

# The Black Mountains Group Benefice

# NEWSLETTER

July 2022



*St Margaret's*

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

Part of the Abbeydore Deanery  
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**[www.bmgparishes.org.uk](http://www.bmgparishes.org.uk)**

Min  
**50p**  
donation



## Churchwardens

### Clodock & Longtown

Mr Nick Vaughan 01873 860201

### Craswall

Mrs Christine Cleaton 01981 510674

Mr Geoff Holder 07580 632273

### Llanveynoe

Mr Donald Phillips 01873 860298

Commodore Peter Tribe 01873 860260

### St Margaret's

Mrs Jane Baxter 01981 510388

### Michaelchurch Esley

Mrs Olive Howells 01981 510228

### Newton

(Vacant)

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## From the Clergy

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### REVIVAL

The Abbeydore Deanery had an interesting church gathering recently. It began with a presentation on the ‘Parish Offer’: the money people in the parishes give to pay for the ministry of the Church as a whole and in particular the work of a parish priest. It was a well presented, honest and challenging appraisal of the current financial decline of the rural church. In summary it was clear that if giving continues to decrease so will the number of priests. Then, at the end of the meeting someone spoke with real passion about a group that prayed for a revival and a general invitation was extended to all to join this prayer meeting. The contrast between the two items got me thinking around a couple of questions. Firstly, will the financial pressures of the ‘cost of living’ crisis mean that only wealthy neighbourhoods will be able to afford a priest? Second, how did past revivals come about?

A revival, in ecclesiastical terms, is where hundreds and thousands become Christians over a relatively short period of time by committing their lives to following Jesus Christ. The growth of the early church after the resurrection appearances of Christ, could be seen as the first revival with Jesus’ teaching and ministry being the inspiration. If we look at Christ’s ministry, it was for all people, whatever their income stream or their position in society. However, Christ’s ministry expressed an emphasis for the poor and the marginalised. He lived a frugal life with the vulnerable, and if he criticised anyone, it was predominantly the religious elite and the politically powerful who exploited the poor.

When we speak today of ‘revival’, we often think of the Welsh revivals of the late 19th Century and early 20th century. They too followed the teachings and example of Christ, however, there was a critical relationship which was recently explored by the broadcaster Jeremy Bowen in his radio programme, ‘This Union: Being Welsh’. It explained that there was a strong relationship between the Chapels of the revival and the burgeoning trade union movement that became the Labour Party. This social movement had a radical element that came from the Chapel tradition that reflected Jesus’ emphasis on the poor and vulnerable. In this instance the vulnerable were the exploited working class of the industrial revolution. The revival was a holy spirit inspired movement that spoke against what wasn’t fair. A mystical socialism.

The Old Testament describes a God who, several times, says to his people; “I don’t care for your worship if you are not caring for the poor”. Maybe this radical call from a radical God is where we should start. Maybe the institution of the Church, as we know it, will only survive, if, when we think about our giving, we think first of those who are vulnerable locally and globally.

It would be wonderful to see a revival but in order to experience one maybe we have to consider creatively these words from Jesus himself:

‘Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.’ [John 12:24] *Rev Simon Lockett*

### JULY READINGS

#### Sunday July 3rd

Old Testament	Isaiah 66: 10-14
New Testament	Galatians 6: (1-6), 7-16
Gospel	Luke 10: 1-11,16-20
Psalm	66: 1-8

#### Sunday July 10th

Old Testament	Deuteronomy 30:9-14
New Testament	Colossians 1:1-14
Gospel	Luke 10: 25-37
Psalm	25: 1-10

#### Sunday July 17th

Old Testament	Genesis 18:1-10a
New Testament	Colossians 1:15-28
Gospel	Luke 10: 38-end
Psalm	15

#### Sunday July 24th

Old Testament	Genesis 18: 20-32
New Testament	Colossians 2: 6-15, (16-91)
Gospel	Luke 11:1-13
Psalm	138

#### Sunday July 31st

Old Testament	Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 12-14, 2:18-23
New Testament	Colossians 3: 1-11
Gospel	Luke 12: 13-21
Psalm	49: 1-12, or 1-9

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### SUNDAY 3RD JULY 2022, 11AM HOLY COMMUNION ST MICHAEL’S, MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY

Angie will celebrate her first Holy Communion as a priest at St Michael’s, Michaelchurch Escley. This special service will be followed by a bring and share lunch at Esleyside Hall. Please come along to support our curate on this very special day.

Please get in touch to let us know if you are able to join us and/or if you would like to contribute towards a gift for Angie on this occasion: [abbeydoredmc@gmail.com](mailto:abbeydoredmc@gmail.com).

Angie will be priested at a special celebration at Hereford Cathedral on Saturday 2nd July at 4.30pm. All are welcome to come along to this service, arrive early for a good view!



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### Deanery Update

Over the last year there have been lots of opportunities to get to know our Curate, Rev Angie Kateley. We’re delighted to say that at Hereford Cathedral on Saturday 2nd July at 4.30pm she will be priested at a special celebration, all are welcome. If you’d like to celebrate this special time within the deanery, we’d love you to come along as Angie celebrates her first Holy Communion as a priest at St Michael’s, Michaelchurch Escley. This special service will be followed by a bring and share lunch at Esleyside Hall. If you’re coming along, please do drop me an email.

At present, for all services of Holy Communion this will be distributed using “intinction”, which means you’ll be given a wafer or a piece of bread that the priest has dipped in the wine, rather than being offered the chalice. We will keep this practice under active review.

We hope you have already got the dates for the Wenatchee Girls Choir in your diary – they'll be singing Evensong during the first full week in July in a church near you. 5th July Dorstone; 6th July – Michaelchurch; 7th July – Craswall; 8th July – Clodock; 9th July – Madley. Each service starts at 8.00pm.

Come along and support them – they are sure to appreciate this, especially as each day they will have walked a section of the Golden Valley Pilgrim Way. If you'd like to walk a section too have a look on the website or get in touch for the route details, or join the pilgrimage we're arranging in conjunction with the British Pilgrimage Trust from the 1st August.

I'm sure you'll agree that we live in a wonderful area with glorious historic places to visit. You may wish to do this by walking the Pilgrimage route or alternatively travel by bike, car or other mode of transport. To find out more about the churches, places and people of this area through history go to [www.blancheparry.com](http://www.blancheparry.com) where you'll find a wealth of information.

Our Grow Strong group had its first residential weekend in June. Canoeing, archery and exploring the mountains were some of the activities experienced and the time ended with a Forest Church celebration. Grow Strong is for young people in years 6 – 10 and from September we'll be on the lookout for new members so if you know someone who'd like to join in, do get in touch.

For more information contact: Anne Lloyd, Deanery Mission Coordinator 01981 620145 [www.abbeydoredeanery.org](http://www.abbeydoredeanery.org) [abbeydoredmc@gmail.com](mailto:abbeydoredmc@gmail.com)

*Anne Lloyd, Deanery Mission Coordinator – 01981 620145  
[www.abbeydoredeanery.org](http://www.abbeydoredeanery.org) [abbeydoredmc@gmail.com](mailto:abbeydoredmc@gmail.com)*

## Thanks

### CLODOCK JUBILEE GARDEN PARTY

After a fun and enjoyable day we would like to thank the many people who helped out, and those who supported the event to make it a fantastic successful garden party. We will be sending St Michael's Hospice a cheque for £3100.

*Sharon, Isobel and Beryl*

### DAVID GASTON

I should like to thank David Gaston for writing, and you for publishing his account of his visits to Poland in the May newsletter. It is one of the most vivid and moving accounts of the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine and its effects on individuals that I have read. Thank you. *Pauline Jones*

*Editor's note: I know that David's writing moved many readers, just as stated by Pauline. He is still driving, now helping with a medical team, and sending back his reports. There are more on page 5 & 6, together with details of his GoFundMe page, should you wish to help him continue.*



Donate for  
David

### LONGTOWN THURSDAY CLUB

Jubilee Celebrations – Thursday Club Raffle:

We owe a big 'thank you' to everyone who contributed to the success of our raffle on the 5th June – for all the wonderful prizes that were donated, and to everyone who bought tickets.

The raffle raised £250, which will be shared between the Village Hall and the Black Hill Communities Network Ukraine Group. *Pauline Jones*

### BREAKFAST FOR CHRISTIAN AID 21 MAY 2022

Thank you to all who supported (in any way) the Big Breakfast under the Oak Tree. Your generosity meant that the amazing total of £498.40 was raised for CHRISTIAN AID. *Jane at Old Chapel*

## Forthcoming events

### JULY EXHIBITION OF ART, DESIGN & CRAFTS LONGTOWN VILLAGE HALL – SATURDAY JULY 2nd

See p8 for details

### LONGTOWN AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY AGM AND TALK

#### Monday 4 July 7.30pm Longtown Village Hall

Items for the AGM should be sent to Dr Jeremy Davies, the Society's secretary, in advance of the meeting.

Following the AGM, Judy Stevenson, Team Leader at Hereford Museum, will give a presentation on the important hillfort at Sutton Walls, just north of Hereford. The fort went through several phases in its 800-year history and later, in the Saxon period, may have had associations with King Offa, whose palace was, possibly, close by. More recently the site was used for quarrying and later by the council as a refuse dump. The Sutton Walls Conservation Group has been formed to try to save the hillfort's key features.

There may be an opportunity for non-members to join us on our summer visits, each costing £10. The first, on **16 July**, is to Snodhill Castle, where excavations will be taking place. The other excursion on **13 August** is to Garway Church, once the property of the Knights Templar. We will then see the dovecote at adjacent Church Farm. Tea will be served at the village hall. Contact [jeremypdavis@outlook.com](mailto:jeremypdavis@outlook.com) to check availability

Dr Jane Adams will be the speaker at the first meeting of the new season on 5 September and her subject will be "The Cornewalls of Moccas".

## TRINITY CHURCH

GIRLS' CHOIR, WENATCHEE VALLEY, USA

Hear the choir sing Evensong at 8.00pm at the following churches as they walk

The Golden Valley Pilgrim Way.

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July – Dorstone

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July – Michaelchurch

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July – Craswall

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July – Clodock

## Guided Tour of Croome Court Walled Garden



**VISIT** Wednesday 6th July

Meet 1.45pm at Visitor's Centre

Britain's largest Georgian walled garden meticulously restored by its owners. Includes 400 David Austin roses. Additional charges apply to visit adjoining National Trust park & house.

**£15 for tour with owner Chris Cronin (inc Tea).**

[www.croomewalledgardens.com/location/](http://www.croomewalledgardens.com/location/)

**Longtown Library**  
**now open,**  
**Every first Wednesday of the month**  
**2.30 - 4.30 pm**  
**Swap books, tea and chat!**

**Next open on 6th July**

**LONGTOWN THURSDAY CLUB**

July Activities – please note the changes to the programme:

**Thursday 7th July**

Members will be visiting the Old Railway Line Garden Centre near Hay-on-Wye. Times and travel arrangements will have been sorted out at our 23rd June meeting. If you couldn't attend then, please contact Hazel or Pauline.

**Thursday 21st July**

Meeting in Longtown Village Hall 2pm to 5pm

For further information please contact Pauline Jones 01873 851782; [jonespauline@pobroadband.co.uk](mailto:jonespauline@pobroadband.co.uk), or Hazel Pugh 01873 860803

**Concerts for Craswall**

**THE ELYSIAN SINGERS WITH CONDUCTOR SAM LAUGHTON**

**Saturday July 9th at 7pm**

**Dore Abbey**

**THE GLORY OF BAROQUE**

Purcell, *Come, Ye Sons of Art*

JS Bach, Cantata No.39

Purcell, *Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes*

Vivaldi, *Gloria* RV589

*"Amongst chamber choirs, they're one of the best."*

*[Sir John Tavener]*

Making a welcome return after a three-year absence, The Elysian Singers of London, founded by Matthew Greenall and under musical director Sam Laughton, is one of the UK's leading chamber choirs.

**HOPE CRAMSIE, guitar**

**Sunday August 7th 2022 at 3.30pm**

**St Mary's Church, Craswall**

Making her first appearance with Concerts for Craswall, this exciting young classical guitarist from here in The Golden Valley will perform a thrilling programme spanning the Renaissance and Baroque through to the 21st century. Music by Dowland, Bach, Barrios and Presti amongst others.

More information/tickets from our website

<https://www.concertsforcraswall.org/shop>

or the box office tel: 01981 510112

**ST. MARGARETS FLOWER FESTIVAL WEEKEND**

**9TH & 10TH JULY 2022**

**SATURDAY 2.30PM**

**MUSIC AMONG THE FLOWERS**

An opportunity to display your talents, regardless of ability, in a supportive environment. If you want to display your musical talents or say a reading please contact Elizabeth May on 01981 510533 [emaylittlem@gmail.com](mailto:emaylittlem@gmail.com)

**ST. MARGARETS FLOWER FESTIVAL WEEKEND**  
**SUNDAY 3PM FLOWER FESTIVAL SERVICE WITH**  
**REV. ANGIE KATELEY**

Followed by refreshments. Any contributions or help with flowers please contact Jane Fleet on 01981 510116 or [janefleet88@gmail.com](mailto:janefleet88@gmail.com)

Flower donations gratefully received on **Friday 8th July**

**NEWTON ST MARGARETS WOMEN'S GUILD**

*[Men, you may join us too if you dare!]*

For our June meeting Ruth Richardson gave us a lively presentation about the History of Herefordshire Field Names, inspiring us to pay more attention to old maps, field names and the landscape. Thank you, Ruth.

There will be NO meeting in July but a visit to the Textile Bazaar at Hellen's Manor, Much Marcle on **Wednesday 13th July**. Meet there for 11am.

**Thursday, 11th August**, early evening: **Gin Tasting at Black Mountains Botanicals.**

Guests and new members are welcome.

Phone 07794920729 if you would like transport to above events or for further information.

**CRASWALL BARBECUE AND DRAW**

**Saturday 23rd July** – start time 5.00pm

All the usual stalls and competitions: burgers and hot dogs, cake stall and plants and produce, the milking competition and many more.

This year the proceeds from the Barbecue and Draw will go towards replacing the antiquated electrical wiring in the church.

*Christine Cleaton*

**CRASWALL TO LLANVEYNOE PILGRIMAGE**

**Feast of the Transfiguration – Saturday 6th August**

**Start at Craswall Church at 3.00pm**

This year the pilgrimage will be led by Rev Luci Morris. We will walk from Craswall Church past the Bull's Head and up to the green lane leading on to the mountain and eventually to the Cat's Back car park where we will follow foot paths across the fields to Llanveynoe Church. We will conclude the Pilgrimage with a short service. Total walking time is roughly 2½ hours and we hope that, with the earlier start time and weekend date this year, it will be a more family friendly event and even afford time for an early evening picnic at Llanveynoe.

*Christine Cleaton*

**BARBECUE AT THE CORNEWALL ARMS**

**& fun in the sun**

**7 August from 12.30 onwards**

**Everybody welcome**

Bring your own meat (or veg), plates and cutlery.

Brad, salads and puddings will be provided.



**Duck Race**

at Clodock Mill

**£1 a duck**

from Isobel

Proceeds to Longtown Village Pride

**LONGTOWN & DISTRICT SHOW IS BACK**

**SATURDAY 20TH AUGUST 2022**

A warm welcome awaits all when visiting Longtown and District Show. After a few years of being unable to hold the show, our committee have been working hard and are gearing towards the return of the 77th Show which is packed with entertainment for the whole family.

We have: horse and pony classes, dog classes, livestock classes, vegetable/flower/handicraft and produce classes, vintage car/tractor displays, speed shear, children's sports, craft stalls, trade stands, variety of food/drink stalls with licensed bar, bale pitch, children's activity area and so much more. We are excited to announce the "Wye Valley Axemen" will be joining us as our main ring attraction with two displays throughout the afternoon. Following the show, there will be an "After Show Dance" that evening and the following afternoon (Sunday) "After Show Buffet Lunch" (ticket only) to include entertainment for all the family. If you would like to book a trade stand or stall, please contact the show team as we do have some space available.

We extend our thanks to the landowners, committee members, volunteers and stewards who combined, all make this wonderful show happen.

We look forward to seeing you at the show, gates open from 8am on the 20th August!

For more information, please email us on **longtownshow@outlook.com** or contact:

Andrew Christopher – 01981 510240

Sally Bigley – 07966 968290

Amanda Howells – 01981 510264

event, was superb. Blue skies and warm sunshine bathing the parent spectators as they cheered the children on through their obstacle, 2 legged, egg and spoon, relay races, the bean bag toss and the traditional Year 6 race where our oldest children attempt a rather complex race whilst the rest of the school bombard them with water and flour!

Following hot on the heels of this was our Oak Class (Year 5 and 6) residential to London. At Michaelchurch we alternate each year between a London residential and an outdoor adventurous activity week/residential. This year we stayed at an amazing house in south London and had a fantastic few days visiting the Imperial War Museum, the London Eye, Parliament, the Tower of London, Greenwich park, riding a boat along the river and, to top it all off, a visit to the Harry Potter Studios! It was a fantastic trip and a superb experience for all involved.

There are now just a few weeks left before the end of term and we still have some amazing events ahead including our mountain bike ride from school to Hay, our summer production and our epic end of term water fight! Let's hope the weather is as kind to us for those events as it was for the sports day!

We also have just a few weeks left before we say goodbye to our marvellous Year 6 children – the summer term I always find a bitter sweet one, filled with great fun and laughter but tinged with the sadness of farewells. However, like Year 6s around the country, they are all ready for a new challenge and we will be sending them on their way with love and pride in our hearts.

If you are interested in a pre-school or primary place for your child at Michaelchurch, please contact our school office. We are pretty full but still have a few places in odd year groups. All the best.

*Louise Crocker, Head Teacher,*

*Gary Crocker, Deputy Head Teacher, School 01981 510208*

**VOWCHURCH & DISTRICT GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

Herefordshire Councils Local Plan 2021-2041 – Place Shaping Consultation runs from Monday 13th June – Friday 29th July. Place Shaping is the third public consultation to be undertaken in 2022, the results of which will help inform the preparation of a new local plan for Herefordshire. Information can be found at [hlp.commonplace.is](http://hlp.commonplace.is). A consultation event is due to take place at Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall on Monday 4th July 2022 between 2pm-4pm, Planning Officers will be available to answer any questions you may have.

The Parish Council has now adopted its Community Resilience Emergency Plan and will be available to view on the website at [vowchurchgpc.org.uk](http://vowchurchgpc.org.uk)

**The Herefordshire Trail** is a newly launched long-distance path using existing public rights of way to give a circular tour around the county, parts of which pass through our parishes. More information via [herefordshiretrail.com](http://herefordshiretrail.com)

Are you struggling with your energy bills? Keep Herefordshire Warm have a dedicated Energy Advocate who works across the county to make sure that no one has to struggle with their energy bills alone. They can help support you with managing fuel debt and large energy bills, accessing emergency credit and grant funding for energy efficiency improvements, home visits to understand how you use energy at home, and how



**Local Newsround**

**MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

We have now entered the final half term of the academic year and it has felt so good to have had a full year without having schools close and a return to remote learning. That's not to say that this year hasn't been impacted heavily by Covid with both pupil and staff absences still causing disruption.

It has however, been an exciting start to the final half term. First off, we were excited to welcome our pre-schoolers to a new classroom as part of the development of our early years hub. The children have settled in well and our loving their new, dedicated setting.

We have also had sports day and what a day it was! For starters, the weather, so often the spoiler of many a summer



to reduce it and access to further local support services where necessary. If you're struggling with you bills, you don't have to suffer alone. Call Keep Herefordshire Warm on 0800 677 1432.

*Linda Cowles, Vowchurch & District Parish Clerk  
vowchurchparishclerk@hotmail.com / 01544 321906*

### **BLACK HILL COMMUNITY NETWORK UKRAINE GROUP**

More terrific news, but we need your help please.

Three Ukrainian families have arrived in our community – three more are close to making final arrangements – others are working to get approval.

Several children are about to start in our local schools.

A Ukrainian husband and wife are offering themselves for handyman work, farm work, gardening or cleaning. **Can you help** by offering work? Please discuss with John Spearman on 01981 510 363.

We have offers of two cars for use by Ukrainian families, but **we need help** with funding tax, insurance and maintenance. **Can you help please?** Contact: Rhiannon Taylor on 01873 860749 or Bob Burson on 01873 860313.

The hosting need has not diminished. **Can you offer** anything ranging from a room to a property? If yes, please contact Sue Robinson on 01981 510360.

We are providing services to Ukrainian families which require funding and so we have opened a JustGiving page. **Can you help please** by making a donation?



[justgiving.com/crowdfunding/blackhillukrainegroup](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/blackhillukrainegroup)

On 14th June there was a meeting in Longtown for those interested to help. There were helpful and very informative presentations and a wonderful get together over wine and cake. Sue Robinson is to be thanked for making it happen and Mark Ewins very helpfully facilitated a Zoom presentation from Ludlow.

Publishing **David Gaston's accounts of his relief missions to the Ukrainian border** in the May edition caused many readers to make contact to say how much it had brought home to them the human impact of the unfolding tragedy. David is still making the journeys, now driving in support of one of the medical teams. He is continuing to send back his accounts, some of which are included here.

**David Gaston** is the husband of Sue Gaston, the Head of Fairfield High School and Executive Head of Longtown School.

### **ANDREI'S STORY**

#### **24th April**

I have been back in Dorohusk in Poland for a few days when Valerie has sends me a message, I think from Canada. I met Valerie on my previous trip to Dorohusk. She is a director of an organisation called Canadian Medical Assistance Teams, which has been providing medical support in Ukraine. She knows I am back in Poland and asks if I might take a Ukrainian civilian to Salzburg. Andrei was seriously injured in a Russian rocket attack on the centre of Kharkiv. Several civilians were killed. He suffered from multiple shrapnel wounds, five of which have been removed by the hospital in Kharkiv. He needs specialist treatment to remove the rest, one in particular that has caused nerve damage in his right leg. A surgeon in Salzburg has the

expertise, the facilities and the opportunity. The challenge is that Andrei is still in Ukraine. Enter Agnieszka.

She has the job of driving into Ukraine, finding Andrei and bringing him to Poland, persuading Ukrainian guards that this is a good idea (men of fighting age can't ordinarily leave Ukraine). And she does it; cool as you like!

#### **25th April**

Andrei is able to walk slowly with the help of a stick, but it is clear that he is in pain. After photographs and he has said goodbye to Aga we set off. It's about 13:15. We arrive at our accommodation in Salzburg at 06:15; 17 hours later! The time goes by quickly; Andrei is not letting life – threatening shrapnel get in the way of his optimistic outlook or his squid ink black humour. His is not a 'could be worse' mentality; he talks eloquently about what needs to be done to make things better, about how he is going to play 5 a side football again one day soon. We laugh through the journey: Andrei shows me a Lego model 'tractor towing a tank' set; I show him a plastic model kit of the Russian warship Moskva. On the box is a picture of the sea but no ship. It's hard to drive safely when you're laughing so much!

#### **26th April**

Agatha takes the reins in Salzburg. She has organised everything with the help and generosity of contacts. So we have a room in a and there are specialists waiting to see Andrei in hospital which is all accomplished on the same day. Further consultation and tests are required but it looks like the earliest appointment is a month away. Andrei is undeterred. "I'll need to find a way to stay then" he says as though it's the easiest thing in the world!

Agatha comes up trumps again; Andrei will be seen this Friday. There is a lot of excitement and relief. Andrei now needs to register in Salzburg as a refugee. We find the place and Andrei goes through a long process over two days, filling in forms, getting advice and so on. In the meantime, a contact in the UK, John, has introduced a potential partner to share the driving. After a telephone conversation, Charlie lets me know he will be flying into Salzburg on Thursday to join me. Perfect timing. The good news ends abruptly. Andrei tells me he has just received news that his home in Kharkiv has been destroyed along with all his possessions. I'll find somewhere else to live, he tells me quietly. And things? They can all be replaced, he says with a shrug.

#### **Friday 29th April**

Andrei is going into hospital today for further tests. He will be staying in Salzburg for the foreseeable future. Charlie and I are going back to Dorohusk on the Polish border. I have rarely met a person who has such an optimistic view of life as Andrei. We have been together since Sunday and he has maintained his good humour throughout that time. He is in constant physical pain but says nothing; he has lost all of his possessions and his home; whether or not he will heal completely physically remains to be seen but his view has remained that he is alive and others aren't, that he can find another home and that possessions are the least of his worries. His son is safe in Berlin: his parents are close to the Polish border. He still aims to play football again; after all, he is only 35! Andrei has joked through the week that it is lucky to be with me and that every time something good happens we should buy a lottery ticket. I point out that a

piece of shrapnel missed his heart because of a bottle of water; it's me who should stick with him while buying the lottery ticket. At the clinic we say our goodbyes. Don't forget, he says, when I am mended, you come to Czech Republic and we dance in nightclub. I point out my age and Agatha reminds me that my age is in my head. They turn and walk away. And don't forget, shouts Andrei, to buy a lottery ticket.



### DRIVING THE MEDICS

*The minibus has returned to England for a break because there are fewer people crossing the border into Poland than previously. David has remained in Poland for two weeks to drive a team of medical staff from Canada over the border into Ukraine each day to hold clinics for displaced people and refugees. Here is a postcard from Ukraine...*

#### 10th May

Each day we drive to the border, collect a ticket, have the passports checked, go to border control, on to customs control, have the minibus checked, hand in the ticket, drive to the next set of checks. Each day, members of the team speed up the process with charm and good humour. Occasionally, a guard recognises us and waves us on. We thread our way through to the front of queues, asking drivers to pull back, move forward; most are obliging, noticing the humanitarian signs on our bus; a few are not. It is agonisingly slow at times; three hours to cross is not uncommon. On one occasion, we don't get beyond first base; a new document is required! No explanation provided. No document? Turn around. A day wasted; a day when someone needed help and didn't get it.

Going through the crossing is a new story every day. A border guard, looking down, says: I have a brother in Mariupol; another asks if we can help his sister to leave Ukraine- she is in great danger where she lives; an aid worker has returned from Bucha: I can't tell you how bad it was, he says breathlessly – I've never seen anything like it. A woman asks if we can provide cream for acne! The team is able to provide it, a seemingly small kindness that brings a broad smile.

A border guard asks if we have weapons and ammunition; our protestations are strong. Why do you ask, we enquire. We're told that the people in the pickup behind us told the guard. They are taken out of the line. When we leave, they are still being detained. *Schadenfreude!*

Once through the border, the team splits: the border clinic is manned and the rest of us drive to a town where clinics are held for displaced people. Outside the border clinic, people shuffle by with carrier bags and suitcases. Some have children. Most look weary, some utterly exhausted. Tempers fray; occasionally voices are raised but mostly the atmosphere is calm, dignified. Because I sit outside, I'm approached for requests for a lift.

Next to the medical centre is an aid post set up and run by Vassily and his family. All day, every day they provide food, hot drinks, aid and chat to whoever turns up. There is always someone in there or hovering outside in need of food, a hot drink, water. His family are absolutely dedicated. Each morning, Vassily shares a handshake; his large hands chart the labours of his life. His wife beams and nods and makes me milky tea.

And the trucks keep queuing both ways. Mile after mile, nose to tail. Going nowhere. Drivers in groups smoking, arms folded. Along the central reservations, around the trucks, inches from the cars whipping by.

Old women, babushkas, line the corridors of the schools and other buildings that have become makeshift clinics. Outside, lads practise their pull ups on the play bars in empty playgrounds. The babushkas mutter about waiting too long. They are dressed up for the occasion as though the doctor is a visiting foreign dignitary. They sit on children's chairs low to the ground while the doctors listen, ask more questions, listen, ask more questions. They are interested, thorough, gentle, compassionate. Can I have some tablets, a creaking babushka asks. When the doctor explains that the tablets she already has are the correct tablets, she is less than impressed.

I sit in the corridor with the patients. Towards the end of one session, a woman, in her forties perhaps, speaks to me. I give her my phone with a Ukrainian translator on it. We strike up a conversation of sorts with the phone, her broken English (which is better than my Ukrainian) and sign language. We ask each other questions. Eventually, how many children? I show her six fingers. Her eyes widen and she expresses surprise. Only in Ukraine, she says. No, I tell her; in England as well. I type that there was nothing on TV. She shrieks with laughter and repeats my response to her neighbour who looks me up and down. When my conversationalist has seen the doctor she wishes me luck and waves goodbye. When I am packing up, I walk out to the foyer and she is there with two other women. They talk over each other and laugh as I pass. Even though I don't know what they're saying, I reckon I've got a fairly good idea!

There are preparations for a response to war everywhere. Anti tank installations, road blocks, sandbags, camouflage nets – all the paraphernalia recognisable from countless wars I have watched unfold on my television from Vietnam to Bosnia. Soldiers stand and wait. They chat, smoke. They are vigilant: the phone on the dashboard on satnav duty is a threat; "Put it away!" They play with puppies at the border crossing, showing great tenderness.

They wait.

*David Gaston*

### How to support David Gaston

David's step-daughter, Abi, has set up a **GoFundMe** page to help meet the costs of David's humanitarian work. It is administered by Fairfield High School.

If you would like to donate, please use this QR code, or visit:



[gofundme.com/f/davids-drive-transport-and-aid-for-ukraine](https://gofundme.com/f/davids-drive-transport-and-aid-for-ukraine)



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Pilates at Vowchurch Hall, Tuesdays from 6pm. Contact [hannahmthomas@hotmail.com](mailto:hannahmthomas@hotmail.com)

Bowls returns in the Autumn.

Contact Richard Stokes [rtastokes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rtastokes@hotmail.co.uk)

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An exhibition of Jenkins' work which has been on display at All Saints Church is reopening at Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre in Rotherwas from July 5 until September 2. Opening times: Tuesday to Friday, 10am – 4pm and second Saturday of the month (9 July and 13 August).

Hilary Engel's book, Golden Valley Faces, is available from the author (01981 241 210) and at Waterstones.



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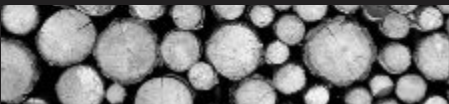
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**MATTHEW MAFLIN**  
**PROFESSIONAL PAINTING AND DECORATING SERVICES**

*Internal and exterior decoration*  
**Tel: 01873 860867**  
**Mobile: 07497258129**  
**matthewmaflin@gmail.com**  
*Public Liability Insurance held*  
*References available on request*



**DOMESTIC & COMMERCIAL PEST CONTROL SPECIALISTS**

**01873 830204**

Bees • Wasps • Flies • Ants  
Rats • Mice • Fleas • Moles

info@pandppestcontrol.co.uk



**Sooty's Chimney Service**



**Richard Watkins**  
**01981 240 185**  
**07947 959 452**

**MARTIN WATKINS**  
**ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING**

New House, Cobhall Court,  
Allensmore, Herefordshire. HR2 9BG  
Email: mwelecon@gmail.com  
Tel: 07974 244653  
Part P Registered  
Domestic, Agricultural, Commercial, Electrical  
Installation, Maintenance & Inspection & Testing

## DECOR SOLUTIONS

tjsj@me.com

**Painting & Decorating**

Tim Jones  
Tel 01981 540242  
Mob 07810 895355

3 Generations of experience, specialising in Painting & Decorating services.

General property maintenance duties carried out.

Fully insured.  
Good competitive rates.

A high standard of workmanship & customer satisfaction guaranteed.

## Kevin Williamson



**Mob: 07810 288115**  
**Evenings: 01432 378163**  
**kwilliamson027@hotmail.co.uk**

### K&D building and landscaping

All aspects of building new and old undertake

Drainage specialist/septic tanks

Fencing specialists

All aspects of landscaping/ patios/decking /ponds/retainers and stone walls

All internal work carried out

Over 20 years experience between us and a large portfolio

## Traditional Joinery

Quality, Bespoke Handmade Service  
Doors, Windows, Conservatories & Much More

Unit 1, Ramsden Court, Ramsden Road,  
Rotharwas, Hereford. HR2 6NT  
Tel: 01432 379635 • Mobile: 07786 815268  
www.traditionaljoineryhereford.co.uk  
Contact us for a FREE Quote

## Woodland and Garden

### Scrub Clearance and Timber Extraction

Most types of scrub and woodland cleared, including brambles, bracken and gorse, as well as meadow/small field topping. Sloping and narrow access areas reached using compact (Alpine) tractor semi-offset topper and mulching flail.

Timber forwarding service also available. Felled timber moved using Alpine tractor and trailer with crane.

**Call Ben Hill**  
**01981 510136 or 07990 638125**



## AVALON TREE SURGERY

WE CARE FOR YOUR TREES

**MATTHEW THOMAS**  
OVER 10 YEARS EXPERIENCE  
NPTC QUALIFIED  
FULLY INSURED

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01981 541307  
07794 569284

ALL ASPECTS OF TREE WORK UNDERTAKEN

## TUGWELL TREE SERVICES



For a professional service in all aspects of tree care, including Pruning, Felling, Planting Supplying Trees & Shrubs and Hedge Maintenance

**Specialists in:**  
Tree Reports & Surveys,  
Stump Removal with a High Power Narrow Access Stump Grinder for all those inaccessible stumps

**DAVID TUGWELL Tech Cert. Arbor A**  
**Bridge End, Newton St Margarets. HR2 0QP**  
**Tel: 01981 510104 / 07968 093898**



## DAVE WATKINS TREE SERVICES

All Aspects of Tree Services Covered

Fully NPTC Covered & Insured

Local to Longtown/Pontrilas but cover any surrounding areas

**Tree Removal**  
**Pollarding**  
**Hedge Trimming**  
**Tree Reductions**  
**Site Clearance & Chipping**

**07931 893923**  
**davidwat69@gmail.com**





01873 860 444

<b>Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri:</b>	<b>7.30 am - 5.30 pm</b>
<b>Late night Thurs:</b>	<b>7.30 am - 7.00 pm</b>
<b>Saturday:</b>	<b>7.30 am - 4.00 pm</b>
<b>Sunday (May - Oct):</b>	<b>10.00 am - 2.00 pm</b>
(Nov - April):	10.00 am - 12 noon
<b>Bank Holiday Mondays</b>	<b>10.00 am - 2.00 pm</b>

### Sunshine skin solutions

Wowee! As the sunshine returns we have a range of sunscreen for skin protection, sunglasses for your eyes and aloe vera if you need to help your skin recover. Our cold drinks chiller has had a little update, it now has Gwatkin Cider, Marlborough Sauvignon and a Bubble Zest turmeric ginger drink.

### Fresh Soft fruit

We are delighted to have a local supplier of Gooseberries again this year. Monday, Wednesday and Friday Strawberries, raspberries and blueberries arrive fresh from two different suppliers. Plus check out our frozen fruits including blackcurrants from local award winning grower Windmill Hill.

**17th July 2022 is World Ice Cream Day**, we would love to see you buying our tip top locally made ice cream from Rowlestone or Shepherds (#ShopLocal30). You could come and enjoy a tub in the sunshine on the Sunday reading a paper (Sunshine not guaranteed)

Humble bee beauty soaps, candles and diffusers, was founded by two sisters Sarah and Laura which are made in Monmouth. Lovingly handcrafted harnessing the natural properties of plants and flowers, using only pure essential oils.

The business began when they moved back to the area with their young families and decided to create a range of gentle, natural products that they wanted to use in their own home.

### We accept newspapers and magazine vouchers

Many newspapers are increasing their prices, so to reduce the cost many offer discounted vouchers you can pre-purchase in a variety of packages over 12 to 13 weeks. Typically the savings are 20% or higher, look out for a deal.

Magazines are also changing prices, so if you see a voucher for a discount off your next copy don't hesitate to bring it in

Want a magazine we don't normally stock? You are not alone, we have a handful of customers who we order a single magazine just for them. Join the gang and one fab customer who likes a weekly magazine no longer every week so we keep it for them on the 1st and 3rd week of every month.

### LONGTOWN POST OFFICE

**Saturday 9am ~ 11am & Monday to Friday 10.30am ~ 3.30pm**

Taking a last minute opportunity to travel or go on a work trip, you can pick up Euros at Longtown Post Office immediately and any other travel currency can be ordered for collection safely at the Post Office

**Pay your bills at our Post Office** If an invoice has a barcode on it, it is likely it can be paid at the Post Office when you want, using cash, card or cheque (except Welsh Water). Keep track and you can **pay your council tax, BT, Water, nPower**, at the Post Office on a day you choose.

### Changing your mobile phone?

You can always topup your mobile phone credit at Longtown Post Office, plus we have sim cards if you are going eco and buying a preloved phone.

### Save time, use our Post Office as your bank for personal & business accounts

- Using your bank card you can pay cash into most personal and business bank accounts
- Using a personalised paying in slip you can pay cash into your personal and business bank accounts
- Using a personalised paying in slip and an envelope you can pay cheques into personal and business accounts.

### Handmade crochet Jubilee Post box topper

Thank you all for the lovely comments our Post Box topper was made by the talented Verity Price from Cow House Crochet in Newton St Margarets

### Transition to Barcoded Stamps

Non-barcoded stamps will be phased out but will remain usable until 31st January 2023. Customers are encouraged to use their non-barcoded stamps before this date. Alternatively, non-barcoded stamps can be exchanged for the new barcoded version through the Royal Mail's 'Swap Out' scheme.

**Sadly no posties are based at ours, so if you want to chase a letter or parcel, please call Royal Mail Hereford on 01432 346100**



**Hopes of Longtown** – Open seven days a week 01873 860444

[www.hopesoflongtown.co.uk](http://www.hopesoflongtown.co.uk) / [@HopesofLongtown](https://www.facebook.com/HopesofLongtown) / [info@hopesoflongtown.co.uk](mailto:info@hopesoflongtown.co.uk)

join our Facebook group Hopes of Longtown and post community/charity events for free

Like our Hopes of Longtown business page to keep up to date with news

Tag us in your passion for food and community via [Twitter](https://twitter.com/HopesofLongtown) / [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/HopesofLongtown) / [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/HopesofLongtown) / [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HopesofLongtown)

**CHURCH SERVICES, JULY INTO AUGUST**

**3 July, Trinity 3**

11am Michaelchurch Holy Communion  
*Angie's First Celebration of Holy Communion*

Followed by *Bring and share lunch* at Escleyside Hall to celebrate Angie's Priesting

**10 July, Trinity 4**

11am Llanveynoe Holy Communion  
 3pm St Margaret's Flower Festival Service  
 6pm Clodock Evening Worship

**17 July, Trinity 5**

9.30am Craswall Morning Worship  
 3pm Newton Holy Communion

**24 July, Trinity 6**

9.30am Clodock Holy Communion

**31 July, Trinity 7**

3pm St Margaret's Holy Communion

**7 August, Trinity 8**

9.30am Llanveynoe Morning Worship  
 3.00pm St Margaret's Holy Communion

**JULY DIARY AND EVENTS PLANNER** Please see <https://blackhillcommunities.net> for events further ahead

Sat	02 July	11.00am-5.00pm	Black Hill Communities Ukraine Group, Exhibition of Art, Design & Crafts. Longtown Hall
Mon	04 July	7.30pm	Longtown & District Historical Society: AGM and talk, Judy Stevenson <i>Sutton Walls</i> . Longtown Village Hall
Tue	05 July	8.00pm	Evensong with Wenatchee Valley Girls Choir, Dorstone
Wed	06 July	8.00pm	Evensong with Wenatchee Valley Girls Choir, Michaelchurch Escley
Wed	06 July	1.45pm	Escleyside Gardening Club, visit to Croome Court
Wed	06 July	2.30-4.30pm	Longtown Library, Longtown Village Hall
Thu	07 July	8.00pm	Evensong with Wenatchee Valley Girls Choir, Craswall
Thu	07 July		Longtown Thursday Club: Visit to Old Railway Line Garden Centre, Three Cocks
Fri	08 July	8.00pm	Evensong with Wenatchee Valley Girls Choir, Clodock
Fri	08 July	6.30pm	Llanveynoe Church: Progressive Supper
Sat	09 July	7.00pm	Concerts for Craswall: <i>The Sounds of Purcell</i> , Bach & Vivaldi, Dore Abbey
Sat	09 July		St.Margarets Flower Festival Weekend, inc Songs Among the Flowers at 2.30pm
Sun	10 July		St.Margarets Flower Festival Weekend, inc Flower Festival Service at 3.00pm
Wed	13 July	11.00am	Newton St Margarets Women's Guild: Visit to Textile Bazaar, Hellen's Manor, Much Marcle
Sat	16 July		Longtown & District Historical Society: Summer visit, Snodhill Castle
Thu	21 July	2.00-5.00pm	Longtown Thursday Club, Longtown Village Hall
Sat	23 July	5.00pm	Craswall Barbecue and Grand Draw
Sat	30 July	10.00am-noon	Longtown Village Pride, Longtown Castle
Sat	06 August	3.00pm start	Craswall to Llanveynoe Pilgrimage, St Mary's, Craswall
Sun	07 August	3.30pm	Concerts for Craswall: Hope Cramsie, guitar. St Mary's, Craswall
Sun	07 August	12.30pm onwards	Barbecue at The Cornewall Arms in aid of Longtown Village Pride
Thu	11 August		Newton St Margarets Women's Guild: Gin tasting, Black Mountain Botanicals
Sat	13 August		Longtown & District Historical Society: Summer visit, Garway Church
Sat	20 August	From 8.00am	Longtown and District Show
Sat	27 August	10.00am-noon	Longtown Village Pride, Longtown Castle
Sat	27 August	2.30pm onwards	Duck Race and Barbecue, Bridge Inn, Michaelchurch Escley

**Village hall contacts**

**Craswall Hall**

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

**Longtown Hall**

Mark Ewins, 01873 860829  
[www.longtownvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.longtownvillagehall.org.uk)  
 bookings@longtownvillagehall.org.uk

**Escley & District Sports Pavilion**

Kirsty, 01981 510682  
[www.escleysportspavilion.com](http://www.escleysportspavilion.com)  
 escleysportspavilion@gmail.com

**Escleyside Hall**

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

**Newton Church Room**

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

**Golden Valley Safer Neighbourhood Team**

**Peterchurch Police & Fire Hub, Hereford HR2 0RU. 01981 550253**

PC 3687 Jeff Rouse 07870 150972  
 PCSO 6378 Pete Knight 07773 053 919 peter.knight@westmercia.pnn.police.uk  
 Contact: 101 ext 4820 – Email: [goldenvalley.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:goldenvalley.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

