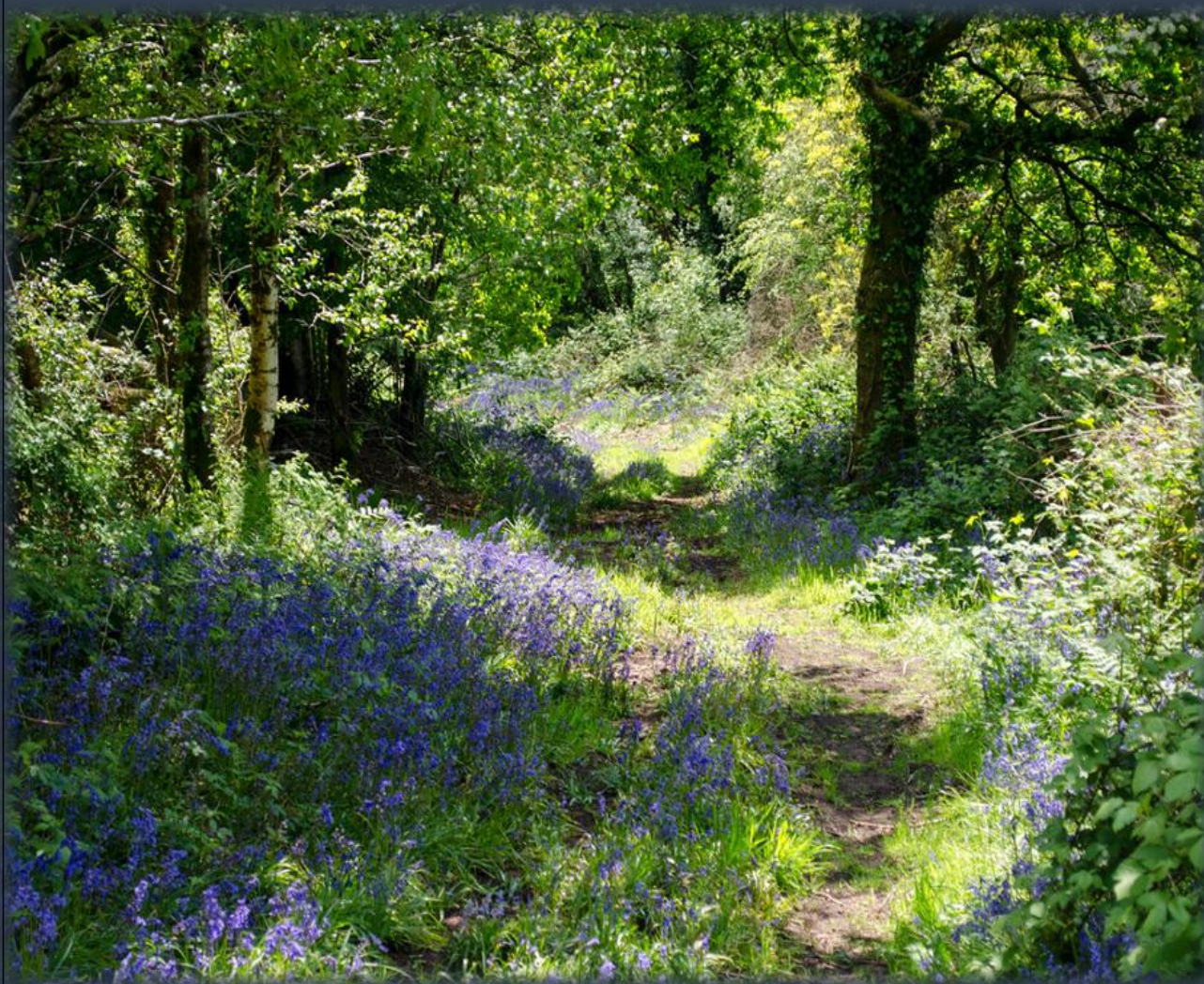


Awliscombe & Weston Times



Spring 2023



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Contact Page.

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- Thank you.

Emergency Contact Numbers.

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

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

Incumbent	Revd. Sue Roberts	Email: sue41260@gmail.com
Honiton Team Office	01404 44035	office@honitoncofe.org
The Honiton Mission Community website, on honiton.org , has information about services in Awliscombe.		
Church Wardens	Nick Thwaites	01404 548467 / 07900 041174
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	Sally Maynard	07810 442355 - Clerk
Awliscombe Village Hall	Liz Gillingham	07811 675800 - Booking Secretary
		01404 43551
	Kevin Coxon	07796 132238 - Chairman
Young Wives	Sally Lawrence	01404 42825
Garden Club	Pat Hughes	01404 841170
Short Mat Bowls	Kelvin Briscoe	01404 549047
Awliscombe Ladies	Rosemary Sprigg	01404 43814

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.

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 very clearly heard once the unit is opened. There will be a repeat of training in the new year.

Next Issue

The deadline for the next issue will be **15th June.**

Send your article to awliscombeandwestontimes@gmail.com

What's On.

To help everyone keep their diaries up to date, you can now go onto the Awliscombe Parish Council website, click on What's On and see all of the public events for the village. If anyone has an event which they would like advertised on this calendar, then please let Sally know on lawrencesally@hotmail.com

For any people who are new to the area, they should know that new members are always welcome to any of the various clubs and events mentioned in the magazine. Details of people to contact are on the contact page at the beginning of this magazine.

Monthly regular dates in the Village Hall

Mondays -	Garden Club	7.30pm – 10pm 2 nd Monday in month
Tuesdays –		
Wednesdays -	Short mat bowls	2 pm - 7pm & 7pm - 9pm
Thursdays -	Honiton U3A Hist. Awliscombe Ladies	8 am – 1pm last Thursday in month 7.30 pm - 2 nd Thursday in month
Fridays -	Drama Tots Slot car racing Honiton WI Art	8am – 1pm. 7 pm - 10pm 1 pm – 4pm 2 nd & 4 th Friday

SAVE THE DATE.

Friday 7 th April	Good Friday
Sunday 9 th April	Easter Sunday
Monday 24 th April	Village Whist Drive in Village Hall.
Thursday 4 th May	Local Elections
Saturday 6 th May	Coronation of King Charles III.
Monday 22 nd May	Village Whist Drive in Village Hall.
Saturday 17 th June	Village Fete 1.30 in Weston at The Otter Inn.
Monday 26 th June	Village Whist Drive in Village Hall.

First Thursday of the month:	Classic Car chatter at The Honiton Inn.
Last Friday of the month:	Open Mic Night at The Honiton Inn.
Alternate Wednesdays:	Knit & Stitch in the Village Hall. 7.30



Just a few lines to say 'hello' and to acknowledge how good it feels to be welcoming Spring once again. Leaving the dark evenings behind somehow fills us with renewed energy and puts a certain spring in our step.

It is a time of making plans, whether for the many garden tasks ahead, planning a holiday or just taking a quiet few day exploring our local beauty spots. Each season, Hembury Fort seems to holds its own beauty, so we hope you enjoy this Spring front cover.

As always we welcome input from you, it really would be appreciated – maybe a photo or a story you'd like to tell. Thank you so much to the people who contributed to this issue, to the distributors who give their time and to Mary and Ray for your recent help.

We wish you a Happy Easter and a very Happy Spring!

Cream Teas ... Laughter Tent ... Many Children's Games

Awliscombe & Weston Fete

Lucky dip

17th June

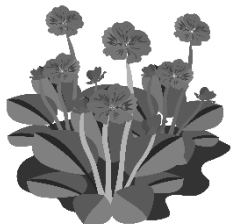
Find the key

Plant stall

Cake Stall

Bric-a-Brac

and much more!



Plant Stall

The Otter Inn

Duck Race!



Opens ... 1.30pm

See you there!

How to help the church building be maintained and become a more usable resource for the whole village:

The Friends of St Michael's Church had its inaugural AGM on Monday 30th January. We were pleased to welcome all who attended and enjoyed the wine and nibbles.



Our objective is to raise money to ensure our beloved and historic village church is in good repair. Further than this we want it to be valued by, and used as a resource for, the whole community. Our first priority is to install a functioning toilet. Photos were displayed of 'modern compost toilets', that we had visited, in the churchyards of both Luppitt and Combe Raleigh.



Everyone was impressed by the clean, odour less, modern design. We are awaiting detailed quotes but soon hope to move forward with our plans. The long-term aim is still to install an indoor toilet in the church, but the probable cost is such that it needs to remain a plan for the future.

In contrast a more easily attainable goal was agreed: to install Swift and Owl boxes in the church belfry in the hope of providing a safe haven for these vastly diminishing bird populations. It may even be possible to install cameras onto these bird boxes.

There is a general desire to begin removal of the pews in church, to provide a much more usable space. The present pews are screwed into raised wooden platforms that will also need to be removed and the flooring underneath is unknown. We are investigating what reflooring will be necessary so we can accurately judge how expensive a project this will be.

Several ideas on how the church could be used were suggested and we looked at how we can link closer to the school and the parents there, as well as the larger village community. We have already successfully raised over £3,000 although this is only the beginning. You can help by joining us as a member of the Friends of St Michael's.

To be a member we ask for a minimum monthly payment of £2 per month or more. You can also donate annually or pay a lump sum to be a life member. If you want to find out more go to the Parish Hall website (www.awliscombeparishcouncil.co.uk) and then click on Information, and then amenities. The Church page comes up with all the Friends of St Michael's Information. Alternatively, please contact Kathryn Empson, tel: 01404 548840 email: stmichaelfriends@gmail.com for more information.

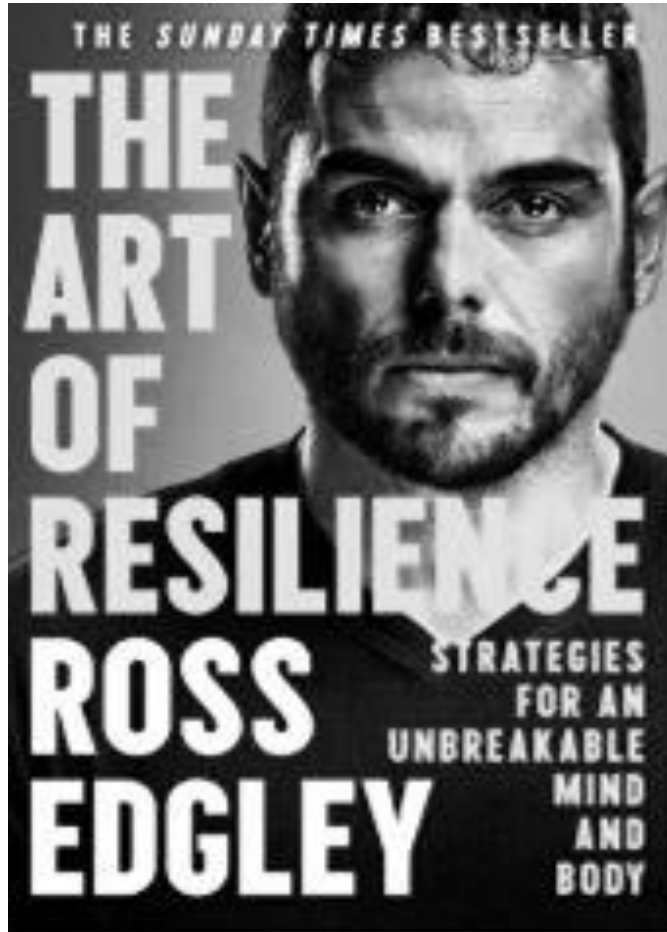
Our first event was a concert by folk singer Jim Causeley. See the full write up elsewhere in the magazine. We are grateful to Bradfords for supplying the loo for this wonderful evening.

Kathryn Empson

The Art of Resilience:

Strategies for an Unbreakable Mind and Body.

Author: Ross Edgley



This book puts wild swimming at a whole new level!

In 2018 Ross Edgley became the first person in history to swim all the way around Great Britain.

This gruelling 6 month 1,791 mile journey began and ended at Margate, Kent. Swimming clockwise around our shores, Ross endures treacherous storms, pounding waves, constantly changing tides and polluted shipping lanes. All this and throw in painful jellyfish stings, the Corryvreckan whirlpool off the wild west coast of Scotland and a surprise encounter with two giant Royal Naval patrol vessels.

Along the way Ross received tremendous support from friends, family and the many locals in all the coastal 'pit stops'.

Throughout the book Ross shares how he conquered this intimidating world-first adventure, focusing on mental strength and stoicism.

I was captivated from start to finish, completely in awe of his physical and mental strength and was warmed by his humble personality.

Reviewed by - **Liz Gillingham**

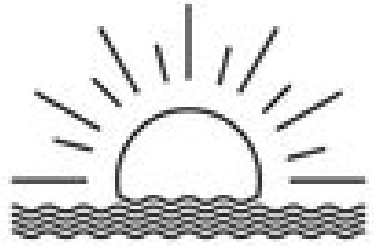
Come and enjoy a slice of Simnel cake, Easter biscuits



and a cup of tea or coffee

9th April

9.30am



Easter Morning

If you don't normally come to St. Michael's, we'd love to see you, pop along whether on your own or bringing children, find a seat and you'll be made very welcome.



Not forgetting the

EASTER EGG HUNT

Bring a little basket or dish
to gather as many as you can find
after the service

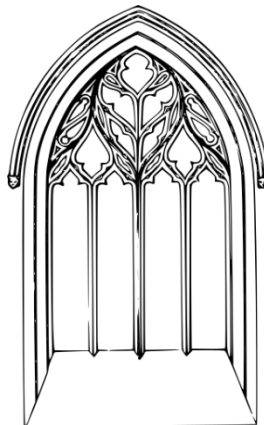


For those of you unable to make the service, the Easter Gospel reading will be: John 20 vs. 1 – 18

Thank you to **Mandy** for organising the team of people who keep our lovely church clean.



We know it takes time and effort,
so big thanks to you all!



Thank you **Jane** for organising the team of people who keep our lovely church looking so beautiful with flowers, thanks for your time and creativity everyone.



Revision of St. Michael's Electoral Roll.

The St. Michael's Church Electoral Roll is due for its annual review in April. A copy of the current Electoral Roll and qualifications for inclusion on the Roll are on the notice board in the Church porch.

For new entries on the Roll, amendments or deletions please contact David Chippington on 43480 or oldchips@hotmail.com

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LOCAL PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS – 4TH MAY 2023

Local Council Elections will take place this year on Thursday 4th May 2023 where Parish Councillors will be voted on for the next 4-year term. If you would like more information, please visit www.eastdevon.gov.uk and go to 'Council and Democracy' tab on the first page. Go to 'Becoming a Parish Councillor' and this will give you a lot of information regarding the role as a Councillor. Application forms will be available from The Clerk (please email awliscombe.pc@gmail.com or telephone 07810 442355 from the 1st March). Or a digital copy will be available on EDDC website or www.awliscombeparishcouncil.co.uk. Nomination papers must be delivered to the EDDC Council offices in Honiton between 27th March and 4th April. For any further details please contact the Parish Clerk – Sally Maynard for more information.



ANNUAL LITTER PICK.

The Annual Litter Pick will be taking place on Sunday 2nd April 2023. Meet in the village hall car park at 11a.m. Please bring a high vis vest/jacket if you have one and be prepared to walk on the by-roads of Awliscombe and Weston.

.....

Congratulations to the AWLISCOMBE CRIBBAGE TEAM who have won the Knockout cup.

Thanks to the esteemed leader Mike Dent, who through rousing oratory and 'raw meat' brought the team to this successful conclusion.

.....

Thank you to the three curry houses who kindly donated a 'main meal for two' for our curry night.

Viceroy Tawa, Dunkeswell.
The Brave Gurkhas, Honiton High St.
King of Spice, New ST. Honiton

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on recycled paper.

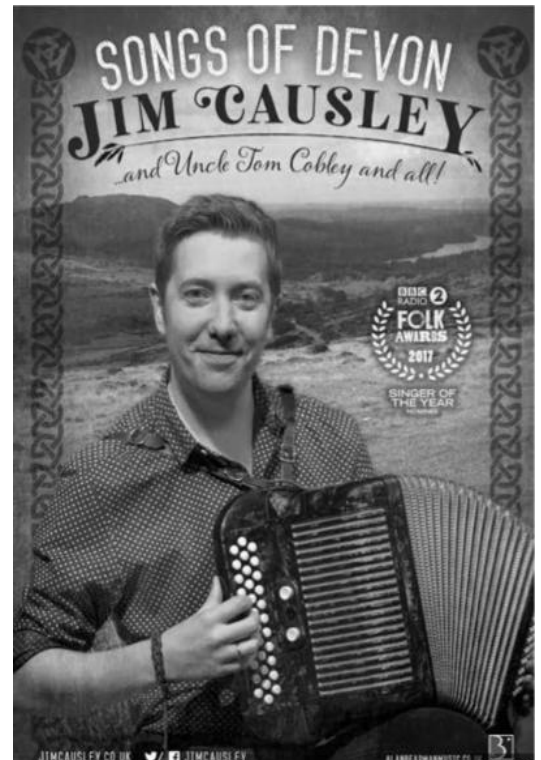
Jim Causley - Songs of Devon.
11th March, St Michael's

One of the main objectives of the *Friends of St Michael's* is to promote the use of St Michael's for community events outside church services. So when Allison mentioned that the acclaimed Devon folk singer Jim Causley was an old friend and loved singing in churches, we had to invite him - and we were so glad we did.

Jim has a national reputation in the folk world ("the finest singer of his generation" according to one critic), but for those who hadn't seen him before it was his palpable love of Devon and its rich folk history which was so striking - that and his wonderfully warm and engaging personality: occasionally the music was put on hold as he took us on a tour of this historic county, sometimes in the footsteps of the Rev'd Sabine Baring-Gould, an early hero of the English Folksong Revival who criss-crossed Dartmoor on his horse in the 19th Century, recording songs that had been passed down orally, before they were lost.

The other figure conjured up was the poet Charles Causley, a relative, whose work forms the basis of two of Jim's albums.

The songs varied from the jocular and faintly disreputable (*The Tythe Pig, Old Uncle Whiteway*) to the spooky and supernatural (*Lady All Skin and Bone*) to the nostalgic (*In the Sidings*, mourning the closure of railway branch lines in the 1960s). The shocking imagery of Charles Causley's *Timothy Winters* was rendered all the more vivid in song: "Ears like bombs and teeth like splinters, a blitz of a boy is Timothy Winters.."



St Michael's has hosted some memorable concerts in recent memory, and this will join that illustrious roll. The weather wasn't encouraging, but those who braved it were rewarded with a surprisingly warm church (heaters switched on at 5pm), drinks from one of our two bars(!) And even the chance to pop out to the loo (kindly supplied by Bradfords). Above all, though, it was the warmth of Jim's performance that will live longest in the memory.

Membership of the *Friends of St Michael's* is gradually growing: at the moment around 10% of the households in the villages have signed up. We'd love to get that closer to 90% so that everyone, by contributing just what they can afford, can be part of our mission to preserve and enhance St Michael's for the whole community. If you need an application form or more information, please contact the secretary, Kath Empson, on stmichaelfriends@gmail.com

Nick Thwaites



Recipes for soups.

There is nothing like a bowl of warm soup to nourish one. Here are two enticing recipes to try.

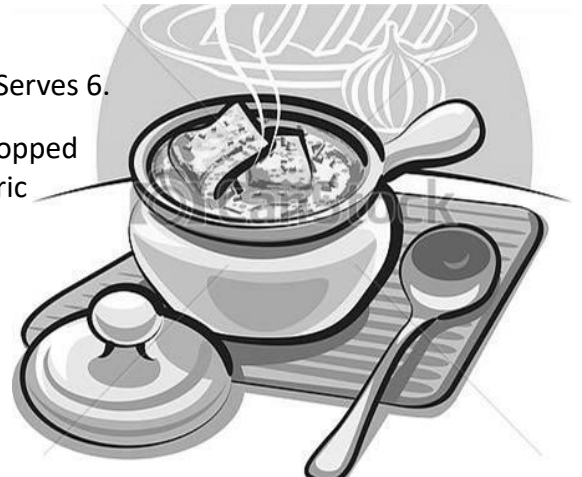


Lentil and Tomato Soup with Cumin and Coriander.

This is a warming, slightly spicy soup. Something to revive you. Serves 6.

2 tablespoons olive oil
 ¾ teaspoon ground coriander
 ¾ teaspoon ground cumin
 350g (12 oz) red lentils, washed
 1.2 litres (2 pints) vegetable stock
 400g tinned chopped tomatoes
 Salt and freshly ground pepper
 Fresh coriander leaves.

1 medium onion, finely chopped
 ¾ teaspoon ground turmeric
 pinch of ground cloves



Heat the oil and cook the onion for 5 minutes in a covered saucepan, without colouring. Add the dried spices and cook, stirring for 5 minutes. Add the lentils and stock, cover and bring to the boil. Simmer gently for about 20 minutes until the lentils are tender. Add the tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Cool a little and then purée in a liquidizer with some (20g, ¾ oz) of the fresh coriander leaves. Taste for seasoning. Garnish with the rest of the fresh coriander leaves.

Chestnut, Nutmeg and Bacon Soup.

This is a richer soup with unusual flavours. It serves 6-8.

25g butter
 12 rashers streaky bacon, roughly chopped.
 1 head celery, finely diced
 and finely diced

Some parsley, stalks removed and chopped
 1 bay leaf, spine removed, pounded with some salt in a pestle and mortar to a fine dust.
 1½ tablespoons ground nutmeg
 5 garlic cloves, finely chopped
 300g cooked peeled chestnuts (you can buy these vacuum- packed), roughly chopped
 250 ml double cream.

3 teaspoons olive oil
 1 leek, finely diced
 3 heads celeriac, peeled

3 red onions, finely diced
 2 juniper berries, roughly crushed
 1 litre chicken stock
 Salt and freshly ground pepper



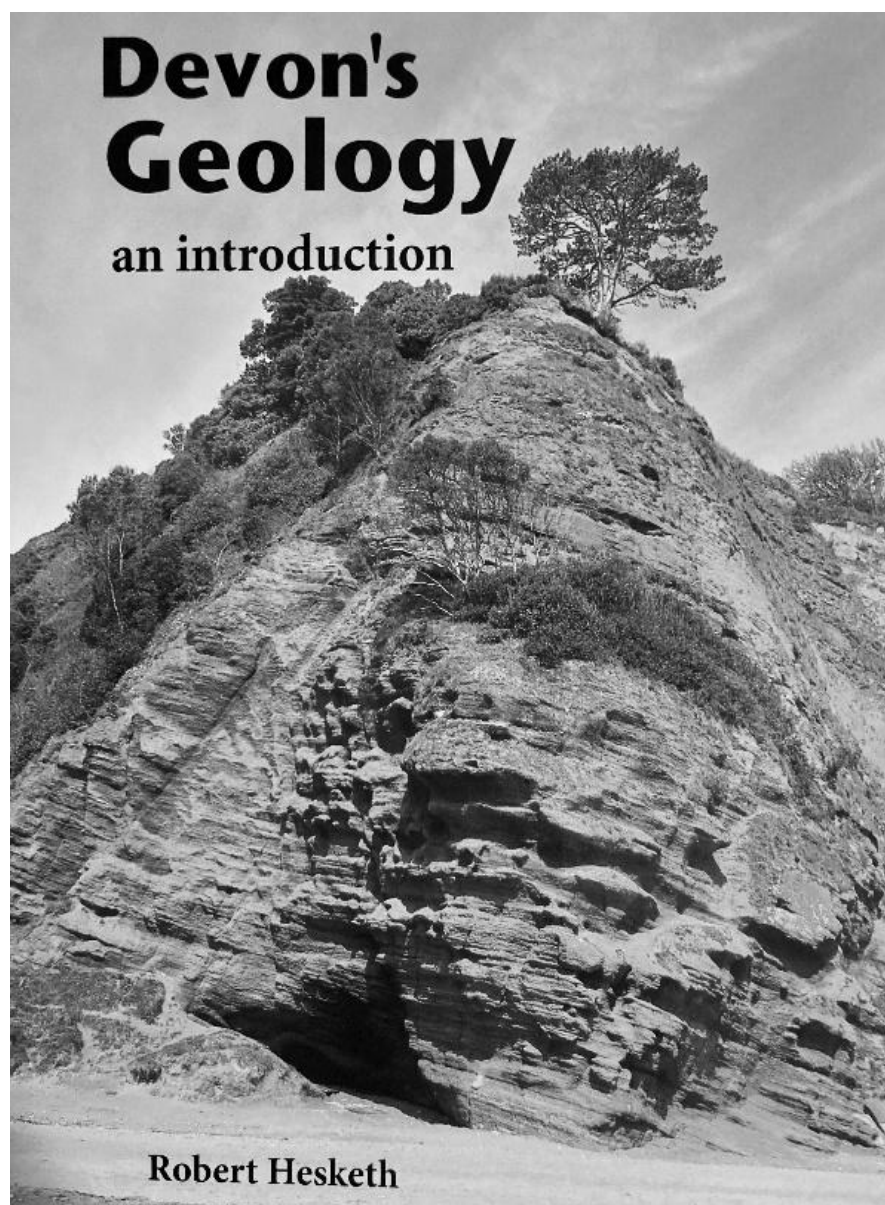
In a large saucepan, heat the butter and olive oil over a low – medium heat. Gently fry the bacon, leek, celery, celeriac, parsley, onion, bay, nutmeg, juniper, garlic and a little salt until very soft – about 1 hour. Add the chestnuts and cook for a further 15 minutes. Finally add the cream and chicken stock and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Check the seasoning. Add some ground pepper and parsley to serve.

Awliscombe Young Wives – **Devon's Geology** talk

On the 16th March, we gathered at the village hall for a fascinating evening presented by Robert Hesketh. Many of us have his books sitting on our shelves at home – but to hear from him first hand was a real treat.

Robert reminded us that here in Devon we live amongst the most beautiful and varied geology and therefore landscape anywhere in Britain. He explained such features as the magnificent red sandstone cliffs in the east of the county, the contorted rock strata at Hartland and the sculptured granite of Dartmoor. Much information came our way and in the one hour talk he touched briefly on the geological periods, each of which are represented in Devon, spanning 400 million years!

Did you know we are the only county in Britain to have given its name to a geological system known all over the world – the Devonian Period (c395-345 million years ago)!



At that stage we were part of one very large landmass, the Old Red Sandstone Continent. The seas were tropical which helped deposit in both north and south Devon, sandstone and shales. Creatures that thrived in the shallow waters, can be seen as remains which formed massive limestone beds around Plymouth and Torquay, this can be a source of fascination as you visit the erosion carved caves – Kent's Cavern.

Limestone caves of course also exist at Chudleigh and Buckfastleigh for us to wonder at.

The oldest rock strata can be found at Leyton Beds, in the east, then westwards into Somerset – Coombe Martin, Ilfracombe and Morte Slates,

Pickwell Down sandstones, Baggy sandstones and Pilton Shale. Follow the coat path or indeed inland (the lesser known tors on Dartmoor) where good examples are to be found. Also an example closer to home, Budleigh and Sidmouth, being slightly sheltered from the south-westerly winds did not experience the same erosion which East Sidmouth and Exmouth did. Here can be found the partly eroded sandstone sea stacks at Ladrum Bay

We may be more familiar with the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods (200-65 million years ago). East of the Axe Valley and on into Dorset, but did we know that the Upper Greensands of East Devon, found on the cliff peaks and on top of the Blackdown and Haldon Hills were deposited on an ancient shoreline? Similarly if we drive up the Sid Valley from Sidmouth on the A375, a similar pattern of gradient can be seen.

The rich plant life and bird life found at our rivers and estuaries have benefited from the millions of years that have gone before. As we read about the many findings of animal bones, for example the oldest in Kent's Cavern (remains of a cave bear 500,000 years old), it could make us wonder what researchers and historians will conclude about our time here and now on earth, our soil our bones!

To travel through the 7 geological periods, is far too much to tackle here and for sure - best left to the experts. Most of Robert's books are to be bought for a very reasonable £4/5 and most local bookshops sell a good range of the many subjects he covers, suggesting places for us to visit whilst explaining all to us, once there.

Maybe we will look with a different eye when we are driving across the moors, walking a coastal path or sitting on a beach - understanding the basics of geology, can only enhance our experience.

Thanks so much for organising Liz.

HONITON REPAIR CAFE.

THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH.

Next one on 15th April will have tool sharpening.
Community Use Building, School Lane.

Bring along items such as small electrical goods, sewing (zips etc), computers, toys etc; our experts will repair them if they can; it is helpful to bring spare parts, materials, instruction booklets. Coffee/tea and cake available. Cash only. Volunteer repairers and helpers needed.

09.30 to 12.30 last book-in is at 12.00.

Contact honitoncag21@gmail.com or 01404 45073.

Website: www.honitoncag.co.uk

Each issue we are asking a person or couple to be cast away on the infamous desert island, asking them for the eight (or four) music tracks they would choose to take, a book, a luxury item and all the reasons why.



DESERT ISLAND DISCS



Our next castaway is: **Nick Thwaites**

As always, trying to pick just eight pieces has been an impossible task, and I'm sure that if I did the same exercise again the list would be different, but I've taken the view that the aim is to chart my life in music, so I've tried to pick music that was important to me at different times and still treasured now.

My parents met in 1960 in Jakarta, where my mother was a secretary at the British embassy and my father worked in the tea trade. This was the era when South-East Asia was at the heart of a tug-of-war between communist and western democratic ideologies, and in one of the flare-ups of anti-British sentiment orchestrated by President Sukarno, the British Embassy was burned down and my parents and a one-year-old me were air-lifted out to Singapore. My father was posted to India and our family then moved every four or five years, to Colombo, in Ceylon as it then was, Kenya and finally Pakistan. We came back to Sussex, where my father had been brought up, in 1979 for the start of my last year at school.

Disc 1: Mozart: Piano Concerto no. 23. One of my earliest musical memories is of lying in bed and hearing music floating up the stairs. My father had a large record collection, but it was the brilliance of Mozart, and the piano concertos in particular, that he loved. I have associated them with tropical evenings ever since - which would have come as a surprise to Mozart in Alpine Salzburg

Disc 2: Gilbert & Sullivan: I have a Song to Sing, O! from *The Yeomen of the Guard*. I was sent back to boarding school in England when I was 8. Like anyone else I was homesick to start with, but ultimately loved my prep school, which was in a large Victorian building in about 40 acres of Sussex countryside. One of the biggest events of the year - hugely exciting - was the annual school production - almost invariably Gilbert & Sullivan. It was a boys' school, so my first involvement, at about 10, was as one of the chorus of sisters, cousins and aunts in HMS Pinafore. We never actually performed *The Yeomen of the Guard*, possibly because it is the most serious, and operatic, of the G&S output, but my family had this on a cassette which was a staple of long car journeys and I luxuriated in its sentimental light tragedy.

Disc 3: Robert Parsons: Ave Maria. At 13 I went on to school at Winchester and enjoyed myself, mainly by doing just enough of what was expected of me, which included singing in the chapel choir. At the time high Victorian and Edwardian church music was in vogue, but the masters of the English renaissance made an occasional appearance and Parsons' *Ave Maria* made such an impression on me that years later it was my first pick for music at our wedding. The last quarter of the piece is just the setting of the word 'Amen' using the simplest possible three note motif, taken up by each voice in turn, overlapping, building in complexity and swelling to a climax before subsiding to a perfect and peaceful resolution. One day I'd love to perform it in St Michael's, which has the perfect acoustic for this music.

Disc 4: Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto. Like most teenagers I was a slushy romantic at heart, though more boringly conformist than most, so the pieces I loved (and still do, though I wouldn't now play them on a loop for days on end) were the huge concertos of the late Romantic repertoire, ideally by a tortured, or at least troubled, composer, subjecting his unfortunate soloist to outrageous tests of virtuosity and emotion. The Rachmaninov piano concertos were favourites, but for sheer heart-on-sleeve drama nothing could match the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.

Disc 5: Ralph Vaughan Williams: Symphony no. 3. I was a lawyer in my pre-Devon life, working for a large London firm, but between 1993 and 2005 I was posted to the firm's Asian offices in Tokyo, Singapore (where I met Sharon, working for a rival firm) and Bangkok. It was a lot of fun, but all ex-pats have a soft spot for a (probably idealised) England, and for me the music that took me back there was that of Vaughan Williams. It should be said that he himself had mixed feelings about being labelled as a purveyor of Englishness (and in particular rather regretted the huge popularity of *The Lark Ascending*). In fact, much of the third symphony was inspired by RVW's time as a medical orderly behind the trenches in World War I, but it does have a wistful beauty that earns its nickname - the 'Pastoral'.

Disc 6: Amy MacDonald: This is the Life. Fortunately, when Sharon came into my life, she brought with her a rival CD collection that extended my non-classical repertoire beyond Fleetwood Mac, Dire Straits, the Eurythmics and other mainstream (I would say classic) favourites. I'm not sure who added Amy to the collection, but her folky melodies were popular with both of us and Sophie and Julia and *This is the Life* brings back happy memories of family car journeys.

Disc 7: Shostakovich: Piano Concerto no. 2. The soundtrack to my life in the workshop is - rather predictably, a mix of Radio 3, Radio 4 and, during the Summer, *Test Match Special*. Every now and then something is played which is new to me and so striking/beautiful/different that I just have to down tools and listen. This was one of those pieces. It's partly because Shostakovich's life and work was dominated by a difficult relationship with the Soviet authorities and the appalling deprivation of the Second World War (he lived through the siege of Leningrad), and much of his music reflects that turbulence. This, however, is not like that: the sparkling energetic outer movements enclose a slow second movement of melting loveliness to make you sigh.

Disc 8: JS Bach: Mass in B Minor. Having stayed away from organised choral music since I left school, I have to thank Martin Staniforth for persuading me to go back to it, joining him in *Sweet Honi*, the rock choir started by Andy Hague in Honiton. After a few years I moved to sing with *Collegium Singers*, a chamber choir based in Taunton, and occasionally other choirs elsewhere. With one of these I got the opportunity to sing, with a professional period orchestra, in Exeter Cathedral, what for me and many others is the greatest choral work ever composed. Unlike most of Bach's sacred music, the Mass wasn't written as a single work, but put together, near the end of his life, from elements composed and performed over the preceding 25 years. In a way it was Bach's own Desert Island Discs. Performing such a glorious piece in such exalted company and surroundings was one of the greatest musical experiences of my life.

Having The Bible and the Complete works of Shakespeare, which **BOOK** would you choose to take with you? - It seems a bit of a cheat to go for a Complete Works, but I think it's allowed under the rules, so I'd take the **Complete Works of Charles Dickens**. He's such a magnificent story-teller, even if he can be a bit preachy (Hard Times is hard going), and the books teem with human life, which would be a cheerful antidote to my solitary existence on the island.

LUXURY ITEM? - This is so hard without knowing the destination (Maldivian sand bank or Svalbardian wilderness?) but I hope that there would at least be trees, and I know that, even with music and books, I would want to make things, so if it's allowed I'd take **a toolbox with all my tools** (hand tools only I guess), including some saws big enough to fell and plank trees.

And finally, which track would you **SAVE FROM THE WAVES?** - It should really be the B Minor Mass, because it contains the whole world, but I know it so well, having played it for decades and rehearsed it exhaustively over two or three months last Summer, that most of it is still in my head, so it would be the **Vaughan Williams**, reminding me of home.

~ THANK YOU, NICK, FOR SHARING YOUR DESERT ISLAND DISCS WITH US ~

Wildflower Meadow at St Michael and All Angels Church.

A churchyard or burial site may be the most ancient, enclosed piece of land in a parish, perhaps even older than the church building. Apart from grave digging, the grassland will have been relatively undisturbed, re-seeding naturally for hundreds if not thousands of years. It will also have been both mown for hay and grazed by animals during its time as a burial ground. A benefit of this continuity of management over a very long time is a diversity of beautiful grasses and flowers and associated animals, some of which may now be uncommon or rare in Britain. Old, relatively undisturbed, or 'unimproved' grassland is now rare in the UK, in fact UK meadows have declined by 97 per cent since the 1930s.



Here at St Michael and All Angels Church in Awliscombe we've been developing a plan to manage the grounds to protect and enhance the wildlife within it. Initially, the focus is on the management of the churchyard to rediscover the wildflower meadow that once was. Specifically, the intention is to regularly mow the areas around the more recent graves and memorials, as well as a broad strip along the side nearest the lane, to allow easy access for visitors and families, and to manage the other areas as a perennial wildflower meadow (rather than annual flower meadow). These areas will be left uncut between April and mid-Summer to allow plants to flower and set seed, providing food for bees, butterflies and other invertebrates, and in turn for birds and other mammals. A churchyard richer in wildlife is a pleasant place to be, which will hopefully encourage the community to visit more and cherish Awliscombe church as a valuable asset of the community.

Perennial wildflower meadows thrive best on low fertility soils, and so the main action is to collect grass clippings. By doing this not only do you prevent the nutrients from being returned to the soil, but harvesting the grass helps further reduce the fertility of the soil.

The timing of the cut is also important, to allow the wildflowers to grow, flower and set seed for the following year.



Churchyards are havens for wildlife and one of the last pieces of land to be untouched by chemicals, often containing species lost from the local area, and so we want to refrain from using pesticides and fertilisers.

Whilst grasses have their place in a meadow, too much can out-compete and suppress wildflowers.



Removing the grass cuttings will help with this as a low fertility favours the wildflowers, but in one part of the churchyard we have also sown yellow rattle. Yellow rattle is semi-parasitic on grasses and will weaken their growth giving wild flowers a chance to compete, and is therefore often dubbed the 'meadow-maker'.

We're still feeling our way with establishing a wildflower meadow at the churchyard; getting the balance right between cut and un-cut areas, and the timings when to harvest the hay. It may take some time for the changes to take effect and the wildflowers to show, so thank-you for bearing with us and for being patient while we find this balance.

We'd very much welcome anyone who would like to get involved in protecting and enhancing the churchyard for wildlife. There is much planned and plenty to do: from taking surveys of the plants and animals in the grounds; building nest boxes; cutting and baling the hay (in the summer sun with a burger and cider) to simple encouragement, understanding and patience in what we're trying to

do at Awliscombe church. If you'd like to find out more, please get in touch with Mark Beeken or Nick Thwaites.

If you'd like a small bale holy hay (£3), please get in touch with Mark Beeken (beekenmark@gmail.com, 07776000306).

Biodiversity is declining faster than at any time in human history. Since the 1970s, the UK has lost almost half of its wildlife and plant species and as such is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries.

Some groups are faring worse than others. For example, insects have declined by 75%, and 26% of the UK's mammals are at a very real risk of becoming extinct.

On a species level, the figures are even more shocking. Swift populations have fallen by 58% since 1995, and is now on the red list. Since the 1950s the number of hedgehogs have declined by 95%, and even numbers of the common toad have fallen by 68%.



Doing whatever we can in spaces such as Awliscombe church or in our own garden, we can play our own small part in reversing these trends, that together make a huge difference locally.

Mark Beeken.



Quotes from
some of Woodpeckers class.



While discussing springtime, chickens and eggs, the question arose... what came first, the chicken or the egg?

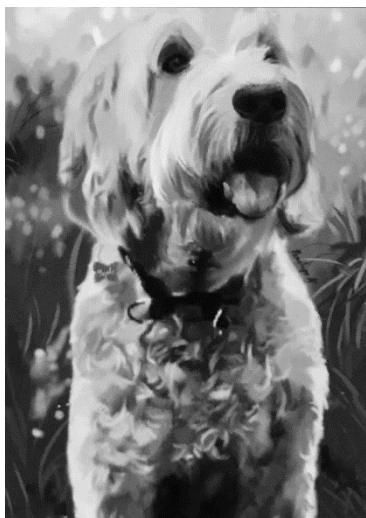
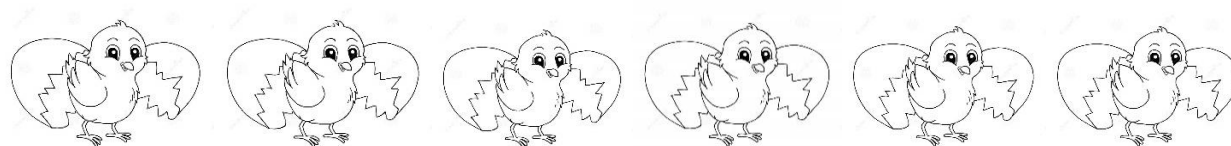
(With no hesitation) – Well God created the chicken and then she laid the egg. – L

It must be the chicken of course, but where did she come from? – E

Chicken! ... no egg! ... no chicken, because she had to make the egg. – B

Egg, because the chicken came from the egg. But ... (smiles and shrugs) - L

Chicken came first because a random egg would not be warm with no chicken to look after it, unless, but where did it come from? Outer space? *(I never thought of that!)*

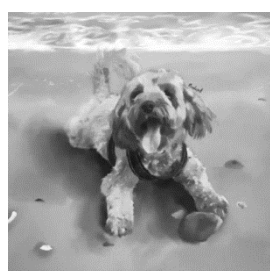
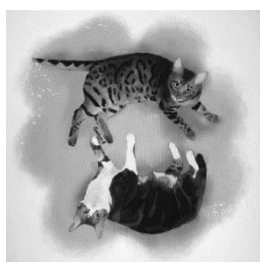


Penelope is 13 and has lived in Awliscombe all her life. She is fund raising to go to Tanzania next summer to spend 4 weeks working on ethical environmental projects with Villages in Poverty. To achieve this, she needs to raise £4,600 and has already worked hard to raise almost £800. Part of this money pays for the trip but a significant amount is put towards the projects she will be helping to deliver.

To help fund raise she is using her fantastic art skills to offer 'pet portraits'. She creates each one by hand using a digital drawing pad and each one can take upwards of 4 hours to complete,

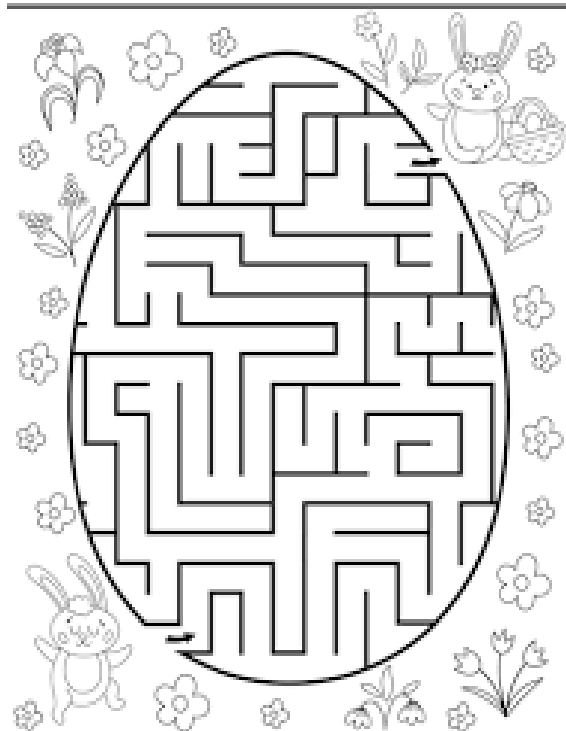
Penelope is asking for a minimum donation of £25 for each pet and is happy to talk about styles and backgrounds if you have something specific in mind. Any donations you'd like to make would be most appreciated as well! Many

thanks for your support.



These are shown in black and white but in colour they are even more lovely!

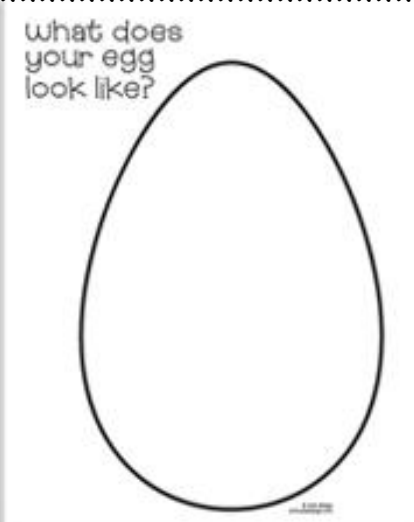
This is the link for Penelope's GoFundMe page: <https://gofund.me/.9ea2f091>



Find your way out



Spot the difference (13)

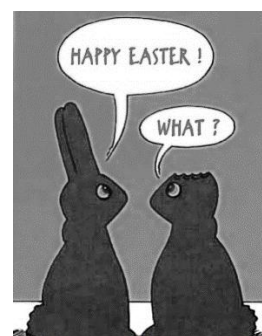


* Honeybees are more likely to swarm during the spring. They swarm as a way to start new colonies from successful ones. Surprisingly, swarming honeybees are docile and the most friendly they will be all year.



* what do you get when two flowers kiss? - Tulips

* most hedgehogs appear from hibernation now Spring has arrived. Have you seen any in your garden yet? Don't forget to leave a hole in your fence so they can roam freely looking for food and shelter.



Some local residents may have been lucky enough to see this beautiful shire horse being walked around the area as part of his education – getting him used to people and traffic. Although at 3 years old he is not yet fully grown, he is a lovely sight. This is Flash.

Name - Alderley Flash Alex
Stable Name - Flash
Breed - Shire
DOB - 26th March 2020
Age - 3 years old

Sometimes you have a dream, ours is rather large! Flash is our dream, he's a huge part of our animal family and already holds a lot of memories for us!

My family and I have been breeding and showing Shire horses all over the country for over 40 years. When Julie and I met we wanted to drive horses, so we decided to start out on our own. We went looking for a heavy horse that we could drive. We found Alderley Flash Alex aka 'Flash'.



Although Flash is tough and spends most of his time outside, even in the snow, he does have a cosy stable as well.



We first saw him during the first Covid lockdown when he was barely 6 months. We liked his attitude and presence. By the time we could get him home he had just turned a year old.

Unfortunately, during our first summer a lot of shows had been cancelled due to Covid. During this time, we were able to do a lot of home training but nothing can prepare them for the show ring.



Then last year we took Flash to some local shows as part of his education to becoming a driving horse. We had some ups and downs but Flash took everything in his stride, exceeding all our expectations.

At Gillingham & Shaftesbury Show he won the yearling/2-year-old class and went on take reserve champion of show on the day.



This year Flash's education is all about harness and long reining him; getting him accustomed to being in a form of driving environment. We are hoping to start him driving by the end of the year.

Paul and Julie Willis.



28th January '23 - An Awliscombe Indian Supper – hosted by

THE CURRY GUYS



After deciding to take a risk and try something different... the random plan for a Curry Night came to fruition. A few phone calls with amazingly positive reactions all round (the folk in Awliscombe are very kind!), resulted in a team being born.



So it was, that recipes were gathered, lists were made, ingredients bought and the grand plan started to take shape. For those of you who came, did you realise that all the all ingredients had been donated by the people who cooked them? ... these being:

Paul, Martin and Harriet, Helen and Steven, Timandra, Caroline and Kevin, Sharon and Nick, Simon and Sarah and Allison.

Here are the guys themselves, who formed an amazing team in their own right, not stopping for a moment! As a very new venture – they overcame all the challenges the evening threw at them, with hard work, organisational skills and much laughter.



Jack Layzell, Martin Willmington, Duncan Bryant,
Simon Ricketts, Kevin Coxon, Paul Willmington

Starter: Large freshly made vegetable samosa
with mango chutney, papadoms, onion and tomato

Main: North Indian Chicken Korma - Mild
(made with yoghurt and cashews) - Vijaya Selvaraju

Beef Masala - Medium

(made with warming spices and yoghurt) - Abida Rasheed

Fragrant Squash Curry (v) - mild/medium

(made with chickpeas, ginger, pineapple and coconut milk) - Jamie Oliver

Desert: Mango sorbet and cinnamon biscuit



The hall was decorated beyond recognition ... lit trees, the longest string of fairy lights ever, paper flowers, Indian fabrics and lamps and of course Indian music to help set our scene. Therefore big thanks goes to Kevin and Caroline for help with the above. Could not have done it without you!!! Karen, thanks for your support and making copious amounts of flowers and Carole, for your help in onion



chopping and setting of tables. Lucy, thank you for stepping in with your support and selling so many raffle tickets! Martin and Rick for being the friendly guys behind the bar, selling Cobra and all else. Nick for the large creative sign and Sharon for managing ticket sales (70 sold)+ 4 takeaways!

Thank you to the three Indian Restaurants who

kindly supplied the generous 'main meal for two' and to everyone else who kindly contributed gifts for the raffle. Most of all - thank you all for coming on the night!

There has been very positive and kind feedback and sentences spoken such as 'when we do again next year'!! So, who knows? maybe! The main reason which lay behind this evening was raising money for the **UNICEF Ukraine Crisis Fund** and for **St Michael and All Angels' Church**. A fabulous total of £914.00 was made to be equally  shared.



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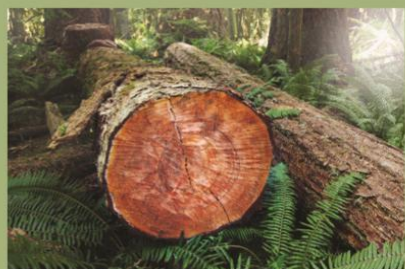


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