I don't know whether it will prove truly perennial, or whether it will exhaust itself after flowering and not come back next year, but either way I shall be saving some seed so that in future I can enjoy a whole clump of them. I think this is one plant I don't want to be without.

Sue Russell



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## ORLETON AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB



### A.G.M. & Bring and Share Supper

Our A.G.M. was held before our annual Bring and Share meal on July 28. There were delicious contributions from members, the best yet. Thank you to everyone who contributed food.

The AGM minutes can be read on our website.

In August we held our 45th Annual Show. This has been the most challenging growing season in our history but members still geared up and we had a very successful show. A report will be forthcoming next month.

On Tuesday 29 September Bill Laws will be giving a talk entitled

**'Apples, pears and the Herefordshire Pomona'.**

At 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](http://www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk)



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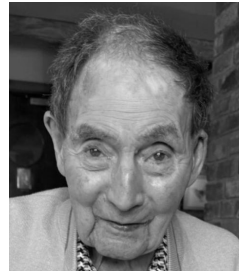
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# Voices from the Village: Ian Ramsay

## Part 2: Harvest time

Harvest was a big event when Ian lived at Carse Grey, especially during World War II, when food was rationed. Every scrap of land on the estate was ploughed up and civilians were encouraged to help in harvesting. Here, in Ian's own words, is an idea of some of the crops grown near his Scottish home:



Potatoes were hand sown mainly by women and teenage girls. They walked in prepared drills wearing a jute apron filled with seed potatoes and planting a single potato with each step, a foot apart. Work started at 8am and finished at 5pm, with breaks at 11am, 1–2 pm and 3pm. Only the rain would stop them working.

Gathering in the potato crop each autumn was achieved by a major effort from mainly the local housewives and their children. Schools were given extra holidays to help with the potato lifting. Imagine you are 10 or 12 years of age. You are standing in a dimly lit room and it is 6am. The window glass is crystallised with ice, you have a balaclava over your face plus a leather helmet over your head. You're wearing a vest and then a shirt, a pullover and coat, not to forget a thick sheet of brown paper for extra insulation. Add in two pairs of trousers tied at the ankles to keep the heat in and to top it off, a coat and mittens – the coat sleeves tied at the wrists to keep the heat in.

Your mother appears. She too is dressed up for winter in coat, hat, scarf and gloves. "It's time to go," she says, and you follow her outside to where the cold condenses your breath into clouds of vapour. A lorry is waiting, and you and Mother climb aboard, joining the others on their way to the potato farm.

On first arrival in a field the farmer's foreman would count the number of pickers he had, then divide the length of the field by the number of workers then divide the field into bits. Adults got large bits and children, like me, got half bits. The size of the bits were determined by the size of the field. Each bit was allocated a number of creals, shallow baskets woven from cane or willow. The beginning and end of your bit was determined by the foreman and marked by thin branches he had cut from a hedge.

The potato digger was hooked on to a tractor and driven down the furrows. A wheel on the digger rotated, casting the potatoes onto the bits. Then we began putting the potatoes into the creals as fast as we could, aiming to finish clearing our patch before a ploughman with a horse and cart came round to collect your creals and empty them into the cart. Then we might get a few minutes to rest before the tractor reappeared, creeping slowly towards you and it all began again. At one point when I was struggling to keep up, the lady on the bit behind me said. "Sing and potatoes will jump into the creals by themselves." From then on when things felt difficult, I started singing.

Once all the potato drills had been cleared the final act was to harrow the field to rake up the potatoes that had been missed by the pickers. We lined up shoulder to shoulder and, with jute sacks around our waists, we walked behind the harrows picking up the exposed crop.

There was time off school to help to bring in the raspberry and strawberry crops too. Mother took me with her to pick “raspbs” but not to harvest the strawberries – too much bending down for her. Raspberries were much easier than picking potatoes. We came and went as we liked as we were paid by the weight. Mum and I had a bucket each hung onto our waist by the handle so as you could pick rasps with both hands. When the bucket was full we took it to the top of the field where the bucket was weighed, and we were paid so much per pound. A common way of cheating was to put stones in the bottom of the bucket or in some cases boys would pee into the buckets to make them heavier. They were destined for Robinsons, to be made into jam. I doubt whether such practices would go on today!

My father often helped the local farmer at grain harvest time. The corn was cut by a reaper-binder, this machine, drawn by a horse or a tractor, had a low level blade several feet long that cut the corn. The corn fell onto a conveyor belt, which carried it into the binder where it was tied up into sheaves. These were then stood up and placed against each other, forming stooks.

Threshing was a major operation. The machine itself was about the size of a small house and powered by a steam engine. As a child, I remember seeing one standing in the corner of the field next to our house. It was all black with a tall chimney puffing out smoke. High up on the side close to the driver’s cab was a large rotating fly wheel, with a drive belt that powered the threshing machine. I can see my father now, a slim figure with his sleeves rolled up and with a hay fork lifting the sheaves over his head and dropping them into the top end of the threshing machine. There the seed and the chaff were separated and the straw was tied into rectangular bales.

But harvesting was not all work. There was a break at 11 o’clock, with tea from a thermos and a prepacked snack. Lunch, from 1– 2pm, meant more tea and sandwiches. However, for kids like me the hour break was playtime, and what better place to play than in the farm buildings? There was always hay and straw to jump into, while running through the stables was a thrill in itself – you never knew if one of the horses might lash out with their hooves.



I gave myself a knock on the head when I was playing around a farm cart. The cart was parked with the shafts up in the air, I grabbed the leather belt which was hanging down from the shaft, my weight pulled the cart down clipping my head as it did so. But no real harm was done. One of my playmates helped me up and we ran off to join the others who were getting ready to go back to work.



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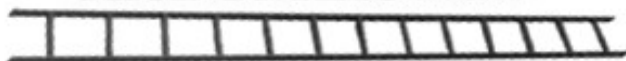
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# Bircher Sunday School



Back row, left to right:  
Anne Cradduck, Margaret Richards (Bircher), Diane Griffiths, Eileen Cresswell, Mary Adams, Chris Richards (Bircher Common).

Middle row, left to right:  
Mary McLean, Janet Niblett, Gillian Cradduck, Brian Price, ?, Mary Marpole.

Front row, left to right:  
Margaret Marpole, Pauline Niblett, Brian Adams, Pamela Marpole

A Sunday School was established in Yarpole in 1834, teaching 45 girls alongside the Croft and Yarpole National School. The Primitive Methodist Chapel in Bircher opened for worship in 1841 and then often hosted the Sunday School. It was converted into a private residence in the 1990s. This photo was taken in 1958. We have tried to identify the children as accurately as possible, but if you spot any errors or have more information to add, please let us know.

Thanks to Yarpole Living History for permission to reproduce the photo, and to Gilly Cradduck, Frances Preece and Eileen Cresswell for helping to identify the children and teacher in the photograph.



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## **NOTES - The development of Community Projects at St. Leonard's**

### 1980s

1. A man from Green Lane Crescent, who made violins in his garden shed, asked if his son's string quartet could give a concert in St. Leonard's. It was a success and other requests for music/drama followed.

2. Floor unsafe (wet-rot); it was replaced by concrete & carpet and the pews became moveable. All work completed by twenty volunteers with equipment on loan from local builders.

3. Pews at the west end also had wet-rot, so the area now occupied by the shop was curtained off as a space for exhibitions, meetings and music/choir rehearsals etc.

4. Heating system upgraded and new parish hall completed with an understanding that routine bookings (yoga, whist drives, bowling, play group etc) went to the hall and concerts, drama, long-term exhibitions to St. Leonard's.

### 1990s

Steady increase in use for both venues.

### 2002/3

The County Council organized a 10 year development plan. Consultations took place in the Parish Hall in Lucton and St. Leonard's where there was a ten-day display with plans and models. The published plan contained a recommendation that extended use should be made of St. Leonard's.

### 2004

The owner of the shop and post office gave six months notice that it would close. A public meeting agreed to set up a community co-op with financial support from the County Council. A temporary shop was opened in a portacabin in The Bell car-park.

### 2005

The shop committee agreed to assess 10 potential permanent sites. Only 2 were available and suitable – a) a new build on a field in the centre of the village and b) convert the west-end of St. Leonard's. The Church Council were already discussing an upgrade for the Church – better lighting, heating, seating. Grants were not available for single use community assets, so plans were submitted for converting the West-end of the Church.

### 2006/7

There was opposition from some conservation groups but strong support from English Heritage and the Church at both local and national level. At no stage was there any threat of closure. On the advice of Hereford Diocese Community Funding and Partnership Office a project was set up with representatives from all Parish Organisations: they suggested that this committee was not led by church officials in order to maximise a sense of community ownership. There was an 85% positive response to a questionnaire supervised by the local authority.

### 2008

The financial crash made grant applications very difficult: eventually £180,000 was raised, enabling specifications to be drafted and contracts awarded. Work started in January 2009 involving insulating floor & ceiling / sustainable heating / building the shop & staircase to mezzanine. Replacing the limewash to the walls (removed by Victorians) gave the building a bright, welcoming feel.

### 2009

The shop / post office opened in September. St. Leonard's could then serve the community by being an integrated place of worship, a venue for exhibitions and events, a café and a shop / post office.

A.S. Thompson, September 2019



Thanks to the following for the photos on this page:

Sandy Ewing - tower at Croft Castle

Keith Smith - Red Admiral and Comma butterflies

Brian North - Brown hare , Croft Ambrey

# Croft with Yarpole and Lucton Parish Church Services for September and October 2026



| Date        | Service                                                  | Church             | Time           |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Sept</b> |                                                          |                    |                |
| Wed 2       | Be Still                                                 | Yarpole            | 17.30          |
| Sun 6       | Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer                     | Croft              | 09.30          |
| Sun 13      | Holy Communion Common Worship                            | Yarpole            | 09.30          |
| Mon 14      | Café Church                                              | Yarpole            | 19.30          |
| Sun 20      | Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer<br>Celtic Worship   | Yarpole<br>Yarpole | 08.30<br>16.30 |
| Sun 27      | Lay led service                                          | Yarpole            | 09.30          |
| Mon 28      | Café Church                                              | Yarpole            | 19.30          |
|             |                                                          |                    |                |
| <b>Oct</b>  |                                                          |                    |                |
| Sun 4       | Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer                     | Croft              | 09.30          |
| Wed 7       | Be Still                                                 | Yarpole            | 17.30          |
| Sun 11      | Holy Communion Common Worship                            | Yarpole            | 09.30          |
| Mon 12      | Café Church                                              | Yarpole            | 19.30          |
| Sun 18      | Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer<br>Harvest Festival | Yarpole<br>Yarpole | 08.30<br>15.00 |
| Sun 25      | Lay led service                                          | Yarpole            | 09.30          |
| Mon 26      | Café Church                                              | Yarpole            | 19.30          |

**Anyone wishing to contact a priest please phone or email:**

**Rev. Matthew Burns on 01568 614399, [teamvicarwest@leominsterteam.org.uk](mailto:teamvicarwest@leominsterteam.org.uk)**

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