



Mere matters

& so does
West Knoyle



VE DAY
8TH MAY 1945



May 2025

Your community magazine
Including a guide to local events

10:30 - 17:00 JUNE 21ST
NO NEED TO BOOK. ENTRY FREE

MERE'S MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL OF FUN!



A SIMPLY EXTRAORDINARY DAY FOR ALL AGES

TO CELEBRATE OUR MEDIEVAL TOWER BEING RESTORED WE WILL BE TAKING MERE BACK TO MEDIEVAL TIMES WITH JESTERS, FIRE EATERS, HUMAN STATUES, KNIGHTS, MINSTRELS, FIGHTING KNIGHTS, SWORD SCHOOL, STILT WALKERS, COOKING DISPLAYS, EXHIBITIONS AND MUCH, MUCH MORE. MERE WILL HAVE THE MEDIEVAL DAY OF ITS LIFE.

During the day our Writer in Residence Jane Borodale will be giving readings from her stories that she has based on the Tower histories and Richard Nye, our Composer in Residence will be leading Mere School, Shreen Harmony and The Tower Stories choir in his commission "The Anthem for Mere".

A quarter peal will be rung by Mere Bell Ringers.

See Steve Hawkins photographs of the restoration and watch the Tower restoration film.



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Treasurer - Alison Beall Treasurer4MM@Outlook.com

Mere Town Council

If you are reading this before the 1st of May then I hope that you have been able to register to vote and will be voting. There are candidates to choose from in both the Unitary (Wiltshire) and Town Council elections. The returning officer and team are efficient and you should be able to find out the results within a couple of days at most. The Town Council Office will publish results.


My apologies for not getting the Chairman's report in last month, I shall be brief this month. My first task is to thank the volunteers who went out to Litter Pick, one and all. At the last town council meeting we discussed:



- The plans for the Annual Town Meeting, which will have happened on the 23rd April.
- Planning applications.
- A request to use part of the Salisbury Street car park for a small funfair on the evening of the Mere Carnival. We turned the plan as presented down and asked the Carnival and Funfair to consider something taking less of the car park.
- We adopted the recommendations of a working group meeting on the effectiveness of our Internal Control Measures.
- Heard, from our Clerk on the allotment rent audit.

The next Town Council meeting will be on **12th May**, with the newly elected Town Councillors attending. The Venue will be the Duchy Manor Foyer, adjacent to the Town Council offices.

John Jordan, Chair, Mere Town Council
for information on Town Council activities, minutes, agendas etc.

lindseywood@merewilts.org 860701  merewilts.org

Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes

Roads in the Mere Division consisting of Mere, Kilmington, Stourton, West Knoyle and Zeals need repair. Some are in very poor order such as by Park Corner Farm West Knoyle, for which I was pleased to receive the following reply: *"Park Corner Farm - The C297 at Park Corner Farm has been assessed for in situ recycling, a process which is designed to produce a lasting solution to the underlying reasons for the deterioration of the carriageway at this location. Coring and testing carried out earlier this year have identified that the carriageway at this location is suitable for in situ recycling and the team are now in the process of agreeing the design with the contractor, with the aim of carrying out the works this financial year."*

National Trading Standards operation results in illegal cigarettes and tobacco seized in Trowbridge. Wiltshire Council Trading Standards has taken part in a large-scale, nationally funded, Illegal tobacco disruption operation, (Op CeCe), in Trowbridge.

I attended an open Mere WI meeting where The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust put on a presentation. We learnt of a scheme called **Buy with Confidence**, if you have a problem with a member of the scheme or any other trader, you can contact Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 08082231133. If you are a business interested in becoming a member you can also contact the above number. The Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust in 2024 attended 314 domestic abuse cases and made 1191 visits to victims of crime. A scheme called **TrueCall** which stops nuisance calls was advertised, if interested call 08000336330.

Wiltshire Council manages the Household Support Fund. The primary objective of The Fund is to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in the most need; particularly those who may not be eligible for the other support government has recently made available but who are, nevertheless, in need and who require crisis support. Wiltshire Council has been allocated £4,809,175.90 from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Fund is to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in the most need with the cost of essentials. Without this support they would struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs to help them with significantly rising living costs for the following twelve-month period: 1 April 2025 -31 March 2026. The grant is a 12% reduction on the previous 12-month round of funding provided by the government. Through the schemes, households with children, disabled persons and pensioners have been supported. Help has included food and fuel vouchers, housing costs, advice services, white goods, furniture poverty and flooring. Following the introduction of the means tested winter fuel allowance in late 2024, a large cohort of low income, pensionable age households didn't meet the threshold for government support. The household support fund 6 has provided £300 of energy support to 1,231 residents aged 80 and over.

I am getting increasing numbers of complaints again in regard Dog fouling. By highlighting it here again, hopefully it will send out a message again to curb the problem, however any improvements always seem to be forgotten in a short time. Dog fouling is the responsibility of the dog owner – it is NOT the dog's fault. Please do challenge any handlers you see not doing the 'right thing'.

Fibre broadband by Wessex Internet in Mere has been cancelled until further notice due to lack of funding and the need to prioritise their government-funded BDUK/Project Gigabit projects. There are 80 properties that are in a position to be installed. These are in the western edge of the Town. A communication will be sent to all their registered leads or orders, according to whether they can reach them or not. The future of Wessex Internet in Mere essentially relies on being able to secure funding through BDUK. According to them (BDUK), there is another operator planning to fibre Mere, and so their request to include Mere in their Project Gigabit contract was denied.

Wiltshire's new High Sheriff was sworn in on Friday, 4th April 2025 in a ceremony which dates back to Saxon times. Mr Martin Nye made his Declaration at St Martin's Church, Bremhill, nr Calne, taking over from Dr Olivia Chapple. Around 80 guests attended the ceremony and reception.

Wiltshire Council has successfully prosecuted two farmers following mistreatment of cattle. In January 2024, the farm was visited where twenty-three cattle were found to have no access to water. One cow was seen to be licking from an empty water container for five minutes. There is no water provision at the site and the animals rely on this being brought to the farm in a container. The visiting vet's opinion was that the cattle were being given insufficient amounts of water. Records for the farm showed an overall mortality rate of 31% for cattle. Overall mortality rate in England for all cattle in 2023 was 5.03%.

Fly Tipping: A load of waste including a carpet was dumped in the road at Kilmington. It is worth noting Wiltshire Council is reminding businesses owners of their legal responsibility to dispose of their commercial waste correctly after a Warminster resident was issued with a fixed penalty notice (FPN) for waste offences. There is no suggestion that a business dumped the above, that is to be investigated.

While at The Police and Crime Panel I was informed Wiltshire has 54 "special" officers who are volunteers. They worked 5882 hours this year to March. Specials have the same powers as a PC. I was also informed some shops now have radio communication in some form with the Police. I was also informed the prisons are full again and to my surprise the number of days courts can run are limited and to be reduced.

Penny Fennon gave March rainfall for Salisbury Street as a total of only 1 cm with 0.5cm on both 22nd and 28th March.

Pam Baldock gave the rainfall for Lordsmead in March to 29th, very dry for 22 days from 27th February to 29th March, 2.25mm. The Met Office predicted 30th and 31st would be dry at that date of the 29th March.

Every month I publicise the fact Wiltshire Council is recruiting foster carers, with a range of flexible roles on offer including full time, short break or emergency care. To find out more about fostering in Wiltshire, people can visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/fostering or contact the team at fostering@wiltshire.gov.uk I believe you can also call 0800 169 6321 or text the word Foster to 60002.

George Jeans 07710 441599 george.jeans@wiltshire.gov.uk

Mere Theatre Club

As the summer programme gets under way our thoughts have to turn now to the autumn. Who knows what treats are in store? If you'd like to find out, join our mailing list. Whether you like music, drama or comedy there'll be something for you and maybe a non theatre outing too. Contact details below

Madeline Morris 07481-555101 madsmorris@gmail.com



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In Memorium

***Peter Dethick**, the much-loved husband of Ann, father, grandfather, uncle, friend to many and a gentle gentleman died on March 11th in Salisbury Hospice.*

A Service of Thanksgiving for Peter's Life will be held at St Michael the Archangel Church, Mere on Saturday 24th May 2025 at 2.30pm and afterwards in the Grove Building.

All friends welcome. No flowers please, but donations, if desired, to be for the Salisbury Hospice, who cared so tenderly for Peter in his last weeks.

Mere Auctions

The first Mere Auctions sale of general household items, as well as antiques and collectables, organised by the Mere resident Auctioneer, Wayne Stevens, will take place in the **Grove Building** on **Saturday 31st May**, viewing from 11am and the Sale starts at Noon. Speaking about the Sale, Wayne (who is also the Festival Director of the Mere Literary Festival) said:

"I am honoured and delighted to launch Mere Auctions, which is a new venture in the town and an extension of my auction business, Stevens Auctioneers. This is a real chance for Mere residents to have clear-out to try and sell what is no longer useful for them, but for other people, may be just what they need! I hope to see everyone at the sale on the **31st of May** as with only in-person and no online bidding, you have to be in it to bid it!"

Entries for the sale can be agreed up to the 25th of May and sellers should contact

Wayne for details on enquiries@stevensauctioneers.co.uk

Mere Social Club

Congratulations to Louise on yet another successful Spring Fair, which was very well attended. Also, congratulations to Mere football teams (adults and youth) on the splendid results this season.

The Skittles season is now over but we will be holding our Summer Skittles competition in June/July. Entries are open to anyone who can get a team of 4 together and the closing date for entries is **Saturday 16th May**. For more information, please ask at the club, call Michael on 07535 087014 or email meresummerskittles@gmail.com

There is still time to take part in the Spring Draw which will take place on **Friday 2nd May** at 8.30pm. There are lots of lovely prizes to be won!

There is no live music this month due to our hall hosting private functions on the weekends, however do not despair as we will be hosting the popular band **Permission Slip** on **Saturday June 7th**. Everyone is welcome, so get your glad rags on and come along for a great evening!

Elaine Laurence, club steward elainelaurence57@gmail.com

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MERE FOREST CHARITIES - Assistance Available

The charities exist to support those persons resident in the Parishes of Mere and Zeals who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress.

Currently supporting a number of individuals with an annual grant before Christmas, applied for in October. Applications for assistance are welcome at any time during the year. For further details and application form please write and enclose an AS stamped addressed envelope to:

9 Clements Lane, Mere. BA12 6DF

Mereforest@gmail.com



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Mere Toddlers Foodbank:

With great delight and humble thanks to all those many lovely people who volunteered, supported and attended, we can report a grand result of £744.24 was raised at two brilliant events in Mere, on April 12th.



Duck Racing: Trudi and Berni and their team had over 100 Ducks sponsored to race in a gorgeous event in the sunshine with refreshments, bunting, Easter egg prizes, medals, and flowers. They made over £300 and everyone had such a lovely time.

Quiz: The inimitable Penny Fennon and our lovely helpers made a grand total of £424.17 and great time was had by all. Feedback sheets were all good, saying there was a relaxed and fun atmosphere, despite Penny's awful jokes.

Everyone who came brought an item for donation to the Foodbank as well as paid an entry fee, whilst some people also donated raffle prizes.

The amazing Duke of Edinburgh award scheme students who are helping weekly at the Foodbank were absolutely brilliant, with boundless energy and enthusiasm. Thanks Chloe and Tom! Chloe's sister Mia also helped despite not being old enough yet to be on the scheme.

The winning team was Purple Pants, with the Guillemots second and Universally Challenged third.

Our favourite comedic answer was, when asked which crab has a claw shaped like a fiddle, 'a Stradivarius crab' ...

There was an amazing raffle and we would like to thank all donors as listed below.

Finally, we give huge thanks to the very generous Christine Gilbert who sponsored our Prize money of £100.

Please look out for our ongoing 'Food items word Quiz sheet available at the Library and Mere Foodbank at just £1 with a £10 prize money! Fun for all the family.

Quiz raffle providers:

Plantworld, Charles Farris, Hillbrush, Jill Christie, Pharmacy, Sturdy Storage, FJ Chalk, Jeans Electrical, Hayley's Hairdresser, Beauty Box, Angel Tea Rooms, Fish and Chip Shop, Walnut tree, Lou's It, Post Office(Waltons), Paul and Debbie Linthwaite, Mel Wilkinson, Walton Antiques, The George, Neals yard, Asda, Judy Cooper, Maureen Portnell, Susanne the sewing lady, Carnival Committee members, Sam at Smart Step Footcare, Waitrose, Co-op Mere.



Anne Rich arich4@icloud.com : 07413512023

MERE AUCTIONS

First Sale - SATURDAY 31st MAY

The Grove Building

Viewing from 11a.m. sale Starts at 12 Noon

Stevens Auctioneers are delighted to be bringing the first
MERE AUCTIONS General Sale to the town on 31st May!

We hope to be able to continue doing so every 3 months (or earlier) as demand requires, but to do this, we need the people of Mere and the surrounding villages to have a good look to see what is taking up space in their homes, that others will be keen to buy. With all the financial challenges around at this time, here is a real chance to make some extra money!

We will be taking-in items up to 25th May (please - not on auction day itself) so message me now if you have "Lots" to offer...

This sale will not be online and will be in-person bidding only. So why not come to the auction and relive the excitement of the saleroom again!

"You have to be in it to bid it!"

Refreshments will be available throughout the sale!



Wayne Stevens – Auctioneer

Do you have household, antique, collectable, decorative, forgotten, unused items that you no longer want?

(Sorry, we cannot accept large furniture items or kitchen appliances, etc.) Any item that can be carried easily by one person will be welcome! All electrical items will need a very recent P.A.T. test certificate to be accepted. If in doubt, contact us!

Email: enquiries@stevensauctioneers.co.uk

Call or Text: 07414173673

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Patients participation Group

The Patient's Participation Group (PPG) is raising money to buy a defibrillator for Mere surgery. This piece of equipment, which costs around £2k, is able to be used for children as well as adults and will be kept at the surgery. Our first fund-raising event, held at the United Reform Church, was a coffee morning with a raffle and a cake stall. We were delighted and very touched to see so many people supporting the event and we raised a magnificent £645, which means we are well on our way towards our goal.

The PPG committee wants to thank all of you who came and who contributed so generously to the occasion. We hope be doing another fund-raising event later in the year.

Lucy Woolley (Chair) lucywoolley1@gmail.com

Mere Spring Fair

Brilliant sunshine for Mere Spring Fair and Family Fun Day, held on Saturday 5th April, at Mere Social Club 11am to 4pm. A steady flow of people through the doors, people being extremely generous with donations and happy kiddies running around with face paint and chocolate covered faces. Live music, Bar, BBQ, Stalls, Raffle, Tombola, Cafe and Cake, face painting, bouncy castle, Kiddies Activity and much more took place. The atmosphere was great. Fundraising in support of Salisbury District Hospital Charity Stars Appeal, Neonatal Unit. Hundreds of people attended through the day, possibly the best attended to date.



Mere Rivers Group

With so little rain the levels of both rivers had dropped and there was concern for the Duck Race, but Wessex Water agreed to turn on the stream support for the morning even though the water levels were not at the trigger point, it made a real difference and the race was a great success. Thank you, Wessex Water.

At the moment it would appear that the boards on the upper Shreen will not be replaced this year, which will make it easy for the ducks and ducklings to navigate. We have far too many ducks on the stream, this is because they are regularly fed and do not need to go in search of mates. The males are constantly trying to mate with the females who are already looking after young. Please stop feeding the ducks (well, other than mums with young children!) these are wild birds and should be treated as such. The males should be out looking for food and mates, not being fed and having such an easy life.

As a huge asset to Mere, we need to maintain both our streams in their natural state.

Ian Sheppard lanjsheppard@outlook.com

Mere Bowls Club

The club opened for the new season on Saturday 26 April with a roll-up to enable members to enrol for 2025 and to get some practice. This was vital as our first leagues match was at Westlands, Yeovil on 30 April.

We are truly grateful to Jeans Electrical who have sponsored us this season and their support will help us get new club shirts as agreed at our AGM.

New members are always welcome and we are taking part in the Big Bowls Weekend promoted by Bowls England. So, on Sunday and Monday 25 and 26 May we invite anyone who wants to try bowls to come along to our green near Mere School and Dentist Surgery between 2.30pm and 5pm. All you will need are flat soled shoes (no heels please as they damage the playing surface) and we will provide everything else you need including guidance on what to do. Tea and cake will also be available during the afternoon. There is no charge so why not come along and give it a go.

John FitzGerald 860867 fitzgeraldjns@sky.com

Fair Trade in Mere

My stalls this month will be held on **Saturday 17th** at the URC Coffee Morning and **Sunday 18th** after the Morning Service at St Michael's. I have been able to source some new products – muesli, pasta, and more. Why not come and browse and see what you can be tempted by! We have been reminded that the new American tariffs are going to affect many developing countries badly so buying a Fair-Trade product will be even more important to support the struggling farmers, smallholders and artisans.

Janet Way 860884

Mere School

We are extremely fortunate at Mere School to have our own kitchen and Mrs Gulliver who prepares delicious, daily meals for us. She caters for every possible food allergy and dietary requirement. Some of our favourites include macaroni cheese, chicken and ham pie, chicken korma and lasagne followed by fruit crumble and custard, cheesecake, pancakes with strawberries and bananas and banoffee pie. The meals are 'made from scratch' using quality ingredients – we believe there is nothing more important than a high-quality lunch for our young children. It also helps them to concentrate during the afternoon.



Children are expected to sit around a table with their friends and use their very best table manners. Our older children help the younger ones – pouring drinks, cutting up food and clearing away.

Mrs Gulliver talks to the children about what they enjoy and she adjusts her menus accordingly. We have also had a whole school focus on reducing food waste, which has been very successful. Our Governing Body keep a very close eye on ensuring the 'best value for money' and have been delighted with the financial savings from reducing our food waste.

Sometimes we have special meals and snacks – Mrs Gulliver is working on creating an Italian meal for our Italian day shortly. We buy cakes to raise funds for charities - Red Nose Day and Children in Need and we all enjoyed hot chocolate and a cookie on World Book Day.

We are delighted that we are now providing meals twice a week to the Mere and District Day Centre. They are a registered charity whose aim is to reduce loneliness and isolation for elderly people from the locality. The Centre provides a safe and sociable environment for people aged over 60 to meet, enjoy a hot nutritious meal, stimulating activities and entertainments, plus the occasional outing chosen by the guests. Sessions run under the supervision of the manager, enthusiastically supported by a team of trained volunteers. I understand that the clients are really enjoying the meals!



It is good to be working in partnership with a local organisation.

Catriona Williamson

Diary Dates (Recurring events are first shown in **Bold** then in *Blue*).

Venue Key:

AYP - Andy Young Pavilion
SCP - Salisbury Street Car Park
Drs - Surgery
GB - Grove Building

L - Lecture Hall
Lib - Library
MSC - Social Club
RMC - Castle St Car Park

StM - St Michaels Church
URC - United Ref Church
VH - Visit Hillbrush
WT - Walnut Tree Inn

1	Thurs	10:00	Art Group (every Thurs)	GB
		10:00	Hearing Aid Clinic @ United Reformed Church	URC
		11:00	Rhyme Time (every Thurs)	Lib
		17:15	Girlguiding (every Thurs)	GB
		19:30	Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)	URC
2	Fri	13:45	Duplicate Bridge (14:00 start - every Fri)	GB
3	Sat	14:30	Croquet (every Sat & Sun) <i>Coffee Morning</i>	Steep Street
4	Sun	14:30	Croquet (every Sat & Sun)	Steep Street
5	Mon		Food Bank	L
		14:30	Croquet (every Sat & Sun)	Steep Street
6	Tues	17:45	Yoga (every Mon)	L
		09:00	Little Angels (every Tues)	GB
7	Weds	8:20	Zumba (every Tues)	L
		09:00	Chair Yoga (every Weds)	L
		09:30	Tai-Chi (every Weds)	GB
		10:00	Get Wiltshire Walking Group – Starter Walks (every Weds)	SCP
		14:00	Pilates (every Weds)	L
8	Thurs	18:30	Karate (every Weds)	L
			<i>Wiltshire Walking Group, Pilates, Karate, Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers</i>	
		09:00	Walking Zumba (every Thurs)	L
		10:30	Harmony for Health – Music	L
		19:30	Ukulele	Butt of Sherry
9	Fri		<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Guides, Bridge, Shreen Harmony, Yoga, Harmony FH</i>	
		09:00	Antiques silver/gold valuation	L
		10:00	Merely Women	GB
		14:00	Short Walk (J.Way)	SCP
10	Sat		<i>Dup Bridge</i> <i>Coffee Morning, Croquet</i>	
11	Sun		<i>Croquet</i>	
12	Mon		<i>Scouting, Yoga, Food Bank</i>	
13	Tues	14:00	Mothers Union	GB
14	Weds		<i>Little Angels</i>	
		19:00	Gardening Club	GB
15	Thurs		<i>Wiltshire Walking Group, Pilates, Karate, Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers</i> <i>Rhyme Time, Art, Guides, Bridge, Shreen Harmony, Yoga, Harmony FH</i>	
16	Fri		<i>Dup Bridge</i>	

17	Sat	Coffee Morning & Fair Trade, Croquet	
18	Sun	14:00 Mere Walking Group Fair Trade Stall after morning service Croquet	SCP StM
19	Mon	Scouting, Tiddlers and Toddlers, Yoga, Food Bank	
20	Tues	Little Angels	
21	Weds	19:00 Merekits Women's Institute Wiltshire Walking Group, Pilates, Karate, Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers	GB
22	Thurs	Rhyme Time, Art, Guides, Bridge, Shreen Harmony, Yoga, Harmony FH	
23	Fri	10.00 Merely Women 19:00 Cine Club Dup Bridge	GB GB
24	Sat	Croquet	
25	Sun	Croquet	
26	Mon	Scouting, Tiddlers and Toddlers, Yoga, Food Bank	
27	Tues	Little Angels	
28	Weds	Wiltshire Walking Group, Pilates, Karate, Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers	
29	Thurs		
30	Fri		
31	Sat	11:00 Mere Auctions	GB

Times, events and venues shown cannot be guaranteed as being correct

Mere Art Group

The Group proceeds with very good attendance. We are now operating on the new rates of £4.00 per 2-hour session on Thursday mornings, 10.00 till 12.00. Refreshments are included.

We have received a new 'recruit' in the last 2-weeks, and she is settled in, enjoying the atmosphere and contributing to this friendly community. May I remind you that there is no charge for anyone wishing to try-out a session. The Art Group meets every Thursday throughout this year till December 18th. The picture of 'The Mere Market Square' this month, is by Jon Wright.



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Copy date for the **June 2025** issue

Closing deadline is: **16:00hrs on Thursday 22nd May**

Email contributions are preferred, to the Editor, Richard Jefferies 863425
editor@merematters.co.uk or deliver to 16 Underhill, Mere, BA12 6LU.

Please be sure to state your name and a contact telephone number to ensure inclusion.

Lucky Balls

Mere Amateur Dramatic Society presented Lucky Balls by Louise Roche at The Mere Lecture Hall late in March.

It was an excellent production and very well attended. Actors were on stage singing numbers such as Abba songs, the play was off stage at the front of the hall, it was very effective, the music and songs was well received.



Nine wedding guests are the victims of a bad seating plan. They try to get along then one suggest that they chip in to buy a lottery ticket. When they win nearly eight million pounds it sees their masks slip away to reveal who they really are.

The poor Maitre d' tries to keep the reception on track but in the end he can only watch as relationships unravel. Eventually having the brides mother's handbag around his head he said, because all the guest were more interested in the lottery winners, and no one came to see the bride and groom cut the wedding cake.

Alcohol was free, it has not been allowed in the Lecture Hall until recently. Donations were given. Another great performance by MADS.

Text and pics by George Jeans

Walking Groups In Mere (All ages are welcome to join in all of these walks)

"Get Wiltshire Walking", Starter Walk:

Every Wednesday there is a 40 minute stroll around the footpaths and lanes of Mere for those who wish to become more active, or are recovering from illness, injury or surgery. All walks are on flat, stable terrain and finish at the Angel Tea Room. Meet by the surgery at 10.00am. Unfortunately, for safety reasons, no dogs are allowed on these walks, except assistance dogs.

Dave and Wendy Drewett 07508 340105

Short Walk:

Meet in the surgery car park at 2.00pm on **Friday 9th May** and join me for a short walk around the paths and lanes of Mere, learn a bit about its history and refresh yourself with a cuppa at the Angel Tea Rooms afterwards.

Janet Way 860884

Mere Walking Group:

Our next walk will be on **Sunday 18th May**, meeting at Salisbury Street car park for a 2.00pm departure, with car sharing to the start point. The destination and finer details of the walk will be posted in the clocktower and also on Mere Mutters Facebook page nearer the time. All are welcome to join in, dogs on leads please.

Dave and Wendy Drewett 07508 340105



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Mere & District Link Scheme

Community First, which oversees the 43 Link Schemes in Wiltshire, carries out an annual audit of Link Scheme activity. The 2024 details for the Mere and District Link Scheme and all the Link Schemes are shown in the infographics below. These highlight the fantastic work by Link volunteers across Wiltshire and, once again, show that Mere Link Scheme drivers covered many more miles than the overall average of 20,201 with MDLS drivers covering 50,773 - a tremendous effort from all of our drivers.

In March we did 116 trips. As ever, Salisbury District Hospital was the busiest destination with 44 trips. With this number of trips we have estimated that our five volunteer co-ordinators made/received around 400 phone calls during the month. Well done.



If you want to use the Link, once you have an appointment please call 01747 860096 to book a driver. As a charity we do not charge for trips but ask for a donation. **Please remember that our co-ordinators work in their own homes – we do not have an office - so please keep calls to 9-5 Monday to Friday and only use the 01747 860096 number.** Also, it is a great help if you can give us a minimum of 48 hours notice (not including Saturdays and Sundays). Our co-ordinator has to ring round to find a driver who is available to take you to your appointment and we cannot guarantee our co-ordinator will be at home to arrange last minute requests.

Do you want to volunteer as a Link driver? We are a local charity and we take clients to medical appointments, including Covid vaccinations, and even shopping when resources allow. **New drivers are always welcome.** You choose when you want to drive, use your own car and we pay 45p/mile to cover your costs. If you are interested in volunteering as a driver please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096.

A date for your diary - the Link AGM will be held on **Friday 6 June at 7pm** in the Grove Building. After the meeting we will have a drinks and nibbles social. Everyone is welcome.

John FitzGerald Chair 860096 merelink.org.uk

Mere Mortals Petanque Club

The local Nadder & Stour Petanque League commences on the week beginning **11th May** and Mere Mortals will be fielding at least one team. Our nearest league rivals are the White Lion at Bourton but there are rumours that Gillingham might be entering this year. The Town has a very good terrain set in the park between the rear of Waitrose and the High Street. The more local players the merrier. MMPC club sessions on Tuesdays from 6pm, Wednesday from 2.30pm and Saturdays from 10.30am continue to be well attended but there is plenty of room for more and the playing area is open all day, every day, at the old swimming pool site adjacent to the Primary School. Just toddle along and you will be guaranteed a warm welcome. Boule and tuition (if needed) provided



Colin Senneck [706008](tel:706008) colin2423@sky.com

Croquet and Boules Club

The first weekend of play has taken place and we look forward to many more weekends of striking, blocking, jumping and generally using any allowable tactic to block an opponent! May the weather be fair for the whole of the croquet season.

Did you know:

"Croquet is a very old game widely known and practiced in France since the XI century under the name 'Jeu de mail'. Borrowed by the British around 1300, it was modified over the centuries: the Scots made golf of it, the Irish turned it into croquet." (Source: Jaques of London.)

We play every Saturday and Sunday from 14.30 hours. If you fancy having a go come along any weekend and enjoy a free taster session. All equipment and tuition are provided by the club.

Hilary, Treasurer, 861733 or Avril, Secretary, 861285.

Ukes at The Butt of Sherry

Our next session is on Thursday, 8th May at 7.30pm at The Butt of Sherry.

We are a group of ukulele enthusiasts who meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month for an informal evening of strumming and singing. We play a wide range of popular songs and welcome all abilities. If you don't have a ukulele, but would like to join us you would be most welcome. Let me know if you would like to come along and we can have a ukulele for you to play. An evening of fun, laughter and song is guaranteed. You can check out our Facebook page 'Ukes at The Butt' for our song list.



Maggie Holmes maggieholmes101@gmail.com



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Letter from the Churches

A non- driving friend and her husband who had to give up driving recently moved to be near their children. She had been very active organising local knit and natter, walks, games days, singing sessions etc. for the elderly and has been much missed. She wrote saying she missed it all and was trying to find where God wanted her to continue her work for Him.

Three weeks earlier I had received a phone call from a friend, from my previous church who no longer drives, and is getting very forgetful, after a very active and helpful life, who said almost the same thing. When my husband died, I remember saying almost the same to my minister. He advised me to "be patient and wait. You'll know when He thinks you are ready". In my case, a month later, I was invited to an evening 'do' at a small local village for the elderly, complete with its own village hall hospital and village transport. There I was asked to take weekly Art and Craft classes for the residents- which I did for the next 7 years until I moved.

Many of those residents who joined me had been very active helpers, until forced to stop, and felt uncomfortable having to rely on others instead of giving the help. I know the feeling and it seems to be quite common.

Perhaps the best way we can remain 'givers' is by giving others a chance to do for us what we had enjoyed doing for others in the past.

Paul tells us that Jesus said it is more blessed to be a giver than a receiver. But without receivers, to whom do we give? and even when receiving, we can be gracious giving our Thanks, as we do to God who gives us everything. He is a model receiver.

Aileen Maitland Aileendm32@outlook.com

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Church Contact and Service Details

The Parish Church St Michael's the Archangel:

Vicar: The Rev'd Michael Molano 07396 979448

Churchwardens: Mr Kit Stallard 07803-086161 Mr Richard Wilson 07966-244373

Admin Secretary: administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

4 th	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Informal Family Service
11 th	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
18 th	Sun	08:00 09.30	BCP Communion Rogation Communion Service- Bush Farm (Bison Farm), West Knoyle
25 th	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
29 th	Thurs	07:30 08:00	Ascension Day – Hymns from the tower followed by Communion service

West Knoyle Parish Church St Mary the Virgin:

Vicar: The Rev'd Michael Molano 07396 979448

Churchwardens: Mrs Jill Randall 830534 Sir Charles Burnett 01747 812089

4 th	Sun	09.30	DIY Service
11 th	Sun	09:30	Communion
18 th	Sun	10:30	Rogation Communion Service- Bush Farm (Bison Farm), West Knoyle
25 th	Sun	09:30	Matins

The United Reformed Church

Minister: Vacancy

Mere Contact: Elaine Laurence 07403-845711 elainelaurence57@gmail.com

11 th	Sun	11:0	Penelope Dent
18 th	Sun	11:0	Sue Litchfield
25 th	Sun	11:0	Rev. Colin Marsh

The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.

St Mary's has been closed and weekend Masses are now at SS Luke and Teresa, South Street, Wincanton BA9 9DH.

Parish Office: 01963-34408 hope.stlukeswincanton@outlook.com

Mass at St Michael the Archangel usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 10.30am but there will be no Mass in May and the Mass in June will be on Tuesday 24 June at 10.30am.

Coffee morning at Visit Hillbrush on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10.30am.

John FitzGerald 860867

Mere Information

For full information on the businesses, organisations, societies, attractions and activities in Mere, together with current and back numbers of "Mere Matters", please visit merewilts.org

Mere Library

Monday:	10:00 – 14:00* and 14:00 – 19:00
Tuesday:	09:30 – 17:00
Wednesday:	10:00 – 14:00*
Thursday:	09:30 – 17:00
Friday:	09:30 – 17:00
Saturday:	09:30 – 13:00

* Volunteer operated opening hours.

Sally-Ann, Mere Senior Library Assistant 860546

Booking Meeting Venues

Grove Building:	administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk	07714-718625
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	861063
URC Church Hall:	Mrs E Laurence	07403-845711



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From Times Gone By!

WHEREAS William Coombs, late of the parish of Kingston Deverell, Richard Watts, late of the parish of Longbridge Deverell, Elijah Mardment, late of the parish of Mere, and Israel Mills, late of the parish of Mere, who were enrolled to serve in the Third Battalion of the Wilts Local Militia ... have neglected to attend training and exercises of the said Battalion, which commenced at Salisbury on Thursday the 10th of May instant, whereby they are deemed Deserters. A reward of twenty shillings for each of the said Deserters is allowed by Act of Parliament.

Salisbury & Wilts Journal, 21 May 1810

TWENTY GUINEAS REWARD

ESCAPED from Justice, charged with stealing yarn from the bleaching yard of Mr Thomas Mitchell, of Gillingham, Dorset, JAMES COWLEY of Mere, Wilts, 55 years of age, about 5 feet 8 inches, thin growth, with brown hair, teeth uneven before, crooked nose, his eyes generally on the alert, walks very loosely, and commonly wears a brown great coat; by trade a Tick Weaver, but occasionally works Husbandry. Whoever will apprehend the said James Cowley, and lodge him in any of his Majesty's Gaols, or deliver him to the Constable in Gillingham, shall receive Twenty Guineas Reward, by applying to me, THOMAS MITCHELL. N. B.—if the said James Cowley will discover his accomplice or accomplices, every endeavour will be used to obtain him in a pardon.

Salisbury & Wilts Journal, 27 May 1811

Martyn Beardsley

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Mere Gardening Club.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday 14th May** is a talk by well known antiques expert Paul Martin. Paul regularly appears on television programmes such as Flog It, Make me a Dealer and Antiques Road Trip. This is a ticketed event which is of course free to Gardening Club members. (Members who have not yet obtained a ticket and wish to attend the talk should contact Les Manwaring) There are some spare tickets available for the General Public at a cost of £5 and available from the Angel team rooms. The meeting is held in the Grove Building with a start time of 7pm for refreshments with the talk commencing at 7.30pm

The June event is a coach trip to RHS Rosemoor on Wednesday 13 June which again is a members' only event at a cost of £15 which includes the coach and admission to the gardens. This trip is for the first 53 members to sign up and pay and promises to be a most interesting visit

The Mere bi-annual scarecrow festival is back again over the weekend of 14th and 15th June, entry details are available from Rose on 07791559674 or roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk. The theme this year is Historical Characters which we hope will tie in with the "Tower Stories". Prizes this year are £100 as first prize, £75 for second and £50 for third. The scarecrows will be judged by the General Public. Scarecrow trails will be available to purchase at a cost of £1 and will be available from the Angel tea rooms. All completed and returned judged trails forms will be entered in a draw to win a prize.

Please get your thinking cap on and help make this an event that Mere can once again be proud to host.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

[Les Manwaring - 01747 861941 or 07827671653 lesmanwaring@yahoo.com](mailto:lesmanwaring@yahoo.com)

Mere Amateur Dramatic Society (MADS)

After all the excitement and hard work of our Spring Production, MADS would like to invite you all to their Annual General Meeting which is to take place on **Monday 12th May at 7.00pm** in the Small Hall of Mere Lecture Hall. It is a good time for anyone who would like to exercise their inner thespian to hear more about MADS and all it does and to perhaps become a member, whether to tread the boards or to help backstage in any capacity. All are welcome, there is no age limit and you never know what you can do until you try! We look forward to seeing you there.

Following our Spring Production at the end of March it was decided to donate the sum of £150 to Mere Preschool and Nursery and £150 to Mere Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who came along and made it such a success.

[Jenny Wilding 860908 jenny@flaxmill.org.uk](mailto:jenny@flaxmill.org.uk)

Merekits - Women's Institute

Merekits have had a busy month with lots of activities happening. We had a busy meeting when the Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust came to speak to members and guests about their safety both within the home and when using the internet and technology.

Some of the other activities included some great guided walks around the local area, a skittles evening where members had fun practicing and developing their skills in throwing the balls down the alley and the monthly meeting of our book club enjoying a healthy debate around the chosen book "Because of you" by Dawn French.

The craft group has also had a busy month making craft items for and attending the spring fair, where they displayed and sold several handmade craft items. Finally, 11 of our members had a day trip to the Dent's glove factory in Warminster for an extremely informative talk and look around the museum, which was followed by lunch at the Lakeside Garden Centre, Crockerton.

As a group, we normally meet on the third Wednesday of each month in the Grove Building from 7pm to 9pm. We are always looking to welcome potential new members, so ladies why not come along and join us to find out more. Our meetings offer a varied programme of events throughout the year including talks and demonstrations as well as many other activities previously mentioned. We provide an opportunity for women to meet like-minded people and make new friends in the area. There's always something happening both nationally and locally for you to participate in as much or as little as you would like.

Our next meeting will be on **21st May** where we will be celebrating our second birthday and holding the annual meeting. Please do come along and join us to find out the fun we have.

Verena Cooper 07971-790256 verenacooper2@gmail.com

Mere Cricket Club

Mere Cricket Club are your local social cricket club who play for the fun and enjoyment of the game and we're seeking new players for the season ahead.



We play friendlies on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings against local villages and teams and welcome players of all ages and experience.

So, if you are new to the game or area and fancy playing as many or few games as you want, then we'd love to hear from you. For details on fixtures, how to join and any other questions you may have, please contact either Bryan Yeo (07721 844066) Mark Cassidy (07763 001119) or email

markcassidy661@btinternet.com

Mere Carnival Committee

We have been working hard behind the scenes to recruit some new members of the committee; in the hopes we can get the carnival to flourish once more.

We have been successful in having people put themselves forward for both Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. I (Victoria Johnson) have put forward interest into being the Chairperson and hope to have the support of the local community in bringing the Carnival back for many years to come!

We unfortunately are still in need of more volunteers, whether that be as a committee member, or even just someone willing to lend a helping hand. The positions we still need to fill are: Secretary, Procession Secretary and a Public Relations Officer

We would be extremely grateful to anyone that would be willing to offer their time and expertise in exchange for lots of laughs and some community spirit.

We are hoping to have a few new events throughout the year to raise money for the carnival, and so we will need volunteers to help run these events, which will hopefully bring the Mere community together to enjoy fun days out over the summer, all leading up to the big day of the Carnival!

There will be support provided for anyone that is willing to volunteer, we all just desperately want to keep the carnival running and will do what we can to ensure it does! We meet the second Tuesday in every month, so why not pop along to a meeting and see what it's all about?

We look forward to meeting you, whether new friends or old.

Should you be interested in joining us, please contact us at any of the below emails or simply follow us on Facebook and give us a message:

Victoria Johnson chairperson@merecarnival.co.uk or treasurer@merecarnival.co.uk

Calling All Gardeners

There will be a plant stall at the Tower Stories Medieval Festival of Fun on Saturday 21st June starting at 10.30am. We would be very grateful if you can pot up (and label!) any spare plants or seedlings you may have and bring them along on the day by 9.30 or earlier if possible. More details next month.

Heather Stone and Judith Thompson 860553



Walk of Witness

Good Friday every year in Mere people meet in the Mere Town Square for a Procession of the Cross to the top of Castle Hill. Churches Together in Mere and District organised the event.

This year Good Friday fell on the 18th March, the young and old followed and helped carry the cross up the hill performing readings that were made by many at different stops on the way. For one stage the children this year carried the cross entirely on their own. The Walk of Witness this year called The Way of the Cross, was carried out in the morning from The Square and on to the top of Castle Hill. The cross of sorrow was carried and erected on Castle Hill.



The weather was good at the start in Mere Town Square, rain eventually appeared, however we could see more of an approaching storm from Castle Hill, which kindly missed us. The Walk was well attended. Afterwards at 12-30 Lent Lunch was served at The Grove Building, Mere

Photo and text by George Jeans




In Mere & DISTRICT

We were very blessed on our Good Friday walk with the cross up Castle Hill, in that, though 'heavy rain' was forecast, and we could see dense rain clouds all around us, only a few spots of rain fell in Mere, until we were all safely down the hill, and – for many of us – safely into the Grove Building for the last of this year's Lent Lunches. Very grateful thanks to the organisers and all who have helped with the excellent Lent lunches this year.

If you enjoy outdoor events, you may like to know that St Michael's heralds Ascension Day, Thursday 29th May, by singing hymns at the top of the Church Tower at 7.30am – followed by a Communion service and then breakfast together at the Angel café. The next Churches Together event – also outdoors but with wet weather provision – is our annual Songs of Praise in Stourhead Gardens at 3.00pm on Sunday 29th June. It's a lovely event, so please put it in your diary. At the time of writing, we have a keyboard player for that event, but no keyboard! If you have one you would be willing to lend us, we would be extremely grateful and it will be in good hands. (If wet we meet in St Peter's Church, Stourton). More details in June Mere Matters but the deadline for hymn choices is June 2nd so please send yours in good time to your Church rep if you have one, or directly to me.

Judith Thompson



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