

Awliscombe and Weston Times



Spring 2026



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Contact Page.

St. Michael's Church, Awliscombe school, Parish Council, Village Hall, and club contacts.

Honiton Team Office 01404 44035 office@honitoncofe.org

The Honiton Mission Community website, on honitoncofe.org has information about services in Awliscombe.

Church Warden	Nick Thwaites	07900 041174
	Timandra Burford	07946869251
PCC Secretary	Sharon Thwaites	01404 548467
Bell Captain	Roger Sprigg	01404 43814
Awliscombe School	Penny Hammett	01404 42031 – Executive headteacher, Fort Federation.
Awliscombe School	Vicky Morris	Head of School
Awliscombe Parish Council	Nigel Boulton	07730926809 - Chair
Awliscombe Village Hall	Liz Gillingham	07811 675800 - Booking Secretary
		01404 43551
	Anna Beard	07748 635503 - Chair
Young Wives	Sally Lawrence	01404 42825
Garden Club	Sally Lawrence	01404 42825
Short Mat Bowls	Kelvin Briscoe	01404 549047
Awliscombe Ladies	Rosemary Sprigg	01404 43814
Knit and Stitch	Sarah Dent	07540 110965
Friends of St. Michael's	Kathryn Empson	07979697487

Emergency Contact Numbers.

Ambulance, Fire, Police	999
Police non-emergency	101
NHS non-emergency	111
Flood line	0345 9881188
Fire Non – emergency	0800 0502999

Defibrillator Unit

As most people know, we have a defibrillator in Awliscombe. It is situated on the wall of the village hall, to the right of the entrance. There is also one on the wall as you enter Heron Farm in Weston, directly ahead of you.

This comes as a gentle reminder of what to do in an emergency situation.

If someone collapses with a cardiac arrest near you, then **speed of response is paramount, so ring 999 without delay.**

If someone was able to fetch the defib unit, instructions will be heard very clearly once the unit is opened.

What's On.

Monthly

regular dates in the Village Hall or the committee room in the hall.

Mondays -		
Tuesdays -		
Wednesdays -	Short mat bowls Knit and Stitch	2 pm - 5pm & 7pm - 10pm 7.30 – 9.30 alt. Wednesdays
Thursdays -	Honiton U3A Hist. Awliscombe Ladies Garden Club	8 am – 1pm last Thursday in month 7.30 pm - 2 nd Thursday in month 7.30 pm – 3 rd Thursday in month
Fridays -	Slot car racing Honiton WI Art	7 pm - 10pm 1 pm – 4pm 2 nd & 4 th Friday

SAVE THE DATE.

Details of these events are elsewhere in the magazine.

Saturday 7 th March	Awli with rugby & pizza 4.00pm
Saturday 14 th March	Awli with rugby & pizza 4.00pm
Monday 23 rd March	Whist Drive in the Village Hall
Monday 30 th March	Easter Bingo in the Village Hall
Friday 3 rd April	Good Friday
Sunday 5 th April	Easter Sunday
Saturday 11 th April	Awli with pizza van from 6.00 pm
Sunday 26 th April	Farm Fit Games at Nprove Studio
Saturday 9 th May	Open Mic night in hall and pizza.
Sun 24 th Mon 25 th May	Open Garden at The Old Rectory
Monday 25 th May	Whist Drive in the Village Hall
Thursday 28 th May	Coffee Morning at Cadhay for RDA
Saturday 13 th June	Village Fête at The Otter Inn
Saturday 19 th September	Harvest Supper in the village Hall

Church Matters.

Services at St. Michael's are on the first and third (with communion) and fourth (lay-led) Sundays of each month at 9:30am. Everyone is welcome. Information about these services is on honitoncofe.org and in the Honiton parishes newsletter, *Around the Parishes*.

The group of people who like **classic cars** that used to meet at The Honiton Inn now meet on the first Thursday of each month at **The Otter Inn** in Weston. Anyone welcome.



On 29th March, Palm Sunday, it is a fifth Sunday so there will not be a service at St. Michael's in Awliscombe.

Instead people are invited to take part in a procession from St. Michael's Honiton to St. Paul's before 11.00.



Church Perch

Thought for the Day Week Month Quarter

By the time you read this we'll already be well into Lent - that time when we're supposed to give up chocolate, alcohol or something else that might otherwise bring a bit of relief when there doesn't seem to be much else to enjoy.

Actually, we enjoy Lent - not just because you can really see the days getting longer (we discovered recently* that the word itself comes from the Old English *Lencten*, referring to the lengthening days, in contrast to most European languages, which use a word deriving from the 40 day period in the Church calendar, or to fasting) but because it's a period when we're invited to examine and reset our relationship with God.

Help! What does that mean? Well, probably different things for different people: it might just mean going for a walk on a sunny day (there was one last Saturday) and thinking, "Gosh, we're lucky!" We like the idea of a period of reflection and renewal. The Church even publishes a little booklet each year to guide us with very short daily readings, and thoughts based on them (there are still some in St Michael's - please help yourself). If giving up chocolate helps you to focus on that, go for it: come Easter you may find that you're tasting it with renewed delight - or alternatively that you're perfectly happy without it!

* We're indebted to *Cathedral Life*, the weekly newsletter about events and activities at Exeter Cathedral, with its brilliant introduction by the Dean (always amusing and interesting; never 'worthy'). You can sign up for free at www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/get-involved/stay-in-touch

Nick Thwaites

Timandra Burford

Churchwardens - St Michael's



Village Hall News

The Awli @ the Hall – frequently with a pizza van outside – has continued to be popular; providing a pop-up pub where everyone can gather for a drink, some chat and perhaps a pizza or two.



The Ceilidh was very popular and hugely enjoyable. Everyone joined in and had a really good time. There was a delicious buffet halfway through and the event raised a whopping £1258 for Hospiscare. Thank you to Sally and The Young Wives for organising it all so well.



The committee opened up the bar on New Year's Eve. It was lovely to see families earlier on in the evening enjoying some games together.



It was also great to welcome people from Weston. There was plenty of chatting, dancing and at midnight we all watched the amazing firework display from London on the big screen before joining in a circle to sing Auld Lang Syne.



The annual quiz was as popular as ever. Thank you to Sarah for the questions, to Sharon and Sarah for all the maths and to Paddy for asking the questions. Thanks also to the committee for cooking a delicious chilli for us all. The proud winners were the team called The Riparians – Gill David, Chris and Carole. The prize for the best name went to the Football United group who called themselves Tequila Mockingbird.



There was another Open Mic night on the 7th February. As before many local people came and played a great variety of music for us to enjoy. It was so good to enjoy a drink, pizza and chat while listening to our talented neighbours.



Nick, a visitor from Gittisham, came along and played his fairytale lapsteel guitar for us. Most unusual. Thank you to Helen and Stephen for organising these nights for us. The next Open Mic night will be on **Saturday 9th May.**





The Awli nights in the hall can now be more spontaneous as the committee has obtained a licence for alcohol. Some of the six nations rugby was shown on the big screen. For these events we thank Neil and Karen Oakley for donating two barrels of Otter Bitter to the bar. We are also very grateful to Martin and Jane who run the bar most of the time. Anna, Sarah, Mike and others have stepped in now and then. If there is anyone else who is happy to help out, in the bar or by being there to set up or clear away, then please talk to Martin and Jane or any committee member.

There is a questionnaire enclosed in this edition of the magazine. Please take the time to fill it in and let the committee know how you would like to see the hall being used and how you could join in and help to make this a venue for all of the community.

New Awliscombe & Weston website

Last year the committee decided to setup a new hall booking system to help reduce the busy workload of our Booking Clerk and Treasurer. We selected a system which is used by hundreds of village halls in the UK and one of the key benefits with this system is the ability to set up our own website. The committee decided to create something that would benefit the whole community of Awliscombe and Weston rather than be hall specific.

As well as the online booking system, it includes:

Events e.g. Quiz Night, Harvest Supper, Church events, Whist Drive, Village Fête, Bingo, etc.

Activities e.g. Short Mat Bowls, Garden Club, Young Wives, Church Services, Awliscombe Ladies Group etc.

Links e.g. Local B&B, Pubs & Local Businesses.

FOSM - Friends of St. Michael's church.

A&W Times - Back issues of this magazine. Available in full colour from now on.

We also hope to collect as many consenting email addresses as possible by users registering for news, what's on etc. and see this as a more inclusive method of communication.

Look out for this and please sign up. We promise not to bombard you!

PLEASE REGISTER HERE FOR REGULAR UPDATE EMAILS ABOUT WHAT'S ON AND OTHER HALL RELATED INFORMATION

As I write, the site is not yet live & visible to searches, however it can be viewed directly at Awliscombe.com and will be live shortly.

This is not considered in any way finished and we welcome any feedback including anything that's been left out. Please email kcoxon@gmail.com K.Coxon.



St Michael's Church, Awliscombe FOSM Vacancy for PCC Treasurer

St Michael's Church and Friends of St Michael's in Awliscombe are looking for
a new Treasurer

This voluntary role is an important part of St Michael's and the Friends of St Michael's. The Treasurer works closely with the PCC and FOSM to manage accounts, bank cash and prepare simple financial reports.

All necessary training, full support and a clear handover will be provided. Experience with bookkeeping or finance - while helpful - is not essential. What matters most is reliability, integrity and a willingness to help the local community.

If you have a few hours to spare each month and would like to contribute to the life of this historic village church, we would be delighted to hear from you.

For more information or to express your interest, please contact Nick Thwaites
Phone 079000 41174 or nick.sharon.thwaites@mac.com



Friends of St. Michael's was started 4 years ago and many newcomers to the villages may not be clear about its purpose.

Friends of St Michael's is a group dedicated to supporting and making the most of the historic church building and churchyard of St Michael and All Angels, Awliscombe. Anyone can join the Friends; it has no religious purpose. Together we will provide regular financial support to maintain and enhance the building and its churchyard as an asset for the whole community, so future generations can continue to enjoy memorable family gatherings, school plays, community get-togethers and other events such as exhibitions and live music, as well as services.

Membership of the Friends is on a 'household' basis, so there is no need for separate individuals within a household to join separately. Leaflets, including an application form with payment details are available in St Michael's, or from the Secretary of the Friends, Kathryn Empson (01404 548840, stmichaelfriends@gmail.com).

Here are some excerpts from this year's AGM.

Since our inception our goal, aligned with the community, has been to raise funds for the fabric of the church. We received tremendous support that our first goal should be lavatory facilities in the church so that we could offer a wider range of events, and accommodate the needs of our congregation appropriately.

We have debated whether we should explore if it is feasible and viable to try and connect to mains water and instead of a compost loo, put in a fully functioning normal lavatory. The other benefit of this would be that we would have to put in drainage and could put in a spur which, in due course, could be connected to a kitchen servery within the church. However we know that this would require considerable fundraising efforts so we will not recommend this as an option now but we will continue to see if we can identify relatively easy access to mains water for the future, which would enable us to obtain a quote for the kitchen servery works.

As a committee, our main aim is to make the church more viable as a community hub to enable us to host a wider variety of events, all of which would benefit from a loo.

We have been very lucky to host a number of events in the church, including our cream tea in the summer, and a number of you have already bought tickets for the Jim Causley concert later this month. It should be a great concert.

To broaden the types of events we could host, we would like to remove a number of pews and replace that seating with stackable chairs. The floor under the pews would need to be made good. We understand that some members may be reluctant to consider removing the pews because a lot of churches traditionally have them. Interestingly, we know these are not the original pews, and so we feel somewhat comfortable in recommending that several rows are removed. We will also conduct a parish survey about this before applying for permission in accordance with PCC and church recommendations.

Our list of tasks grows ever longer and includes re-plastering (where required) and redecorating, enhancing the lighting and much needed heating, and a simple kitchen servery within the church.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to my fellow committee members for their tremendous work in making the events at the church work seamlessly

Finally, I'd like to quote from some remarks made at the AGM by churchwarden Nick Thwaites.

"In February 2022 St Michael's was struggling financially. We were having to dig into financial reserves, and couldn't pay our Common Fund (the annual levy to the Diocese which makes up the majority of Diocesan income). We proposed (a) encouraging an increase in giving by members of the congregation, and (b) the formation of the 'Friends of St Michael's'. Exactly four years on, thanks to the generosity and hard work of so many people in both congregation and wider community, our financial situation has been turned around. The Friends is flourishing; St Michael's now pays its Common Fund in full every year; we have completed some major repairs, and we are well on our way to building the toilet - unimaginable in 2022."

Siân Dalrymple – Chair of Friends of St Michael's

Clubs around the villages.

Many of the clubs have been having their AGMs and making plans for the year ahead.

At the end of last year, the former Garden Club ended after many years. Everyone is very grateful to Pat for keeping everything going and for giving so much of her time and energy to making it an enjoyable and interesting club.

At the eleventh hour, however, many of the members and others who share an interest in gardening decided that it was a shame to let the club die out. Monday was an awkward day for many so a new Awliscombe and District Garden Club has arisen from the embers of the previous one and has just had its first meeting.

The annual cost of membership is £15 per person. Membership is not limited to those living in Awliscombe and Weston, and members will receive a discount card for use at Combe Garden Centre. At each meeting held in the hall there will be a raffle and refreshments, as well as plant sales at certain times of the year.



After the recent closure of Awliscombe Garden Club, a new club has been formed and will be known as Awliscombe & District Garden Club. Meetings will be in the Hall on the 3rd Thursday of the month or at a different location if we are doing visits/trips out.

The committee members are:

Sally Lawrence – Chairman

Sally Holmes – Vice Chairman

Mary Boulton – Secretary

Shirley Wills – Treasurer

Mark Dalrymple – Vice Treasurer

Caroline Coxon & Carole Lock – event organisers

Malcolm Adams – plant sales

Karen Welch & Kay Adams – teas & rota

Caroline Coxon – raffles & rota

Events:

19 th March	Talk about Bio Hub and Bio Char by Caroline from Trim Plants.
16 th April	Demonstration on Hanging Baskets by Andrea in Combe Garden Centre.
21 st May	Wild Flower Walk, Holyford Woods. Park opposite Tower Service Station.
20 th June	Trip to Burrow Farm.
18 th July	Party at Eglad House.
20 th August	Either talk or Quiz TBC
17 th September	Demonstration on Willow Weaving.
15 th October	Either talk or quiz TBC
21 st November	Visit to Millhouse in Combe Raleigh 10am, all about poinsettias.
17 th December	Bring and Share social event, possible Christmas craft.

Sally Lawrence - lawrencesally@hotmail.com

The Young Wives are celebrating their 35th year!! (Not so young, but young at heart). Again, if anyone is interested in joining this group the contact details are on the Contacts page at the front. We meet up about once a month for a variety of activities.

YOUNG WIVES TIMETABLE FOR 2026

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISER(S)
23.1.26	Beehive event The Roses (tickets have already been bought)	Anne Edwards
25.2.26	Meeting in Hall Committee room to discuss Safari Supper To celebrate our 35 th anniversary	Everyone
26.3.26	Exeter Underground Passages	Jane Davies team
22.4.26	Taunton Races (tickets have already been bought)	Mandy Reed
6.5.26	Plymouth Gin Distillery	Jane Davies team
18.6.26	Circular walk possibly Tipton St John area	Liz Gillingham
4 th or 11 July	Safari Supper at various houses and finishing at Hall	Everyone
August	BBQ on a Beach	Sarah Ricketts
September	Dalwood Vineyard	Jenny Bishop
October	Escape Rooms	Jane Davies team
November	Recipe swap evening	Liz Gillingham
December		

And there may be a visit to Beer Quarry caves during the summer as and when we know what events they are holding this year.

Carole & Caroline

The Awliscombe Ladies are organising an Easter Bingo among other activities. Their contact details are also on the Contacts page.



EASTER BINGO NIGHT

Monday 30th March in Awliscombe Village Hall.

Doors open 6.30 ... Eyes down 7.30

As always, chicken dinners, easter eggs and cash fliers.

Run by Awliscombe Ladies group.



AWLISCOMBE WHIST DRIVES



We meet on fourth Monday of the month starting at 7.30pm in the village hall.

£4 entry + raffle (inc Cuppa/biscuits)

Dates for 2026:

Mondays, January 26th, February 23rd, March 23rd, April 27th, May 25th, June 22nd, July 27th, August 24th,
September 28th, October 26th, November 23rd, NO WHIST IN DECEMBER.

If anyone would like a refresher or to learn how to play whist, please give Mandy a call on 07918685428.

Awliscombe Charity Work

With 2025 now drawn to a close, it is time to look back at all the work for charity we have done across the village. Whether you were organising one of these events or just taking part, every contribution was important in raising money for these charities and making a positive impact.



Starting off with the Whist Club, which raised £500 in excess payments for the Memory Café; a dedicated local meeting space for people recently diagnosed with dementia or struggling with memory loss. The Memory Café offers a safe, friendly environment to socialise over a cup of tea and slice of cake, or attend other social events and activities.

The ceilidh, organised by the Young Wives, raised an incredible £1258 for Hospiscare, a charity supporting people with life-limiting illnesses across Devon. Awliscombe United were able to add to that with £500 raised at their 1972-2025 reunion (covered in our last issue). This money was split between Hospiscare and Force; a local charity supporting anyone affected by cancer in Exeter and Devon.



Christmas is a time of giving and generosity, and we had three events raising money for charity during this season. The Christmas market raised £405.29 for Operation Rudolph, which aims to help families and children across East Devon enjoy Christmas, regardless of cost. The carol service raised over £300 for Home Start, which provides compassionate, confidential and expert help for families with young children, whilst the Christingle service raised £197 for the Children's Society, which helps children and young people through a wide range of struggles.

The school has also been doing plenty of work to support charities. Through various sponsored events such as non-uniform days, they were able to raise £207 for Children in Need, responsible for helping children and young people across the country through challenging times, from mental health struggles to poverty and family-related issues. The exciting Reindeer Run raised an additional £387 for Hospiscare, whilst the school Remembrance Day raised £170.50 for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Finally, returning to the festive season, Awliscombe Primary School combined with Payhembury to send off 39 shoe boxes for the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal, which delivers shoeboxes filled with gifts to children in struggling and war-torn environments.

We should of course remember the work of our local clubs and societies as well. The Awliscombe Ladies ran a Tabletop Sale that managed to raise £103 for the Honiton Hospital League of Friends, which supports the Honiton Hospital to provide vital local care. In addition, they also raised money through donating to the charities of their speakers: £40 to Lung Cancer Research, £70 to Dunkeswell Airfield, £60 to a police charity and £40 to Cancer Research. That's an amazing £313 to charity in total! Meanwhile the Garden Club raised £312 for Devon Freewheelers, an incredible charity providing a free blood bike courier service to the NHS. This means that the charity transports emergency medical consumables: everything from blood products, tissue samples, medication and donor milk.

A special mention should also go out to Mary Bolton for the events held in and around Honiton for the RDA (East Devon Riding for the Disabled Group). This is a wonderful charity that helps disabled children and adults enjoy the experience of horse riding, and is run by a dedicated band of volunteers. There were three main events held throughout 2025 in support of this group, the Honiton Show, where second hand horse tack and clothing was sold. Fundraisers also had the privilege to hold a coffee morning at Cadhay Gardens, and December saw a visit from Father Christmas to the Christmas celebration evening where mulled wine and mince pies were served and carols were sung. The total amount raised from these events was nearly £2200, so a huge thank you to everyone who took part.

In 2026, the group will once again be present at the Honiton Show, and on Thursday 28 May another coffee morning will be held at Cadhay Gardens. Everyone is welcome to join for a coffee or tea and wonderful homemade cakes, or just to enjoy a wander around the beautiful gardens. Don't forget to make a note in the diary for those events!



Up at Nprove Fitness Studio Nicky and her clients have taken part in various sponsored events to raise money for charity. In their Farm Fit games event they raised an incredible £3606 for Young Lives versus Cancer.

The poster shown is from last year's Farm Fit games which will also take place again this year, on Sunday 26th April. They will be looking for draw prizes if anyone would like to donate any and support the charity event for Young Lives versus Cancer.

There are probably some other groups in the area who have raised money for a good cause. I am sorry if we have left anyone out. The record of money raised for charities is impressive.

Do please contact us if there is anything you wish us to include in the magazine in the future.

Julia and Caroline

When you think of the movies, you don't often think of Devon. Yorkshire has its sweeping gothic scenery, perfect for Brontë protagonists to stumble through tragically. Bath's iconic honey-coloured townhouses and stacked terraces are a welcoming familiar sight in period dramas and vaguely Austen-adjacent properties, and London comes out on top as a place where stuff just seems to happen, more often and more dramatically (or at least, that's what every other hit BBC crime drama seems set on convincing us).

But what about Devon? Well, it may not have as many shadowy alleyways or regency ballrooms, but that doesn't mean it hasn't starred in a surprising number of on-screen appearances. Some of them you might have even heard of, and some could very well make for an exciting next watch.

1. *The Roses* (2025)

Perhaps not the most feelgood film of the year, *The Roses*, directed by Jay Roach, is something of an anti-romcom that charts the deteriorating relationship between chef Ivy (Olivia Coleman) and architect Theo (Benedict Cumberbatch) Rose. Though the film is largely set in California, many of its most scenic locations were actually filmed in Devon; from the Winking Prawn Café at North Sands (used as the location for 'We've Got Crabs!' in the film) to the North Sands beach and the Cliff Road in Salcombe. Perhaps the familiar landscape might offer some comfort whilst everything else on screen goes horribly wrong.



2. *Shalbourne* (2024)

This indie period drama is the passion project of Devon filmmaker Caroline Corrie, who also stars as the film's lead character Helen. Awarded the Best Foreign Film Feature prize at the Toronto Female Eye Film Festival, *Shalbourne* follows a woman's rebellion against her husband in Edwardian England, and was filmed across South Devon.

3. *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* (2023)

Directed by Hettie Macdonald and starring Jim Broadbent and Penelope Wilton, this film follows a man as he walks across the UK to visit a dying friend. The film starts in Devon, and filming locations include Kingsbridge, South Brent, Buckfast, Exeter and Tiverton. A heartwarming film about love, friendship and human determination, this might be a good thing to watch immediately after *The Roses* to restore a little more of your faith in humanity.



4. *House of the Dragon* (2021)

Game of Thrones was a global sensation, and its follow up series, *House of the Dragon*, created a similar buzz when it first aired in 2021; full of bloody battles, unconventional family relationships and, of course, dragons. The hit TV series, based on the books by George R. R. Martin, was filmed in a series of stunning locations, from Castleton in Derbyshire to Monsanto in Portugal.

Several important scenes were filmed in North Devon, at Hartland Quay, turning a somewhat familiar landscape into an epic fantasy backdrop.

5. *The Night Manager* (2016)

Just in case you hadn't got enough of Olivia Coleman. In this 2016 crime drama (now with a second season, only nine years later), luxury hotel night manager turned spy Jonathon Pine (Tom Hiddleston) infiltrates the inner circle of Richard Roper (Hugh Laurie), a dangerous arms dealer. The second episode is primarily set in Devon, with most of the filming taking place around Hartland village and Blackpool Mill Cottage, North Devon.



6. *And Then There Were None* (2015)

A three-part Agatha Christie adaptation with an all-star cast including the likes of Aidan Turner, Charles Dance, Miranda Richardson and Sam Neill. This BBC miniseries follows ten strangers who are invited to an isolated house on an island off the coast of Devon, where tensions rise as they begin to be picked off one by one. Despite being set in Devon, most of the filming actually took place in Cornwall. However, the railway scenes at the beginning were all filmed at the South Devon Railway between Totnes and Buckfastleigh.

7. *Rebecca* (1997)

Also starring Charles Dance, this adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's novel has been praised for its faithfulness to the source material, and earned Diana Rigg (playing Mrs Danvers) an Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries or Movie. The classic, deeply unsettling tale of a young girl haunted by her wealthy older husband's ex-wife was filmed in a range of locations across the UK. The beach scenes, however, were filmed at Mothecombe Beach in Devon.

8. *Sense and Sensibility* (1995)

Let's finish off this list with something perhaps a little more pleasant. Emma Thompson's delightful adaptation of Jane Austen's novel about three sisters and their widowed mother forced to move to a small cottage in Devon is the perfect romantic period drama escape. Also starring Alan Rickman, Hugh Grant and Kate Winslet, the film's production took place all across South Devon, from National Trust Saltram and Plymouth to Berry Pomeroy, Compton Castle and Mothecombe House.



A History of Water in Awliscombe and Weston

By Valerie Cann

Water has been in the local news a fair amount lately. After weeks of near constant rain and severe flooding, it is often difficult to think of anything else. Let's revisit the archives of the Awliscombe and Weston Times and once again learn about the history of water in our parish; researched and written by Valerie Cann.

How did people in the village get water before SWW and its predecessors?

Of course there were wells, some wells on private property, some available to all. Water from a spring came out of the Lion's mouth in the wall by the main gate. (of the school) Sadly this no longer happens. There was a well beside the road between the pub and Chinston Hill, where buckets could be dipped. In the field opposite the top churchyard gate is a small brick building which was a pump house covering a well providing water for the Edwardian Vicarage (now known as the Old Rectory).

Charles Cottrell, who lived at 3 Church Hill, earned pocket money as a boy when on Saturday mornings he operated the pump which filled a tank at the vicarage. When the tank was full the vicar blew a whistle and Charles was given sixpence! 2.5 pence for those born since decimalisation.

The most ambitious scheme was a watercourse in Greenway Lane. This was a 19th century construction and is confirmed by a map in the Devon Record Office. The spring that supplied it was in the top field on the left-hand side of the lane. It crossed under the road in a stone culvert and from there flowed down a purpose-built channel on the eastern side of the lane. There was a small farm just below the present fir plantation, called Greenway Farm, which had a drinking place for the farm stock. There were two further drinking places for cattle on the way down and then a cottage, which has also disappeared, with a water shute. It continued on down, providing yet another drinking place for cattle.*

Opposite Coopers Cottage (now the Hall car park) was the last shute used by the cottages in the surrounding area. Finally it crossed under the main road, ran down a ditch past the Post Office (now the Granary) and into another culvert under the entrance to Heathfield Farm, which it provided with water for the house and the yard. Eventually it found its way into the river Wolf. There are just a few remaining traces of this remarkable watercourse left.

*The Oxford English Dictionary does not recognise the word shute, it prefers chute; it is Devonshire dialect word, also as in 'shuting' for guttering on a building. In this instance the water was directed into a pipe which enabled a bucket to be placed under the flow to collect water.



MATT WOOSEY & JOHN PARKER



We're thrilled to welcome back internationally-renowned duo: singer/songwriter **Matt Woosey** and double-bassist **John Parker** for an intimate seated studio performance of blues and funky rhythms, topped off with their characterful chemistry.

Easter Sat 4th April, 8:00 - 10:00 pm
Old Rectory Studio, Awliscombe, EX14 3PJ

Bar opens at 7:30

Matt: "Completely convincing, a master." Tom Robinson, *BBC 6 Music*
 JP: performed extensively with acts such as Ed Sheeran. "An intuitive musician, combining beautiful soaring double bass with a beatboxing style."

£22 Book online at www.creativebeings.uk/events

TOP INTERNATIONAL MUSICIANS ARE COMING TO AWLISCOMBE!

Perhaps the perfect way to spend Easter Saturday evening? **Matt Woosey**, acoustic blues/rock singer/songwriter, will be joined by double-bassist **John Parker**, formally playing with Nizlopi (JCB Song fame – No1 in the UK Singles Chart, Dec 2005).

Matt's refreshing musical songwriting and playing style combines acoustic blues, folk and rock conveyed with an accomplished vocal delivery. His catalogue covers a wide spectrum delivering a powerful blend of tracks from 8 albums.

"Is Matt Woosey the finest acoustic blues guitar player currently working in the UK?" Tom Robinson, 6 Music.

"His guitar-work throughout is exemplary with riffs that could easily grace any Pink Floyd or Fleetwood Mac album" - Amplified Magazine.

JP has worked with a huge number of acts over the years and performed extensively all over the world with artists such as Ed Sheeran, Kate Rusby, Will Pound, Polly Paulusma and Jake Morley, to name but a few!

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FOSM Jim Causley Concert

On Saturday 21 February, acclaimed Devon folk-singer Jim Causley treated us to a night of music; weaving a rich tapestry of Devon's folklore from barrels of cider to gruesome ghost stories. Each song was accompanied with a short lesson about its history and significance, helping us to not only enjoy but understand them on a much deeper level. Audience members were even encouraged to join in with some choruses, with varying levels of success! There was a break halfway through to enjoy a chat and a drink, and the evening ended with a beautiful rendition of 'Glorious Devon Morning' touchingly dedicated to the much-missed Allison Bryant, who was instrumental in organising Jim's first performance at St Michael's two years ago. A huge thank-you to everyone who was involved, to the Friends of St Michael's for organising, and of course to everyone who came along to this joyful celebration of local culture.

At the End of the Earth

After leaving a busy dock
We come to a new railway station
We chase time like this all our lives
The journey seems to repeat itself
But we never reach the so-called destination
Let me tell you, I am a Nomad's son
Love and death are nothing but a way of living
And everything happens along the path

Jidimajia

Translated by Wang Ping



Salt Sky

The bright night sky,
Doorway to everything-

In all that black
All those stars:

Salt.
Pinpricks

White fireworks.
Perlite.

We look up
Pulled into the immensity

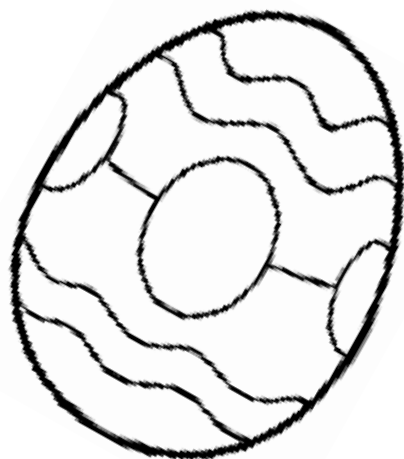
Lifted into the limitless-
As if it were a hole

We are falling into,
Up instead of down.

We stand on the earth,
Breathe in the night.

It is all too big.
We go back inside.

Alberto Ríos



The First Day of Spring

by Julia Thwaites

To say that winter has overstayed its welcome would be something of an understatement. With constant rain leading to some of the worst floods in the area in years, spring couldn't come soon enough. So, what signs do we have to look out for to indicate that sunnier days are just around the corner?

Well, that does somewhat depend on what you define as spring, since according to the Woodland Trust, it could technically start on two different days. If you're an astronomer, the first day of spring lands on the spring equinox, around the 20 March (though this can vary from year to year). The spring equinox is the day that the sun finally crosses over the equator, meaning that the sunlight and dark hours become equal. The word equinox roughly translates to 'equal night', from the Latin 'aequus' (equal) and 'nox' (night). Equinoxes should not be confused with solstices, which are either the longest or shortest days of the year depending on the season. The meteorological first day of spring is one we are all more familiar with: 1 March, defined by weather scientists, who split up the year into equal seasonal quarters for statistical reasons.



Despite having conditions that most people would find unpleasant to step outside in, spring begins for some flowers in early March and even mid-to-late February. We've all seen a slightly bewildered bunch of daffodils popping up on frosty mornings, and in fact this delightful burst of colour frequently blooms between Ash Wednesday and Lent, giving them the less well-known name of 'Lent Lilies'. It should come as little surprise that daffodils are closely related to snowdrops, another common sight this time of year. Snowdrops are known in France as the 'pierce-neige', or 'snow piercer', due to their hardened leaves that allow them to break through frozen ground. Their sap also contains a specialised kind of antifreeze, protecting the flowers from frosts. A beautiful symbol of winter coming to an end, just be careful when picking them; according to some superstitions, to bring a snowdrop inside will bring great misfortune to

the household. Other flowers to look out for are the unmistakable purple flash of crocuses at the base of tree trunks, and the little constellations of wood anemone that crop up at the beginning of March.

As the days pass, the trees start to wake up again. Ash, beech, oak and rowan are all native trees that begin to bud in March, whilst leaves will begin to emerge from the silver birch trees and crab apples will begin to blossom. More insects, such as bees and butterflies, will begin their vital role as pollinators, and as March turns into April, wild birds and animals will return to the scene. April is around the time that swallows return from their migration to warmer climates (if we could all be so lucky), as well as a time for those in hibernation to stop their alarm clocks. The UK's three hibernating mammals are bats, dormice and hedgehogs, so be sure to look up to the night sky or investigate any rustling hedgerows for these small, perhaps slightly sleepy signs of spring.

Lemon and Pistachio Shortbread

A delicious little treat bursting with fresh, bright flavours to bring a splash of sunshine into your kitchen. The bunny shapes are optional.

Ingredients:

- 60g pistachios
- 125g butter, softened
- 55g caster sugar, plus extra for finishing
- 180g plain flour
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2tbsp lemon juice (or more if the dough is too dry)

Method

1. Toast the pistachios in a small frying pan until they start to darken (they should be soft to touch). Take off the heat and allow to cool.
2. Use a fork to beat the butter and sugar together until smooth and creamy. You may want to use a food processor if the butter is a bit cold.
3. Sift in the flour and stir until thoroughly combined. You may need to use your fingers, rubbing the butter and flour together to form breadcrumbs.
4. Add 50g of the pistachios to a blender and blend until they form a heavy powder. Add them, along with the lemon zest, to the rest of the ingredients and stir until combined, gradually adding the lemon juice until you have formed a thick dough. Roughly chop the remaining pistachios and stir into the dough.
5. Tip the dough onto a floured surface and knead lightly, before rolling it out to a 1cm thickness. If you want slightly thicker biscuits, bear in mind they may need to be in the oven for longer.
6. Cut the dough into shapes of your choosing and place on a lined baking tray. Sprinkle with caster sugar and put in the fridge to chill for 20 minutes.
7. Bake the biscuits in the oven at 190C for 15 minutes, turning partway through. Check they are cooked all the way through. If not, put in the oven for another 5 minutes with a baking tray on the rack above.
8. Allow to cool on a wire rack before serving.



Care Training Devon

Devon Business & Education Centre, Tale, Payhembury, Honiton, Devon, EX14 3HL

Tel: 01884 220150

Email: team@carewithkindness.co.uk

Rural Devon Training Hub Launches to Strengthen At-Home Care Skills

Tale, Devon (30th January 2026) – Care Training Devon officially opened the doors to its new training facility on 30th January 2026, marking a significant milestone for the local care community and the wider health and social care sector across Devon. The grand opening took place at the Devon Business & Education Centre, Tale, EX14 3HL, bringing together unpaid carers, care professionals and local businesses.

The event celebrated the launch of **Care Training Devon**, a new community-focused resource dedicated to improving people's confidence and competence in delivering at-home care for elderly and vulnerable adults. The initiative was formed by the founders of Care With Kindness, a local domiciliary care service.

Care Training Devon offers a wide range of in-person courses, including moving and handling, everyday care skills, first aid awareness, dementia and communication training, plus specialised workshops such as hoist and mobility support. Training is delivered in small groups by qualified professionals with extensive experience in health and social care, using real equipment in a calm, welcoming setting.

The opening of the training hub represents a strategic investment in the future of care across Devon. As demand for home-based care continues to rise nationally, initiatives like Care Training Devon play a vital role in strengthening community resilience, reducing risk, as well as supporting integrated care pathways with NHS and local authority partners.

At the launch, attendees enjoyed a live training demonstration and guided tour of the new facility, showcasing Care Training Devon's practical, hands-on approach to learning.

The official opening ceremony included a speech from **Richard Foord MP**, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Honiton and Sidmouth, highlighting the importance of accessible, high-quality care training in rural communities and the growing pressures facing family carers and care providers nationwide.

Also speaking at the event, **Chris Lorimer**, Director of Care With Kindness, outlined the vision behind Care Training Devon: to ensure that anyone with the responsibility to care - whether a family member, unpaid carer or professional - has access to practical training in a supportive, local environment. "This facility exists to serve our community," he said, "when a carer feels confident and supported, everyone benefits."

Mr Foord formally opened the facility by cutting the ribbon alongside carers from Care With Kindness. The event concluded with networking opportunities, allowing attendees to connect, share experiences and explore future collaborations.



Recipe: Spring Vegetable Soup

A play on the classic leek and potato soup, this is a great way to use up any green vegetables at the bottom of your fridge. If you want to make it a little more substantial, add a tin of chickpeas or butterbeans, or some cooked grains such as spelt. We would also recommend serving this with a slice of hot buttered toast, because spring may be here, but the sun may take a little longer to arrive.

Ingredients:

- 2 leeks
- Olive oil
- 2 sticks of celery, finely chopped
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- A pinch of salt
- 2 medium potatoes (or three small ones), peeled and chopped into roughly 2cm cubes
- 1 litre of chicken stock
- 100g frozen peas
- Other green vegetables (We used spring greens, roughly shredded, but spinach, kale or even broccoli could work as well)
- Tinned chickpeas or butterbeans (optional)

Method

1. Trim the leeks, peel if necessary and rinse. Slice each one in half lengthways, then slice each length into little half-moons. Rinse in a colander, then place in a bowl and cover with cold water before leaving to soak.
2. Add a generous drizzle of olive oil to a large saucepan on a medium-high heat. Scoop in the celery and onion with a pinch of salt and turn the heat down ever so slightly so that the vegetables don't stick to the bottom of the pan. Cook until transparent and slightly golden.
3. Add the potatoes to the onions and celery, along with the litre of chicken stock. Add a little cold water if necessary to cover the potatoes, then bring the liquid to the boil and let it simmer for ten minutes, or until the potatoes are cooked.
4. Drain the leeks and rinse again under cold water, then add them to the soup. You may need to turn up the temperature to maintain a simmer. After five minutes, add the frozen peas and other vegetables. You should also add the beans or chickpeas now if desired. You can add more cold water as well, to ensure the desired consistency. Simmer until all the vegetables are cooked.
5. Season to taste and serve piping hot.



Dear Community Friend,

Here at **Action for Children Fostering South West Peninsula and Family Breaks Devon**, we provide the highest standard of support and care to children in our services. We are well established across the region and have been a provider of short breaks and fostering locally for over 20 years.

Nationally and locally, there is a shortage of foster carers to provide the essential care required for children at the times they need it the most. This could be long term care, short term care or short breaks (what used to be called respite care).

We are reaching out to you today, as we urgently need more people to consider a role/career as a foster carer. We kindly ask you to pin our leaflets on your community notice board, share on your website and share in your community newsletters. We will send you copies in the post and electronic versions too, attached via email. If there is anything else you can do to promote our search for new foster carer applicants or if you require more leaflets, please get in touch with us.

Further information is available via our website where you will find details of how to find out more:

- Fostering Information - <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering/>
- To make an Enquiry - fostering.enquiry@actionforchildren.org.uk
- To make an Enquiry by phone - **0845 200 5162**

From all of us at Action for Children Fostering South West Peninsula and Family Breaks Devon, our sincerest regards and thanks.

Fostering South West Peninsula and Family Breaks Devon Team.

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Honiton District
Lions Club CIO Mole Screening Day
Saturday 18th of April @ The Mackarness Hall,
Honiton.

Walk-in service from 9am-1pm.

Cost to each patient is £5. Honiton Lions will match this donation, and all proceeds will be donated to Cancer Research UK.

Dr Tony Downs Consultant Dermatologist will be the medical professional in attendance.

Tea and Coffee will be available at a small additional cost.

Any Questions please contact Brian the Lion on 07966173828.



The Honiton and District Lions Club is a dedicated group of volunteers who have been serving the East Devon community since 1977 under the global motto "We Serve." As a registered charity, the club is distinguished by its commitment to ensuring that 100% of the funds raised from the public go directly to charitable causes, with all administrative costs covered by the members themselves.

They are a fixture of local life, organizing popular annual events such as our annual raffle and the Charter Day Classic Car Show to raise money for everything from youth sports equipment and school safety gear to major healthcare initiatives like Hospiscare. Beyond financial support, the Lions provide essential hands-on service by assisting with senior citizens' and youth events as well as health awareness programs, acting as a vital pillar of support for those in need across the district.



QR Code for The Lions Club Website

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Send your article to awliscombeandwestontimes@gmail.com

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