

The Black Mountains Group Benefice NEWSLETTER

February 2025



The Parishes of Clodock & Longtown with Craswall, Llanveynoe,
St Margaret's, Michaelchurch Escley & Newton

Part of the Abbeydore Deanery
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01981 620145 / 07432 873422

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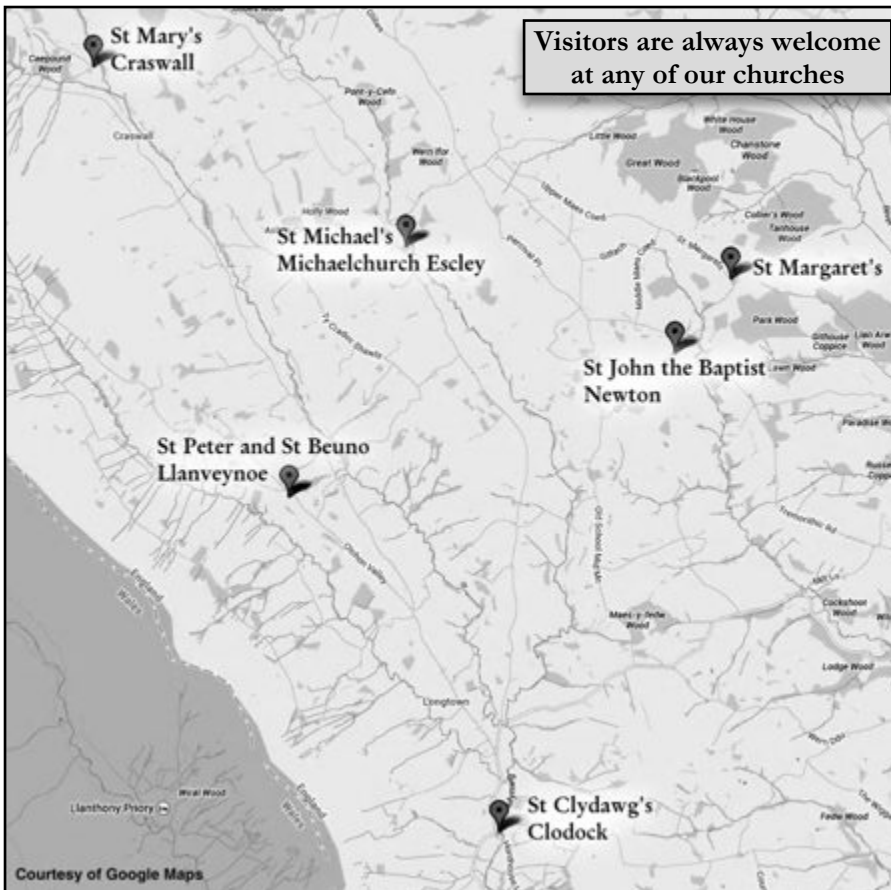
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Craswall

Mrs Christine Cleaton 01981 510674

Llanveynoe

Commodore Peter Tribe 01873 860260

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St Margaret's

(Vacant)

Michaelchurch Esley

Mrs Olive Howells 01981 510228

Newton

(Vacant)

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From the Clergy

BRID AND ST BRIGID AND CANDLEMAS

A long time ago early February was the month the Celtic Goddess Brid was celebrated as having awakened with the coming light of spring. A time associated with water as life giving; with poetry, also seen as life giving through its intuitive revelation. A time to celebrate fertility and healing.

With the coming of Celtic Christianity, the life of St Brigid of Kildare became entwined with Brid the Celtic Goddess. Indeed, the Church of England still celebrates Abbess Brigid on the 1st of February. Within Celtic spirituality, Brid and Brigid are seen as keepers of sacred fire and water and are associated with healing. In Kildare there was a pagan temple with a fire that had been kept alight for a thousand years. Instead of trying to extinguish the flames thinking them pagan only, St Brigid, and the women who followed her, kept them aflame for another thousand years. If water was dirty Brigid would turn it to beer in order to heal. One of the prayers associated with her contains these lines:

*I would like a great lake of beer for the King of Kings.
I would like to be watching Heaven's family drinking it
through all eternity.
I'd like to give a lake of beer to God. I'd love the Heavenly
Host to be tipping there
For all eternity.*

In Ireland and on the west coast of Scotland red cloth was placed on a windowsill on St Brigid's Day and when it caught the morning dew it would have curative properties for the rest of the year.

Sadly, the celebration of women, fertility and sacred flames were not welcomed by some aspects of the Church. From the 12th century women who had given birth were purified by being 'churched'. Why anyone should be purified after something so natural and beautiful is beyond me. To be fair, the ritual was also used to give thanks for a child and was based on the story of Mary and Joseph bringing Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to give thanks and to dedicate his life to God. In Britain, this was celebrated as 'Candlemas', also in early February, and there were processions at night with lit candles until the 16th century reformers banned them. Parishioners were having too much merriment!

In the past we have had forms of Christianity that celebrate women and healing and others that think women need purifying and forbids festivities. I know which interpretation I would like to follow.

Rev'd Simon

READINGS – FEBRUARY & 1st SUNDAY IN MARCH

Sunday 2nd February

Old Testament Malachi 3: 1-5
New Testament Hebrews 2: 14-end
Gospel Luke 2: 22-40
Psalm 4 (1-6), 7 - end

Sunday 9th February

Old Testament Isaiah 6: 1-8 (9-2nd)
New Testament 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11
Gospel Luke 5: 1 -11
Psalm 138

Sunday 16th February

Old Testament Jeremiah 17: 5-10

New Testament 1 Corinthians 15: 12-20
Gospel Luke 6: 17-26
Psalm 1

Sunday 23rd February

Old Testament Genesis 2: 4b-9, 15-end
New Testament Revelations: Chapter 4
Gospel Luke 8: 22-25
Psalm 65

Sunday March 2nd

Old Testament Exodus 34: 29-end
New Testament 2 Corinthians 3: 12 - 4:2
Gospel Luke 9: 28-36 (37-43a)
Psalm 99

Deanery Update

Following on from the Advent and Christmas services, we are now looking ahead to the opportunities that this new year will present.

The Deanery held a very successful Marriage Preparation Course in January, where some of the couples who are being married in churches within the Deanery came together to look at inspiration ideas for their marriage service, communication and a section title "Stacking the dishwasher": working well together when we disagree!

A great deal of work is happening in the Ewyas Harold and Black Mountains Groups as they gather together the required information for the recruitment of a new Vicar in that area. A huge thank you is due to all those who are contributing to this, and we hope that we will have some candidates to interview before Easter.

In the next in our series taking a deeper look at some of the projects that happen within Abbeydore Deanery we look at...

Golden Valley Pilgrim Way – What is it?

The Golden Valley Pilgrim Way is a 6/7 day circular "bring your own beliefs or none" pilgrimage route along the footpaths in this area beginning and ending at Hereford Cathedral.

Pilgrims make a booking via the Deanery office to be able to stay at churches within the deanery each night as they follow the route. In 2024, over 250 pilgrims walked the route staying in churches, and many more are likely to have walked sections of it during the year. A lot of bookings have already been made for 2025.

As well as offering pilgrims a spiritual experience, the project is bringing in income for churches and local businesses and has been shortlisted for the Visit Herefordshire Unsung Hero award with the winner being announced in late February.

Dates for your Diary:

Reflective Ramble: 23rd February 1.30pm, Dorstone Church. At this Ramble, we'll be welcoming Matt Freer who will be offering an introduction to Breathwork. Please get in touch to let us know if you'll be coming along.

Hedgerow Communion: 2nd February 2pm, St Andrew's Church, Bredwardine

As always, we're happy to hold special services in our churches so please get in touch to find out more about funeral, wedding or baptism arrangements.

For up-to-date information:

- Keep an eye on our website: abbeydoredeanery.org
- Follow our **Abbeydore Deanery** Facebook page or join our Facebook group
- Subscribe to our regular email update: <http://eepurl.com/ggcfPj>
- Get in touch with the Deanery Office on **01981 620145** or abbeydoredmc@gmail.com

Llanveynoe Church

We apologise for having to cancel the 9.30 Llanveynoe Church Service on Sunday 2nd Feb and want to inform you that the next service will be on Sunday 2nd March. This will be at the normal time of 9.30 am.

SALEM BAPTIST CHAPEL
Llanwonog Lane, Longtown HR2 0LE



SUNDAY SERVICES

2 Feb	6.30 pm	Bring & Share
9 Feb	6.30 pm	Revd Malcolm Lane
16 Feb	6.30 pm	Mr David Adams
23 Feb	6.30 pm	Mr Rob Roberts

ALL WELCOME

For further information, please email longtownsbc@gmail.com

QUAKER MEETINGS AT DULAS COURT

A time to sit in peace and stillness together can be elusive. Occasional Quaker Meetings at Dulas Court Nursing Home are now providing such an opportunity.

Residents, relatives and any visitors are all welcome.

For half an hour we sit in stillness/mindful silence and quietly reflect on the Light within, whatever that is for each of us - as many others do in quiet spaces throughout the world.

Our next meetings will be at 3.30pm in the craft room next to the visitor's car park at Dulas Court on the following **Sunday 2nd March, Sunday 8th June, Sunday 5th October**

Dulas Court Nursing Home, Dulas, Ewyas Harold, HR2 0HL (Park in visitors car park)

Any questions please contact: Clare Lockley, Lifestyle Manager on 01981 240214, c.lockley@herefordshirecarehomes.com

Thanks

WITH THANKS

Debra June Pritchard's family wish to thank everyone for their kind donations to Amyloidosis Research, totalling £1800.00

STORM BERT

Those affected by the recent flooding caused by Storm Bert, would like to thank all who helped out and offered support, in ways too numerous to mention.

Thank you.

Forthcoming events

LONGTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Longtown Village Hall HR2 0LD

Monday February 3, 7.30pm

MEMBERS EVENING

Yvonne Chapman: Allensmore Court

Caroline Brown: Urishay Castle and Chapel

Miriam Griffiths: "I Spy History"

Guests are very welcome at our meetings (£4).

Half Season membership available.

For more information, contact

jerrydpdavis@outlook.com or visit

www.lhsarchive.org.uk

CRASWALL WHIST

Every Tuesday in February: 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th

7.30pm Craswall Village Hall

An evening of whist, light refreshments and a draw



Longtown Library is next open on

**5th February
2.30 to 4.30pm**

More Singing Matters

With Fiona Evans, Director Hay Community Choir

ON SATURDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2025

VENUE: Longtown Village Hall

TIME: 10.00 am to 3.30 p.m.

COST £20.00

BRING: A bottle of water, a pencil, a desire to sing and a packed lunch

Coffee and Tea will be provided

Singing is good for you. Singing together with other people is even better for you so come along and do yourself and others a favour that will get your feet tapping, your heart racing and bring a smile to your face.

**Tickets available from Sarah Ashton,
The Old Greyhound, Longtown, HR2 0LD
07968 371218 / 01873 860492**

ashton.sj@googlemail.com

Tickets:

<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/EGOA>

Alternatively pay by cheque (made out to Sarah Ashton) or cash.



NEWTON ST MARGARETS WOMEN'S GUILD

We usually meet on 2nd Thursday evening of each month at 7.30pm in Newton Parish Room HR2 0QR. New members and guests are very welcome.

There is normally a charge of £5 per person at each meeting. This is to cover cost of hiring the room and to pay our speakers. Or you could opt for the "value for money" £20 annual subscription!

Thursday 13th February 7.30pm:

A Valentine's Feast (provided by members of the Guild.)

Cont'd ...

Please phone if you would like to join us for this evening of epicurean deliciousness!

Thursday 13th March 2025 7.30pm:

Further Adventures with Bob Burson

For further information and/or a lift, please phone 07794920729



Longtown & District
Show Committee

Valentines
Bingo

Friday 14th February

Longtown Hall

Doors Open 7pm
Eyes Down 7:30pm

Flicks in the Sticks with Arts Alive
at the Esleyside Hall HR2 OPT



Thursday, 27th February 2025
Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start.

Tickets have already been selling for this exciting "café style evening" with

THE MOSCOW DRUG CLUB
(named after the song)

They describe themselves as Transcendent Troubadours of World Jazz and Folk – a "heady and waggish mix of Jazz, French Muzette, Latin Grooves and New Orleans Swing!

Imagine having a few to drink and staggering arm in arm into the darkness of an eastern European cobbled street and stumbling into a bar where Django Reinhardt and Tom Waits are having an hour's jam with local Tziganes. Combining their original material with songs by the likes of Jacques Brel, Tom Waits, Leonard Cohen and Eartha Kitt. The Moscow Drug Club deliver an intoxicating and intimate musical experience."
– Arts Alive

For more information and to purchase tickets,
£15 each, £6 (under 18)
<https://artsalive.co.uk/live-performance>
or email: nevillefleet@gmail.com



**BORDERLINES
FILM FESTIVAL**

The 2025 BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL
is coming to Esleyside Hall HR2 OPT

Thursday 6th March

Small Things Like These [cert 12a]
(based on Claire Keegan's novel)

Thursday 13th March

Outrun [cert 15]
(set in the Orkney Isles, starring Saoirse Ronan)

Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start

Tickets £5.50 adult, £3.50 child

For further information and tickets please email:
nevillefleet@gmail.com



Funded by
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14–23 MARCH 2025

JOIN US IN LONGTOWN, CRASWALL &
EWYAS HAROLD FOR FREE EVENTS...

Printmaking | Ceramics | Wool crafts
Green woodworking | Local history
Tinplate photography | Stained glass

WWW.BLACKHILLARTSEVENTS.COM

BLACK HILL ARTS EVENTS
LONGTOWN, CRASWALL & EWYAS HAROLD

Two weekends of demos and workshops celebrating creativity and heritage in the Olchon and Golden valleys, Herefordshire.

When Helen Arthur set up an art studio in the area in 2019, she couldn't help noticing just how many artists and makers live nearby. So, with collaboration in mind, she secured funding from Herefordshire Council under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to run an arts and heritage festival.

Join us for the BIG launch – pop-up restaurant, live music and workshops information – **Friday 14 March, 5pm 'til late.**

LONGTOWN VILLAGE HALL, HR2 0LD

Let's take pride in our creative community!

www.blackhillartsevents.com



WWW.BLACKHILLARTSEVENTS.COM

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2 WEEKENDS OF HERITAGE
CRAFTS: FREE DEMOS &
AFFORDABLE WORKSHOPS

14–23 MARCH 2025



Local Newsround

LONGTOWN COMMUNITY PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL

The enthusiasm of the Longtown children never ceases to amaze me. The children came back to school on a very cold Tuesday morning, after the excitement of Christmas and being at home for two weeks, with a smile on each and every face and an eagerness to settle back quickly into the routines of listening, asking questions, caring for each other and being the very best they can be!

Class 4 began their climbing sessions at the Longtown Outdoor Learning Trust on the first Friday back. We have strong links with LOLT and are so lucky to have it on our doorstep. The children learn valuable skills as well as enhancing their ability to communicate effectively, work as a team and gain confidence and courage when trying something new.

As well as Class 4, our Year 4 pupils will be treated to two days of confidence building activities at LOLT in February, with activities such as gorge walking, caving, zip wire and canoeing. What a lucky bunch!

We have held our unusual meetings for our Y6 parents to become more familiar with our procedures around SATs, our Y4 parents to share information about the Multiplication Check and our Y1 parents to discuss the phonics screening later in the year.

Class 4 will be visiting Kingstone High School for a school's netball tournament at the end of the month. Good luck team!

Class 2 and Reception will be treated to a visit from Animals Interactive in February, when they will get to meet and handle a collection of animals in school. This will support and enrich their science curriculum looking at both humans and animals.

Our Early Years children continue to explore and learn in the outdoors. Eric the rabbit enjoys being tucked up in his warm hutch, meeting the children and being fed his favourite carrots. After a small hitch, which saw a tree blown onto the top of the classroom in the winds before Christmas, the children are now located back in their space and making all sorts of goodies in their mud kitchen.

The whole school will be visiting Cardiff at the end of February to gain experience of a Hindu Temple and to attend the Dinosaurs Live Show at the Millennium Centre. A day packed with excitement and new experiences for everyone.

Our Patron of Reading, published author Catherine Barr, will be visiting us again in February – something the children and staff are always very excited about. Catherine shares with us the new book she is working on and her travelling adventures. The children are always eager to share their love of reading with Catherine and we love having our own real-life author in school!

Clubs this half term include Photography, Multiskills, Art and Choir and we continue to offer Breakfast Club to all our pupils from 8am each morning. The PTA will also be running two additional Football Card Clubs through the term. Always a winner with the collectors among us.

Our popular Stay and Play sessions continue for our very youngest visitors and dates for this half term are Friday February 7th, March 7th and 21st and 4th April. We love to welcome new members all the time. Please keep local media scanned for a few special sessions coming up shortly.

Our fantastic PTA will be holding a fabulous Valentine's Disco just before the half term break as part of their never tiring efforts to support our school. They have already paid for our Early Years to have a special light and sensory area in class to support their work on space, and they are paying for the animal visitors in class 2. PTA are also paying for our transport costs to Cardiff, which makes such exciting trips possible. Thank you, PTA.

Our Pre-School/Early Years Hub is open for 4 days a week, Monday to Thursday 8:45am to 3:15pm from September, for 2-year-olds and up. We do accept funded places for 15 and 30 hrs. Please call the office to arrange a visit if you would like to come and meet the team.

Please contact Emma in the school office if you would be interested in a visit or looking for a school place for your child/ren.

Call 01873 860239 or email admin@longtown.hereford.sch.uk

Follow us on Facebook to see up to date information about all the wonderful things we get up to in school.

Thank you.

MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thankfully, after a rather stormy November and December, the new term has started with a run of lovely, settled weather and even some sunshine. As usual, the run-up to the Christmas break was rather busy and everyone very much needed their Christmas holiday! Our annual Walking Nativity was another resounding success, and a huge crowd of family, friends and interested locals turned up to enjoy our retelling of the Christmas story. We also enjoyed a trip to the panto, with a difference, as we were warmly welcomed to Peterchurch Primary School to watch a touring pantomime – Jack and the Beanstalk. The children had a great time and we are extremely thankful to Peterchurch for inviting us to join them. Pre-school didn't miss out on the festive panto fun either. They 'popped' into the Courtyard in Hereford to watch a lovely retelling of the Elves and the Shoemaker story. Term ended with our delicious Christmas dinner, cooked by our excellent resident chef, Verity Price. It really was a fantastic feast and very much enjoyed by adults and children alike.

In class this term we have a really diverse range of topics. Acorn Class (Years R to 2) are learning all about castles, Sapling Class (Years 3 and 4) are finding out how the railway changed the world and Oak Class (Years 5 and 6) are learning all about the Ancient Greeks. At Michaelchurch, we believe that getting out and about and seeing things first hand is the best way to learn so Acorn Class will be heading off to Caerphilly Castle in February. Caerphilly is the largest castle in Wales and the second largest in the UK, after Windsor Castle, so they will certainly have a very rich

experience indeed. Meanwhile, Saplings will be welcoming in an expert on steam engines to talk to them about this groundbreaking technology. Oak, on the other hand, will be recreating the Battle of Gaugamela, one of Alexander the Great's most famous victories, out on the playing field and will find out first hand how Alexander defeated Darius II much larger force.

For all the children in the school, from Pre-School to Year 6, Forest School continues to be a vital part of our week and we are looking forward, as we always do, to seeing the changes that the longer days will bring as we move into springtime. However, as we know only too well, there is plenty of time for winter to strike so I am sure Mr Crocker will still have plenty of opportunities to use his new playground gritting machine!

In other news, Michaelchurch Esley Primary and Preschool is looking for a new recruit to join the Governing Board. Are you, or do you know someone, who is enthusiastic about education and has some time to spare? If so, they may be just the person we need! A co-opted governor doesn't have to be a relative of the school – in fact, it's better to have a range of backgrounds and experiences on the governing body. If you would like to find out more about how you (or someone you know) can contribute to governance at our school, or have any questions about being a governor, then please contact the school office. They will then arrange for a governor to contact you to have a chat.

Finally, if you like the sound of Michaelchurch Esley Primary and Pre-School and feel it sounds like the sort of place where your child could flourish, whether they're pre-school or school aged, then please get in touch via our school email address (admin@michaelchurch-esley.hereford.sch.uk) or give us a call on 01981 510208. We'd love to show you around!

CAROLING AND WASSAILING

Caroling and Wassailing are alive and thriving in and around Longtown. A week before Christmas a minibus load of singers toured the valley, calling at pre-arranged venues to entertain. We sang to many and by arrangement we were welcomed in (as in days of old) at some, to be refuelled with mulled wine and sustained with seasonal nibbles, before yet more singing. It was a long night of caroling but thoroughly enjoyed by all.

On Christmas Eve more than a hundred gathered for Carols at the Castle. Far flung places were represented. We had visitors from Norway, Mexico, Australia, Russia and even Ewys Harold. Longtown Castle entrance was decorated with lights; mulled wine and eating treats were available; musicians led the company in carol singing; Frosty the Snowman arrived with sweets for the children, who then showed off the lanterns they had made. All round it was a marvellous occasion to welcome Christmas Day.

After Christmas our good friends from Malvern, a group of west gallery singers, came to Clodock Church to give a superb concert of old English carols, sung by candlelight from the west gallery. They are pleased to come each year because they so much enjoy singing in our beautiful church.

To keep with tradition, yet more mulled wine and mince pies were served.

Then on January 11th it was time for the now traditional Longtown Wassail, made famous last year for being featured on Countyfile by the BBC. A flaming torch parade left the village hall for Longtown Castle where within a circle of small fires, there was a ceremony involving Fair Oak Cider at the apple trees, conducted by Foxwhelp Morris. Later in the village hall there was morris dancing, a mummer's play, folk singing and an auction. Great fun was had by all.

These events raised money for, Schools for Uganda, so the very greatest thanks must go to the many people who welcomed us, donated refreshments, who sang and played, who came along to enjoy the events or welcomed us in, those who donated and those who helped in any of many ways, certainly too many to mention. Donations are still coming in, but today I have sent an initial sum of £1,250 for urgent work at one of our schools in Uganda. So our very best thanks to all involved.

Bob Burson and Jayne Davies

LONGTOWN AND DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Please note that this report was held over from the December edition

As the previous meeting had to be cancelled because of flooding, so despite a fall of snow the day before, the Council was determined to meet! It was a very full Agenda:

Councillor Cook reported that there had been a speeding survey done by a small sub-committee who drew up a list for Balfour Beatty. This included some attainable goals (road line painting to indicate junctions more clearly, pinch points and speed limits) and more difficult to achieve goals i.e. lowering the speed limit outside the school, amongst others.

The Police attended and their report was very encouraging. The Officer said there had been a low level of crime from July to October. She also said they had been approached to give constructive advice again on the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. This was approved.

The very relevant subject of flooding in the village was raised by Councillor Cook. The severe rainfall in October had created flooding in the village and he had observed at least four manholes which had water pouring from them, one of which had sewage contaminating the ground around, and ultimately ending up in the Olchon brook. It was agreed that the Water Treatment plant was not sufficiently robust to cope with the inundation, and that Welsh Water would be contacted as well as CPRE.

The Draft Budget was discussed and it was agreed not to raise the precept. It has remained at the same level for the last five years.

It was agreed that the Council would continue to support the three Parish Halls – Longtown, Craswall and Walterstone – to the tune of £650 each.

With the bad weather this month there was an enquiry about grit. This is free and available for collection from from the west side of Longtown Village Hall.

A small sub committee will be meeting in the New Year to update The Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk confirmed that a Grant for it has been applied for. This represents the views of the residents of Longtown, Craswall, Llanveynoe and Walterstone. Collected in 2016 and still relevant!

Round and About

THE MONDAY CLUB

This friendly little club is run at Peterchurch Village Hall every Monday serving teas and coffee. Everyone is welcome to pop in between 10am and 12pm.

The New Year has started well. We will, I'm sure, have plenty of things to look forward to throughout this year.

On the 27th January we had the Wye Singers coming to entertain us. Our thanks again to them.

Unfortunately, we have had to change the date of the film show to 10th February due to unforeseen circumstances.

If you feel like coming, please do. There's no obligation to come every week but I know you will always get a friendly welcome and it's a great way to make new friends.

We are always looking for volunteers and if you would like to help us as a volunteer, please ring Mrs. Kath Gaze on 01981 550579 or pop in and you will be very welcome.

You don't have to do it every Monday. We are happy with any time available. It's just making tea and coffee.

PETERCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

Monday Club every Monday morning 10am-12pm Pop in for Tea/Coffee and a chat

Why not come for Gentle Dance exercise with Abbie Mason every Thursday morning 11.30 am-12.30.

Hatha Yoga is being held every Wednesday 7pm -8.30pm and 10.30 am-12pm

Parish Council meetings every 3rd Tuesday of the month

Dementia Matters Herefordshire is pleased to introduce the Peterchurch Memory Café at Peterchurch Village Hall, which will run once a month on the **third Friday of every month** from 10.30am-12.30pm.

Our Memory Cafes are designed to enable people with memory problems or concerns, their families/ friends or carers, to get out and meet like-minded people. Every Café involves fun quizzes, activities and occasional guest speakers, with professional support, information and advice available. A contribution of £2.50 per couple is requested, and there is no booking necessary.

Dementia Matters Here(fordshire) is a local charity, supporting those with memory or cognitive concerns/ diagnoses across the county. For more information please call us on 01432 804480 or email charlotte.banks@dementiamattershere.org.uk.

Village Art Club

Starts again every Monday 7.00pm - 9pm from 16th September and Every Wednesday 1.30pm -3.30pm from 18th September

The new booking form is now on the website, www.peterchurchvillagehall.org, along with what's happening at the Hall

Peterchurch Village Hall is a community building, run by a small committee of dedicated trustees. It is the ideal venue for local events, and is available for hire from £10 an hour.

As well as hosting many a birthday party, the hall has a few regular user groups -

Parish Council every 3rd Tuesday of the month

We always welcome new groups!

If you wish to hire the hall or have any other inquiries, please call any of these numbers:

The Booking Secretary (Sarah) - 07774 457887

The Chairman (Brendan) - (01981) 550482

The Hall - (01981) 551162

(Please leave a message if you are unable to reach anyone on the numbers above.)

VOWCHURCH & DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council has received some funding to improve Public Rights of Way, but did you know that Landowners can apply for stiles etc. for free from Herefordshire Council? If you would like further information on how you can request this equipment, please contact the PROW team on PROW@herefordshire.gov.uk.

The Lengthsman contract is due for renewal on 1st April 2025. The Parish Council would like to invite any interested contractors to tender for the work. The job currently involves, but is not limited to, monthly visits to the parish to maintain the roadside grips, clear gullies, jet pipes and some strimming through the summer months, along with nominated tasks when requested by the parish. Any applicants must hold relevant insurance and tickets to enable them to work on the public highway. If you would like further information, please contact the clerk.

The Parish Council does have a section on their website where you can advertise your local business, please email the Clerk with a link to your website if you would like to be included in this page.

There is soon to be a new noticeboard at the pavilion in Michaelchurch Escley and the smaller, older board near the telephone exchange will be re-furbished and moved to Newton. These, along with the noticeboard at Vowchurch, are 'Open Community Boards' and their main purpose is to display information about local events in the community. Please be mindful regarding what notices you place there; they are a community resource and are intended to be community policed.

Please continue to report defects to Herefordshire Council as below. The Parish Council is here to help residents when we can in the local community, the email address for the Parish Council is below and is the best way to contact the Clerk as it is monitored on a regular basis, also take a look at the Parish Council website and follow us on Facebook.

Please report any defects via the Herefordshire Council website at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/report-problems-road>. Reporting issues this way will ensure everything is properly logged, assessed, and allocated to the right teams as quickly as possible. You can check progress of a defect, or see if it has already been logged via the progress map on the council website <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/pothole-road-defect-progress-map>.

Linda Cowles, Parish Clerk

01544 321906/ clerk@vowchurchgroup-pc.gov.uk

www.vowchurchgpc.org.uk/

Follow us on Facebook: [vowchurch group parish council](https://www.facebook.com/vowchurchgroupparishcouncil).

Notices and Advertisements

PARISH COUNCIL LENGTHSMAN 2025-2026

Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council is inviting tenders for the Lengthsman contract from April 2025 to March 2026

Lengthsman Job Description

It is Vowchurch and District Group Parish Council's objective to:

- Keep the Parish at a high standard
- Maintain accessibility on U & C roads
- Respond to the needs of Parishioners

The Lengthsman will be expected to work 1 day per calendar month from April – September and 2 days per calendar month from October to March plus any additional days as instructed by the Parish Council.

The main activities are:

WINTER MONTHS

- Clear grids & clean out road gullies
- Jet connecting pipes
- Clear road culvert headwalls
- Jet culverts clear
- Check inspection pits
- Clear headwalls
- Clear grips & reform leads
- Clear minor obstructions from roadside ditches & reform leads
- Clean off road signs
- Clear storm debris off the roads
- Collect rubbish from areas worked
- Note & report major defects to Parish Council for forwarding to Locality Steward
- Refill salt bins

SUMMER MONTHS – AS ABOVE & TO INCLUDE

- Strim round grit boxes & cut back overgrowth
- Strim round road signs and cut back overgrowth
- Strim verges and cut back hedgerows on bends & junctions

The Parish Council may request the Lengthsman carry out additional 'nominated' tasks. Each nominate task will be specified, and the price agreed in writing between the Parish Council and the Lengthsman before any work is carried out.

Highways covered will be all C and U roads within the Parish along with works on the Public Rights of Way network to install finger posts, stiles/and or gates etc.

- The Contractor will be wholly responsible for employed staff for the purpose of delivering the contract.
- The Contractor shall comply with all relevant statutory requirements (including health and safety at work legislation) at all times in carrying out the highway maintenance.
- The Contractor shall maintain an insurance policy with a reputable insurance company to a minimum level cover of £5,000,000.
- The Contractor must supply their own vehicles and equipment.

Expressions of interest should be submitted to the Parish Clerk via email:

Linda Cowles – clerk@vowchurchgroup-pc.gov.uk

**Saturday 1 February 2025
10am to 12.30pm
St Michael's Hall, Ewyas Harold**

Repairs undertaken on:

- Soft toys (including dolls' clothes)/toys
- Clothing (repairs not alterations)
- Small electrical items
- Small pieces of furniture/ wooden items
- Bicycles
- Knife/small tool sharpening (each small item £2 min. donation)
- Other items repaired - please ask



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Contact: charlotte.banks@dementiamattershere.org.uk
01432 804480

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Programme details and tickets at www.haymusic.org
Tickets also from the Hay Tourist Bureau and the door if still available.

BMGN Advertising Directory

Contact: Jill: 01873 860408

/jill@clodockmill.com

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Saturday:	7.30 am - 4.00 pm
Sunday:	10.00 am - 12 noon (Nov - April) 10.00 am - 2.00 pm (May - Oct)
Bank Holiday Mondays:	10.00 am - 2.00 pm

Marmalade joy, Rhubarb and Mouli

We are trying to offer a larger selection of fruit and veg, so choosing options or topping us with us makes life easy. Seville Orange are in for marmalade making, too busy freeze them to make your homemade recipe later in the year.

Indoor Rhubarb goes great with frozen apple for a twist on a delicious crumble.

Not a clue how you can use mouli a radish from south east asia, for those adventurous cooks tell us and share your dishes online and tag us in

Make life easier this February at Hopes

- ★ Allow your skin to recuperate using Lavender Farm hand cream, missed sampling in January
- ★ We have a huge selection of Valentine cards for the special one in your life. Why not send one of our cheerful cards to spread love too?
- ★ Snuggle up and enjoy *Hidden History in the Welsh Mountains* by Richard Hayman.

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Vicar of Dibley stamps - a mark of joy

Ooh, these stamps bring a little bit of joy and happy memories to mind available in 1st and 2nd class. It doesn't stop there; philatelists mark your diary for 30th January for Royal Amouries.

For holiday insurance go online and quote our Post office code of 2056186, this is super helpful to us.

To chase a letter or parcel please call Royal Mail Hereford on 01432 346100



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CHURCH SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

February 2025

Sunday 2 February

15:00 Llanveynoe No service
St Margaret's Holy Communion

Sunday 9 February

9:30 Clodock Holy Communion
Michaelchurch No service

Sunday 16 February

9:30 Craswall Celtic Morning Prayer
15:00 Newton Holy Communion

Sunday 23 February

11:00 Michaelchurch Group Holy Communion

March 2025

Sunday 2 March

9:30 Llanveynoe Holy Communion
15:00 St Margaret's Evening Prayer

Sunday 9 March

9:30 Clodock Morning Prayer
11:00 Michaelchurch Holy Communion

Sunday 16 March

9:30 Craswall Celtic Holy Communion
15:00 Newton Evening Prayer

Sunday 23 March

11:00 Clodock Holy Communion

Sunday 30 March

11:00 TBA Group Service

EVENTS PLANNER			
Mon	03 February	7.30pm	Longtown & District Historical Society: Members' Evening
Tue	04 February	7.30pm	Craswall Whist, Craswall Village Hall
Wed	05 February	2.30-4.30pm	Longtown Library, Longtown Village Hall
Sat	08 February	10.00am-4.00pm	More Singing Matters, with Fiona Evans. Longtown Village Hall
Tue	11 February	7.30pm	Craswall Whist, Craswall Village Hall
Thu	13 February	7.30pm	Newton St Margarets Women's Guild: Valentine's Feast, Newton Parish Room
Fri	14 February	7.00 for 7.30pm	Longtown Show: Valentine's Bingo, Longtown Village Hall
Tue	18 February	7.30pm	Craswall Whist, Craswall Village Hall
Sat	22 February	10.00am-noon	Longtown Village Projects, Longtown Castle
Tue	25 February	7.30pm	Craswall Whist, Craswall Village Hall
Thu	27 February	7.00 for 7.30pm	Flicks in the Sticks with Arts Alive: The Moscow Drug Club (band). Esleyside Hall
Sun	02 March	3.30pm	Occasional Quaker Meeting, Dulas Court craft room
Mon	03 March	7.30pm	Longtown & District Historical Society: Rhys Griffith (Senior Archivist HARC): <i>Hereford and the Civil War, 1642-49</i>
Wed	05 March	2.30-4.30pm	Longtown Library, Longtown Village Hall
Thu	06 March	7.00 for 7.30pm	Borderlines Film Festival at Esleyside Hall: <i>Small Things Like These</i> . [cert 12a]
Thu	13 March	7.00 for 7.30pm	Borderlines Film Festival at Esleyside Hall: <i>Outrun</i> . [cert 15]
Thu	13 March	19:30:00	Newton St Margarets Women's Guild: <i>Further Adventures with Bob Burson</i> , Newton Parish Room
Fri	14 March	5.00pm - late	Black Hill Arts launch event, Longtown Village Hall
Sat	15 March		Black Hill Arts events, see https://www.blackhillartsevents.com/
Sun	16 March		Black Hill Arts events, see https://www.blackhillartsevents.com/
Sat	22 March	10.00am-noon	Longtown Village Projects, Longtown Castle
Sat	22 March		Black Hill Arts events, see https://www.blackhillartsevents.com/
Sun	23 March		Black Hill Arts events, see https://www.blackhillartsevents.com/
Sat	29 March 2025		Conceets for Craswall: Ensemble Renard

Village hall contacts

Craswall Hall

Bookings: Janet Watkins 01981 510226
General inquiries: Christine Cleaton,
cleatonfamily@btinternet.com

Esleyside Hall

Rachel Pritchard: 01981 510368
rachel.pritchard86@hotmail.co.uk

Longtown Hall

Mark Ewins, 01873 860829
www.longtownvillagehall.org.uk
bookings@longtownvillagehall.org.uk

Newton Church Room

Mary Powell: 01981 510295
mary.powell37@btinternet.com

Esley & District Sports Pavilion

Kirsty, 01981 510682
www.esleysportspavilion.com
esleysportspavilion@gmail.com

Golden Valley Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Peterchurch Police & Fire Hub, Hereford HR2 0RU. 01981 550253

PC 3687 Jeff Rouse 07870 150972 jeff.rouse@westmercia.police.uk
PCSO Margaret Andrzejewska 07773 053895 margaret.andrzejewska@westmercia.police.uk
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