

Mere Matters

May 2026

... along with all our Neighbours

Your community magazine
including a diary of local events



FRIENDS OF
ST. MICHAEL'S
CHURCH



**ENSEMBLE
HESPERII**

ENSEMBLE HESPERII

At St. Michael's Church, Mere



SUNDAY 3RD MAY 2026

5PM

Tickets: £30 ** (Book before 19th April: £25) **

Free admission for 21 and under

Tickets available at: Sprout and Flower and
www.friendsofstmichaels.org

The concert "A gift for your garden" is based on
works by Oswald, Handel, Telemann & Graun.



CHURCH OF

St Michael

THE ARCHANGEL IN MERE

Front cover courtesy of George Jeans

Mere Town Council

This being my first year as chair has been a steep learning curve. I would like to thank: Lindsey for guiding me all the way I really could not do this without her and not to forget that Lindsey is the core to our council - her knowledge and commitment in her extremely busy role of Town Clerk; Rachael Hansford the Vice-Chair for her support and the time and effort she puts into her role; to all the councillors for their support and answers to my relentless questions.

My thanks also go out to the team, admin Sonya Ward, Project Coordinator Roger Pipe, Simon, Paul and Sam for keeping our Town clean and maintained, not a small feat; and our very own Barry Hansford for securing the gates to our duchy site, recreation ground and cemetery.

Over the past year I have been blown away by the many different charities and community services in our area and I am grateful to all the volunteers and hard-working people that keep these services and organisations going.

With regards to the Public Consultation on the closure of our fire station – we have been holding various meetings with key representatives. I would like to urge you all to fill in the consultation form, even if you have signed a petition – the information we have gathered is that you will need to state within the survey/questionnaire that you are prepared to pay more to keep the fire station. We need to get everyone on board filling in this form to have a chance to SAVE our station.

You should have or will shortly be receiving a flyer through your door with a QR code linking you to the online survey or if you prefer, A paper copy of the survey can be requested by calling 01722 691000 during office hours, or by emailing consultation@dwfire.org.uk

Here is a direct link to the survey:

Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority Consultation

<https://www.dwfire.org.uk/about-us/your-fire-and-rescue-service/proposed-station-closures/proposed-station-closures-mere/>

Sandra Catley, Chair, Mere Town Council
for information on Town Council activities, minutes, agendas etc.

Contd.....

Luxury residential care at Bramley House

Bramley House in Mere, unlike modern purpose-built care homes, has been tastefully converted from a former rectory. Carefully adapted to enable professional care within an environment that really does look and feel like a real home.

Elegant ensuite bedrooms, beautiful well established south facing gardens, relaxing spaces, engaging activities, delicious food and most importantly real loving care.

Residential care Day care Convalescent stays Respite care



info@bramleycare.com | bramleycare.co.uk

Shaftesbury 01747 855844 Sherborne 01935 677655

Bramley House, Mere | Millbrook House, Child Okeford | The Old Rectory, Stalbridge
Bramley Home Care, Shaftesbury and Sherborne

Floral Sponsors

The Town Clerk would like to report that once again; the Town Council will be keeping up appearances by planting the tubs around the town to give impressive floral displays. Last year we were very grateful to the various sponsors (business and members of the public – see below) who helped to make these floral displays possible. The scheme was a great success. There are 14 tubs & four planting display areas within the town and they are planted twice a year for summer/autumn displays and winter/spring displays. Mr. Clive Hazzard has graciously agreed to replant the tubs again this year and I should point out that this is done at cost price and at no profit to him and we thank him for this generous offer. We also thank the willing volunteers who water the tubs & deadhead the flowers. We estimate the cost of planting each tub is £40 per year and once again, we are looking for sponsors and we would be grateful to any businesses or members of the public who would like to sponsor a tub. We will publish a list of all sponsors in a future edition of Mere Matters. If you would like to help with Mere's floral enhancements, please contact:

Mrs. Lindsey Wood, Town Clerk, Duchy Manor, Springfield Road, Mere. Tel: 01747 860701

We would like to thank the following, who sponsored the tubs during the 2025/26 financial year:

Michael, Joy & Grandchildren, Mere Gardening Club, Ricky & Debbie Curtis, Chris Mills, The Hill Brush Company Ltd, F. J. Chalke Ltd, G. E. & S. M. Jeans

+ 7 other sponsors who wish to remain anonymous

“Explore Wiltshire Events”

We would like to bring your attention to “Explore Wiltshire Events” website. This is a mobile device accessible website and is funded through the Wiltshire Towns Programme and provides a free-to-use-ad free site for the marketing of events across the county.

As part of our grant funding from the Wiltshire Towns Programme Activity Generation Grant, we have given a commitment to contribution and promote the site and we have been adding events to the website to promote Mere. See <https://events.wiltshire.gov.uk/events/meres-medieval-festival-of-fun>

So... if you would like your event added to the Explore Wiltshire Events website, please send details of the event, description, web URL's, pictures, posters etc and we will add them for you.

Lindsey Wood 860701 lindseywood@merewilts.org  merewilts.org



Fun Dog Centre in Mere Wiltshire

www.dogwisetraining.net

info@dogwisetraining.net

MERECAT LODGE

Luxury accommodation for your cat.



Luxury cattery, licensed to DEFRA's highest standards, this home from home environment where your cat will be loved and cared for as if they were our own. All of your cats' needs can be catered for including administering medication.

Tel: 07957 342275 or 07526 371174

info@merecatlodge.co.uk www.merecatlodge.co.uk

Need Help in your Garden?

Offering a variety of different services to help keep your garden healthy and maintained

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- Weeding
- Pruning
- Trimming
- Planting & watering
- Mowing

Peter Hazzard Gardening Services

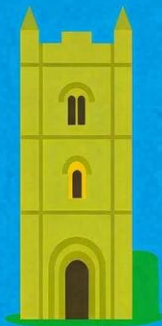
TEL: 07763 770018

E: peterhazzardgardening@outlook.com

ST MICHAEL'S MERE CHURCH FETE

6 JUNE 2026
2 PM

Children's Games
Dog Show
Plants
Bottle Tombola
Live Music
Cream Teas
And So Much More



Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes

Fire Station:

The fate of the local much needed Mere Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Station is still out to consultation. I have arranged for 7000 leaflets to be distributed around Gillingham, Motcombe and other Dorset areas encouraging residents to do the consultation as it will impact them. I have provided printed copies with a limited number of paid envelopes in Mere Post Office and Brainwave. I must thank Mere for providing funds for another 3000 plus to be distributed to much of the Mere area, encouraging residents to be involved in the consultation. I must thank the many who have agreed to print, publish and distribute. The consultation will run to the **15 May 2026**. I am much against any closure of Mere Fire Station, it is close to the A303 and the response time will be in my opinion near 10 minutes longer than now. We also have properties nearby that are of high importance, Stourton House for one. It seems against all common sense that a fire and rescue station adjacent to the A303 is proposed to close, when doing the consultation, please give such reasons, not just 'I do not want it closed'. One important point is, would you be prepared to pay a little more to keep the service.

Broadband:

For many, this is a hot topic. The media state: *"The Gigabit Voucher Scheme is open for communities seeking Full Fibre broadband. If three or more properties in your area need FTTP (Fibre to the Premises), a community lead (such as the Parish Council or an active resident) can compile the addresses, check commercial availability using the Openreach Fibre Checker. Suppliers should already understand the Building Digital UK (BDUK), application process; if not, consider choosing another provider.* The scheme is currently open until August 2026, and no guarantees exist of an extension, so early engagement is recommended. The problem for Mere is we have a commercial offering which is finding it difficult to establish. This negates the voucher scheme which has been used in Stourhead and other areas. You can see whether gigabit-capable broadband is available or planned to become available at your address through the new Gigabit Broadband Availability Checker. Wessex Internet provides an offering to many in the area, I can only suggest you contact Wessex Internet direct and register your details, the more names they have the more chance they can act when BDUK allow.

Southern Co-operative:

The Mere branch of the Southern Co-operative is proposing to join forces with Co-operative Group Limited to secure their future. If approved, the proposal would result in 340,000 Southern Co-op members joining 7.5 million Co-op Group members as members of an enlarged Co-op Group. Eligible members are invited to vote on this proposal. The Southern Co-operative Members including those using the Mere branch have been encouraged by Southern Co-operative to read the materials available in full and to support the resolution by voting in favour at the meeting(s). Contd.....

Abbey Hearing

Est. 2010

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£75
both ears

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no wax

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Abbey Hearing
3 Cheapside House
High Street
Gillingham, SP8 4AA

www.abbeyhearing.co.uk
dorchester@abbeyhearing.co.uk
01305 602240

www.abbeyhearing.co.uk
gillingham@abbeyhearing.co.uk
01747 470500

New High Sheriff:

Wiltshire's new High Sheriff was sworn in on Friday 27 March in a ceremony which dates back to Saxon times. Dr Alexander Goodwin made his Declaration at The Parish Church of St. Leonard's, Keevil nr Trowbridge, taking over from Mr Martin Nye. Alex lives in the lovely Wiltshire village of Keevil with his wife, Juliette; they have three adult children. In addition to the customary role of supporting the Judiciary, Police, Emergency services and the voluntary sector, Alex has chosen as his theme for the year as "Outdoor activity to promote health and wellbeing". He looks forward to meeting charities and other organisations working in this area. The High Sheriff is the Sovereign's representative in the County for matters of law and order. It is the oldest secular office in England and Wales after the Crown. The term of office is for one year. High Sheriffs play an active role in upholding the principal parts of the Constitution including members of the Royal family when visiting the County; the Judiciary, Police, Prison service and other law enforcement agencies; the Emergency Services, Local Authorities, and all recognised faith groups. They also work closely with the voluntary sector in their wider role of helping maintain safe and stable communities. The post is entirely voluntary and unpaid.

Local Transport Plan:

Wiltshire Council has launched a public consultation on its draft Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) Delivery Plan, inviting residents, businesses and organisations across the county to help shape the future of Wiltshire's transport network. The Delivery Plan sets out how the council will put the policies in LTP4 into action between 2025 and 2038. The original LTP4 document was subject to a full public consultation in early 2025 and has since been approved by both Cabinet and Full Council. The Delivery Plan includes a programme for developing projects and plans to improve public transport, expand active travel opportunities, enhance electric vehicle infrastructure, manage freight, and support transport strategies for principal settlements, market towns and rural communities.

Not Everything Is Rubbish

Households are being told to follow new rules on rubbish and recycling from the end of March. Wiltshire, along with some other counties have a dispensation for a time not to fully implement. Please contact Wiltshire Council direct in regard any questions you have on waste and recycling as information in the media may not be relevant to Wiltshire residents at the present time.

Carer Support Wiltshire:

Carer Support Wiltshire announced they would close on Tuesday 31 March. Unpaid carers are people who look after a family member, friend or neighbour who cannot manage without their support due to illness, disability, mental health needs or age-related conditions. They may help with everyday tasks, personal care, emotional support or managing appointments and medication. Their contribution is essential, and accessible support is vital to their wellbeing. Carer Support Wiltshire is a charity that has supported unpaid carers across Wiltshire for around 15 years. Their Board of Trustees announced that the organisation will close on 31 March 2026, stating that ongoing funding challenges have made it impossible to continue. Carers Together

Wiltshire carry out carer assessments, develop support plans and provide information, advice and signposting to all carers. Carers Together Wiltshire will now also take on a range of Carer Support Wiltshire services to ensure continuity for carers. Unpaid carers can contact Carers Together Wiltshire for advice, information and support by calling 01380 710300 or visiting the Carers Together website.

Spick & Span:

Communities across Wiltshire have come together in remarkable numbers to support this year's Great British Spring Clean, the national clean-up campaign led by Keep Britain Tidy. From 13–29 March, hundreds of residents, schools, parish councils and volunteer groups rolled up their sleeves to help keep the county clean. 74 community litter picks were held across the county, with hundreds of volunteers taking part. 956 bags of rubbish were removed from streets, parks and green spaces, weighing 5,736kg. It was noted in a Wiltshire Council news bulletin "while Zeals Parish Council collected 22 bags, four tyres and a lorry mudguard." Mere also did a litter pick which Sonia from the Town Council and Cllr John Jordan need thanking for their efforts along with all those participating.

Dementia Awareness Group:

A sum of money was awarded from the South West Wiltshire Area Board to help set up a Dementia Awareness Group in Mere. At present it is proposed sometime in June to have a meet and greet at the new Castle Lodge Care Home, who have kindly agreed to host for the first year. I will further publicise with information.

Community Orchards:

The following may interest principally those in Zeals, Stourton with Gasper and Kilmington who are in the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. It is aimed to support the creation of ten new community-managed 'traditional orchards' across the National Landscape. Parish Councils, established community groups and landowners are encouraged to express interest in restoring derelict orchards or creating new community 'traditional orchards'. For more information or to discuss an idea, please get in contact: info@cranbornechase.org.uk

Dog Fouling:

I am getting increasing numbers of complaints about this. 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



**Please clean up
after your dog**

Foster Care:

I repeat that Wiltshire Council is calling on Wiltshire people to consider becoming emergency foster carers - offering a warm, safe home to young people who need care and support at short notice. Sometimes, unexpected situations arise that leave children and young people in urgent need of a safe place to stay. To recognise the vital role emergency carers play, Wiltshire Council offers £900 per week per child when a child is placed with foster carers, and £500 per week when carers are available but not currently caring for a child.

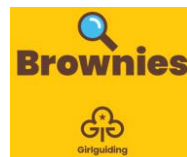
A reminder that I host a site at www.comparethemere.com which is a simple list of businesses and community bodies in the area. Some entries possibly now need deletion however there is contact information for many. Anyone wishing to add please let me know.

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

1st Mere Rainbows and Brownies are recruiting



Rainbows - Thursdays from 5.15pm - 6.15pm
Brownies - Thursday from 6.15pm - 7.30pm
Meetings are held at The Grove Building, Mere.



We run a diverse, fun programme ranging from activities such as making dragons out of recycled objects to tutored painting classes, yoga, pamper nights, woodwork classes, Greek dance classes as well as visits from falconers, dog trainers, hairdressers and historians. We have parties, discos, cinema trips as well as summer camps and various day trips. It is also a great way to meet other children from the local area.

If your daughter is interested in joining our Rainbows or Brownies pack and is aged between 4 - 10 years old, please register your interest at the Girl Guiding website: www.girlguiding.org.uk

Also, if you may be interested in helping or being a leader, please do reach out to us at mereguiding@gmail.com

Tor Reynolds torreynolds@googlemail.com



CHARITY FILM NIGHT

FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2026 AT 7PM
THE GROVE BUILDINGS
£7.50 per person
(Tickets available for purchase at Angel Cafe and Sprout & Flower)

“Come and watch a little piece of Mere History”

All proceeds to Julia's House
Dorset & Wiltshire
Children's Hospices

MERE MAY FAYRE - 1981
Filmed by Peter Manning

Tea, Coffee & Cake

FOR MORE INFO - 01776 061819

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**Remember, you can also visit our website,
www.fjchalke.co.uk or call our team on 01747 860244.**



FJ Chalke

Talbot Garage, Salisbury Street,
Mere BA12 6HE



FOOT HEALTH PRACTITIONER

Good quality care. Nails, Corns, Callus etc
Tuesday at Mere Osteopathic Clinic or Home Visits

Karen Lester ☎ 07939305369

Gillingham Singers Spring Concert

"Music, all powerful"

16th May 2026 7:30 pm

St Michael's Church, Mere

'Please contact Carole on 07572 786416 or via email to reserve tickets.

A drink is included.

Ticket price: £10 in advance £12 on the door

Carole carole.brooks049@gmail.com

Gardening Club

At our next meeting on **13th May** at the Grove Building we will be welcoming Arthur Cole, the head gardener from The Newt.

In June we have the Hidden Gardens of Mere over the weekend of 13th and 14th. If you are able to open your garden, we would welcome a few more. Please contact us as soon as possible. Tea and refreshments will be served in The Grove Building on both days and maps will be available from The Angel Tea Rooms from Monday 1st June at a cost of £7.50 per person which covers both days.(Please take cash to buy the maps). Children under 16 are free when accompanied by adults.

Les Manwaring, 07827 671653 Chairman lesmanwaring@yahoo.com


Rose Heesom 07791 559 674 roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk

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 address envelope to:

9 Clements Lane, Mere. BA12 6DF Mereforest@gmail.com

 Find us on Facebook



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www.hillschimneysweeping.net
tom@hillschimneysweeping.net



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Mere Model Railway Exhibition 2026

Mere & District Railway Modelers are proud to present their 12th Model Railway Exhibition which this year will be held on **Saturday the 14th and Sunday the 15th of June**.

As always there will be some superb working model railway layouts on display in a wide variety of gauges and styles, including a couple of layouts created by club members, as well as 10 or more visiting layouts. At least two layouts will offer the opportunity for children as well as adults to 'drive' the trains, one of which will feature the much-loved **Thomas the Tank Engine** and his friends on a visit to the seaside. Trader support will be provided again this year by Ray Heard Model Railways, and as always, our friends from the Ffestiniog Railway will be on hand to help us celebrate. Light refreshments including homemade cakes will be available on site, and free car parks are nearby. The admission price will be £7 for an individual adult, and accompanied children under 16 years of age will be admitted free of charge. We hope this will be the best small railway exhibition in the South West this year, and will provide a wonderful day out for all the family to enjoy.

Paddy Newton 07552 779211 paddy.newton@sky.com

Mere & District Railway Modellers
<https://mererailwaymodellers.co.uk>

www.mererailwaymodellers.co.uk

MERE MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th June 2026
10am - 4pm



10+ Layouts
Refreshments
Free Car Parking

Mere Lecture Halls
Salisbury Street
Mere BA12 6HA

www.mererailwaymodellers.co.uk

25th anniversary of our Summer Fair

SAVE THE CHILDREN SUMMER FAIR

SUNDAY 31st May 2026
11.00-5.00
DOG SHOW 2.30

25TH ANNUAL FAIR AND FUN DOG SHOW

UPPER LEIGH FARM, EAST KNOYLE,
 SP3 6AP

• STALLS • CLOTHES • TOMBOLA •
 BRIC-A-BRAC • PLANTS • WINE & BEER •
 HOME MADE CAKES • TEAS •
 • BARBEQUE •

Admission: donations to
 Save the Children
 Cash Preferred


THE
BRUSH & BROOM
RESTAURANT



OPENING TIMES



Mon-Sat: 9am-4pm

 Free on-site parking

 Free-Wifi

 Dog-friendly


 Electric vehicle charging

 Gift-Shop

 On-site
Hillbrush Museum

 Wheelchair access

 Outdoor terrace

 Takeaway available

Mere School

We recently celebrated World Book Day as most schools do across the country.

World Book Day is a global celebration started by UNESCO in 1995 to promote reading, books, and authors, encouraging a lifelong love of reading, especially among children, often with activities like dressing as book characters and receiving book tokens to make books accessible.



The staff and children dressed up, enjoyed sessions with a famous author, shared books with other classes and enjoyed the challenge of working out who the 'masked readers' were!

Following this excitement, we hosted a Book Fair in school for a week, where families could buy books and spend their book tokens. Commission raised from this enabled us to buy even more books, in addition to the ones that The Friends have funded for our library.

Just after the Easter holidays we invited parents into school for a brief presentation on reading followed by joining their children in class, where they enjoyed reading activities together.

2026 is the National Year of Reading. The National Year of Reading 2026 is a UK- wide campaign designed to help more people discover the joy of reading.



At Mere School we champion reading for fun because it seriously improves lives. In fact, it is the biggest indicator that a child will grow up to enjoy a happier and more successful future.

Standards of reading are high in school and we attribute this to our children who, they tell us, enjoy sitting down with a good book.



Catrina Williamson

Thinking of Advertising in Mere Matters?

To find out the costs or to book an advert, please contact Ann-Marie Long directly by email or phone. Media4MM@Outlook.com 07833-686742



Fern Brook Lodge

A Care South home for
residential and dementia care



Your trusted local care home in the heart of your community



CQC rating

Good

February 2022

Fern Brook Lane | Gillingham | SP8 4QD

01747 449812 | care-south.co.uk

Proud to be part of Care South, a not-for-profit charity and leading provider of residential, dementia and nursing care, as well as care at home services across the south of England.

Registered Charity No. 1014697. * Correct at time of print.

Care
South

It's the care that counts...

Mere Bowls Club

The outdoor season is finally here, and we have a good mixed programme of matches, both internal club competitions and league matches.

We have joined a new league for this coming season; the South Wiltshire Mixed Triples League, so we will be playing some different clubs not played at before.

We will be playing all the clubs in the Westbrook League again and maybe (hopefully), emulating our success of last year.

The greens team, organised by Richard Coombs, have been working very hard over the winter period to prepare the green with: moss killing, scarifying and cutting, all of which has been repeated at least 3 times.

Thanks are also due to Mike and Anne Courtney who have performed an amazing task with clearing the weeds, brambles and other foliage on the outside of our fence which was beginning to take over the carpark. Also, thanks to Penny Allen for organising the socials over the winter.

The Club's opening day took place on Saturday 18th March with 23 Members attending and playing on four rinks, the green played very well.

Our first match of the new season is on **Saturday 2nd May** against Avon Bowls Club, Remoulds team at their ground in Melksham; the first match in the new league.

The Club will be holding an OPEN WEEKEND on **Saturday and Sunday, 9th & 10th May** at our green in Springfield Road, and anybody is welcome to come and give Bowls a try. Both days will run from 2pm until 6pm and refreshments will be available. The only stipulation is that **FLAT SOLED SHOES MUST BE WORN TO PROTECT THE GREEN.**

Bowls is a sport with many health benefits, mainly; fresh air, non-strenuous exercise and always played in a spirit of fun, friendliness and courtesy.... with a lot of banter thrown in..... **SO COME ALONG AND GIVE IT A TRY.**

If you are interested in joining the bowls club please contact John FitzGerald on 01747 860867 or by e-mail fitzgerald.jns@sky.com

Jon Wright Jon Wright jon252@btinternet.com

Mere Museum

In conjunction with the library the Museum will be taking part in history month which takes place in May. Please join me at the museum on Tuesday 12th May 10.30am to noon or Wednesday 20th May 10.30am to noon. You are welcome to bring photos, ask about the current exhibition or any questions you may have about Mere and it's history.

Rose Heesom Hon. Curator 07791 559 674 roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk

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

Venue Key:

AYP - Andy Young Pav	BS - Butt of Sherry	Drs - Surgery
GB - Grove Building	L - Lecture Hall	Lib - Library
MSC - Social Club	RMC - Castle St Car Park	SCP - Salisbury Street Car Park
StM - St Michaels Church	URC - United Ref Church	VH - Visit Hillbrush
WT - Walnut Tree Inn		

1	Fri		Duplicate Bridge (every Fri)	GB
2	Sat		Coffee Morning (every Sat)	URC
3	Sun			
4	Mon	09:15	Pilates (every Mon)	GB
		09:30	Tiddlers and Toddlers (every Mon)	L
		16:30	Seated Strength & Stretch (every Mon)	GB
		16:30	Brick Creators Club (every Mon)	Lib
		17:45	Yoga (every Mon)	L
		18:00	Tone, Balance & Flex (every Mon)	GB
5	Tues	09:15	Jade Deverill Exercise (every Tues)	L
		09:30	Little Angels (every Tues)	GB
		10:00	Keep a Beat	L
		10:30	Craft & Chat (every Tues)	Lib
		18:20	Zumba (every Tues)	L
		19:00	MADS (every Tues)	L
		19:30	Full-Body Function for Women: Bands, Balls & Boards (every Tue)	GB
6	Weds	09:00	Chair Yoga (every Weds)	L
		09:30	Tai-Chi (every Weds)	GB
		10:00	Get Wiltshire Walking (GWW - every Weds)	SCP
		14:00	Pilates (every Weds)	L
		18:30	Karate (every Weds)	L
		19:30	MoverHer Ignite <i>Railway Modellers (every Weds)</i>	GB RMC
7	Thurs	09:00	Walking Zumba (every Thurs)	L
			Mere Museum Plant Sale	GB
		10:00	Art Group (every Thurs)	GB
		10:00	Hearing Aid Clinic	URC
		10:30	Harmony 4 Health (every Thurs)	L
		11:00	Rhyme Time (every Thurs)	Lib
		14:00	Rubber Bridge (every Thurs)	L
		17:15	Girlguiding (every Thurs)	GB
		19:00	MADS (every Thurs)	L
		19:30	Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)	URC
8	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
			Mere May Fayre Film Night <i> Bridge </i>	GB
9	Sat		<i> Coffee Morning </i>	

10	Sun		
11	Mon	Pilates, Strength & Stretch Tone, Balance & Flex Tidd & Todd, Yoga Brick Club	
12	Tues	14:30 Mother's Union GB Little Angels, Bands, Balls & Boards Exercise, Zumba, MADS Craft & Chat	
13	Weds	19:00 Gardening Club AGM GB Tai-Chi, Yoga, Pilates, Karate GWW RM	
14	Thurs	19:30 Ukulele BS Art, Guiding Zumba, MADS, H4H, Bridge Shreen Harmony, Rhyme Time	
15	Fri	Bridge	
16	Sat	10:30 Fair Trade Stall URC Coffee Morning	
17	Sun	Cancer Research UK table top sale Fair Trade Stall after morning service StM	
18	Mon	Pilates, Strength & Stretch Tone, Balance & Flex Tidd & Todd, Yoga Brick Club	
19	Tues	Little Angels, Bands, Balls & Boards Exercise, Zumba, MADS Craft & Chat	
20	Weds	14:30 Pennybank Writers L 19:00 Merekits (WI) GB Tai-Chi Yoga, Pilates, Karate GWW RM	
21	Thurs	Art, Guiding Zumba, MADS, H4H, Bridge Shreen Harmony, Rhyme Time	
22	Fri	10:00 Merely Women GB Bridge	
23	Sat	Coffee Morning	
24	Sun		
25	Mon	Strength & Stretch Tone, Balance & Flex Tidd & Todd, Yoga Brick Club	
26	Tues	18:00 Pétanque Mere School Ground Little Angels, Bands, Balls & Boards Exercise, Zumba, MADS Craft & Chat	
27	Weds	am Jelly Group VH 19:30 Move Her Ignite: HIIT GB Tai-Chi Yoga, Pilates, Karate GWW RM	
28	Thurs	Art Exercise, Zumba, MADS Craft & Chat	
29	Fri	19:30 Cine Club GB Bridge	
30	Sat	Coffee Morning	
31	Sun	Trainmaster Wiltshire-New Event GB	

Any events shown in **RED** are unconfirmed
Repeat events implied order: | [Grove Building](#) | [Lecture Hall](#) | [Other](#) |

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

3 rd	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Informal family Service
10 th	Sun	10.30	Joint Rogation Communion Service for the Benefice- Park Corner Farm, West Knoyle, BA12 6AH (next to Convish Farm for SatNav/Google Maps)
14 th	Thurs	07:30 08:00	Ascension Day – Sing hymns from church tower, then Communion service
17 th	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
24 th	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion – Pentecost
31 st	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion- Trinity Sunday

West Knoyle Parish Church St Mary the Virgin:

Vicar: The Rev'd Michael Molano 07396 979448

Churchwardens: Mrs Jill Randall 830534 Sir Charles Burnett 812089

3 rd	Sun	09:30	DIY
10 th	Sun	10:30	Joint Rogation Communion Service for the Benefice- Park Corner Farm, West Knoyle, BA12 6AH (next to Convish Farm for SatNav/Google Maps)
17 th	Sun	09:30	Communion Service
24 th	Sun	09:30	Communion Service
31 st	Sun	09:30	Matins Service

The United Reformed Church

Minister: Vacancy

Mere Contact: Derek Fisher – 07935 266375 delfisher@btopenworld.com

3 rd	Sun	11:00	Worship Service
10 th	Sun	11:00	Rev Kate Rawlings
17 th	Sun	11:00	Worship Service
24 th	Sun	11:00	Rev Sue Litchfield
31 st	Sun	11:00	Mrs Christine Marsh

The Roman Catholic Church

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

St Mary's has closed and weekend Masses are on Saturday 5.30pm and Sunday at 11:00am and take place at SS Luke and Teresa, South Street, Wincanton BA9 9DH. Mass at St Michael the Archangel is usually on the third Tuesday of each month but there will be no Mass in May and June so our next Mass will be on Tuesday 21 July at 1030am.

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

John FitzGerald 860867

Procession of the Cross

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.

This year 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 carried the cross mostly 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, clear sky and dry underfoot. Some descended the very steep side of the hill afterward usually reserved for the "climbers" The Walk was well attended.

Afterwards at 12-30 a well-attended Lent Lunch was served at The Grove Building, Mere

George Jeans

Copy date for the **June 2026** issue

Closing date deadline is: **16:00hrs on Wednesday 20th May 2026**

Email contributions are preferred, to the Editor, Richard Jefferies 863425
Editor4MM@Outlook.com or deliver to 16 Underhill, Mere, BA12 6LU.

Mere Library

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

* Volunteer operated opening hours.

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Free digital support appointments at Mere library. Learn more about using your smart phone, tablet, laptop or the library public computers at a free digital support appointment.

To find out more or to book an appointment with our volunteer Steve, speak to a member of the library team or call the library on 01747 860546.

Merely Books Reading Group

Merely Books – reading group at the library, **3rd Tuesday of the month** 2-3:30pm. If you are interested in joining, please speak to a member of staff.

Free half term activities for the children at the library in addition to our regular rhyme time.

- **Tuesday 26th May** 10am – 4:30pm: Drop-in Brick Creators’ Club, for all Lego enthusiasts.
- **Friday 29th May** 10am – 4:30pm: Drop in & Play session, suitable for children up to age 8.

Julia Upton 01985 216022 julia.upton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Booking Meeting Venues

Grove Building:	administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk	07942 291266
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	861063
URC Church Hall:	Derek Fisher	07935 266375

A few extra dates

1 st May Day	May Day is an ancient pagan spring festival, traditionally celebrated across Europe with maypole dancing and the crowning with a floral crown of a May Queen.
3 rd International Gilbert & Sullivan Day	Celebrating the comic operas of Gilbert & Sullivan, on the birthday of the man who brought them together, Richard D'Oyly Carte.
3 rd World Laughter Day	The celebration of World Laughter Day is a positive manifestation for World Peace and it builds up a global consciousness of brotherhood and friendship through laughter.
4 th May Day Bank Holiday	Held on the Monday closest to May Day, this day is a Bank Holiday in the UK and Ireland.
4 th - 10 th Screen-Free Week	Annual event to encourage us to unplug from digital entertainment and spend all that free time playing, reading, daydreaming, creating, exploring, and connecting with family and friends.
4 th Star Wars Day	A pun on the date 4th May inspired the phrase May The Fourth Be With You. So this day is now known as Star Wars Day, so fans have the perfect excuse to watch their favourite film or spin-off TV series today.
5 th World Asthma Day	An annual event organized by the Global Initiative for Asthma with a goal to improve asthma awareness and care around the world.
9 th Europe Day	A day celebrating peace and unity in Europe. It is celebrated by displaying the Flag of Europe and commemorates the founding of the Council of Europe.
10 th Mother's Day (US)	This is the day when you let your Mom know how much you love her on her special day. Established by Anna Jarvis in 1908, it recognizes mothers, motherhood and maternal bonds.
10 th National Children's Day UK	National Children's Day UK is all about the importance of a healthy childhood and protecting the rights and freedoms of children so that they can grow into happy, healthy adults.
11 th - 17 th National Sun Awareness Week	Organised by the British Association of Dermatologists, the aim of this day is raising awareness of the dangers of excessive sun exposure and how to avoid sunburn and skin cancers.
12 th International Nurses Day	Held on the birthday of Florence Nightingale to mark the contributions that nurses make to society. It is a day to recognise the important role of nurses around the world.
12 th - 16 th Eurovision Song Contest	Eurovision is an annual international celebration of music. The 70th Eurovision Song Contest will be held in Vienna, Austria.
15 th International Day of Families	A UN designated day to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families.
16 th - 24 th National Doughnut Week	National Doughnut Week is a fundraising event in aid of The Children's Trust organised by the baking industry. The Children's Trust is the UK's leading charity for children with brain injury.
18 th - 22 nd Walk To School Week	Annual event to encourage children and their parents to walk to school, organised by Living Streets. Many schools take part in the event, giving out badges to those who walk, cycle or roll to school.

18 th International Museum Day	A day to raise awareness on the fact that museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.
20 th World Bee Day	The purpose of World Bee Day is to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators, the threats they face and their contribution to sustainable development.
20th National Numeracy Day	An annual celebration of the importance of numbers in everyday life and will bring together individuals, employers, educators and influencers to improve numeracy.
21st International Tea Day	A UN designated day to take action to promote the sustainable production and consumption of tea and raise awareness of its importance in fighting hunger and poverty.
22nd International Day for Biological Diversity	United Nations sponsored international day for the promotion of biodiversity issues, covering a broad spectrum of issues including climate change, sustainability, food security, transport and vulnerable groups including indigenous peoples.
23rd World Turtle Day	The aim of World Turtle Day is to bring attention to, and increase knowledge of and respect for, turtles and tortoises, and encourage human action to help them survive and thrive.
23rd Elmer Day	A celebration of reading, of elephants and of accepting yourself and others, just like Elmer the Patchwork Elephant, star of the Elmer books by David McKee.
25th Africa Day	The annual commemoration of the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity on 25 May 1963. The day is marked with both speeches by political and social leaders, and concerts featuring cultural entertainment, poetry and speakers.
25th Towel Day	In memory of Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy author Douglas Adams. To celebrate the writer's life and work fans will openly carry around a towel all day, because a froody person who was really together always knew where their towel was.
25th Geek Pride Day	Geek Pride Day is a fun worldwide celebration of geekiness and nerdism. So if you are wildly enthusiastic about something today is the day to tell all your friends about it!
29th National Biscuit Day	A celebration of this tasty treat, whether you regard it as a sweet snack to go with a cup of tea, or a savory addition to a meal.
29th OakApple Day	Also known as Restoration Day, it is a traditional English celebration of the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, following the death of Oliver Cromwell.

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May Day 1574 in the reign of Elizabeth 1st

Two young men of Mere, the Cuckoo King and his Prince, were elected each year to organise the Church Ale. This was a highlight of the social year – similar to modern church fetes but with more drinking. The title Cuckoo King seems unique to Mere. In 1574 Randoll Coward was king and Michael Laning prince. Their job was to collect wheat for bread, and barley to make strong ale for the celebration. This kept Mere parish finances healthy - the profits [profits] and increase of the Church Ale for this year 1574 were £7 - 11 pence

They entertained their opposite numbers, the 'lord' of Gillingham and his men:

1578 paid for bread and drink to make the Sumer Lord of Gillingham Drink - 2 shillings 6 pence.

From a similar event in Cornwall 1602:

- the neighbour parishes at those times loungly [lovingly] visit one another and this way frankely spend their money together. The afternoons are consumed in such exercises as olde and yonge folk (having leysure) doe accustomedly weare out the time withall.
- one Robert Bone of Antony shot at a little bird, sitting upon his coves back, and killed it, the bird (I meane) not the cove; which was either very cunning in the performance, or very foolish in the attempt.

We can only wonder whether any men of Mere could match this.

From a forthcoming book 'Mere Voices in the time of Elizabeth 1' by Kate Symonds





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This is a FREE event, but please book with Val O'Keefe on
07719 419232



MAJOR FUNDERS



www.wiltshiremusic.org.uk/CAW

Mere Theatre Club

Our club has been going now for 17 years and some of us have been with it since the beginning! We offer a range of outings, both theatrical: musicals; comedies; dramas and some to other destinations: castles, festivals, historic houses and gardens. We always supply transport so no parking or getting lost worries!

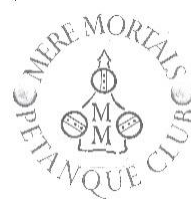
Our membership is only £8 per household per year, just to cover a few expenses and then you will receive the mailings from which to book.

If this sounds interesting, do get in touch for more information.

Madeline Morris 07481 555101 madsmorris@gmail.com

Mere Mortals Petanque Club

'It is lovely to be able to play boules in the evenings now that Summer Time is here. Sadly, numbers attending have dropped off of late due to injury, sickness and players moving away. However, six new enquiries have been made recently with promises to play and we have the new league season to look forward to (matches commence the week beginning the 10th May). Mere Mortals have been placed by ballot in the new division, named Ebble, which has had to be formed to accommodate an influx of three new clubs. A new league club KO competition is also being devised. All in all, things are looking up. Stone Daisy the brewers continue to sponsor the Nadder & Stour petanque League for which all clubs are grateful. Mere Mortals have club sessions on Tuesdays at 6pm, Wednesdays from 2.30pm and Saturdays from 10.30am but the terrain by the school is open at all hours.



Colin Senneck 706008 colin2423@sky.com

Mere Art Group

The Group broke away from Winter with Cakes and Chocolate Eggs.

Attendance remains healthy, despite the Holiday pressures.

We are planning an "Art-Sale and EXHIBITION" on Saturday 12th September 2026. Mark your Diaries!!

This Month's Art submission is by Hilary De La Ceaux.

Helge Brock helgewallenbrock@gmail.com



Mere Goes Quackers

Duck races held in the Shreen River in Mere on Saturday the 18th April.

2 Duck races were held in the river starting by Steep Street in Mere, where a street cafe was also set up. The community were able to enjoy hot dogs, cakes and drinks whilst chatting.

The races were in aid of a cancer hospice. Warm and sunny morning to enhance the atmosphere of many people and the bright colours of the ducks bobbing along with various volunteers in the water, ensuring the ducks swam away from the leafy foliage surroundings.



The event was arranged by Trudy and Bernie Rowland along with family friends and neighbours.

Draw and race prizes donated by local businesses which included an air fryer, £100 experience at Mere Falconry and much more.

Pics and text by George Jeans

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CHURCHES TOGETHER In Mere & District

The rain kindly held off just long enough for the goodly number (60+) of us from our different Churches to stay dry as we joined together for our mini pilgrimage, carrying the cross up Castle Hill on Good Friday. Many of us then took cover in the Grove Building for the last of this year's excellent Lent Lunches, before dispersing to our respective churches for our keeping of the rest of Good Friday and Holy Saturday, and then celebrating with great joy on Easter morning.



Christian Aid Week runs this year from 10th-16th May. The easiest and most efficient way to donate is through their website which you can find by Googling **Christian Aid Week** and then clicking on 'Donate Now'. You'll also find lots of information and good ideas there, too.

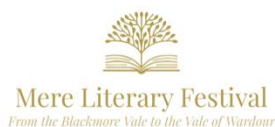
Our next joint event is **Songs of Praise at Stourhead at 3pm on 28th June**. Anyone is welcome to join us whether or not you are attached to any of our Churches – more details about access etc in June Mere Matters. Meanwhile, anyone is also welcome, to choose one of the hymns/songs for that event. Please email me so I can send you a form to fill in with the details of your choice (forms will also be available through the Church representatives). Completed forms need to reach me by **Monday 8th June**, to allow time to coordinate choices and prepare service sheets.

We'll look forward to being together for that event in June. Meanwhile you're very welcome at any of our Churches – details of May services elsewhere in this edition of Mere Matters.

Judith Thompson, Secretary, 860553 judithvthompson@aol.com

The Mere Literary Festival

The Mere Literary Festival team has been visiting our local charities: The Mere and District Link Scheme, Seeds for Success and Read Easy Blackmore Vale. Three important Charities that underpin our local community. But what do they do? What is their history and why do they matter? In a monthly series of podcasts dropping over the spring on the Literary Festival Website their stories are told. We meet the innovators behind these charities and explore the important part the Mere Literary Festival plays in assisting to fund their development.



Final lists of books and authors are being agreed and invitations sent but you too can help. If you have a favourite recently published book or any recommendations of great local or national authors let us know. Keep up to date by joining our Facebook page or following us on Instagram: mere_literary_festival and other social media and become part of our story.

Listen to the first Podcast now on <https://mereliteraryfestival.com>

If you would like to join our team of volunteers please email:

volunteers@Mereliteraryfestival.com

Ashley Gray 07872171111 admin@mereliteraryfestival.com

Merekits - Women's Institute

April's members meeting was well attended with lots of new faces who came along to find out more about our group. We had an interesting talk by a lady from the "House of Colour" who showed us how our colours can complement the way we dress and project ourselves. One of our members won a draw to be a model, which I believe was enjoyed.

The next **meeting** is scheduled for **20th May** from 7-9 pm at the Grove building. This will be our AGM and election of members for the committee. We will also have a lady coming to teach us some Zumba exercises to help invigorate everyone. As always, our meetings are a great way to connect with like-minded women, have fun, and make friends. We also offer various groups for members, including recent walks around the local area, and a ghost tour in ghost tour in Sherborne - there's truly something for everyone.

If you're interested in learning more about us, feel free to attend one of our regular meetings. We gather every third Wednesday of the month at the Grove building from 19:00 to 21:00. We hope to see you soon!

Verena Cooper 07971-790256 verenacooper2@gmail.com

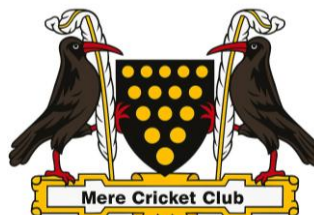
Mere Cricket Club - New Season Starting Soon

The new season kicks off - or should that be 'bats off' - on **Sunday 11th May** at the Recreation Ground, Springfield Road, when we welcome Marnhull - our wonderful British weather permitting! We have games on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings home and away through to the end of August.

We play friendly cricket with a competitive spirit on the field but welcoming off it. We always welcome players new and old of all abilities and experience. We also need volunteers to help us, so if you're able to give time, you would be most welcome. We need help with Umpiring, Groundskeeping, match day teas on Sunday afternoons and general help.

You can contact us via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/share/1H5WLEfh2D/> by visiting our website <https://merewiltshire.play-cricket.com/home> where the full list of fixtures is shown, or call/text on 07896016310.

We would love to hear from you.



Friends of Mere Museum - Annual Plant Sale



Saturday 9th May starting at 10 am until 11am at The Grove Building - your opportunity to buy excellent geraniums and patio or bedding plants. All sales will go to help fund Mere Museum so please come along and support. Payment by cash or card accepted.



Also - do visit the museum to enjoy the current exhibition and browse local photos and museum reference works.

John Jordan friendstreasurer@meremuseum.org

Fair Trade in Mere

May is Fair Trade Month so why not come along to one of my stalls and support the smallholders who are helped to a more sustainable life when earning the Fair Trade premium to bring us such essential products. What would we do without our tea, coffee, bananas and chocolate? URC Coffee morning: **Saturday 16th May 10.30-12.00** and after the morning Service at St Michael's **Sunday 17th May**

Janet Way 860884 jwaywitsend@gmail.com



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Treasurer - Alison Beall Treasurer4MM@Outlook.com Many thanks

Ukes 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 try. 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



Discover the charm of Mere on a relaxed walking weekend. Enjoy six enjoyable walks in and around this beautiful historic town, taking in peaceful countryside, hidden paths, and wonderful views. A perfect chance to stretch your legs, explore somewhere special, and enjoy great company along the way.

Fancy a challenge? Complete all of the walks, about 18 miles, and earn a medal!

For more information and to book your place on one or all of the walks please use the QR code above.

The event is being organised by Mere Town Council with support from Mere Footpaths group, and the Wiltshire Towns Fund.

Roger Pipe Project Co-ordinator 860701

Mothers Union

We were pleased, at our April meeting, to welcome Jocelyn Short who is M.U. Saliisbury Diocese Trustee and was able to update us on MU projects in Salisbury Diocese. Before her talk we held our A.G.M.

It will be Janet Way, well known to so many of us, giving us a talk at 2.30 on **12th May** about!, 'My Calendar Year'. Guests will be welcome as usual!

Margaret Oliver 860111 megoliver83@gmail.com

Mere Amateur Dramatics

Mere Amateur Dramatic Society presented a performance based on a play written in the 1980s, The Continental Quilt, the play was presented over 3 evenings of Thursday 26th March through to Saturday 30th March 2026. It was played to a capacity crowd in Mere Lecture Hall, on Saturday night. The action takes place in the lounge of



Michael Feather's three-bedroom flat. Michael Feather starts by discussing with his brother Richard how he "Richard" could be under the continental quilt with a lady who was not his wife, when his wife came home, and he "Richard" tried to explain to his wife that he and the lady were just examining the quilt. Elizabeth Feather was played by Mary White who never dropped a line, being mother she reminded me of Mrs Bucket "Bouquet", I was waiting for Sheridan to be mentioned or appear, however it was very clever like the whole play, it was all in the imagination. Bertie the beetle was kept in a match box and frightened all the ladies that came in contact with him, very much in contact on one occasion. Michael Feather having allowed 3 ladies to stay at his flat, finished by the 3 ladies deciding a rota for all thing left to the imagination. Excellent acting and production by all. Juliet Booth has been a MADS member for over 30 years, was presented with an award for directing her first play.

Photo and article by George Jeans

Kilmington & Stourton WI

Vanessa Meeker (President) announces: "It was with great sadness I have had to announce the suspension (closure) of our WI from 24th March 2026. We have been unable to find a secretary out of our 36 members, so despite our WI having run very successfully for nearly 30 years we are unable to continue. We have had some very interesting speakers and outings over the years and a lot of celebrations, so this I am afraid is the end of the road"



From left to right: Jane Parker, Vanessa Meeker President, Rachel Harrison, Bernie Isted.

Walking in Mere

Short Walk - Wednesday 20th May

Meet at 2.00pm in the Surgery Car Park for a walk around our paths and lanes, and enjoy the early summer, with a refreshing cuppa at the Angel Tea Rooms afterwards

Janet Way 860884

'Get Wiltshire Walking', Starter Walk

May sees the second anniversary of these walks and we're thrilled to report that they continue to be a great success. In the past year we've met every single Wednesday, with an average of 17 walkers per week.

This group relies on a dedicated band of trained volunteers so if you think you'd like to become a walk leader please come and join us on a Wednesday morning to learn more.

We meet by the surgery at 10.00am for a 40-minute gentle stroll around our lovely town. Unfortunately, for safety reasons only assistance dogs are allowed on these walks.

Mere Walking Group

There will be no official Sunday walk in May as we will all be focussing on and joining in with the Mere-athon. Details included elsewhere in this edition. It promises to be a great event, so do join in. With 6 walks to choose from there should be something for everyone.

Wendy and Dave Drewett 07508 340105

Mere Amateur Dramatics

MADS would like to invite everyone to their Annual General Meeting which will take place on Monday 11th May at 7.00 for 7.30pm in the Small Hall at Mere Lecture Hall. This is the opportunity to come and hear of the activities of the last year and for those interested in joining MADS, either to tread the boards or in helping back stage with set building, stage management, props and costumes to hear more. We welcome anyone of any age, so come along and hear what we are up to in the coming year.

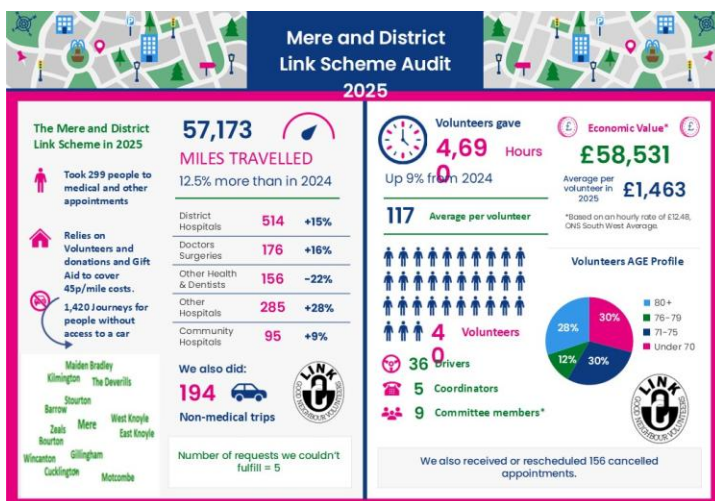
We would like to thank everyone who came to our Spring Production, 'The Continental Quilt', in March for your continued support of our productions. We were all delighted with the full audiences for each performance, which makes all the hard work so worthwhile. We are now making plans for our Autumn Production in November, for which there will be play readings held over the next couple of months, so look out for notices of these, and come along if you can and satisfy your inner thespian. You never know what you can do until you try!

Holly Robert on behalf of MADS- 07801901912

Mere & District Link Scheme

Wow March was our busiest month on record with 160 trips (118 was the monthly average last year) including 43 to Salisbury Hospital and 42 to RUH Bath. Four of the trips were doubled up with two passengers and we had 19 cancelled trips so our co-ordinators arranged over 180 trips. What an incredible effort by all - well done.

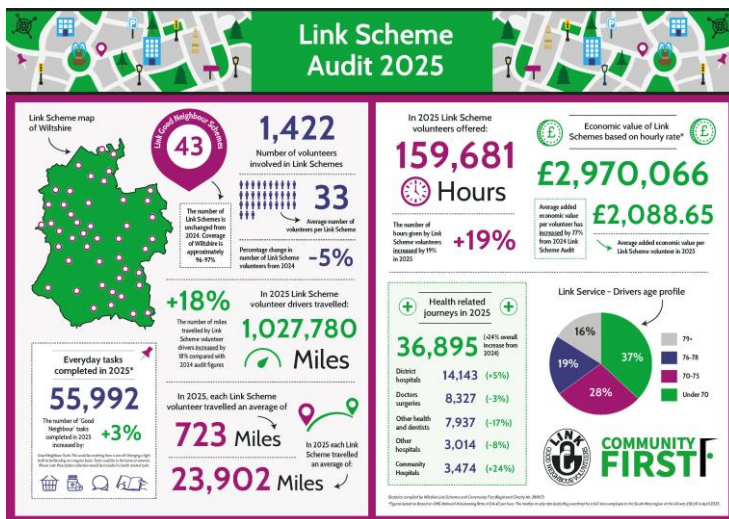
The first infographic below summarises our activity in 2025 and shows many increases on 2024. These figures show the real need for Link services and the huge benefit they give to our local communities. New drivers are always welcome. If you would like to find out more about volunteering as a driver, please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096.



However, we're not the only busy Link Scheme as in 2025 Wiltshire's 43 Link Schemes drove an amazing 1,027,780 miles in a year, which is the first time a million miles have been driven in a year, and is an 18% increase on 2024. We did one of the larger mileages 57,173 against an average of 23,902 as you can see from the second infographic below

The Link Scheme is a local charity and our volunteer drivers primarily take clients to medical appointments. Once you have an appointment, please call 01747 860096 to book a Link 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, please try to give us a minimum of 48 hours notice (not including Saturdays and Sundays) as we cannot guarantee our co-ordinator will be at

home to arrange last minute requests. If you have to leave a message please do so slowly and clearly.



A date for your diary - the Link AGM will be held on Friday 5 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

All Spick and Span

As part of the Great British Spring Clean, a well-attended community litter pick has taken place in and around Mere on the morning of Sunday 29th March. Organised by John Jordan with Mere Town Council.



John said "Despite the cold wind blowing, we collected 11 bags of litter. Many thanks to the collectors. The dog helping is called Nala."

Photo and article by George Jeans

Castle Lodge Care Home

Opening January

Welcome to Castle Lodge Care Home, a brand-new home in the heart of Mere, designed with comfort, care, and community in mind.

Our services include:

- ✓ **Residential Care**
- ✓ **Dementia Care**
- ✓ **Respite Care**

With modern facilities, welcoming lounges, landscaped gardens, and a dedicated care team, Castle Lodge offers a place where residents feel truly at home.



For more information call

01733 911 570

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www.countrycourtcare.com





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