

Aymestrey Matters



Autumn 2026

Parish Notice Board



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 20th October 10.30am - Macmillan Coffee Morning
Saturday 7th November - Annual Aymestrey Bonfire & Fireworks
Saturday 5th December - Parish Christmas Party



FUN QUIZ

2nd Friday in the Month
In the Parish Hall
8.00pm

Runs September to June.
Teams of 4 or come along and join a team.
Cash Prize and Raffle

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY

CALLING ALL PARISH RESIDENTS
AND HALL USERS

Saturday 5th December
8pm start (doors open 7pm)

Get into a festive Christmas spirit.
With disco, live DJ, and a Buffet,
but bring your own drinks.
A free community event.

Macmillan Coffee Morning 20th October

"Tea/Coffee in the Hall"

*Come and join us for the **weekly** social event.
Meet new people, have a chat, all parishioners welcome.
Every Tuesday in the Parish Hall
10.30am to 11.30ish*

Carpet Bowls
Monday Evenings
@ Parish Hall
7pm
All Welcome

Film Night
3rd Friday of the Month
September to early Summer
Supper @ 7.00pm
Film @ 7.30pm
Contact Ian Banks
for details:- 770816
Next Film 16th October

Parish Council
Meetings
held in the Parish Hall
7.00pm
4th Wednesday in the month
(except Dec & Aug)
ALL Parishioners are welcome
to attend

EDITORS' PAGE

‘Trouble at t’ mill’

.....a phrase used to indicate workplace problems in a Yorkshire (or possibly Lancashire) mill.

One such series of events being the Luddite revolts around the early 1800's. The Luddites were artisan textile workers, who broke into the woollen and cotton mills damaging the new mechanised looms and knitting equipment which they felt were responsible for the loss of their jobs and reduced wages. Many of the perpetrators involved ended up in mass trials in York in 1813, with some being transported to penal colonies or even executed.

So now lets talk about Artificial Intelligence (AI), and here we may be able to see some similarities between the rise of mechanised weaving and that of AI. There's fear that many jobs will become obsolete, losing many talents and skills, and our fear is that things will become less creative and very predictable.

We hope you will agree that Aymestrey Matters is a well loved magazine with at present no AI content other than the few adverts for local events. (Only one in the last edition). We, as the current editors, want to keep it this way with content created by individuals and not by 'generative artificial intelligence models'.

Although we are not fully paid up Luddites, we will endeavour to keep AI content to a minimum whilst understanding that AI has its uses when creating local event advertising.

Denise & Martyn

***Please forward all articles, photos, notices and letters to
editor@aymestrey.org***

Thanks, as usual, to all contributors and distributors, regular and occasional, with special thanks to our new volunteer distributors for agreeing to cover Upper Lye and Covenhope areas.

Also not forgetting Imogen Davis for her lovely cuddly Hedgehog front cover

New Community Defibrillator at Covenhope

Thanks to funding from the British Heart Foundation, a defibrillator has been installed at Covenhope Farm.

From the B4362, take the Covenhope Lane to Shobdon Hill Wood,
the unit is sited on a building at Covenhope Farm, HR6 9SY.

What3words - gobbles.gone.efficient



Arts and Crafts Round-up 2026

It was another bumper year for top class entries in the 2026 Competition Tent. And we had three new awards for excellence in the form of the Preserves Cup, the best Junior Entry Rosette and the Ken Holland Memorial Shield which was kindly donated by his family and went to the Judges' choice of best entry in the adult classes. Our talented winners were as follows:

Against strong competition, Ian Banks won the Margaret Probert trophy for the best Victoria Sponge Cake. The Joyce Pugh Cup for baking went to Ruth Hurcomb who did especially well with her bread and cheese straws. The new Preserves Cup for excellence in jams, chutney and fruit drinks went to Steph Dunn who also won the Rose Cup for best single rose. The Art & Handicrafts trophy went to Carole Gandy and the Best Junior entry was scooped by Elsie Wood who created a beautiful miniature garden in a teacup. The final award was the new and very beautiful Ken Holland Shield which went to Carole Gandy for her beautiful embroidery.

As ever, the judges were a vital element in making the Arts and Crafts competitions such a success. We would like to thank our new vicar Maggie Tate-Druiff, Hazel Bows, Noelle Cooper and Angela Gardner. They did a super job but the day really goes to all the clever people who entered our 25 competition classes and worked so hard to create a magnificent show.



A tasty tableau of cakes

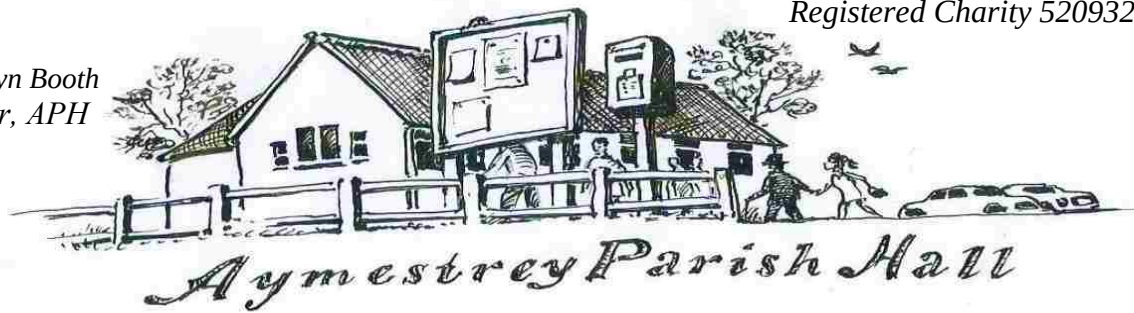


Beautiful flower arrangements

The Ken Holland Shield presented by Mrs P Holland to Mrs C Gandy

RT

Martyn Booth
Chair, APH



I know this sounds sad, and it probably is, but I was looking through some old Parish Hall minutes from 2021 and came across the fact we had just organised our first Coffee Morning. It transpired that it was held on the 10th August 2021; about a dozen people attended that day and since then numbers steadily rose until we are averaging around 25 each week.

So on Tuesday the 11th of August this year we had a 5th birthday special with lots (and I mean lots!) of cake, we had birthday banners and even sang 'Happy Birthday'.

I feel that these weekly Coffee Mornings are extremely important in enabling social contact for many residents who otherwise may not have any. They are a place where new residents to the parish can meet others and get involved if they choose.

Recently attendances have dipped slightly, we currently average around 20, I hope this is seasonal and that numbers will increase now that the holidays are over and the weather is deteriorating.

Running this as a weekly event is quite a commitment and the efforts of Dee, Steph, Pauline and Richard should not be understated, a big thank you to them.

We always welcome new and old faces, so if you are free any Tuesday morning between 10.30 and 11.30ish why not drop in, have a cuppa and a chat, after all we'll talk to anyone.

While we are talking about Coffee Mornings, we are holding a special one on Tuesday 20th October starting at 10.30, in aid of 'Macmillan Cancer Support'. We will be fundraising on behalf of this charity which is so important for cancer care; this is such a worthwhile cause and every penny raised will go directly to them.

Autumn has arrived along with our new season of hall events, the first quiz was well attended with half-a-dozen teams, quizzes now run through the winter on the second Friday of each month, the next one being on the 9th October hosted by Dee & Martyn. The following Friday we had Film & Food at which Ian served up 'Bangers & Mash' followed by a showing of Ian McKellen starring in the film 'The Christophers'. Next film night is the 16th October showing 'The Devil Wears Prada 2', see elsewhere in this edition for further details.

Looking further forward to (dare I say??) Christmas, this year we plan to have another 'Parish Christmas Party'. It will be along similar lines to last years but a bit more of a disco with a DJ rather than Karaoke. After last years event, this is an evening you should not to miss – **Saturday 5th December.**

MB

WILDLIFE IN THE MARCHES

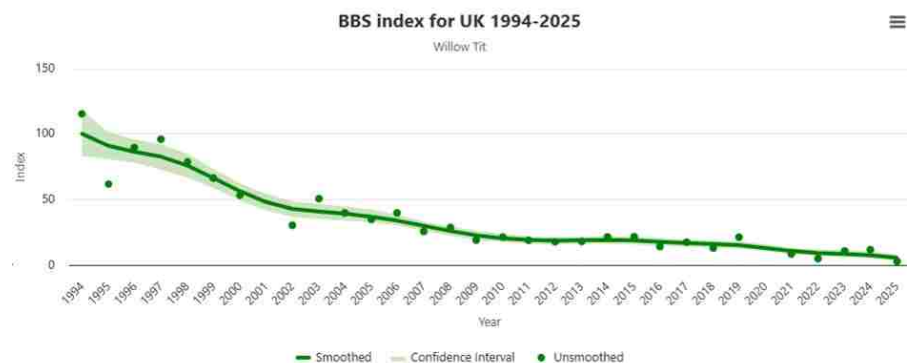


To feed or not to feed

We all love to feed birds. We seem to be a nation of bird lovers (for the most part). Annually, as a nation, we spend around £380 million on feed for our garden birds. Why do we do it? Obviously, there are benefits to us. Just being close to nature (and where closer than at home) brings us a boost to our wellbeing. It's well-known that being in the presence of nature in general, and bird song in particular helps lift our mood. There is also the fact that feeding the birds, we know that we are helping them. We hear so much about how wildlife is struggling and what with climate change that's likely to get worse for some species. But what if some of our feeding was doing harm?

Most of us know by now that there are issues around the spread of bird disease associated with feeding in our gardens. The very fact that we attract a large number of birds continually to one place makes the spread of diseases such as trichomoniasis much more likely, but we can largely ameliorate this by regular cleaning of our bird feeders (it's recommended that we do this every couple of weeks). However, it is now becoming apparent that by large scale feeding we can alter the ecology and population dynamics of our birds.

Two of our most common garden birds are the Blue Tit and Great Tit, familiar to us all. They are feisty birds that can come to dominate feeders. Their ecology is in wintertime to gather in mixed species flocks and wander a large area looking for food. They'll keep coming back to your garden so long as you feed them. Both species have a stable population with no measurable decline since 1994. Two other members of the Tit family have not fared so well. The Marsh Tit has declined by 50% in the same period while the Willow Tit has declined by over 90%. Both are found locally (they're incredibly difficult to tell apart and I'll write about that another time).



So, what does this have to do with garden bird feeding? Well because it seems possible that we are helping the Blue and Great Tits so much, we are artificially boosting their population. They are more aggressive at bird feeders than Marsh and Willow Tits (which do come to feeders) so take more food than their scarcer cousins. However, the main effect is that because Great Tits and Blue Tits do not have a defined territory in winter, the boosted numbers can enter Marsh and Willow Tit territories and outcompete them there as well (Marsh and Willow Tits tend to move less in winter and keep to their territory).

Do we stop feeding? I'd say no, not at the moment but perhaps we need to rethink when we do it. The likelihood is that there are multiple factors in the decline of Willow Tits. Another reason they are declining is lack of habitat. They require dead wood to build nest holes, and we relentlessly tidy up nature. We need to leave more dead trees! My feeling is that we should be looking to feed birds only when they really need it. This is in the 'starvation gap' that occurs at the end of January up till the beginning of April and in severe cold snaps. I don't want to stop feeding as I know too well the beneficial effects for myself. Maybe we just need to reflect on the fact that when we intervene, that intervention can have unexpected side-effects.

Mike Wheeler

Ed: Mike runs the Leintwardine Wildlife Group, they have regular talks and events throughout the year; their Facebook group gives details plus information of sightings in the area.



Film & Food Night

Enjoy a relaxed and sociable evening of food, film and community.

16th October 2026



The Devil Wears Prada 2

The fashion, the fabulousness and the fierce one-liners are back! Join us for a glamorous evening of food, fun and film as **Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt and Stanley Tucci** return in *The Devil Wears Prada 2*.

Enjoy a delicious meal and settle in for this highly anticipated sequel, as Miranda Priestly and Andy Sachs return to the world of fashion, ambition and impossible choices. Whether you loved the original or simply fancy a great night out with friends, this promises to be a stylish and entertaining evening — and, as Miranda might say, **very much worth making the effort for.**



Food: £6

at 7:00pm



Film: £6

at 7:30pm

MENU



Beef Stew



Jacket Potatoes



Peas



Vegetarian option



Ice cream (£1)



- Please bring your own drinks
- Payments are cash only on the evening.



Everyone is welcome to join for food, film, and friendly company.

Aymestrey and Leinthall Earls Churches

Revd. Maggie Tate-Druiff

How was your summer?

Maybe you got away for some sun, sand and sea, or maybe the sun, sandy soil and scorching temperatures were enough for you at home!

I remember learning about climate change in my Science classes, 20 years or so ago at Bishop's School in Hereford. We learned that in

20 years' time, the earth's temperature would have increased so much that very hot summers would be common in the UK. We thought this sounded great! No need for hot sunny holidays abroad – the heat would come to us.

We also learned that food would be harder to grow, mass migration would increase as famine spread and conflicts over scarce resources pushed people out of their homes.

We heard that many species of animal and plant would become extinct as they struggled to adapt to their too-fast changing environment and their habitats were destroyed by wildfire or human activity. This sounded less appealing...

As a teenager, I was really struck by the injustice and inevitability of the climate crisis. I wanted to do what I could to change it. Along with some of my friends, I became a bit of an eco-warrior, trying everything within my power to do my bit to save the planet: I became vegetarian, I bought only second-hand clothes, I went round turning off lights, I put on lots of layers in the winter instead of the heating, I avoided travelling by air plane.

As a new Christian (I came to faith at a church youth group in Hereford around this time), I understood Jesus' words to "love your neighbour as yourself" as an instruction to care for all creation, including my global neighbours living in other parts of the world, who were already experiencing the ill effects of temperature increase, poor crop yield, food scarcity, earthquakes and tsunamis.

20 years later, I still believe this – loving my neighbour means not turning away from suffering cause by climate change closer to home, as well as those experiencing its devastating effects abroad. Am I still an eco-warrior? I hope I am. As an adult with a vote, a job and an income, I have far more choices that have a wider reaching impact than I did as a teenager. But my heart is still affected by the injustice and inevitability of the situation we find ourselves in.

Where do I turn when I feel hopeless or helpless?

To prayer, of course, to the God who made this world and who has not left us defenceless. To Jesus who promises to be with us in 'summer and winter and springtime and harvest', as the well-loved hymn, '*Great is thy faithfulness*' puts it.

We are entering the Harvest season, a time to celebrate the natural world and cherish creation. If you'd like to join me in praying for our world this harvest, here is fitting prayer from Revd Nick Read from Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy:

*Loving God,
you promise that as long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,
summer and winter, day and night will never cease.*



*We look to you as the author and guarantor of creation
to remember your covenant promise.
Please bless those who farm the land in this difficult harvest season
beset by climate change, high input prices and low yields.
We pray for justice and equity in the food chain
that none may go hungry and that all can afford the necessities of life.
May all of us, who benefit from their labours,
be truly thankful for the food we eat
and may all of creation benefit from wise and caring stewardship
in the years to come.
Amen.*

Weekly Audio Prayer from Hereford Diocese ~ Revd Nick Read, Agricultural Chaplain
Available at www.youtube.com/@hfddiocese

Maggie Tate-Druiff ~ Rector, The Mortimer's Cross Benefice
Kingsland, Eardisland, Aymestrey and Leinthall Earles Churches
Email: rector@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk
Mobile & WhatsApp: 07514 785568 / Phone (Mon-Thu): 01568 701 245



STEEL PANS



Kingsland Steel Pan Players have met most Fridays during term time this year (September 2025 - August 2026), under the supervision of myself and Wayne Menzies. The junior group, in particular, are both talented and keen, have made tremendous progress, and have performed in public several times over the past year mainly during church services. In addition to playing for Messy Church a couple of times, they have played at both Christmas and Easter services, at the service for the installation of Rev. Maggie, at the final service for Rev. Rosie, and most recently at the Craft Fair, where they played continuously for half an hour.

After the summer break, Steel Pan Groups will resume in Kingsland Church on Friday 4th September, with a 4.30 pm group for juniors (Under 13s) and a 5.30 pm group for seniors (Under 90s!), as before.

Anyone who would like to learn to play the Pans is welcome to join us: there is no need to be able to read music, the most important requirements being a reasonable sense of rhythm and enthusiasm. The Pans are very enjoyable to play and they make a splendid sound.

If you are interested in learning to play the Pans, please do come along to our first session of the new school year in September, or phone me first to obtain more information.

Sally Johnson 01568 708779 / 07932 059595

Church Notice Board



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

at
St John the Baptist & St Alkmund

Aymestrey

8th November

Please gather at church at the earlier time of 10.50am to allow for joining the Nation for two minutes silence at 11am.



ADVENT SUNDAY

St John the Baptist & St Alkmund

Aymestrey

Sunday 29th November
Benefice Service at 10.30am

DECORATION OF THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

Aymestrey Church

Saturday 19th December
at 10am

All contributions of holly and
greenery much appreciated

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

St Andrew's Church,
Leinthall Earls

@3.30PM

Sunday 13th December

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

St John the Baptist
& St Alkmund

Aymestrey

@3pm

Saturday 20th December

Followed by the usual mulled wine
& mince pies

CHRISTMAS DAY

Traditional
Holy Communion Service

11am

at St John the Baptist

and St Alkmund,

Aymestrey

PLOUGH SUNDAY

at St John the Baptist and St
Alkmund, Aymestrey

Sunday 10th January 2027 at 11am

Mortimer Ward

Carole Gandy

What a Summer and what an impact it has made on our farmers, the small holders and the frail in our community and increased our concerned as to what impact this will have on autumn and winter and is this going to be the new norm.



Due to an increasing call upon our services and the government providing us with less funding we are going out to consultation on our Council Tax reduction scheme; a scheme which at present those on universal credit or pension credit can apply for. This does not affect those who are retired who are on pension credit and will continue to receive a 100% reduction in their council tax, however those of working age on universal credit we are considering reducing the rebate to 80%. I would be really pleased to get your feed back on this and you can contact me by email.

We are already as you can see, from above, looking at our budget for 27/28 and how we can make savings. My Cabinet post Adult Social Care, Health, Wellbeing and Housing is particularly difficult to stay within budget, as demand continues to grow. We therefore have to be innovative and find ways of making these savings without impacting on our most vulnerable residents.

At present I am working with my Tech team at the Herefordshire Community Hospital and at County Hospital to demonstrate to both staff and visitors the opportunities, through technology, which may keep an older person in their own home, when discharged from hospital, rather than going into a care home which they might be pressured to do if relatives live a distance away. The interest has been really positive and if we succeed in getting a few more people able to return to their own home rather than going into care it would be seen as a success. Most people do want to remain in their own home.

You as a community can help us in this; keep an eye on those in your community who are getting frailer, and others who are appearing to withdraw from community events, Loneliness is one of the most common issues that we have in our County. It could follow bereavement, lack of mobility or other reasons but it is becoming a more common problem in our County. Make sure you publicise your weekly coffee morning and I know you will make new attendees welcome. There are two new organisations in Leominster one above the bank hub in Lion Square and one in the Halifax building which have been set up to help people overcome loneliness and if necessary go along with that lonely person on their first attendance in order to help them gain confidence.

On a brighter note the fete was splendid and again the sun shined upon us. I won best in show for my cross stitch, the first award I have ever won in my life and probably the last.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a problem and I will try to solve it.
carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk 01568 780583 07792882133



Sue Wright. *I was born in Shifnal and raised in rural Suffolk. After marrying a local boy, we moved to Devon, where our two sons were born. Then we moved to the Isle of Wight. We settled in Aymestrey five years ago. It is the perfect place for me to be creative as I'm a hand weaver, spinner, knitter and dyer.*

What is your earliest childhood memory?

Holding my Daddy's hand, running along trying to keep up with his long strides and having a shoulder ride when I got tired.

Where in the world have you most enjoyed travelling?

For many summers, we hired a yacht and explored the Greek Isles, stopping in beautiful bays and small villages. Reaching each new place by boat felt magical, especially when we discovered a local taverna for drinks and a meal.

Who is your favourite artist?

I love Art in many forms, I would have to say my sister is my favourite, and I have some lovely pieces of her work in our home.

What is your favourite Film?

Inn Of The Sixth Happiness (1958 starring Ingrid Bergman). A story of great courage and fortitude.

What are you passionate about?

Living a simple life respecting Nature and working in the traditional crafts of weaving, spinning and natural dyeing. I love to use colour, texture and pattern to produce my textiles.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Always having chocolate in the house, but that's not really an extravagance - it's a necessity!

What book are you reading at the moment?

The Red Queen written by Philippa Gregory. I enjoy reading historical fiction, especially if it includes local events or places.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Being at our cottage, pottering in the garden or working at my floor loom in my studio, where the view of Pokeshouse Wood inspires me. Hillside Cottage is my "Happy Place".

What would be your ideal dinner menu

Lamb chops with homegrown veg, and Pete's homemade chips! followed by ice cream and caramel sauce!

What is your favourite piece of music?

Tricky one as I love lots of different music. I choose "Telegraph Road" from the album Alchemy- Dire Straits Live.

What is your most treasured possession?

My lovely Peter of course! Plus, my floor loom.

Thoughts from a Retired Gardener

Jim Logan

Two Voles and a Stoat

Lying dead on the kitchen floor to greet me when I came down to make a morning pot of tea, not a good start to the day, especially not for them. Our cats are responsible for this carnage of course and probably more specifically Eloise our dainty tabby; she being a prolific hunter the scourge of small furry creatures. Her brother Graham, the grey cat looks the part when he sits majestically sentinel at the end of our garden path, watchful and inscrutable like all cats. His looks belie his indolence, in truth he spends a lot of time in the house either upstairs on the bed or in cooler weather downstairs on the boiler resting in between bouts of intense inactivity.

Ella the huntress does provide me with a very unscientific and grisly way to assess the population of small mammals locally, interestingly she rarely brings in birds and the Stoat is highly unusual too. The usual corpses are Field Voles, small and grey, or the slightly larger Bank Voles with chestnut brown fur. Field Mice are common and pretty, Yellow Necked Mice the size of baby rats. House Mice are uncommon and immature Brown Rats are rarely brought in, although there are plenty of them out there. Our cats do occasionally bring in Shrews both Common and Pygmy but I think they usually avoid them as distasteful.

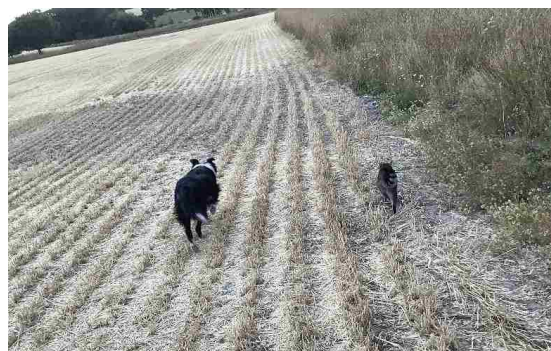
Last week there was a Harvest Mouse, *Micromys Minutus*, and it really was minute, four inches long and half of that was its prehensile tail which it could use to clamber in grass stalks and other herbage, I'm sad that it was killed but it does prove that there is a viable population here. I think that Ella usually hunts within hundred yards or so of our cottage and I've searched in vain for the

woven nests of Harvest Mice that indicate their presence, I will keep on looking. There is plenty of suitable habitat and I would love to be able to observe them alive.

Ella has recently taken to accompanying me on my evening walk with Meg the Collie; she scampers along confidently tail up secure in our company. Her self assurance was tested a couple of weeks ago on the stubble, when, with my attention focused on a Hare fifty yards away on the brow of the hill; Meg giving it the 'Collie stare' we failed to see a second Hare sitting tight close by and passed it by. When we turned for home and retraced our steps the curious dark patch in the stubble that we hadn't noticed previously, rose up from the earth and became a big Hare, bigger than Ella, it loped away unhurriedly. Ella was startled by this apparition and stayed very close until the bottom of the field her tail bristling like a bottle brush.

I refer to Ella and Graham as 'our' cats; I really I don't think that you can own a cat, they live with us amicably and affectionately but on their terms, we feed them and cuddle them but they have their own lives that don't involve us. I saw the very excellent production of *Cats* at Wigmore High School, at the end of term, in that hot July weather, my granddaughters being in the Jellicle Cat ensemble.

T S Elliot was clearly a keen observer of cat behaviour. I wonder, did he have small rodent corpses displayed in his kitchen in the mornings.



Jim

PARISH NATTERS & POST BOX

Congratulations
to
Lucy and Andy at The Cottage,
Aymestrey on the arrival of their son
Percy.

* * * *

A warm welcome to the Parish
and also to Yatton ~
Duncan, Jennifer and family
@ The Granary
With very best wishes to you in
your new home.

Thanks to funding from the
British Heart Foundation
a defibrillator has been installed
at **Covenhope Farm**.

From the B4362, take the Covenhope Lane
to Shobdon Hill Wood, the unit is on a
building at Covenhope Farm, HR6 9SY.
What3words - gobbles.gone.efficient

Congratulations to Dan and the Fete
Team for another very successful
Aymestrey Fete.

It proved yet again to be a fun filled
social event with a few new additions
along with the old favourites

Bonfire Wood Required

Fallen timber, old pallets,
wood furniture (no glass or
plastic please) etc.



Use the opportunity to
get rid of your old wood and
wooden items!

Drop off items, by arrangement,
at the field

Please contact Dan Hurcomb-
hurcombdc@gmail.com

AYMESTREY PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY

CALLING ALL PARISH RESIDENTS

AND HALL USERS

WE'RE HAVING A PARTY



Saturday 5th December



**Get into a festive Christmas spirit. With disco, live
DJ, and a Buffet, but bring your own drinks.**

A free community event.

8pm start (doors open 7pm)

Please let a committee member know if you are coming

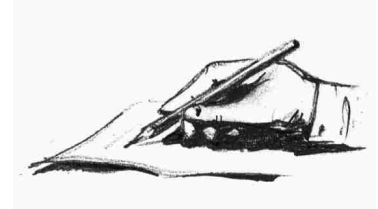
or text/call 07434 621260





Parish Council

*Parish Council doings and extracts
from the Clerk's postbag.*



The new-look Aymestrey website has arrived! It brings together everything you might need to know about Aymestrey – Parish Council news, meetings and planning, the Parish Hall, Churches, local groups, footpaths, parish history, community information, useful contacts and much more. A handy way to keep up with local news and events. A huge thank you to Cllr Doug Murrie and a resident for giving their time, energy and expertise to creating this valuable resource for the whole community. Do take a look – and sign up for updates! www.aymestrey.org

The Parish Council has appointed two new members. Councillor Jo Stannard was co-opted in June, and Councillor Nick Barrow was co-opted at the meeting on 23rd September. With these appointments, all casual vacancies have been filled, and the Parish Council is now at full strength.

Financial decisions included an award of £700 to the Parochial Church Council towards upkeep of churchyards; the purchase of two solar panels and replacement batteries for the parish Speed Indicator Devices (using ring-fenced funds); self-heal pinboard for the Leinthall Earls noticeboard; £300 towards Aymestrey Fete costs; £360 honorarium to the Parish Footpaths Officer (PFO), and £128.80 towards insurance for the Aymestrey Parish Commons Association.

Herefordshire Council has confirmed the following grants. Lengthsman tasks £2,061.00; repairs and replacement gates/stiles/bridge on Public Rights of Way £8,973; Drainage grants in two categories – Maintenance £2,515.13; and New Assets £10,499.00. Work on these projects is underway...

Defibrillators. The life of the unit at the Parish Hall has been extended having received new pads from a First Responder, a contact of Cllr Stannard's. These pads are readily available and there is now less urgency to replace the unit. The Parish Council submitted a successful grant application to the British Heart Foundation, for the provision of a defibrillator and cabinet at Covenhope Farm. These have been received and will be installed within the month. My thanks to Cllr Stannard for raising awareness of this grant and drafting the application. Members also agreed to purchase two Bleed Control Kits, which will be stored at Yatton and Leinthall Earls.

Plans to replace a bridge on footpath AY9 are progressing. The project will be funded by a £5,000 Herefordshire Council grant (part of the £8k mentioned above) and will be carried out by the Parish Footpaths Officer (PFO) and volunteers. Following discussions at the July meeting, the Parish Council is also considering an assistant to support the PFO. If you would be interested in this volunteer role, please contact me.

Scheduled meetings take place at 7 pm at the Parish Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month (except August and December). Dates for the coming year are 23rd September, 28th October, 25th November, December – no scheduled meeting, 27th January 2027, 24th February, 24th March, 28th April, 26th May 2027. Mark them in your calendar and come along!

Your input is valued, and you are welcome to attend meetings at the Parish Hall.

Mrs. Maggie Brown, Clerk

Email: clerk@aymestrey.org



Produce & Flower Show Report 2026

Summer 2026 has been a challenging season for the nation's gardeners but I am delighted to say that the quality of entries in our Flower and Produce Show was as high as ever. There were a couple of new classes, and two new cups on offer in the form of Aymestrey Vegetable Expert and Aymestrey Flower Expert, plus a new trophy for the best single rose.

We were joined by two wonderful new judges; Jo Stannard is a previous Best in Show winner and a Parish Councillor, and Rob Thomas is a senior gardener at Berrington Hall for the National Trust. As ever, there were some difficult decisions to be made in awarding the prizes.



Huge congratulations go to Ruth Hurcomb who excelled across all fields and scooped the Vegetable Expert and Flower Expert trophies as well as the Stephen Price Cup for highest overall scores across all the categories.

The new Aymestrey Rose Bowl was kindly donated by Pauline and Richard Hammond and a beautiful, carved base has been created by Ian Banks.

The lucky winners of this award for best single rose were Catherine Swain and Sam Hurcomb.

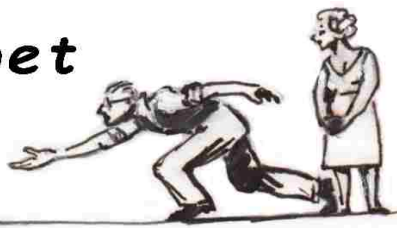
The final award for the Judges' choice of best item in the show went to Pauline Hammond for her stunning jug of garden flowers.



Many thanks and congratulations to everyone who took part in the show and we look forward to another display of gardening excellence in 2027.

RT

Aymestrey Carpet Bowls



Autumn Report 2026

We have enjoyed a consistent turnout on Monday evenings for Carpet Bowls over the summer. On the August Bank Holiday Monday, we enjoyed our annual Social Evening that included the awarding of our annual Cups and Trophies.

This year's winners were:

- Drawn Pairs Champions – Alan Johnston & Dave Dunn
- Pairs Champions – Chris Richmond & Martyn Booth
- Singles Champion – Martyn Booth
- Most Improved Player – Peter Climmer

Our Winners!



Earlier in the summer, the Young Farmers asked for an evening of bowls, so Dave, Martyn and myself took up the challenge of introducing them to the game. Although their numbers were lower than expected, with many away on holiday, we still had a great evening. There was plenty of lively, noisy competition, which made a change from a typical Monday night bowls session (though, without naming names, some of our regular bowlers can be quite noisy too! 🎱)

As we get into Autumn, we are preparing for the winter league (against teams from Lingen, Titley and Wigmore); after being pipped to the title last year, we're hoping to go one better this year.

If you want to try Carpet Bowls, then why not pop along on a Monday evening (from 7pm) or contact me: wrightturned@gmail.com or tel 07759980090.

Peter

Notes From The Marsh

mid-June – end August 2026

Seeing Red!

Well, we've seen a number of red alerts this summer, the heat has been Mediterranean, if not tropical, phew – red has some interesting shades: scarlet, vermilion, crimson, not to mention lobster and fiery. There were two red-letter days for me (something the Romans did do for us, with a calendar marked in red for special days). Firstly, not one but two Kestrels were hovering over rough meadow opposite; then on 28th July the first Hummingbird Hawk-moth landed on my buddleia.



Not the first local sighting; admiring a neighbouring flower-filled garden and talking about – guess what? - Hummingbird Hawk-moths, one appeared as if summoned. Even on the Kingsland bowls green – and I was actually bowling, folks, fancy being muddled by a moth! - a sudden shout of 'Where's Susanna?' as one materialised on the flower-tubs. Mostly migrants from further South, they live up to 5 weeks as they siphon nectar from buddleias and longer-tubed blooms; their top speed is about 12 mph - they're absolute whizzes. What's more, they reputedly have better colour recognition than honey-bees.

So what's in a colour? To start with, butterflies and moths can see more of the

red light spectrum than we can, as well as ultraviolet. Many flying insects have evolved together with flowers which use ultraviolet patterning to guide bees and butterflies to nectar and pollen – a plus both for plants when it comes to pollination and for insects when it comes to nourishment.

Red, for human beings, is rich with emotion; we see red when we're angry, as provocative with scarlet women, as romantic with roses. It's also a clear warning – spilt blood, traffic lights, red flags. That's not so different with butterflies or beetles, though emotions may not come into it! Many signal 'Not edible' or 'I'm poisonous' with red markings which sensible birds, bats and other predators can recognise.

So, danger, danger! – Red Admiral, Scarlet Tiger Moth, Ruddy Darter? (all lurking in my garden.)

Actually, not quite and not for humans; for a start, birds certainly go after Scarlet Tigers – some may be teenage flyers which don't recognise a warning, but perhaps quite large day-flying prey is worth the risk, or not so tasty rather than actually poisonous. Garden Tiger Moths (also in my garden) have orange-red underwings, hidden unless they're alarmed and flash them at clumsy passers-by; some suggest they are poisonous when eaten by predators, as their body fluid may contain neurotoxins from caterpillar food-plants such as Foxgloves. As Garden and Scarlet Tigers are closely related with similar patterning, the suggestion that one is poisonous and one is just distasteful is probably connected to differing caterpillar food-



plants - Scarlet Tigers seem to prefer Comfrey. Needless to say, there are crafty mimics too; I'd love to see a Hornet Moth!

Red Admiral butterflies, coming to the UK each year, are said to have their pretty black, white and red upper-wing colouration for mating purposes rather than for danger and tend to be brighter when growing up in summer. The Ruddy Darter - no swearing, it's British! - is a smallish dragonfly which comes to my paddock pond; the male is a glorious red - the female is golden. Dragonflies have incredibly good eyesight and colour recognition, as well as being able to see faster movements than we can - so the chances are that sexual colour differences help them to find the right mate - and possibly to attack their rivals!

On a blue note, it's been a good year for Holly Blue butterflies which have flitted all round the garden, usually above my head; a few Common Blues. Sadly, not one sighting of Fritillaries, just one or two Small Tortoiseshells, a sprinkling of Painted Ladies, a few Green-veined Whites, skittish Commas, various Peacocks and Red Ads, Speckled Woods dancing in the shade - Clouded Yellows on the bowls green and down the lane, but none gracing me with their sunny presence.



Moth trap performances have been varied, from only 6 or 7 common species on a sullen clouded morning at the end of July to a positive flood on 14th August - including 12 Common Wainscots, 12 Large Yellow Underwings, 6 Yellow

Shells, 5 Flame Shoulders - and 25 Setaceous Hebrew Characters.

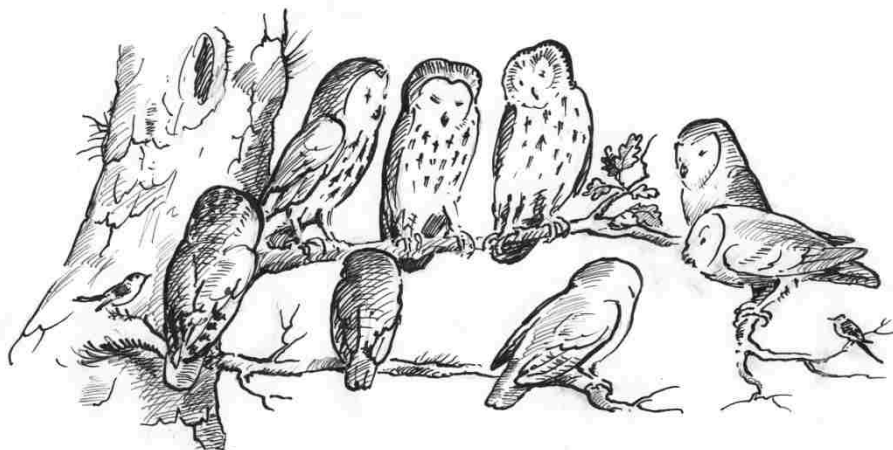
Perhaps more ominously, there was an unobtrusive migrant moth with a few tiny orange spots, seen several times, blandly named in UK the Small Mottled Willow. Having been innocently welcomed as a new name on my 'twitch-list', it then became apparent that it is under false colours. In the US it's called the Beet Armyworm - and the larvae can decimate a variety of crops including beans, peas, salad leaves, potatoes and cereals. It can't stand cold winters, so has not so far managed to populate Britain; but here's the red light - given global warming, it may unfortunately become a resident in future.

Finally, let me introduce you to two other recent arrivals in the trap. Firstly, the Brussels Lace moth - don't lock up your cuffs and collars, this one eats lichens; looks like a bit of old lace, and is locally common. The second one, also encountered on 20th July, is a bit of a puzzle - hopefully the Angle-Striped Sallow, not to be confused with the Tawny-barred Angle (some moth-namers are obviously bent on giving us the wrong angle!). However, some moths are notoriously variable; my photo shows a golden brown moth with two golden spots and the correct double-pointed line above (rather than the single point of the very variable Dunbar) and the up-curving line beneath - but the little wretch has a white spot on the inside of each golden spot, not a black one. The real thing, or yet another lookalike? - mimicry is a wonderful thing, but I don't want to end up red-faced!! - I'd far rather been in the pink...

Susanna Checketts

PARISH PEOPLE

Here are some details for people in the parish you might need to contact



PARISH COUNCIL

Chair

Eleanor Waldron
contact via clerk

Clerk

Maggie Brown
clerk@aymestrey.org
Tel: 07398 222 310

Members

John Probert 01568 708484 - Dan Hurcomb hurcombdc@gmail.com
Domenica Dunne 07966103698 - Pauline Hammond 01568 708044
Doug Murrie (contact via clerk) - Jo Stannard jstannard8@btinternet.com /07545844526
Nick Barrow. (contact via clerk)

Special Responsibilities

Lengthsman: Yatton Farm Services Footpaths: Dave Dunn 01568 770224
Tree Warden: Richard Hammond rjhammond500@btinternet.com
MMP Patient Rep: Pauline Hammond pauline.hammond500@btinternet.com 01568 708044.

Ward Councillor

Carole Gandy 01568 780583 carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk

PARISH HALL

Chair: Martyn Booth 07748604215
Bookings Secretary: Pauline Hammond 01568 708044 or 07796590266

CHURCH

Reverend Maggie Tate-Druiff rector@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk
01568 701245, 07514 785 568
Churchwardens: Meg Thorpe 07943046450. Philip Dunne 01568 770432

AYMESTREY MATTERS

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DATES FOR DIARIES

2026

When	What	Where
Mondays 7.00pm	Carpet Bowls	PH
Tuesdays 10.30am to 11.30 am	Tea/Coffee in the Hall	PH
Thursdays 8.00pm	Sequence Dancing	PH
Thursdays 9.30am to 10.30am and 10.45am to 11.45am	Pilates	PH

October

Friday 9th 8.00pm	Fun Quiz Night	PH
Friday 16th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Sunday 11th 11.00am	Morning Prayer	Aymestrey
Sunday 18th 3.30pm	Evening Prayer	Leinthall Earls
Tuesday 20th 10.30am	Macmillan Coffee Morning	PH
Sunday 25th 9.30am	Forest Church	Aymestrey
Wednesday 28th 7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting	PH

November

Sunday 1st 11.00am	Holy Communion	Aymestrey
Saturday 7th Gates open 5pm	Bonfire 6pm	Fete Field, Aymestrey
Sunday 8th 10.50am.	Remembrance Service	Aymestrey
Friday 13th 8.00pm	Fun Quiz Night	PH
Sunday 15th 3.30pm	Holy Communion	Leinthall Earls
Friday 20th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Sunday 22nd 9.30am	Forest Church	Aymestrey
Wednesday 25th 7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting	PH
Sunday 29th 10.30 am	Advent Sunday Service	Aymestrey

December

Saturday 5th 7.00pm (Doors open)	Parish Christmas Party	PH
Sunday 6th 11.00am	Holy Communion	Aymestrey
Friday 11th 8.00pm	Christmas Fun Quiz	PH
Sunday 13th 3.30 pm	Christingle	Leinthall Earls
Friday 18th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Saturday 19th 10.00am	Decorate the church for Christmas	Aymestrey
Sunday 20th 3.00pm	Carol Service	Aymestrey
Wednesday 23rd	No Parish Council Meeting	
Christmas Day 11.00am	Holy Communion	Aymestrey
Sunday 27th 10.30am	Benefice Service	Aymestrey

Printed by One Stop Print Shop Leominster Tel: 01568 610095/610619
Email: theonestopprintshoposps@gmail.com

Winter Edition of Aymestrey Matters
Hopefully to be published early/mid December
Copy date for this edition is 29th November 2026
All articles, photos, notices and letters please to
editor@aymestrey.org

An Evening of Swashbuckling Fun at Yatton Court

After weeks of planning, preparation and keeping our fingers crossed the good weather would hold, Friday 31st July finally arrived – and with it, Illyria Theatre Company's production of *The Three Musketeers* at Yatton Court.

And what a setting for an evening of outdoor theatre!

From 6pm, audiences began arriving armed with picnic baskets, folding chairs and everything required to make themselves comfortable for the evening. Before long, the grounds were filling with families, friends and neighbours enjoying their picnics and settling down in the sunshine, while tea, coffee, Pimms and other refreshments were served.

Then, at 7pm, it was time for the main event.

Illyria brought Alexandre Dumas' famous tale of d'Artagnan and the Three Musketeers to life with all the energy, humour and ingenuity for which the company is known. With a small cast taking on an extraordinary number of characters, there were lightning-fast costume changes, sword fights, adventure, comedy and, of course, plenty of cries of "All for one and one for all!"

One of the great pleasures of outdoor theatre is that it is about much more than simply watching a play. There is something rather special about sitting outside on a summer evening, picnic beside you, surrounded by the Herefordshire countryside while a live performance unfolds just a few feet away.

We were also extraordinarily fortunate with the weather. The heatwaves of the summer, whilst not at all great for the garden or the environment, meant we didn't have the usual worry that inevitably accompanies organising any outdoor event in Britain. So, the sun shone (although it went a bit chilly later) and we were treated to exactly the sort of glorious summer evening we had been hoping for.

The event was organised by Aymestrey Events, and we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who came along and supported it. Seeing so many people gathered together and enjoying themselves made all the work beforehand worthwhile.

Our thanks also go to everyone who helped make the evening possible – those who assisted with setting up, parking, welcoming visitors, refreshments and the many other jobs that go on behind the scenes at an event like this. We are also enormously grateful to the Hurcombs for allowing us to hold the performance in the beautiful setting of Yatton Court.

And, of course, our thanks to Illyria Theatre Company for providing such a wonderfully entertaining evening.

Perhaps most importantly, it was lovely to see people coming together for an event right here in our local community – meeting friends, chatting over picnics and enjoying a shared experience on a beautiful summer evening.

Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket, helped spread the word, shared our Facebook posts or simply told friends and neighbours about the event. Your support really did make a difference.

We hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we enjoyed bringing it to Aymestrey.

And after the success of our first outdoor theatre evening, perhaps this won't be the last time we see picnics, deckchairs and a little theatrical magic at Yatton Court...

Follow our 'Aymestrey Events' Facebook page for information about forthcoming Aymestrey events such as the Bonfire, the Wassail and, of course, maybe another outdoor theatre production.

Alison Archer



The audience arriving at the idyllic setting of Yatton Court



d'Artagnan under pressure



Just some of the vibrant costumes used



HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE

St John the Baptist and St Alkmund Church,
Aymestrey
at 6:30pm

Friday 2nd October

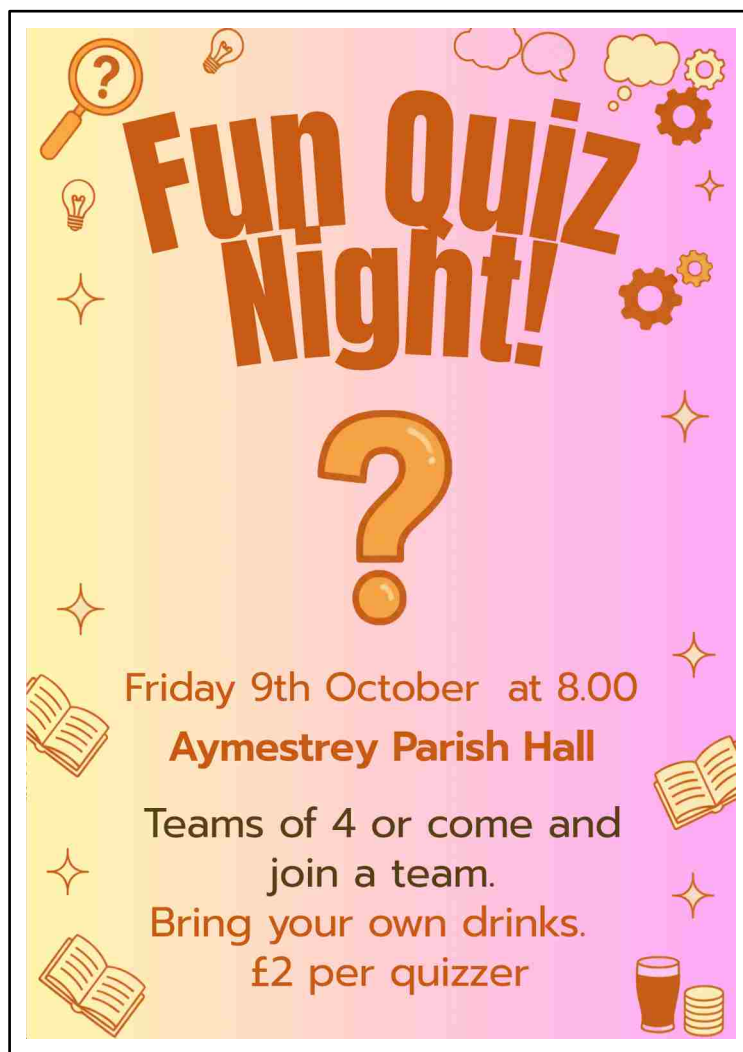
followed by
Parish Harvest Supper
in the Parish Hall

Three course sit down
traditional supper

All Welcome

Please phone Meg 07943 046450 or
Bronwen 01547 540511 to secure your seat at
the supper table and to advise if vegetarian option
is required (please phone to ensure catering numbers)

£15
pay on door



Fun Quiz Night!

?

Friday 9th October at 8.00
Aymestrey Parish Hall

Teams of 4 or come and
join a team.
Bring your own drinks.
£2 per quizzier

AYMESTREY PARISH BONFIRE & FIREWORKS

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER

To be held on the Fete Field, starting at 6pm
with fireworks from 7.00pm.

Gates open at 5pm

Food and Soft Refreshments Available

Tickets: £8, Under 12s £5 (under 4s free)
Family Ticket (for 4, with 2 adults) £23

Online Bookings~ www.wegottickets.com/aymestrey

