Pontesbury ONLINE



February 2021 Issue no. 272

Newsletter

Community Good Neighbours, Pontesbury and Rea Valley

February 2021 update

We currently have over 40 volunteers being trained and getting involved in helping around the community which is a great help during these difficult times. Don't forget to contact us if you would benefit from some help with shopping/prescription deliveries, especially if you are shielding. You can contact us on 07944891953, by email or now through our facebook site (see web address above). Please also get in touch if you are interested in volunteering. We are also looking for someone to help with administration and some additional members for the Steering group who co-ordinate the project.

Thank you as always to all of our local funders – Pontesbury Cricket Club, Pontesbury Charity, Pontesbury, Minsterley & Hanwood parish councils, Allcare, Severn Rotary, St George's Church, and the many individuals within the community.

Support for Vulnerable Households

For many Shropshire residents, the ongoing pandemic poses challenges that stretch beyond a reduction in the freedoms that we're accustomed to, and the obvious risk to health. The financial implications of the virus continue to impose difficulties and hardship across the county. Therefore, the recently established COVID Winter Grant scheme will go a long way to ensuring that families don't go hungry this winter.

There is a range of support available including the Local Support and Prevention Fund (LSPF) and the Local Authority Emergency Grant for Food and Essential Supplies. Families and individuals who are struggling and would like to access help and support can contact the council's Welfare Support Team on 0345 678 9028.

Work, Skill, Money Guide

Shropshire Council have recently developed a guide which aims to support residents with matters concerning Work, Skills and Money. The guide covers the whole cycle of job loss, financial support, housing, and upskilling for people who are looking for work. The guide can be located via the following link – https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus (Please copy and paste link.)

Community Good Neighbours

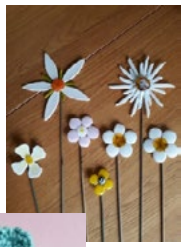
Please note: Copy and Paste links where advised. *Editor*

During the current lockdown the Library is running a Ready Reads (Click & Collect) service, although the building is closed to the public. More information about this can be found on the Shropshire Library Service website www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries. The building continues to provide support for the Community Good Neighbours Scheme Pontesbury and Rea Valley (as a postal address and for DBS checks for volunteers) and as a venue for St Barnabas debt advice sessions. The Friends of Pontesbury Library (FoPL) library lottery is open again for business along with some exciting online entertainment. Check out the FoPL website for more information. https://pontesburylibrary.co.uk





the PAVILION
Community Hub and Library
Serving Pontesbury and the wider Rea Valley communities





During the Friends of Pontesbury Library/St George's Christmas trail, the Pavilion 'Secret Garden' which had been beautifully decorated, was open for visitors. A big thank you to everyone involved. We are currently inviting people to join our 'Spring Blossoms in the Pavilion Secret Garden' community art project and make flowers, insects, birds, bees etc. to decorate the garden for when we can open the building again in Spring. Check out the Pavilion website www.pontesburypavilion.co.uk for ideas of what to make and more information about how you can get involved. *FoPL*

Closing date for copy for the **March** edition is **Feb 10th** (please include a contact phone number)
Email contributions to **pontesburynewsletter@gmail.com** or hand in at the Post Office.
Advertisers – See inside for details of how to place your ad.

Getting Support in Pontesbury

Community Good Neighbours, Pontesbury and Rea Valley *Tel: 07944 891953*	**General** **Get in touch with a local Good Neighbour for a friendly chat, small errands and support to stay active and connected within the community. Phone messages will be listened to Mon,Wed and Fri 10am-2pm**
Pontesbury Community and Care Co-ordinator *h.tazewell@nhs.net*	**Assistance for Pontesbury patients of all ages in need of help, support and advice by signposting to other useful services.**
Coronavirus Helpline *0345 678 9028*	**Covid-19** Shropshire Council helpline for all non-health COVID related enquiries.
Shrewsbury Food Hub Shrewsburyfoodhub.org.uk	Surplus food share tables across Shrewsbury
Shrewsbury Food Bank *01743 343336*	Food parcels, debt advice, returning to work, digital inclusion, lifeskills. Referral needed.
	Money, Utilities
Local Support & Prevention Fund *0345 678 9078*	Council helpline which can help with essential living costs such as food, housing and bills.
Citizens Advice Shropshire *0344 499 1100* *Universal Credit Helpline 0800 144 8444*	Confidential advice and help to solve problems with debt, benefits, housing, legal matters & employment. Need help claiming Universal Credit? Call their dedicated Help to Claim helpline.
Keep Shropshire Warm *0800 112 3743*	Advice and grants for people struggling with heating and energy bills
Shropshire Council Housing Support *0345 678 9005*	**Housing** Support on all housing matters particularly rentals and homelessness.
Severnside Housing *0300 300 0059*	Housing association. Advisors may also be able to help with debt, employment and benefits.
NHS Referrals & Advice Line *0800 196 4501*	**Mental Health, Drugs & Alcohol** For local mental health services
MIND helpline *01743 368647*	Mental health support
Shropshire Recovery Partnership *01743 294700*	Drugs and alcohol support
Shropshire Rural Support *0300 123 2825*	Mental health support for farmers and the rural community
Samaritans *116 123*	Free 24/7 helpline
Shropshire Domestic Abuse Helpline *0300 303 1191*	**Families and Relationships** Support for anyone suffering from domestic violence
West Mercia Women's Aid *0800 783 1359*	24hr helpline for women and children suffering from domestic violence.
Crossroads Together *01743 341995*	Wide range of support for unpaid carers.
Age UK Shropshire Telford and Wrekin *01743 233123*	Confidential advice for older people, their families and carers.



More Sources of Support

Financial support for businesses during coronavirus – Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Public Health England. You can find out more details about the government's support for businesses through this website: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19

If you are in need of some help with food please either contact the **Community Good Neighbour's Scheme** (see details below) or **Shrewsbury Foodbank** who offer a wide range of support including help with food. The **FOOD BANK AT BARNABAS IS OPEN**: Monday, Tuesday and Friday (not open on Bank Holidays) 9.30am – 12pm. Tel: 01743 343336 / 0742 174 5857.

https://www.barnabascommunityprojects.org/shrewsburyfoodbank also lists other support available, such as help with cooking, budgeting and employment.

https://www.shropshirelarder.org.uk/ also lists support available to you.

Community Good Neighbours, Pontesbury and Rea Valley

If you're alone, elderly or isolated our local volunteers can help with a friendly chat over the phone, collecting your prescription or shopping. Do give us a call on 07944 891 953 and leave your name and number!

You can also follow or contact us on:
Facebook: Goodneigbourspontesbury.org.uk
Website: www.goodneighbourspontesbury.org.uk
Email: help@goodneighbourspontesbury.org.uk

COME JOIN US

Macmillan Cancer Online, Free Living Well At Home Sessions! You Are Invited!

Following on from previous community based Living Well Sessions, The Macmillan Living With and Beyond Cancer Team would like to invite you to join us at one of our online Living Well at Home Sessions talking about four main concerns: Fatigue, Physical Activity, Nutrition and Emotional Wellbeing.

Would you like to know more about these subjects?

Would you like to and gain ideas on how you can self-manage these topics?

To ensure there is enough time to discuss the topics, they have been split in to two separate sessions:

Fatigue and Physical Activity
Thursday 11th February. 10:30 – 12:00
Monday 22nd February. 10:30 – 12:00

Nutrition and Emotional Wellbeing
Friday 12th February. 10:30 – 12:00
Wednesday 24th February. 10:30 – 12:00

NB: Please note that on occasion sessions have slightly overrun when participants have been sharing lots of ideas; you may leave the session at any time.

The session uses Microsoft Teams Video Call which is free, secure and protects your privacy.

To take part in the session, you will need:

- An email address
- A smart phone, tablet or laptop with sound and visuals via a camera

You can book on to as many sessions as you wish via the LWBC Team! Simply email or phone to get booked on! We will send you simple instruction and call you before the session to help you take part.

- Email: sath.lwbc@nhs.net
- Telephone: Leah Morgan or Edith Macalister 01743 492 424

During COVID-19, like most services, we have had to change the way we practice but we would like to support you as much as possible and we hope these sessions are a way in which we can do that.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!

More information about the Living With and Beyond Cancer Programme and our Living Well Videos are available at: www.sath.nhs.uk/livingwell



Shropshire Council's Covid-19 Helpline
0345 6789 028
This phoneline is designed to receive enquiries and concerns associated with Covid-19, of a non-medical nature.

Bereavement Support for Shropshire Residents
Call 0345 678 9028

A new service has been launched to support people who are experiencing and suffering from bereavement and loss. The offer is open to any Shropshire resident who has been bereaved by either a recent death or previous loss. The Bereavement Support Service is operated by Shropshire Council and community voluntary partners Samaritans, CRUSE, Severn Hospice and Crane Quality Counselling. The service can be accessed through self-referral by calling 0345 678 9028.

Bereavement Support Service

'Mobilise' carers support

A short blog on dealing with change and uncertainty:
https://bit.ly/323TIX0
A guide to some of the routines that helped us get through Lockdown (Pt 1):
https://bit.ly/324iJS6
A basic 'emergency plan' to get you started:
https://bit.ly/382F4DI
James Townsend,
CEO and Co-Founder, Mobilise
james@mobiliseonline.co.uk
07816 779635

Free online mental health support for 14-25 year olds

Whether it's loss of routine, increased anxiety, or stress at home, we're supporting young people through FREE video therapy sessions (6pm – 12am).

Email: mhteam@lyfeproof.co.uk
Tel: 0121 622 3603,
TEXT: 07395 629297
twitter/facebook/instagram
@lyfeproofUK

Dementia Support in Pontesbury

When someone is diagnosed with dementia there are questions, concerns and situations that arise about what to do, how to understand the condition, and where to find answers and support.
The Alzheimer's Society have local Dementia Advisers who provide personalised one-to-one support for those in Shropshire with a diagnosis of dementia, their family and carers.
If you want to talk with them and have their support then call the Dementia Connect Supportline on 0333 150 3456.

On a low budget? Want to save money?

SHROPSHIRE LARDER

Visit *shropshirelarder.org.uk*
to find out about low cost or free food and help with debt, benefits, housing and more in Shropshire

Support for carers - also see above

Shropshire Council have recently launched a new partnership with Mobilise online to provide additional support for carers in Shropshire.

Mobilise, the online community created 'by carers, for carers', will now offer its range of free online support to Shropshire residents with caring roles. Mobilise support includes regular contact through emails, 'virtual cuppas' and even face-to face coaching sessions, also run virtually.

Here is the link to the service: https://www.mobiliseonline.co.uk/shropshire – we encourage you to take a look at what support is available, share the link with carers you know and send any thoughts on the service to Margarete Davies, Carer Lead, Community Partnerships, Shropshire Council Margarete.Davies@shropshire.gov.uk



Free transport to vaccine appointments

Longmynd Travel is offering free transport for anyone over 70 or in a vulnerable group who needs help getting to their Covid-19 vaccine appointment.

Once you have booked a date and time for your vaccine appointment, please call Val on **01743 861999** to book your free transport.

Shropshire Council is also providing free transport https://newsroom.shropshire.gov.uk/2021/01/coronavirus-free-transport-to-help-shropshire-residents-get-vaccinations/



Pontesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan update

Soon the Steering Group will be enlisting the help of a planning consultant to develop the emerging policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

However we still need the help of the community to support policies relating to housing design, movement about the Parish, small amenity spaces, tourist development and natural and built heritage assets.

Your views and knowledge of these matters are essential in order to build up the evidence in support of proposed policies and are a necessary requirement for a valid Neighbourhood Plan. It will be some years before we again have this opportunity to influence local development. Planning permission is usually required for the development of land or buildings and whether it is given or withheld depends in no small measure on the contents of the Shropshire Local Plan and the Pontesbury Neighbournood Plan. So if you treasure a view, a piece of land, a local style of architecture, footpath, hedgerow or building please let us know via the Clerk as soon as possible. clerk@pontesburypc.org.uk

Here is an example to set you thinking: a national conservation body has recommended that the setting and views of St. George's Church should be protected as it is a prominent historic landmark with impressive architecture Don't miss this opportunity to give us your thoughts!



The 2021 Census is coming soon

The census is a snapshot of our country, its people and their lives that takes place every 10 years and the next one is on the 21st March. The census in England and Wales is conducted by the independent Office for National Statistics.

The census is important for Shropshire. This is a largely rural county of 1200 square miles with a widely dispersed population and a variety of industries which means there are challenges for the council when planning services and allocating funding. The accuracy of the information that the census provides is crucial to ensuring that we all have schools of the right size, doctors surgeries in the right place and the transport infrastructure that we need to get to work.

The importance of the census was highlighted following the 2011 census when the Shropshire population was shown to have unexpectedly grown by 10,000. That resulted in the increased allocation of landing for building and the large increase in house building over the past 3-4 years.

The 2021 census will enable information to be accessed more quickly than before as a result of it being primarily carried out online.

Anyone with a computer, tablet or smartphone will be able to complete the census. It actually is quicker to complete it online although we haven't forgotten that some people will need to complete the census on a paper form.

The 2021 census will include 3 new questions regarding service in the armed forces together with optional questions about sexual orientation and gender identification. The answers will help to support the Armed Forces Covenant and allow people to identify as they wish.

The information that the census provides is important for national, local government and charities. The ONS ensures all the data is confidential and protected. No personal information is released for 100 years.

The ONS is obviously aware of the implications of Covid and its teams will be complying with all regulations so that the public is protected. Some people ask why the census is still going to take place against the background of Covid? The answer is that it will be more important than ever to record the impact of this exceptional virus upon the population, our lifestyles and jobs among other factors.

We all have to complete the census by law. The Shropshire team will support households, those in care and anyone that requires help to complete the census. We will have 6 Census Support Centres throughout the county and helplines will also be provided. In the coming weeks more information about the census will be provided on television, the radio and through social media. It's a great opportunity for us all to help plan our future.

To find out more please visit our website https://census.gov.uk/

Roger Belham, Census Engagement Manager for Shropshire
roger.belham12@field.census.gov.uk

Keeping happy

Action for Happiness is an organisation which puts on all sorts of interesting talks, videos, resources and tools for keeping us upbeat. Visit the website to see what they have on offer. https://www.actionforhappiness.org/



Keeping active

Energize, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin have links to many ways to keep yourselves and your families active from their website – https://www.energizestw.org.uk/energize-resources (copy and paste link) including the 'everyday challenge' shown below.

Energize Active Families Challenge

To help keep your children motivated to stay active, we have compiled a range of challenges for you to undertake each day.

Motivating Monday	Try It Tuesday	Wild Wednesday	Thoughtful Thursday	Fruity Friday
Play Just dance with someone in your house – aim to choose 2 songs each, link below.	Time yourself to see how many star jumps you can do in 1 minute. Repeat this 3 times today to see if you can get any better!	Explore in your garden or nearest open space and see if you can find 3 different leaves. Collect them and try to identify them when you get home.	Start a gratitude journal – try and write 3 good things that have happened to you today.	Make yourself a kebab using 3 different fruits and a straw or skewer.

Each week we will update the weekly challenges with different activities for you to try.
https://www.energizestw.org.uk/active-at-home (copy and paste link) has lots of ideas for Staying Active at Home



Getting together in 2021

Welcome to a new way of getting together in 2021. We are the local u3a for those of you living in south Shropshire, within reach of the Rea Valley, anywhere between Bishop's Castle northwards to the A5 and other villages in the surrounding area. We are still open, active and keeping our members engaged in a variety of endeavours (while the restrictions on face-to-face activities are still in force due to the pandemic) via Zoom, emails, Skype chats, telephone calls and a 3-weekly newsletter. We offer a variety of social, cultural and study opportunities for mature people (retired or semi-retired over the age of 55), all run on a voluntary basis by our members for our members. To find out more please contact Susan Lockwood on 01743 791092, 07854110271 or by email susanlockwood345@btinternet.com

Susan Lockwood

See other FoPL articles on pages 1, 10 and 11.



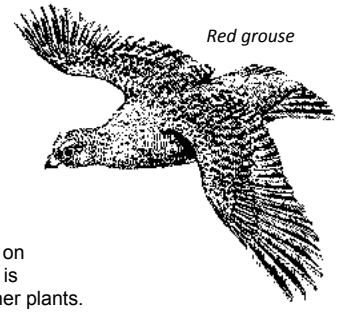
NATURAL ENGLAND

Notes from the hill

In the last few weeks the hill has seen sub-zero temperatures and frequent falls of snow. Being out on site has been a bit strange particularly on days when the green countryside around has been bathed in sunshine, contrasting with the hill sitting under its cold blanket of snow and fog.

We saw a lot of people visiting the hill during the snow, but now that it has gone and the country has gone into lockdown things have calmed right down. The nature reserve is still open but, following Government guidelines should only be used by local people for exercise.

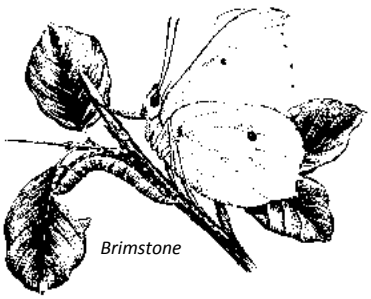
The wildlife of the Stiperstones are adapted to the unpredictable weather that the hill experiences at this time of year and have found various strategies to cope with the harsh environment. The most obvious strategy for many creatures is to move to lower altitudes and many birds either migrate to sunnier countries like the cuckoo which heads off early to central Africa, notably the Congo. The cuckoo can head off earlier than other migratory birds as it has handed over the responsibility of child care to foster parents, by laying its eggs in other birds' nests. In persistent hard weather many birds that nest on the Stiperstones, like skylarks and meadow pipits will move away to lower lying land and can often be found along the coast where the insect feeding is still good. Some resident birds will change their diet from insects to seeds and plant material which is more plentiful in and around farmland in the winter months.



Red grouse

However, the really tough birds, such as red grouse, remain on the hill throughout the winter and have adapted to survive in the harshest conditions. They have dense insulating plumage which prevents heat loss, and their feathers even extend down to their toes. They survive on eating the shoots of heather and other plant material which is available even when the snow blankets the top of the heather plants.

Some creatures that are limited in their migration and can't find a food source in winter, like bats and dormice decide to sleep out the winter, although on warm winter nights bats can often be seen feeding again. Many reptiles and amphibians like common lizards and newts will burrow down to depths where they will not freeze and only emerge again when conditions are suitable. Insects also do this but can also overwinter in various states such as egg, larva, pupa or adult. We will all have seen queen wasps, the only survivors of the hive, which overwinter as adults ready to emerge in spring to start a new colony. They will go into a semi-hibernation called diapause, from which they will emerge if the heating in your house wakes them. Some butterflies overwinter as adults too, by producing an antifreeze in their blood and the brimstone butterfly is one of these, often overwintering in ivy, it is one of the first to be seen emerging in spring.



Brimstone

Our rugged Exmoor ponies can also cope with the toughest of winters. These ponies are the closest relative to the original horses of Europe and have survived in the uplands since the last ice age. In winter they grow an extra layer to their brown coats that protects them from the wind and rain. They also have an impressive digestive system which allows them to eat and process large amounts of rough vegetation including bramble and shrubs which other horses would ignore. This winter fodder allows them to create heat in their bodies throughout the winter months.

Simon Cooter and the Natural England staff at Rigmoreoak.

Pontesbury Gardeners' News

At the time of writing we are in 2021's version of lockdown, whose rules are a little different to those that operated in March. Within the current rules garden centres are allowed to open, so we expect to be opening the Trading Post on Saturday 6 February as planned. However, this may have to be reviewed if the Government's rules change.

Membership fees are due at this time of year: £2 per member, or £1 for those who are retired. As we were closed for an important part of last year we are extending the membership of those who renewed for 2020 to include 2021 as well.

We are expecting deliveries of seed potatoes, onion and shallot sets, pea and bean seeds before our opening date, as well as our bulk delivery of multi-purpose compost. During last spring's lockdown so many people commented on the beneficial value of open outdoor spaces, and in particular their gardens, so we hope that we can help everyone get the best out of their plots this year, and look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday mornings.

The Trading Post is situated in the Old Station Buildings on Station Road and is open every Saturday from 9.30 to 12 noon.

Rob Dixon

February's Newsletter

The Parish Council has taken the decision, following Government guidelines, to only produce an online version of the Newsletter for this month. If you know of any of your immediate neighbours who don't have access to a computer, please feel free to print a copy and give it to them using gloves. Thank you. *Editor*

Virtual Parish Council Meeting: January

Our virtual meeting on 11 January focussed on approval of the budget for 2021/22 and setting the precept. The precept will be set at £142,210 for the forthcoming year which is an increase of 59p per week for a Band D equivalent. This will cover the many services and activities the parish council is responsible for running, including: streetlights, public toilets, play area, The Pavilion and parish council staff, and build towards projects such as those outlined in the Strategic Plan, which can be viewed on the Parish Council website. Pontesbury is a busy, professionally run and ambitious parish with some big projects and ideas for the future.

There will be a virtual parish council meeting held on Monday 8 February at 7pm. If you would like to attend please contact the Clerk at clerk@pontesburypc.org.uk and she will email you a link to the meeting. The link will also be available on the parish council website, along with the agenda. www.pontesburyparishcouncil.org.uk

If you wish to comment on a planning application please use the Shropshire Council planning portal at https://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/ Or pass your comments through Cllr A Hodges at ahodges@pontesburypc.org.uk. All new planning applications for the area are listed on the parish council website.

Debbie Marais, Parish Clerk

"I've been there!"

Why not try a 'Living Walk' – walk in your living room whilst watching a virtual tour around an amazing city or venue – Funchal in Madeira, Brighton, Singapore Gardens, Edinburgh, Oxford and many more.

"We bring the vibrant heart of cities direct to your home. Here for you when you can't travel, we aim to make these Natural Sound walks as close to being there as being there. Hope you enjoy walking with us on these Virtual Vacations. We also bring you virtual Museum and virtual Art Gallery tours and coffee shop sounds for study and relaxation."

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3iId8RgPvwX7niHr37YjKg

FoPL Funding Update

First of all a huge thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising efforts during the last year. This includes supporting events, being a Library Lottery member and using your Co-op cards (We're a nominated charity beneficiary under the Co-op Community Scheme). However we're sure you'll understand that the social distancing required in response to the Coronavirus has affected our fundraising efforts. The work of FoPL is ongoing if we are to maintain our Library e.g. Library costs rely on FoPL's commitment of £3,500pa to Shropshire Libraries. Clearly, fundraising could not stop during this difficult time, but we have needed to change the emphasis of our activities.

While our successful 'indoor gatherings' can no longer be held, events such as our Summer Treasure Hunt and Christmas Tree Trail have proved very successful in terms of both fundraising and community involvement. Assuming that Coronavirus may be with us for some time yet, we have more 'socially distanced' outdoor events planned including a sponsored cycle ride in early summer and online meetings to educate and entertain. (See posters for Library Lottery Goes Live!)

Do look out for the display at the Pontesbury and Minsterley Co-ops of our community events in the last year. FoPL has benefitted from the Co-op Community Scheme for the past two years, for which we are very grateful. The display illustrates how funds raised are being spent to develop the Library patio garden area and media resources for the Library i.e. a smart tv and sound system. FoPL's projects all aim to help meet the needs of our local community during these tough times.

Yvonne Davies, Chair Friends of Pontesbury Library

St. George's Church services

Services for February: Due to the continuing uncertain situation, notices re February Services will be displayed on the noticeboards situated at the church gates and on the website: www.st-george.org.uk (Please copy and paste link.)

Online Eiseddfod

Minsterley Eisteddfod is holding a virtual/online celebration of the arts on the weekend of 20/21 March, which would of been our Eisteddfod weekend. On Saturday, 20 March we will launch a show case of local talent on our web site and Facebook page and we invite people to send us their videos of their performances. These could be pieces they have been practising during lockdown and haven't had the opportunity to air yet whether vocal, instrumental or spoken, or maybe a favourite piece. All entries should be in by 15 February to our website www.minsterleyeisteddfod.btck.co.uk

On Sunday, 21 March, we will broadcast on our website and YouTube a concert featuring some of the choirs and soloists who have performed in our Sunday night Celebrity Concert over the years. This promises to be a wonderful evening which you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home with a cuppa or you can go wild and create a 'party in the park' atmosphere with champagne and full evening dress.

We know that performers are desperately missing the opportunity to share their work and that concert lovers are longing for the sound of live music, which is what the Eisteddfod is all about, but in the currant circumstances this is as close as we can get. So we hope that you will join us for our weekend of music and the spoken word and help us to keep the arts alive.

Full details of how to log into the weekend will be available in the next Newsletter so watch this space.

Lesley Holder

New priest at St. George's Church

The church is really excited to announce the arrival this month of a new Rector for the parish of Pontesbury and the Stiperstones Group.

The Revd. Greg Smith and his wife Fran will be living in the Deanery from early February, so we will have the Rector living in the village. The Covid-19 restrictions mean that Revd. Greg will be licenced "virtually" this month. It would have been good to welcome them in our usual way with the community all able to take part – but we will arrange a formal occasion for all the usual introductions when Covid-19 regulations allow. Watch this space for more information in due course.

We hope that they will be happy here with us and enjoy the great atmosphere of this village.

Mary Worrall and Allen Marsden, Churchwardens

St. George's Church Magazine

To all who usually receive a printed copy of the monthly "St. George's Pontesbury Magazine", we must apologise that the present Covid-19 situation means that we must stop producing and distributing printed copies until further notice. Instead, please visit the St. George's Church website, where this month's edition will be accessible – and lots more besides. We plan to continue publishing "on-line only" until Covid-19 guidance and regulations allow us to go back into print.

Our website is: www.st-george.org.uk (Copy and paste.)

Mary Worrall and Allen Marsden, Churchwardens

More from Friends of Pontesbury Library

Fundraising Up-date

Despite further Lock-down restrictions, FOPL are busy planning a number of Covid safe events over the next few weeks. Unfortunately we had to cancel the Chip it for Charity event this year which was very disappointing (especially as for once we had wonderful weather on the day that the event should have been taking place!).

Fortunately the Christmas Tree Trail event held in December in partnership with St George's Church was very, very successful and raised £1600 altogether to be divided between our two organisations – £800 each. Thank you once again to all those who decorated or trailed or just donated.

Library Lottery News

Our new year lottery winners were Maggie Challinor (1st), Stephen Winwood (2nd) and Adrian Windows (3rd).

Look out for renewal reminders coming by email and make sure you renew. This particular FoPL fundraising strategy is really important for us and easy to take part in (details on the website). We haven't been able to raise our usual funds during 2020 so are more reliant than ever on the lottery scheme.

>>>>>Breaking News<<<<<

On Saturday 6 February we will be drawing the winning lottery numbers LIVE at 11.00am via a Zoom meeting. Invite details below.

Colin Sharp is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
Topic: FoPL Lottery Draw
Time: Feb 6, 2021 10:30 AM London
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86765159540?pwd=dkxFM3VoTFNMS2JkL1VIbm41K3RPUT09
Meeting ID: 867 6515 9540
Passcode: 154258

Although the invite says 10.30, we suggest that you join at around 10.50am.

After the draw there will be some on-line entertainment!

If the event proves successful then some of our future draws are likely to be made on-line on the first Saturday of each month. If you make yourself a cup of coffee and get yourself a lovely piece of cake it will be almost like the coffee mornings in the library! Looking forward to when we get those going again.

To Hell and Beyond!!

An event that we had hoped to run 'live' is now going to be done via a Zoom meeting. We hope to have a huge audience for this presentation so please make your friends and family aware.

Friends of Pontesbury Library invite you to join us for an engaging online (Zoom) presentation by Mike Fletcher on Thursday 25 February 7.00pm -– 8.00pm Free – but donations to FOPL and/or Haemochromatosis UK are very welcome.

'To Hell and Beyond' – Mike will tell us about his motorbike journey from Pontesbury to Hell in Norway to raise awareness of, and funds for, Haemochromatosis UK

Details of how to register/book are on the FoPL website www.pontesburylibrary.co.uk along with how to donate

Haemochromatosis is a previously little known blood disorder and Mike's journey did much to raise its profile at a national level.

Hopefully, FoPL's next Newsletter item will be able to give some details of more normal – face-to-face – fundraising activities for our community. Fingers crossed!

News from the Library



I'm hoping the library will be open for browsing again by mid-February. I know most people like to have a mooch about the shelves and see what takes their fancy, but here in Shropshire we have become quite adept at flipping to our Ready Reads service. This is where we 'pick' your choices for you to be collected from the library door. Here's the link: www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries

Even if you don't have internet access to order a bundle of books online you can just telephone for your requests, or even drop a note in our letterbox at the Pavilion. Please keep a check online or the notices on the library door, we will let you know what service we are offering depending on national or local restrictions.

Still in an optimistic mood, the Pavilion team, library and Friends are planning to create a joyous bloom of spring colour to the patio area. Continuing with the Secret Garden theme from the Christmas lights, we will be we are planning 'Spring Blossoms in the Secret Garden'. A knitted, crocheted and any other craft imagined display of early spring. This will tie in with the lifting of restrictions on the library so the date may be liable to change, but we have fingers crossed for 20 February.

The Library Owl





Litter Letter 5 from The Bagatelles

A recent walk down the country lane revealed a plastic bag hanging on a tree – an orange plastic bag – not empty but full of the remains of a fast meal. It didn't invite close examination!
It did, however, have the effect of bringing into focus the matter of plastic in our shopping.....
Before the pandemic, single-use plastic was being phased out but the plastics industry has treated the Covid-19 emergency as an opportunity. How can this be?

Here are five reasons:
- More pre-packaged food is being sold and fresh produce/deli counters are closed
- Takeaways are on the rise
- New laws, including banning plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds, have been delayed
- The charge on single-use bags for on-line groceries has been lifted
- Oil prices have plummeted making plastic production cheap and recycling uncompetitive.

With literally billions of plastic bags being produced for the UK market each year we must find ways to re-use them. Plastic is, after all, a very useful material and should be valued. Here are some of the various ways you can re-use your plastic bags:-

1. Use them as rubbish bin liners plus compostable shopping bags are often cheaper than designated food caddy liners.
2. Have you thought of giving your car boot or garden shed a tidy up, using plastic bags to contain dirty wellies, tools or rags and gloves etc,?
3. Plastic bags are very useful for storing bread and produce in the freezer.
4. Sliced open and spread out, a plastic carrier bag can make an excellent non-stick surface for kneading and covering dough when baking.
5. Can be used for lining paint trays, protecting brushes and sealing paint tins.
6. During winter plastic bags can used for protecting your plants.

The list is endless! Have you any suggestions on how we can re-use plastic bags ? – Share them with Pontesbury Newsletter readers.

Do you ever feel like a plastic bag
Drifting through the wind
Wanting to start again ? *[thank you Katy Perry]*

On behalf of Pontesbury Climate Emergency Action Group

SPREAD THE WORD, DON'T SPREAD LITTER

Pontesbury Climate Emergency Action Group

Following a webinar run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy recently on using a carbon calculator tool, the group is looking at our Parish's carbon footprint. This refers to all the areas of human activity in the area which produce carbon or other greenhouse gases, which are the cause of global warming. The Parish Council has declared that its ambition is to be carbon neutral by 2030, which means looking at reducing the carbon emissions from all council activities and buildings. The Pontesbury Climate Emergency Action Group are supporting the Parish Council and also looking at reaching carbon zero throughout the parish.

We all produce carbon by the way we live – through heating our houses, using our cars and other machines that run on fossil fuels, through the food we eat, even the clothes we wear. The group is looking at "carbon calculators" for individual households to see what we can do to lower our impact on the environment. Other activities for the future are a talk from a representative from Ashton Hayes, a Cheshire village which has been combating climate change for many years now, have lots of ideas and support for drawing up a carbon zero action plan and have a community renewable energy scheme. The talk will be on February 24th on Zoom at 7pm. Contact the parish clerk if you would like to attend.

We are also looking forward to our community hedgehog project in the spring which we will tell you all about in the March newsletter and sowing wild flower seeds along the Hall Bank footpath, in conjunction with the Mary Webb School and SWT.

If you are interested in any of these activities please get in touch. We meet monthly on Zoom and you are welcome to join us. Please contact Debbie Marais, the Parish clerk for zoom links to meetings.

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

Green Homes Grant Scheme – Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

The Green Homes Grant Scheme has been extended and now runs to March 2022. The government will provide a voucher worth up to £5,000 or £10,000 to help cover the cost of making energy efficient improvements to your home. Improvements could include insulating your home to reduce your energy use or installing low-carbon heating to lower the amount of carbon dioxide your home produces.

The government will provide a voucher that covers two-thirds of the cost of qualifying energy efficiency or low carbon heating improvements to your home. The maximum value of the voucher is £5,000.

If you are on a low income and receive certain benefits, you can receive a voucher covering all of the cost of the improvements. The maximum value of the voucher is £10,000.

To apply for the voucher, you must either:

- own your home (including park homeowners, long-leaseholders and shared ownership)
- be a private or social landlord

https://greenhomesgrant.campaign.gov.uk/

Shropshire Climate Action Partnership (SCAP) for a Zero Carbon Shropshire

"The year is 2030, and reality has finally hit. We have lost the battle. Remember when you used to turn the lights off to 'save the polar bears'? Well, they are no more . . . at least not where they used to belong. In future, zoos are more like a history book of what life once was. This is evidence of the biggest war mankind has ever lost, the one against itself."

This is a quote from a member of the young SCAP team, a clarion call for all of us who do not want to see our planet destroyed, who want to leave the Earth in better shape than they found it for future generations.

This is SCAP's mission, to reach all of us in the county – individuals, councils, businesses, industry, farmers, MPs – with the message that the climate and ecological emergency is here now, we need to inject a sense of urgency into what we are trying to do about it, and that we all have a part to play.

We are a not-for-profit organisation formally launched in August 2020.

Right now, we have more than a hundred volunteers from all walks of life. We involve business enterprises, landowners, charities, councils, community organisations and individuals. Together we have been working to make and implement a plan, a "call to action" suitable for a zero carbon Shropshire through:

- rapid decarbonisation,
- large-scale restoration of biodiversity and natural habitat,
- development of resilient and inclusive communities and enterprises for a sustainable future.

Our plan is a statement of where we are today, where we must get to, and how we can get there.

This is what we believe we need to do.



Please join us.

The plan can be viewed in full on our website: http://www.zerocarbonshropshire.org

"We now have the opportunity to create the perfect home for ourselves, and restore the rich, healthy and wonderful world that we inherited." *Sir David Attenborough*



STEP UP SHROPSHIRE Shropshire Council

Food provision during lockdown

Shropshire Council's Community Reassurance Team is here to help all residents across the county during the pandemic

Did you know there are lots of local groups and services available to help you access food parcels, secure delivery slots and other essentials:

- **Shropshire Larder** – www.shropshirelarder.org.uk
- **Call Shropshire Council's COVID-19 Helpline** for help to access food phone 03456 789 028
- **Mid-Counties Co-Op also offer delivery slots** – call 0800 435 902 to book
- **For all other food and support needs visit** – www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/ or call 03456 789 028

For further support visit **www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus** or call the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Shropshire Council Helpline on 0345 678 9028

HANDS FACE SPACE

www.shropshire.gov.uk

STEP UP SHROPSHIRE Shropshire Council

Looking after your mental health during lockdown

Shropshire Council's Community Reassurance Team is here to help all residents across the county during the pandemic

Looking after your mental health is important, and there are lots of local services available to support you and your loved ones:

- **www.togetherall.com** - an online community for Shropshire residents who are stressed, anxious or low
- **Shropshire MIND** – Call 01743 368647 or email: manager.shropshiremind@gmail.com
- **Samaritans** – call 116 123 for a confidential safe place to talk about whatever is getting to you
- **Young Minds Parents Hotline** – 0808 8025544 (9.30am – 4.00pm) free, confidential online support any adult worried about the mental health of a child or young person
- **Free bereavement counselling** – 0345 678 9028
- **Kooth** – free safe and anonymous online support for young people: www.kooth.com
- **Childline** – call 0800 1111

For further support visit **www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus** or call the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Shropshire Council Helpline on **0345 678 9028**

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STEP UP SHROPSHIRE Shropshire Council

Financial support during lockdown

Shropshire Council's Community Reassurance Team is here to help all residents across the county during the pandemic

If you need financial support, help is available:

- **Test and Trace payments of £500** are available for people on low income who need to self-isolate
- **If you are of working age and receive council tax support,** you have been awarded up to an additional £150 hardship payment on your council tax bill
- **If you have been financially affected by coronavirus,** you may be eligible for grant funding Call us on 0345 678 9078 to find out more
- Visit **www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits** for further information

For further support visit **www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus** or call the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Shropshire Council Helpline on 0345 678 9028

HANDS FACE SPACE

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Pick Up The Phone – You Are Not Alone

To help raise awareness of the range of support available to those who feel suicidal, a new Suicide Prevention Zcard designed by the Shropshire and Telford Suicide Prevention Network (with representation from across health, social care, emergency and blue light services, voluntary services, experts by experience amongst others) has been launched.

The Zcard provides; • Brief advice and guidance on how to address concerns • Contacts for a confidential, listening ear • Primary contacts to seek immediate appropriate support

Useful Resources

1. Free online Suicide prevention training (20 min video on see, say, signpost): www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training

This is a great resource on how to identify risk and how to have difficult conversations, it has been widely shared amongst our networks

2. Help Is At Hand: national resource for support after suicide (physical cards available to order direct from the website for free): https://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/support-guides/help-is-at-hand

Suicide Prevention Action Group

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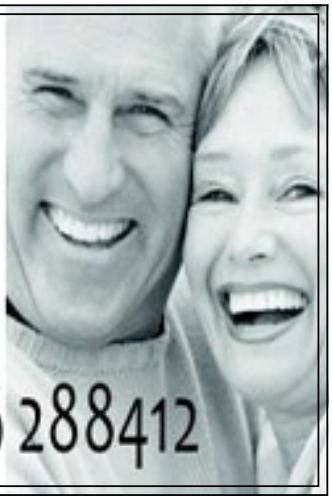
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