

# *Aymestrey Matters*



*Autumn 2024*

# Parish Notice Board



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2pm - Whist Drive

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November - Annual Aymestrey Bonfire & Fireworks

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November - Church Autumn Fayre

**Carpet Bowls**  
**Monday Evenings**  
**@ Parish Hall**  
**7pm**  
**All Welcome**

### FUN QUIZ

2nd Friday in the Month

In the Parish Hall

8.00pm

Teams of 4 or come along and join in.

Cash Prize



### Film Night

3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the Month  
October to early Summer

Supper @ 7.00pm

Film @ 7.30pm

Contact Ian Banks  
for details:- 770816

### *"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 12.00ish*

### Parish Council Meetings

held in the Parish Hall  
7.00pm

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday in the month  
(except Dec & Aug)

ALL Parishioners are welcome  
to attend

### Parish Council Vacancy

Please check website  
[www.aymestrey.org](http://www.aymestrey.org)  
for update  
or  
contact the clerk

### WHIST DRIVES

The next whist drive is on  
10<sup>th</sup> October

but we are trying to make  
this a monthly event  
especially

through Autumn and Winter  
Please contact  
07748604215  
if interested

# *EDITORS' PAGE*

**Y**atton is about 5 minutes, by car, from the Parish Hall in Aymestrey so anyone needing the Defibrillator in an emergency would not meet the golden 5 min rule, even if you put the patient into the car! So it is **lovely to see a Defib or AED in Yatton** and praise and thanks must go to all those residents you donated enough for the project to go ahead. Let's hope it is never needed but if it is then we are prepared; especially if we join in the training offered through the Parish Council. See the ad. Page 15

**A**nother thank you must go to Rosemary Trapp who has led the organisation of another very popular Produce & Flower Show this year. 'Well Done' to all who took part and let's go for an even bigger and more colourful show in 2025. So start pouring over those seed catalogues, the growing season isn't that far away.

**B**efore cancelling the **Foot Health Practitioner** for good, due to lack of support, the Tuesday Morning Coffee Morning will host the clinic about once a month starting on the 15<sup>th</sup> October. So come along enjoy the social occasion and have your feet treated and pampered, it costs much less than a home visit.

**B**est wishes and a warm welcome to our parish newcomers; to those who have been in residence several months and also others who are recent arrivals either permanent or on a temporary basis. A great way to meet your neighbours and find out about what's happening is to join in with happenings at the Hall. Details can be found in this magazine, you will be most welcome.

**Y**ou may be wondering what's happening about the 2025 Calendar, or perhaps not, since we have had no response to requests for photographs from around the Parish and following the poor sales last year; **there will be no 2025 Calendar.**

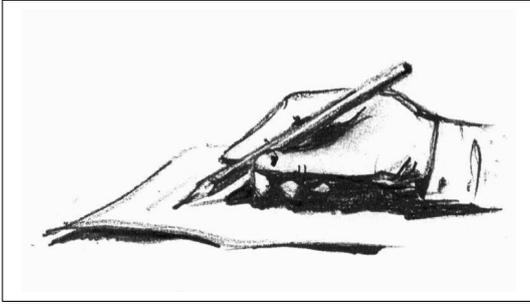
Denise & Martyn

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

*Front Cover design by Imogen Davis, thank you yet again Immy.*

## **Aymestrey – A Mystery at Thornbury Manor**

This Murder mystery play to be held in the Parish Hall will now take place early in the new year. If interested in helping in any way please contact Ian Banks at me@ianbanks.me or 01568 770816. Please see next edition for more details.



## Parish Council

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

The success of the Traffic Calming scheme in Aymestrey village is clear to see. Residents and councillors have worked tirelessly together and with Herefordshire Council and are to be thanked for achieving such amazing results. Read all about it in the Traffic Calming Update.

The new Yatton defibrillator is installed next to the notice board. Confirmation is awaited from the Ambulance Service that the site has been added to their Computer Aided Despatch system. Thanks go to the residents of Yatton for their generous donations totalling £1,100.00 also to the resident on whose property it has been installed, and to Cllr Goddard for finalising the installation. New pads were bought for the defibrillator at the Parish Hall, and a replacement machine will be considered in the budget for next year. The existing machine (a Lifepak CR Plus) was discontinued in 2019, making parts increasingly difficult to source.

A grant of £3,399.00 has been agreed by Herefordshire Council for the repair of steps on the Mortimer Trail below Pokehouse Wood, and for self-closing gates to replace nine stiles on AY5, AY4A, AY14, AY15, and the Mortimer Trail. Landowner permission is required before work can begin. The Parish is fortunate to have such an active Footpaths Officer, providing me with photos, locations, descriptions etc., without which the grant would not have been secured.

A new oak noticeboard has been purchased for Covenhope. Special thanks to Councillors Probert and Goddard, who have volunteered to fix it to the wall.

A donation of £685 was made to the Parochial Church Council to help cover mowing costs for the churchyards in Aymestrey and Leinthall Earls. A similar amount is likely to be included in next year's budget.

What's next? The budget and Precept (tax from each household) for 2025/26 will be discussed at the October meeting and finalised in November.

Parish Council meetings take place on the 4th Wednesday of each month, except in August and December. The upcoming meeting dates are:

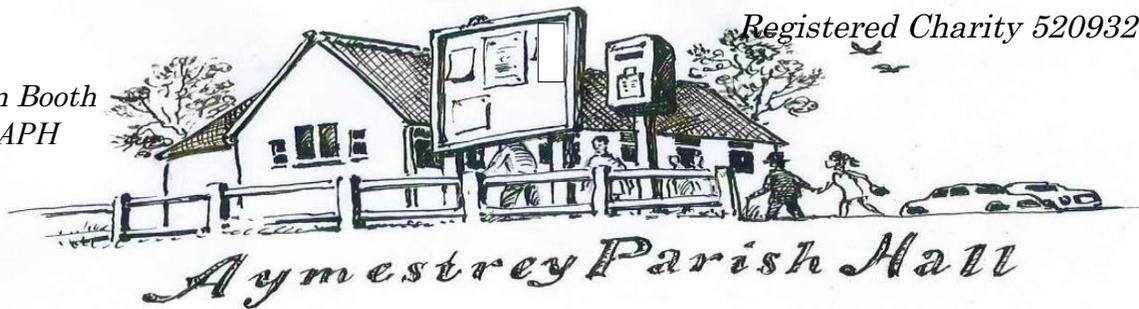
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October
- 27<sup>th</sup> November
- December – no scheduled meeting
- 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025
- 26<sup>th</sup> February

All residents are encouraged to attend. It's a great chance to stay informed about local matters and make your contribution. While formal discussions are limited to council members, you are welcome to share your thoughts and concerns during the Public Session at the beginning of each meeting. Your input is valued, and we look forward to seeing you there!

**Mrs Maggie Brown**, Clerk. [clerk@aymestrey.org](mailto:clerk@aymestrey.org)

*Martyn Booth  
Chair, APH*

*Registered Charity 520932*



The last three months at the hall has seemed somewhat quiet, especially compared with all the upheaval of the first half of the year. However Summer should be more of an outside time, with people enjoying our glorious environment or just being busy in their gardens.

The Fete is always a welcome diversion especially when the weather is kind as it was this year, unlike last years wet and windy event. Another Summer event is the Plant and Produce Show which is held at the hall in August, and this years was well supported, with a colourful floral display sampled from the local gardens; more of this elsewhere in the magazine.

Things are slowly returning to normal, we've had our first quiz of the Autumn, six teams took part and it was a close run thing, with 'The No-hopers' the eventual winners. We allow teams up to a maximum of four, although we have twos and threes, teams are often formed on the night, making it a very sociable event. Please do come along and join in, we always have a laugh, as after all, it is a fun quiz.

Also in September we held our second Whist Drive, led by Hazel Bows, although the attendance was low a most enjoyable afternoon was had by all who took part. We are holding another one on Thursday October 10<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm hopefully we can fill a few more tables as people return from their Summer travels. All are welcome to these afternoons regardless of card playing ability, though a sense of fun is useful!

A Table-top sale (that's not a sale of table tops!) had 10 tables with an array of items from cakes to crafted goods, plants to collectables, thank you to all the stallholders who attended; the customers who came, and especially Angela Gardner for doing the refreshments.

In October Film-night returns on Friday 18<sup>th</sup>, the film being shown is 'Wicked Little Letters' food will be a beef stew – see advert inside the back cover. Thanks to Ian Banks for organising these evenings, the films are always interesting and the food is always delicious!

Renovations and maintenance are an inevitable fact of life for buildings as old as the Parish Hall, and our latest project was to complete the new fencing across the front by the entrance, and also replace the old 'falling down' fence at the rear, We now have new 'Aymestrey Parish Hall' signs crafted by Ian Banks, thanks to him for these. We think they look pretty impressive and hopefully put the hall on the map.

....**And finally**, Coffee Mornings, we run these virtually every Tuesday from 10.30 to 11.30am (although it's usually nearer 12.00 when we start tidying up). For those of you who haven't been, it's an informal very friendly affair where parishioners can meet, drink tea or coffee with a biscuit or occasionally cake, and socialise with friends new and old. If your new to the area it's a great way, in fact it's the best way, to meet people and find out what's happening. Why not give it a try?

*Martyn*

# Notes From The Marsh

16<sup>th</sup> June – 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## *Out of Eden?*

To begin, some strange goings-on in the garden, or thereabouts. At the end of June, I suddenly found myself eyeball-to-eyeball with a Peeping Tom – a Grey Squirrel on my bedroom windowsill! Admittedly it was 11 am, but needless to say I was fully dressed, busy on computer, and in no mood for rodent operators. I opened the window; the squirrel chickened out and went splat into the hedge below. If you have tears, don't bother to shed them now – it was heard galumphing about in the eaves about 3 weeks later.

Then there was the mysterious guest in the garage. I glimpsed a spot of colour on the floor - and there was a Scarlet Tiger; no, folks, this is not a case of pink elephants, it was real and I wasn't on the brandy – it was a moth, it should have been on the Comfrey, what on earth was it playing at?

Scene three, again in early July - this time late evening at the downstairs south window, and it was a real rodent operator – a most beautiful russet-brown Tawny Owl sitting on top of my bird-table. Next up, the Affair of the Yellow Peril (yes, I've been reading too many thrillers). While having a Prosecco in the garden with a friend on a rare fine eve, I suddenly caught sight of a yellow spot gliding over the grass in the gloaming.



Thinking it was some large and fascinating insect, I hurried over – to see the end of a Grass Snake vanishing into the rose-bed – I'd seen its yellow collar.

Last but not least, and definitely peculiar – Sweet Peas behaving badly; on 5<sup>th</sup> September, lo and behold, the first flower this year struggled up the shrub by my door.

Let's be honest, and blame the weather. This high valley has been cold and damp most of the summer; insects have been hard-hit -my mini-wildflower meadow has bloomed well with Scabious and Knapweed in abundance, the grass has flourished– and the potatoes are full of slugs. (Here you will be entranced to know that there are about 40 species of slug in the UK – none of them are on my Christmas list.)

So where are the butterflies, the Bumblebees and the beetles? My check-list from mid-June to mid-September reads: 1 Large Skipper, 1 Ringlet, the passing Cabbage White, several (but not many) Gatekeepers & Meadow Browns & Green-veined Whites, 9 Peacocks all at once, 1 Yellowtail moth caterpillar, an Elephant Hawkmoth caterpillar and a Grey Dagger moth caterpillar kindly supplied by Steph & Kiwi; 1 Queen Hornet and 3 dozy workers, a very few Wasps; 1 Bloody-nosed Beetle, 1 Black & Yellow Longhorn; several Common Carder Bumbles, also an Early worker and 4 or 5 presumed White-tailed Bumbles. (My one excuse is bowling, no sunny spells were attempted. Not good enough, must try harder, I'll be wilder next year.)

One new entrant was the Patchwork Leafcutter Bee on the Birdsfoot Trefoil – was this sinister?

Perhaps we should look at a few rather more devilish clues to the problem. One distinctive flyer has been the Brimstone butterfly, seen earlier in the year and brightening the garden again in August and September. (I'd assumed that there were several broods, but it seems there's just one generation – not sure how that works.) Brimstone – aha, a sulphurous whiff of hell – or possibly of fertiliser. Ironically, it has been used to fumigate against insect pests; the butterfly is innocent, Your Honour.

Back to Birdsfoot Trefoil, a popular nectar plant in my little meadow; at home it was usually called Eggs & Bacon, or Hens & Chickens. More diabolically, it's been nicknamed Devil's Claws – but we'll acquit this poor plant as well – the seed-pods form the claw shape, the devil bit is mere libel.



Cranesbill – I assume the Meadow variety, also in my garden – was used in quantity in Elizabethan love-potions. (Unfortunately, no details found either of the recipe or of the results! - possibly witchery rather than devilry?)

To my mind, the most convincing candidate for collusion with the Devil is that thug Bindweed or Greater Convolvulus, strangling the hedges all down the lane this year; it was also known as the Devil's Guts, and it's impossible to get all the deep roots out cleanly.

To end with a tall story, my first Purple Loosestrife appeared in the paddock in early August, all 6 feet of it. This was understandable. Keble Martin's classic

*Concise British Flora in Colour* says 'On river banks, ditches and marshes' – it's at home in Yatton Marsh. However, one should shudder at the implications of 'loose strife' as in "Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war" (Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*).

We may be in for a garden revolution.

*Susanna Checketts*

## Volunteers Wanted



Having secured some funding to improve our footpaths the Parish are looking for volunteers to join our team to help install and repair stiles and steps.



Please contact our Footpaths Officer

# Church Notice Board



## CHURCH AUTUMN FAYRE

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November  
@ 2pm  
Aymestrey Parish Hall,

Cakes & Produce, Tea & Coffee.  
Bric-a-brac, Books/ DVDs etc.

Raffle

Contributions gratefully received in  
the hall on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> 5.-6.30pm  
Or on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> from 11am

For further information contact  
alexiaphillips24@gmail.com

In aid of Aymestrey & Leinthall  
Earls Churches

## Remembrance Sunday

Aymestrey Church

10th November

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



## DECORATION OF THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

Aymestrey Church

Saturday 21st December  
at 10am

All contributions of holly and  
greenery much appreciated

## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

St Andrew's Church,  
Leinthall Earls

@3.30PM

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December

## CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES

9.30am Holy Communion at St Andrews, Leinthall Earls

11am Holy Communion at St John the Baptist and St  
Alkmund, Aymestrey

## CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

St John the Baptist  
& St Alkmund  
Aymestrey  
@3pm

Saturday 22nd December

Followed by the usual mulled wine & mince pies

## PLOUGH SUNDAY

at St John the Baptist and St  
Alkmund, Aymestrey

Sunday 5th January 2025 at 11am

# Aymestrey and Leinthall Earls Churches

*Rev. Julie Read*

*Rev. Rosie Roberts, Curate*

Dear friends,

I love autumn. I know that, for some, it can be a bit of a depressing season, as the weather starts to turn colder and the nights start drawing in; but I love the cosiness that comes with this, the changing colours of the leaves, the joy of a few sunny days which we might feel are ours by right in summer, but which feel like a bonus in autumn. I love this season more with every passing year – which is probably a symptom of my advancing age! I think this is because it feels like a season of movement and change, perhaps the season where you feel most aware of the cycle we go through each year. We head through autumn into winter, seeing the plants die back and the days shorten, knowing that the year will keep turning and, in a few more months, spring will come and bring with it new growth and new life.

As it says in the book of Ecclesiastes (although you may equally know this line from a song by the Byrds): For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. This wonderfully wise book of the Bible argues that the fullness of life has to include balance – ups and downs, light and shade, gain and loss. Just as the turning of the seasons are an inevitable part of our journey through the year, so our lives go through seasons too. There is wisdom in being able to recognise – and accept – what stage we are living through in various aspects of your life; are we in a spring season, full of growth and potential, heading for summer, or in autumn, where things need to die back in order for new things to grow again? It's tempting to always want life to be springy and summery, but Ecclesiastes (and Turn, turn, turn) remind us that our lives aren't



truly full without the experience of every season. The turning of the seasons is a natural and visible expression of the process of death and resurrection that is fundamental to the Christian faith; just as Jesus had to die in order to rise again with all the possibility and promise that this event brought to the world, so our natural world, and our lives, also have to go through this process.

If autumn is a season you find difficult, I'd encourage you to reach out and spend time with family, friends, and those in our community. As you will see throughout this magazine, there is plenty going on in Aymestrey, from coffee mornings to quiz nights, walks to church services, film nights to fayres. You may already have joined us at Aymestrey church for our harvest festival and supper on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October; coming up in November there are opportunities to gather with friends and neighbours at the Autumn Fayre on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November as well as our Remembrance service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 10:50am. Coffee mornings take place every week, and film nights and quiz nights every month. If you feel you need a one-to-one conversation, Julie and I are always happy to hear from you – you can find our contact details in the 'Parish People' section. Do take these or other opportunities to connect with those around you, celebrate the goodness of this season, and to find warmth and light in the company of others as the nights draw in.

With every blessing,

**Rosie**



The Aymestrey Fete continues to be the great summer event, even the weather can't dim this wonderful traditional gathering; proving yet again to be a successful and enjoyable afternoon. It raises vital funds for the Church and Parish Hall and we are always grateful for your support.

The fete would simply not happen without the tireless efforts of a handful of volunteers who work long hours to organise, set up and run the stalls, displays, events and games; so if you ran a stall on the day, lent a hand with the set up or take down or were involved in any way – thank you, we could not do it without you.

Thanks are also due to Mr & Mrs Hurcomb for the use of their field and to John Probert for making sure it is 'sheep free' and tidy for the fete.

The Grand Raffle was a great success and many thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets. Special thanks to all the generous donors of prizes especially the £100 cash prize and the support of the Riverside Inn.

*Here's to another successful and hopefully dry year in 2025!!!*

*DB*

### *Arts and Crafts Round-up*

We had a very pleasant day in the Arts & Crafts Competition Tent. Friends both old and new popped in to say hello and, later on in the afternoon, shelter from the rain! What we didn't have, however, was a large number of entries so the displays looked a little sparse. Having said that, the quality of the entries we did receive was wonderful, especially in the baking and cookery categories.

The Joyce Pugh Cup for baking is awarded every year and this year the winner was Louise Gellatly who showed great skill with carrot cake, bread, sausage rolls and flapjacks. The flapjacks in particular received high praise from the judges. As ever, the Sweet Preserve class was very popular with first place going to Pauline Hammond for her tasty plum jam.

The Art and Craft classes and the Junior section were, unfortunately, notable for lack of entries with four classes receiving no entries at all. The three Flower Arranging classes were new this year and I hope that next year will see more people taking part. This year Liz May produced two lovely arrangements that really caught the Judges eyes. Among the Juniors Ada Wallington and Violet Wilmot deserve special mention.

And talking of Judges, huge thanks go to Revd Rosie Roberts and Doug Murrie who did a sterling job. Whether they needed to sample quite so much of the flapjacks and sloe gin I'm not so sure but I sincerely hope they enjoyed the experience enough to come back next year. Thanks also to Pauline Hammond for so efficiently helping with the organisation and entries.

So, looking forward to the Fete in 2025, I hope that more people will be encouraged to submit entries. Even if you don't come away with a certificate it's a great chance to take part and show off your skills to the village and have good fun in the process. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the competitions or ideas for classes please get in touch on [rosemary.trapp@icloud.com](mailto:rosemary.trapp@icloud.com).

*RT*

### *Dog Show Report*

This year's dog show was great fun as always, with lots of lovely doggy entries making judging incredibly difficult.

Judging the new musical sit class was especially tough with so many dogs instantly responding to the command to sit or lie down when the music stopped. Musical sits is based on the children's party game when the last to sit down in any round is disqualified. This class will definitely be included again next year. The worthy winner was collie Piper, who also won best in show.

The biscuit-catching round was also fiercely contested, with several dogs catching all three biscuits, so judging had to be based on style. The winner was Kimber who put in acrobatic performance and displayed an array of tricks aided by handler Reigh.

The Young Handler class was won for a second year by Henry Perkins and his lovely spaniel Doug, while best looking dog was handsome miniature English bull terrier Brennus, handled by Chayce.

*Thanks to all owners and handlers who did such a great job of showing off and controlling their dogs. Look forward to seeing you again next year.*

*Helen Hamilton*

*Special thanks must go to Rosemary for organising the Art & Craft Section and to Helen for running the dog show. Ed.*

---

*Don't forget this years 'AYMESTREY PARISH BONFIRE & FIREWORKS' to be held on the Fete Field on FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER starting at 6pm with fireworks from 6.45pm. Gates open at 5pm. See details on back cover.*



#### **Bonfire Wood Required**

Fallen timber, old pallets, wood furniture etc. Use this opportunity to get rid of your rubbish wood and wooden items!

Place your items 'neatly' inside the entrance to the field Bath Cottage in lay-by  
Contact Dan Hurcomb who will ensure gate is unlocked if needed

## Mortimer Ward

*Carol Gandy*



Well it has not been much of a summer and I feel really sorry for the farmers who may have struggled this year to produce a good crop. We seem to have not had seasons, as such, but each month seeming to be very much like the previous one.

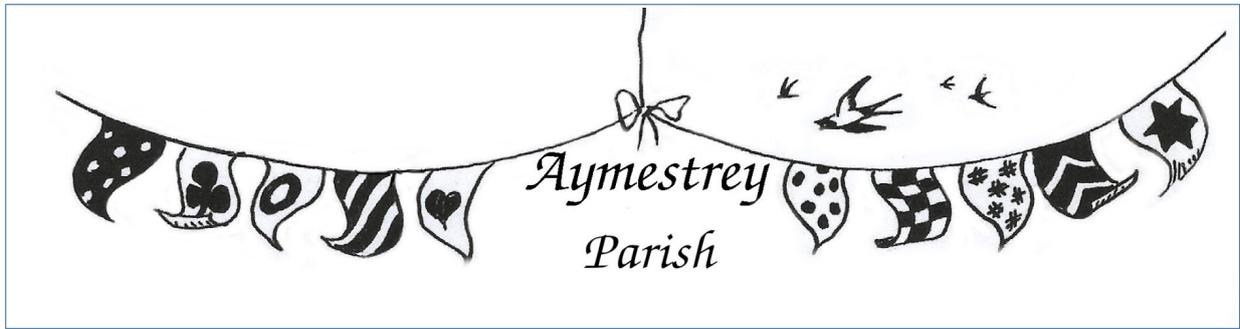
The resurfacing through Aymestrey has taken place along with traffic calming measures which we all hope will be effective. Much of this hard work is down to the parish council and in particular members of the traffic calming group. There is still some work to be done by the traffic calming group and floral group which when completed will really improve the look of the village of Aymestrey and demonstrate that if residents really care about the area they live in and are prepared to put the work in significant changes can occur.

Since my last article Barry and I have attended the Aymestrey Fete which was a great success and I was delighted to give out rosettes to winning dogs. We also came along to the ABBA tribute band event which was a great opportunity to let your hair down and for residents to dress up in traditional costume. Both of these events demonstrated that the Aymestrey area may be small in size but their planned social events are big.

The new government is to increase housing across the country. The effect of this means that Herefordshire's 16,100 proposed houses to be built between 2021 – 2040 has now been increased to 27,500. This is a huge leap and even if we built the Hereford Bypass and Southern Link Road and a southern bypass in Leominster we would still not open up enough land to cater for that increased number and would perhaps have to provide a settlement of over 3000 in the south of the County. We have written to the government explaining that not only do we have little "grey or brown land" we also in the north of the County have a moratorium on house building due to pollution of the River Lugg and therefore this figure is at present unrealistic; without financial support for all the road improvements mentioned above we would not even be able to achieve the original target of 16,100. We are awaiting a response.

At present Neighbourhood Development Plans are still valid but with the proposal to bring back the policy of needing to demonstrate a 5 year land supply we do not know how long that situation will continue. The result of this is that despite the Council consulting on our new local plan for 2021 – 2040 and advising those parishes which are considered sustainable as to the proposed new housing figures for their parish we have now had to go back to the drawing board and I cannot say what the outcome might be with regard to building in the rural areas.

If you wish to contact me about a particular issue, or just have a chat please do not hesitate to ring me on 01568 780583/ 07792882133 or email [carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk). I would also be happy to visit you if required.



## Produce & Flower Show 2024

The Village's top gardeners were hard at work this summer preparing for the Produce & Flower Show at the Parish Hall on the first Saturday in August. And what a show they produced! The tables were laden with 121 different entries for the 24 classes. While a number of folk had struggled to get their runner beans and onions ready in time, courgettes, cucumbers and potatoes all looked marvelous. A large number of flower and herb entries all made the Hall look, and smell, fantastic. We also had some impressive Mystery Seed entries. For those of you wondering, they were Californian Poppies or Eschscholzia.

This year's Rose Cup, for the best single rose, went to Sam & Ruth Hurcomb. If their entries in this class were anything to go by their garden must be a riot of colour and scent.

The Steve Price Cup is awarded to the participant with the highest overall score across all the classes. This year special mentions go to Dee Booth, Steph Dunn and Catherine Swain all of whom gained an impressive selection of awards, but the winners were Sam & Ruth Hurcomb. The quality and range of their winning entries across vegetables and flowers was really impressive.

The final prize is the Best in Show Cup. This is always a difficult one for the judges as they have so many top notch entries to compare. This year, however, they were unanimous in awarding the Best in Show cup to Jo Stannard for her vase of sweet peas. The colour, form and scent were all exceptional. Amazingly this was Jo's first time growing Sweet Peas so watch this space to see what she comes up with next year.

Once again huge thanks to our Judges Pat Allport and John Trapp. With so many wonderful entries it was not easy but they made great job of it. And thanks also to everyone who entered and to Dee and Martyn for organising refreshments and setting up the hall. For next year, we look forward to doing it all again and to another successful Produce and Flower Show.

*RT*



## Old Haunts

Jackie and Alan Watkins live in one of the cottages at the southern end of Yatton Hill Common. In correspondence with Ian Goddard Jackie volunteered some of the stories from the hillside, told here just in time for Hallowe'en....



Alan and I are both interested in the history of the common and have done quite a lot of research; having lived here for so long we have been able to have conversations with quite a few people who either lived up here or around the locality or knew people who did so. Alas, most of those residents were elderly when we came here and they are all now, sadly, deceased. From these we not only learned history but also some stories which some would say are more correctly termed as folklore, as opposed to fact, but they all had their origin in some event ....

**W**ay back in history this hill was shown as Aymestrey Hill on maps and not Yatton Hill Common. The Scots pines at the top of Yatton Hill, that in recent years have sadly started falling down, were originally planted as drovers' trees to stand out as a route guide for drovers driving their cattle from Wales to the market at Ludlow without having to pay tolls.

**Y**atton Cottage (the cottage at the north end of the common, below the pines) was once owned by a friend of Stirling Moss, the racing driver. I cannot remember his name but he was related to the Lockharts, the previous owners of Yatton Cottage. This old man was in his late 80s when we met him some 30+ years ago and he told us how the common is haunted by a huge dog and if you see its ghost you will live a long, healthy and prosperous life. This man was born at Yatton Cottage and said that modesty forbade him to show me the proof, but that he had a paw print on his upper thigh where the dog had come into the cottage at his birth and jumped up at the bed to look at him, as a newborn infant, leaving the mark of his paw as a sign of good luck.



**T**he Squire of Orleton used to like his 'alcoholic beverage' at what was then 'The Crown' pub, now The Riverside. He would partake of so much alcohol that the landlord and/or his friends used to put him on his steed and point the horse in the direction of home. The horse would make its way back to Orleton via Yatton Hill. On one unfortunate day the Squire's luck ran out and he fell off his horse and broke his neck, killing him. The horse took itself home. When I came to live here I was told this story, and that if horses pass that way they will always shy, requiring their rider to sit tight or fall off. This I could not resist, I had to test the theory. At the time I owned a thoroughbred mare and rode her up and down several times over the years over the ground where the Squire reputedly fell off (just above Yatton Cottage). Did she shy or try to get me off? No, and she was a highly strung and sensitive animal, yet she did not bother about crossing that area at all. However, that was just one horse and maybe I was at the wrong spot .....

**W**hen we came to live here Mr and Mrs Ron Jenkins and their teenage grandchildren used to live in Yatton Hill Cottage, next to our own house. The grandchildren came back home after a walk around Beech Grove one day and were terrified and shaking. They had apparently seen a man and a woman in Beech Grove. Nothing odd about that you'd have thought, but this couple looked at them then literally faded away in front of them.

For those who believe in witchcraft and the like there are ley lines that run across the hill roughly where the path goes up the hill from outside of Yatton Hill Cottage to the seat at the top of the common.

Perhaps best not to go up there at night ...



*JW/IG*

---

## Pokehouse Wood

Local folklore includes a tale of an Aymestrey man who having been tormented by Puck all night long in the local woods, left a piece of land in his will, the rent from which was to remunerate a man to ring a bell in the church tower at a certain hour every night “for ever”. This was for the benefit of any stray traveller who might be led astray by a will-o’-the-wisp in the wood just across from the River Lugg, called Poke-house (the abode of Puck). The rent produced, however, was so small that in the course of time no one could be found to ring the bell and it is more than two centuries since it was last rung. There was and possibly still is a hole in the north east corner of the church ringing chamber through which one of the bell-ropes was brought down into the porch for that purpose.

*Thanks to all who provide local history articles especially to Ken Holland who left many notes relating to Aymestrey Parish including this one about Pokehouse Wood. Ed.*

### **Aymestrey Parish Council Defibrillator Training Event!**

**Date & Time:** to be confirmed

**Location:** Aymestrey Parish Hall.

**Why attend?** Gain the skills to respond confidently in an emergency and help save lives. No special skills are required—everyone is welcome!

**The 2 HOUR SESSION COVERS:- What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest, how to recognise SCA, how to use your AED, how and why to do CPR, and what to expect when you dial 999**

***The 5 minutes to save a life***

*Stay tuned for updates on [www.aymestrey.org](http://www.aymestrey.org), hall notice boards or contact the clerk for more details.*

## LEOMINSTER FOOD BANK NEWS

Leominster Food Bank is an independent charity, funded mainly by donations from individuals and also supported by the Household Support Fund, administered by Herefordshire Council.

Since January this year we have given out over 2000 food parcels, of which 850 were for children. We have spent £31,000 on food so far in 2024, in addition to food donations from the public. These figures keep increasing every year as the cost of living goes up and therefore the needs of people who are struggling.



Every week we run two Food Bank sessions, by referral, for those in need of emergency food. We also run two Food Share sessions where we give away supermarket surplus and end of life food to anyone who comes: the aim of this is to reduce food waste and increase access to fresh food to people who might otherwise struggle to afford it. Food Shares also help to reduce the stigma often associated with accepting food from food banks. Every evening we distribute 'end of day' surplus food from the Co-op.

Through our Money Advice Centre we help clients with budgeting and bills, and we offer emergency help with heating via our partnership with the Fuel Bank Foundation. Additionally, we give out summer holiday food bags to help families reduce their need to access the Food Bank.

We have a large 'back-room' team who enable all this to happen by picking up food from supermarkets every day, shopping, checking and shelving food donations, bagging food and making sure our food and premises are safe and hygienic.

We are an entirely volunteer-run organisation, so we rely on the generosity of individuals giving their time and energy to be able to offer these services.

### **How can you help?**

· **Volunteer for us** – we are in urgent need of volunteers for a variety of jobs. Although a lot of our work is public-facing, many of our volunteers work behind the scenes collecting and sorting food. The commitment varies from a few times a month upwards, depending on how much time you have available. Volunteers need to be resilient, have a kind and non-judgemental attitude and be able to work on their own initiative after training. If you think you can help us by volunteering your time, please email [leominsterfoodbank@gmail.com](mailto:leominsterfoodbank@gmail.com) or phone us on 07715 410575.

· **Set up a standing order or give a one-off donation.** Cash donations are very welcome, as we need to pay for food of all kinds including fresh fruit and veg, plus washing powder, toiletries and other important items. We buy the majority of the food we give away. Details for setting up a standing order can be found on our website [www.leominsterfoodbank.org](http://www.leominsterfoodbank.org).

If you've already donated food to us through one of our collecting points, thank you – we really appreciate it. By installing the 'Bank The Food' app on your phone, you can get updates about which items we are in need of most. Visit [www.bankthefood.org](http://www.bankthefood.org) to download it or check the list on our website.

We are extremely grateful to our local community for their huge generosity in terms of food, financial donations and volunteering, without which we would not be able to continue this important service to vulnerable members of our community in Leominster and surrounding villages.

# Mortimer Medical Practice

## News from the Patient Participation Group (PPG)



### Flu vaccinations

Flu and Covid vaccinations are now available to book if you are in an eligible group. Book either online or by phone. Please remember to arrive on time and not too early, in order to avoid too many people in the waiting area. Also you are allocated to a particular vaccinator so please do not think others maybe being seen before you. As there will be a lot of people going in and out of the surgery on vaccination days please take extra care in the car park (there are still cases of cars being damaged with no one owning up) maybe you could get dropped off or park at the Coronation hall and walk over.

### RSV vaccination

There is a new vaccine available to those aged 75 to 79 and to pregnant women. RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus) it is being offered as a one off dose. The virus is an infectious disease of the lungs and airways. The vaccine boots a person's immune system and in trials has shown to reduce serious infections by up to 85% leading to a quicker recovery time and less possibility of hospitalisation. You will be contacted by the surgery if you are eligible.

### Non attendance of appointments

In August 107 people did not attend a booked appointment and did not cancel. This equates to nearly 2 days lost. Please remember to cancel any unwanted appointment. This can be done online, by phone or replying to the text sent out reminding of the appointment.

### New GP's

We have 2 new GP's in post Dr Verity Oloro and Dr Neda Abyneah. So the surgery is back up to strength following Dr Black leaving

### Training Day

The surgery is closed on 17<sup>th</sup> October for mandatory training. You will still be able to access to speak to the receptionist and they will be able to advise you.

### Contacting the surgery

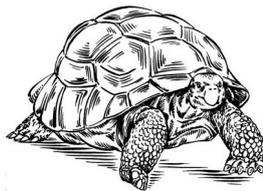
If anyone ever wants to ask a question about things happening at the surgery that bothers or worries them remember I can field questions anonymously on your behalf or just a general point or suggestion towards the surgery. My email and phone numbers are in this magazine on the contacts page (I am also hall booking clerk for Aymestrey) I'm also to be found most Tuesdays at the coffee morning in the parish hall.

**Pauline Hammond** your PPG representative

## Gardeners' Follies

The 12th of September. There is a chill northerly wind today, hissing through the Poplar trees and a few tired leaves fluttering across the garden. My tortoises have hauled themselves out to the best basking sites to try to absorb some solar warmth but they won't feed. Two of my lifelong interests, (some might say obsessions), are tortoises and old Land Rovers. There are similarities, both last a long time and will clamber over difficult terrain if allowed to albeit at a sedate pace.

I always had the modest ambition to have a tortoise lay eggs and to be able to hatch those eggs. One of my first tortoises bought on a whim in 1969 fulfilled this ambition in the 1980s. Unbeknown to me she had nested in the warm earth underneath the 4" heating pipes in a greenhouse that I managed, she had spent the last few weeks of autumn in there before hibernation. Three eggs hatched in February the following year I almost trod on the first to leave the nest. All three as they matured proved to be male. The sex of the developing foetus is determined early in incubation by the temperature, 27-28degrees Centigrade produces all males and 31-33 all females.



That first tortoise had lived in Nottingham then Burton on Trent where she grew to adult size and then Northant's where I was given a male Herman's tortoise, the same species; the previous owner was fed up with it biting sandal wearers toes. It still bites anything that could conceivably be a rival tortoise. We then returned to Nottingham in the 80s.

Subsequently when we came to Shropshire I got to recognise the pre-nesting behaviour of a gravid tortoise, pacing around the garden restlessly and sniffing the earth.

On two occasions I encouraged nesting by taking her for a supervised walk around the two acre walled garden guiding her towards the turf stack, she liked an elevated sunny position where she would first sniff then scrape with her front feet then shuffle before settling to excavate a nest hole using her rear feet alternately. The rear legs of a tortoise are surprisingly long and her curved claws dig and shovel like the back actor of a JCB. After egg laying, (usually 6or8), she covers and tamps the nest quite firmly, then spends time flailing with her rear feet over the whole nest site to disguise it. I had built an incubator box heated with two 35 watt heat pads thermostatically controlled.

And now her 21year old offspring has, for the last two years, nested and produced her own young, 3 last year and 4 this year. Nesting was late this year due to the poor weather and cold nights, 5 eggs on the 24th of June produced four hatchlings the fifth was infertile. They hatched at 55days which is quite short, it can be more than 70 days and hatching is usually spread over several days. The eggs are oval, hard shelled 3.5 centimetres long, similar to a small pigeon egg. I set them on a bed of moist vermiculite. After about two weeks I 'candle' the eggs from above with a small torch, developing embryos show as a dark spot in a pink mass with blood vessels visible. The embryo develops on top of the yolk and so the eggs must not be moved,

especially early in incubation. The hatchlings break out of the egg using an egg 'tooth', the egg shell having become thin and brittle because much of the calcium has been absorbed by the foetus to grow bone.

**T**he hatchlings are immaculate tiny replicas of their parents though sometimes slightly creased across their plastron (belly) through being confined in the egg.

Their instinct is to hide, to bury themselves. I transfer them to a vivarium in the greenhouse with a couple of inches depth of leaf-mould soil and pieces of bark to hide under. They will emerge when it is bright and warm to feed but scuttle away at any disturbance. In the wild they are a tasty morsel for many creatures at this stage.

**I** will keep these little tortoises active with heat and light until about the end of October and then gradually cool them down, they will stop feeding and then hibernate naturally in the leaf mould until I warm them up again in February. They will then be eager to feed and grow.

**F**or the next two summers they will go outside but protected from corvids and rats until they are bigger.

Sadly these tortoises are probably safer here, confined in my garden, than in their native habitat in the eastern Mediterranean, we co-exist amicably.

We will have some warm sunny weather yet for the tortoises but soon they will become lethargic and then bury themselves to hibernate, and I have the autumn routine of probing the ground in likely places with a stick for the telltale hollow sound of a shell. I gather them in to winter in a secure hibernacula.

**A**nd now this evening it feels quite wintry, from the top of the lane I see that a flock of Canada geese have settled in the vastness of the 'Edge of the World' field surrounded by the emptiness that makes ambush by foxes unlikely. I've



created very suitable habitat for my old Land Rovers to thrive but haven't managed to get them to breed, yet.

*Jim*

### **We need Drivers Urgently!**

Community Wheels is the provider of Community Transport across north and central Herefordshire. We provide door-to-door travel for people of all ages who do not have access to a car and are unable to use public transport due to mobility difficulties or its unavailability.

The need of the service is increasing, to the point, that we haven't enough drivers to help our customers. Therefore, we are looking for volunteer drivers in your area. If you are over 21, have a car and some spare time, we'd love to hear from you.

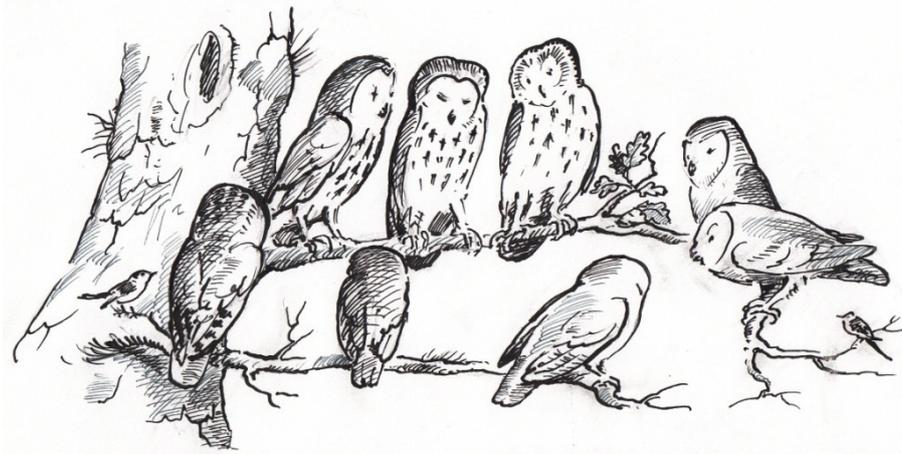
We are also looking for volunteers to driver our 17 seat Minibus, so if you have a D1 on your licence and would like to know more, please get in touch.

A few hours a week could make a huge difference to someone without transport. Our drivers volunteer their time, and we reimburse for all the miles from home and back.

**Please contact Linda for an informal chat on 01568 737940 or email: [linda.jones@hvoss.org.uk](mailto:linda.jones@hvoss.org.uk)**

## PARISH PEOPLE

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



## PARISH COUNCIL

### Chair

Vacant

### Clerk

Maggie Brown  
[clerk@aymestrey.org](mailto:clerk@aymestrey.org)  
Tel: 07398 222 310

### Members

Ian Goddard 770251 - Helen Hamilton 709155  
John Probert 708484 - Domenica Dunne 07966103698  
Eleanor Waldron - Mike Snoswell (both via Clerk)  
Nicola Luscott [nicolaluscott@live.co.uk](mailto:nicolaluscott@live.co.uk)

### Special Responsibilities

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

### Ward Councillor

Carole Gandy 01568 780583 [carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carole.gandy@herefordshire.gov.uk)

## PARISH HALL

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

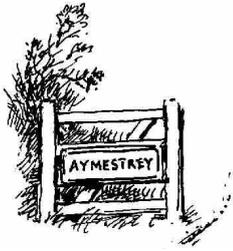
## CHURCH

Reverend Julie Read 708255. Reverend Rosie Roberts [revd.rosie@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk](mailto:revd.rosie@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk)  
07720 333383  
Churchwardens: Meg Thorpe 07943046450. Stuart Hutchings 01547540511, 07961117050

## AYMESTREY MATTERS

Editorial Team [editor@aymestrey.org](mailto:editor@aymestrey.org)  
Denise Booth 07434621260      Martyn Booth 07748604215

**Aymestrey Website:** [www.aymestrey.org](http://www.aymestrey.org)      Ian Banks 770816 [webadmin@aymestrey.org](mailto:webadmin@aymestrey.org)



## Traffic Calming in Aymestrey Parish



Well... It's happened! Not only do we have a brand, spanking new road surface through Aymestrey – but it's RED!

We also have road narrowing markings, buff-coloured roundels and buff coloured “highlighters” outside the Lychgate and Parish Hall areas.

Aymestrey village looks exceptionally smart. So, many thanks to Herefordshire Council AND Tarmac who have been very accommodating, positive and really helpful. Both went above and beyond the call of duty and have put in extra work we weren't expecting. Tarmac installed the brand new gates for us at either end of the village and has also really tidied up the road surface in front of the Riverside.

The new road surface and markings seems to have slowed the traffic down too – but that's just my personal opinion. We don't have any data yet on whether it's actually slowed down vehicles. I'll let you know about that in the fullness of time.

Sorry to everyone who had the awful time of trying to get round the road closures. It wasn't easy was it?

Now the village looks really tidy, we are going to try and keep it that way – so if anyone can help, by sweeping a footpath or two, it'd be most welcome and Aymestrey parishioners would be very grateful.

Breedon has been doing a great job of sweeping the road for us, so thank you to the guys at the quarry too.

I understand Breedon has also written to its drivers to make sure they observe the speed limit through the village. From my observations it appears to have had an effect so – once again, thanks guys.

We still have some more Traffic Calming measures to put in place as we're not at the end yet. I'm hoping that'll happen before the next Aymestrey Matters is published, so keep an eye out for additions around the village.

Alison Archer  
Sept 2024



# DATES FOR DIARIES

## 2024

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

### October

Thursday 10th 2pm	Whist Drive	PH
Friday 11th 8.00pm	Fun Quiz Night	PH
Sunday 13th	Holy Communion BCP	Aymestrey
Friday 18th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Sunday 20th 6.30pm	Harvest Festival followed by refreshments	Leinthall Earls
Wednesday 23rd 7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting	PH
Sunday 27th 9.30am	Forest Church	Aymestrey

### November

Friday 1st 6.00pm	Bonfire and Fireworks	Fete Field
Sunday 3rd 11.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Aymestrey
Friday 8th 5 -630pm	Drop off Autumn Fayre donations.	PH
Friday 8th 8.00pm	Fun Quiz Night	PH
Saturday 9th from 11am	Drop off Autumn Fayre donations.	PH
Saturday 9th 2.00pm	Church Autumn Fayre	PH
Sunday 10th 10.50am	Remembrance Sunday	Aymestrey
<b>Saturday</b> 16th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Sunday 17th 3.30am	Holy Communion CW	Leinthall Earls
Wednesday 27th 7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting	PH
Sunday 24th 9.30am	Forest Church	Aymestrey

### December

Sunday 1st 11.00am	Holy Communion BCP ADVENT SUNDAY	Aymestrey
Sunday 8th 11.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Aymestrey
Friday 13th 8.00pm	Christmas Fun Quiz Night	PH
Sunday 15th 3.30am	Christingle Service	Leinthall Earls
Friday 20th 7 for 7.30pm	Film Night	PH
Saturday 21st 10.00am	Decorate the church for Christmas	Aymestrey
Sunday 22nd 3.00pm	Carol Service	Aymestrey
<b>Christmas Day</b> 9.30am	Holy Communion CW	Leinthall Earls
<b>Christmas Day</b> 11.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Aymestrey
Sunday 29th 10.30am	Benefice Service	TBA

# Film & Food

As the nights draw in, the film and food nights are returning to the Parish Hall (every third Friday). We hope to have a packed schedule, all the way through to April next year, with films that you will enjoy. There are a few changes that we are going to have to make, the first is that the November film will be on the Saturday as unfortunately the Friday was double booked. The second is that we are going to have to increase the prices. The aim is to provide a social occasion for the community and ensure that the costs are covered, any profit goes to the Parish Hall Funds. We have kept prices for the film and food at £5 each since we started over 7 years ago, but rises are inevitable and rather than compromising on the quality of the food we have decided to raise the price to £6 for each. We hope you agree that £12 still represents good value for money.

**IB**

## Friday dates for your diary

18<sup>th</sup> October

**Wicked Little Letters**

16<sup>th</sup> November **SATURDAY!**

**The Holdovers**

20<sup>th</sup> December

**Thelma**

Also- 17<sup>th</sup> January

21<sup>st</sup> February

21<sup>st</sup> March

18<sup>th</sup> April

### Film and Food at Aymestrey Parish Hall



Friday – 18<sup>th</sup> – October

Food £6 at 7 pm / Film £6 at 7:30 pm

Please let us know if you are coming for food at [www.aymestrey.org/food-film](http://www.aymestrey.org/food-film) or phone 01568 770816

Beef stew, Vegetarian option available!

Ice cream and popcorn also available.

Please bring your own drinks

### Film and Food at Aymestrey Parish Hall



SATURDAY – 16<sup>th</sup> – November

Food £6 at 7 pm / Film £6 at 7:30 pm

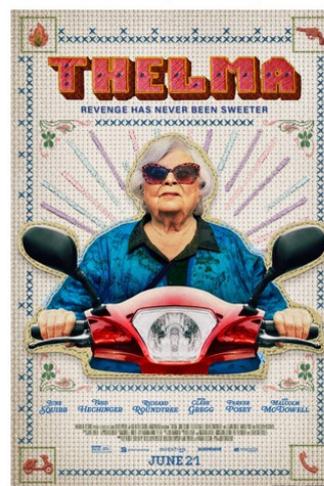
Please let us know if you are coming for food at [www.aymestrey.org/food-film](http://www.aymestrey.org/food-film) or phone 01568 770816

Spaghetti Bolognese, Vegetarian option available!

Ice cream and popcorn also available.

Please bring your own drinks

### Film and Food at Aymestrey Parish Hall



Friday – 20<sup>th</sup> – December

Food £6 at 7 pm / Film £6 at 7:30 pm

Please let us know if you are coming for food at [www.aymestrey.org/food-film](http://www.aymestrey.org/food-film) or phone 01568 770816

Chicken Stew, Vegetarian option available!

Ice cream and popcorn also available.

Please bring your own drinks

# Whist Drive

Thursday

10<sup>th</sup> October

2pm

Aymestrey Parish Hall

£3 per person

Cash Prize



Light Refreshments inc.

All Welcome

*In aid of Aymestrey and Leinthall Earls churches*



## Autumn Fayre

Aymestrey Parish Hall

Saturday 9th November

2pm

Cakes & Produce

Tea & Coffee

Bric-A-Brac

Books & DVDs

Raffle

*Contributions gratefully received to Aymestrey Parish Hall  
on Friday 8th November 5-6:30pm or Saturday 9th from  
11am. For more information contact*

*Alexia Phillips: alexiaphillips24@gmail.com*

## AYMESTREY PARISH BONFIRE & FIREWORKS

FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER

To be held on the Fete Field, starting at 6pm  
with fireworks from 6.45pm.

Gates open at 5pm

Food and Soft Refreshments Available

Tickets: £7, Under 12s £5 (under  
4s free)

Family Ticket (for 4, with 2 adults) £22

Online Bookings~ [www.wegottickets.com/aymestrey](http://www.wegottickets.com/aymestrey)

