

A scenic view of a lake with sailboats and a forested background. In the foreground, a paved path leads towards a grassy area with a green bench. A small sailboat with a red sail is in the water near the shore. Two other sailboats with white sails are further out on the lake. The background is a dense forest of tall trees under a blue sky with some clouds.

Mere Matters

& so does

West Knoyle

Your community magazine

July/August 2021

Mere Matters Editorial

Historically most of the content of Mere Matters has been provided by the Town Councils, Churches and voluntary groups operating in and around Mere; financed through advertising and donations. As an experiment, we are going to open things up and invite a 'Letters' section.

Any resident of Mere and the immediate locality can send in Copy for consideration. It should be noted that this is not an invitation for people to be rude or obnoxious or to wave a political banner – in fact submissions along these lines will just be ignored. It is intended that this be an opportunity for individuals to have an opportunity to ask questions on topical issues or to make positive suggestions/comments.

You may submit your letter to the editor by email or any other paper means but it must include the following:

Your full name, email or contact address and telephone numbers and you must be willing for this information to be made public. Your letter should state clearly the subject to which it relates, should be clear, be factual and no more than 200 words in length. Published letters will possibly just be attributed to their author using name or initials. Anonymity will not be allowed.

Copy distribution

This month sees the return to distribution being through Walton Post Office, the Co-op and other strategic centres. A special vote of thanks to **Viv Sheppard** who headed up our copy distribution throughout virtually the whole of the last year and to all the volunteers who ably hand delivered copies wind, rain and shine.

Richard Jefferies editor@merematters.co.uk

Mere Town Council

Meetings of the Mere Town Council have been very different over the last 15 months with strict regulations relating to gatherings imposed by Government. We came out of "zoom" meetings in May and have been meeting in the foyer of the school since then, while still complying with social distancing and wearing of masks. This means that our maximum number of attendees is restricted to 20. A full attendance of Councillors and the Clerk means we only have space for 4 others. The Council has always welcomed members of the public to speak in the public session, on any agenda items. If you would like to attend a meeting, please contact the office and Lindsey will make the appropriate arrangements. Let us hope that we shall soon be back to "normal" meetings in the Andy Young Pavilion?

Last month, we received the first payment of our "Section 106" contribution from Fry & Son, with reference to the Woodland Road development. The amount is £134k. The council will be giving lots of thought as to how to spend this money for the benefit of Mere. There are unfortunately, legal restrictions: -

Off Site Facilities - Financial contribution can be used towards the provision of outdoor, youth and adult open spaces in the area, to serve the development.

Open Space - Financial contribution towards the provision, maintenance and improvement of Open Space i.e., public open space including play areas and amenity land, in the Parish of Mere.

NB. The contribution cannot be used to construct, extend, improve or maintain any building.

The Town Council will consider any feasible suggestions within the restrictions stated.

A comprehensive list of our bus services has been prepared by Cllr. Debbie Beale and is published elsewhere in this magazine. Wiltshire Council have secured some grant funding to improve the provision of local bus services and are asking for suggestions for new services or changes/additions to existing services that would make significantly more people from communities use public transport. The Town Council will be considering this matter at the next meeting to be held on 5th July so if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

I would like to thank the Vice Chair, Councillor Kate Symonds, for producing the informative leaflet, available as a 'pull out supplement' in this issue of Mere Matters. The Town Council is often asked about its role, so hopefully, this will answer a lot of questions.

*Lesley Traves, Chair, Mere Town Council
for information on Town Council activities, minutes, agendas etc.
lindseewood@merewilts.org ☎ 860701 🌐 merewilts.org*

Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes

This report may be in some local publications when the road works in Castle Street and The Square, Mere should have started (28th June) or just concluded, I understand some return visits may be required for minor works. I have done my best to make all aware of any road works in the Mere area, making use of Walton Post Office and a window by the Salisbury Street Car park, plus I have worked with Mere Town Council and Wiltshire Council and its contractors to put a statement on Mere Matters and will continue to do so. I know disruption to our roads and footways is, or can be, contentious. How the work is completed and its standard can also be contentious, I try to support the majority view.

The new Wiltshire Council require all new councillors (when appropriate) to receive training. During our training we were informed planning was not a means for a councillor to become popular. I take issue with this; councillors are popular if they try and do what the majority want, I considered that is what we are elected for, and we cannot always achieve the majority view. We have the ability on occasion to take applications to an elected committee, yes the committee has to balance the issues however localism comes into play and is considered.

Planning applications go through a process called verification. In simple terms this means the plans submitted comply with what is required. This period extends the

time it takes to determine the application, this time recently has been weeks on occasion or longer. This has been caused for one by directly or indirectly officers attending to Covid grant applications, these have benefited village halls besides businesses. I have alerted several that these funds are or were available. Covid has caused much direct and indirect disruption upon officer's time, I find it more difficult at present to get quick replies and indeed on occasion finding an officer at all.

I attended the Southern Area Planning in Salisbury on the 24th June, which was a real live meeting as opposed to sitting behind a computer screen. It was in the Guild Hall at Salisbury which was rather grand. We all respected social distancing. Fred Westmoreland was chairman from 2009 to now, Fred has now retired and Richard Britton has now become Chairman of the committee. He is a very experienced councillor who was with me in the days of Salisbury District Council, those who were with me when we had a District Council (SDC) are now becoming fewer and new faces are appearing.

I have had many complaints regarding verge cutting or the lack of it around traffic signs, road junctions and footpaths. I have complained and I now see some verge cutting at road junctions etc has started in the Mere division. I will make it clear this is nothing connected with our local footpaths group who do an excellent job and we are lucky to have them. Also, it is not connected with Mere Town council who locally carry out the work very well. I am referring above to Wiltshire Council's responsibilities and its contractors' implementation.

I sit on the financial task group. Much of what we discuss is confidential however I can say about the latest report that has gone to cabinet, that despite the problems that have arisen because of Covid, Wiltshire Council at present is projected to be financially sound and in a good place, however later in the financial year, adult and children's services could impact this.

The committees and task groups I sit on at present are Audit, The Financial Task Group, LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) task group, Southern Planning, The South West Area Board, Licencing and Full Council. The task groups are part of Wiltshire Council scrutiny. The Broadband project board which now only intervenes in the north of Wiltshire, is an officer led board.

Along the southern side of the A303T by-pass, trees have grown up in places since around 1973 when it was opened. These give a measure of sound attenuation from noise from the by-pass. The trees have been thinned before in areas. In places the trees cover a high percentage of neighbour's property and they are losing sun from their gardens. I am meeting with Highways England to see if a remedy can be found, I hope Highways England will be a thoughtful neighbour.

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

The Mere Toddlers Foodbank

We have been supporting families and the general community for five years this month and have recently absorbed the St Michaels Church foodbank into our operation, resulting in Mere now having just one foodbank. All donations; whether monetary, foodstuffs or physical support should be directed to Toddlers please or to the Warminster Foodbank.

The priority has always been to help those families who have fallen on hard times by way of reduced income, maternity leave, loss of employment, bereavement etc. During the pandemic, the demand increased substantially to a point where we were delivering the same amount every month, as was delivered in a six month period this time last year.

The Fresh foodbank is available on Mondays – term time only at the Toddlers group in the Lecture Hall and on Saturdays, next to Ivymead Cottage, Ivymead as an ‘open-air’ stall, thanks to Maureen Portnell for the use of her garage, with a few extra long-life items available. In the school holidays both Monday and Saturday stalls are held there. After access by the priority group of young families; short life goods may be available to others through swapping long-life items for fresh ones.

Donated goods left at the collection point in the Mere Co-operative, or on the stall, go to the Warminster and District Foodbank on a fortnightly basis, and are then used to make up nutritionally balanced deliveries which we collect and deliver as a week’s worth of food, toiletries, nappies where needed, even cleaning products where possible, for everyone within a household.

The Toddlers group receive donations of fresh goods from Waitrose weekly through the FareShare scheme and also get contributions on a regular basis of long life items from the Gillingham Foodbank, which primarily go to Warminster but also items for the Foodbank stall when they have an excess.

All of this is an enormous logistical operation. It could not happen without all our lovely volunteers who willingly give of their time to fetch, carry and deliver, along with all the very kind donations we receive. None of this would be possible without the help and support of the Lecture Hall and the Grove Building providing storage capability. As the halls reopen for their public functions we are going to lose access to essential storage which is likely to place the whole operation at risk. If anyone can help provide or suggest storage facilities for Short and Long-life foodstuffs, please let us know.

We also have a voucher system in addition to the food parcels, using all money donated, some from St Michael’s Foodbank which has been passed on to us, from The Golden Bottle Fund, some from various kind members of the public, and a donation from the Town Council. The vouchers have all been for local shops: the Co-operative, Sprout and Flower, and Davies’ Butchers. We have applied to various others too, like Asda, and Waitrose who have Community Funds, and use it all to replace food when we don’t have enough, or when there is an extra need as with fuel poverty this last winter when children were home from school in

lockdown. We have also sent funds to Warminster and District Foodbank to help as they have been unable to fundraise in the usual way.

If you are in a situation where you are finding it difficult to put food on the table, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Anne Rich ☎ 861493 arich4@icloud.com

Merely Women

Just to catch up with our current situation, we have now come to a time in our covid life when we may be able to restart our regular meetings soon. If all goes well, I plan to resume our meetings in September, which will be on the 2nd and 4th Fridays, and each month thereafter, as usual.

However, this could all change due to new government directives or the Grove Building not reopening for large gatherings. I am hopeful that I will see you all again in September, fingers crossed, so please check for updates in the September issue of Mere Matters.

Jean Eyles ☎ 863450

Fair Trade in Mere

The Big Brew:

We had a fun and happy day and by the generosity of everyone who came I was able to send £155 to Traidcraft Exchange for their Regenerators Appeal. This will be helping many smallholders affected by climate change to build a greater resilience against its huge problems. And of course UKAid doubled all funds raised! Thank you so much everyone who attended.

Janet Way ☎ 860884 jwaywitsend@gmail.com

Mere Gardening Club

We are pleased to announce that all being well and with restrictions being lifted our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 11th August**. This is a Social meeting and will be held at Talbot Cottage, Hazzard Hill, starting 6.30pm, all members and spouses are invited.

Please bring your own nibbles/food. A drink will be provided.

Rose Heesom Secretary ☎ 07791 559674 meregardenclub.org.uk

Copy date for September 2021 Issue

Closing deadline is: 4:00pm on MONDAY 23rd August.

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.

Mere Carnival 2021

Carnival bingo at mere social club on **Friday July 9th** .Eyes down at 7.30pm

Carnival quiz **Friday July 16th at the grove building 7.30 start.**

Due to covid restrictions there will only be 30 places at each event so book early
at pennvallen@hotmail.co.uk

Sadly there will not be a carnival this year but we are organising a family fun day on Saturday 18th September 2.00pm – 9.00pm. Hopefully this will be on the Mere School field. Various stalls and events including tombola, crockery breaking and skittles alley are planned along with bar and food sales together with live music throughout the day and evening. Fun fair rides are also being planned.

We are also holding a Golden Ticket Draw at £1.00 a ticket with a whopping £500 prize. Tickets will be on sale soon in a number of outlets in Mere and at the event.

What a day it will be so come along for a grand day out.

Penny Allen

Mere & District Railway Modellers

At our recent EGM it was decided that free membership of the club is to be extended till the end of September this year. This is an excellent opportunity for any person interested in the well founded and supported club to come and join us at 7.00pm on a Wednesday evening at the rear of Castle Street Car Park. The main reasons for joining said group is that personalities within the club have contacts that can save railway modellers a considerable amount of money if they are planning on taking up the hobby. Again the skill set of the members allow persons an interesting evening at all levels on the hobby.

Tom Snook ☎ 861977 tomsnook29@hotmail.co.uk

Mere Film Shows

A quick update to let you all know that we are still around and are busy considering ways to recommence showing films as rules are relaxed in the near future. In the meantime do head over to the Moviola website to see more information on its work and current films. <https://www.moviola.org/films/>

If you are new to Mere and would like to find out more about what we normally then please get in touch with me.

Rosie Jordan-Barr 861567 rosiejb77@gmail.com

Mere Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Fives Court Update

The Mere Surgery PPG submitted its paper (<https://www.meresurgery.co.uk/practice-information/mere-pgg-wcc-proposal/>) to Wiltshire Council by the deadline of 2nd June. We have since had the following from Rob Scott, Senior Estates Manager in the Estates and Development Department of Wiltshire Council.

"The thought is that we will need more time to explore the options for the site, both with you and with housing colleagues and it is probable that we won't be putting anything formal in place until July or possibly August, in terms of further decision making.

Instead, over the next few weeks it is likely that we will be coming back to you to understand your requirements in further depth and to explore whether there are any synergies between your and our housing team's needs in the town".

As one colleague said "it seems like they're having a meeting to decide about making a meeting! Well, that's more time for us". We continue to follow this matter up strongly as it is clear it really matters to all who live in and around Mere.

Elaine Stallard, Chair Mere Surgery PPG 📞 07711 350377 MerePPG@gmail.com

The Grove Building

We are pleased to announce that having been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected the Grove Building will be fully open for business within the next couple of weeks. Most of our regular users have already signed up again but we still have slots available.

We can offer dates in July and then forward but it will of course be necessary to respect whatever Covid rules are in place at the time – please contact us for advice.

The Calendar can be found on the website at grovebuildingmere.org.uk

Please contact administrator@grovebuildingmere.org.uk 📞 07935 266375 to make bookings

Derek Fisher



Mere Town Council Supplement

Your Mere Town councillors - elected in May 2021 are:



Lesley Traves
Chair
☎ 860611



Kate Symonds
Vice Chair
☎ 861278



George Jeans
also Wiltshire Councillor
☎ 860215



Debbie Beale
☎ 861908



Nicholas Beale
☎ 861908



Louise Bennett
☎ 07871 654436



Aubrey Colman
☎ 860847



Philip Coward
☎ 830270



Rodney Coward
☎ 07872 576914



Rachael Hansford
☎ 860168



Clive Hazzard
☎ 860318



Raymond Hill
☎ 861920



Glen Ings
☎ 07783 513082



John Jordan
☎ 861567



Eric Mitchell
☎ 860156



Lindsey Wood
Town Clerk

We are all proud to be politically independent volunteers.
**You are welcome to attend our monthly meetings
and to speak in the public session.**
You may contact the Town Clerk
preferably by telephone on ☎ **860701**
during office hours – Tues, Weds, Thurs 10 am – 3 pm
or email lindseywood@merewilts.org

WHAT MERE TOWN COUNCIL DOES

Who is responsible for what?

We have a two-tier Local Authority service in Wiltshire with **Wiltshire Council** being the principal authority and **Town & Parish Councils** being responsible for many local services and community facilities. The two authorities do overlap in some areas to maintain continuity of services. George Jeans is both a **Town** and a **Wiltshire** Councillor. We know it can be very confusing to know which Council to contact for what service so here is a brief list of responsibilities:

The main services provided by **Mere Town Council** are as follows:

Full details are on the **Mere Town Council** website merewilts.org

- Allotments – 89 allotments plots spread around 3 different locations
- Buildings - owned, leased or managed by Mere Town Council include:
 - Andy Young Pavilion
 - Clock Tower & War Memorial
 - Two chapels in the cemetery
 - Mere Youth Club Building
 - Model Railway Club building (in Salisbury Street Car Park)
 - Public Toilets in Salisbury Street Car Park
- Burials & Cemetery provision
- Car Parks – leased from Wiltshire Council
- Community Changing Rooms at Duchy Manor
- Defibrillators (The Square & Duchy Manor)
- Events – Civic & National
- Litter & litter bins (where not owned by Wiltshire Council)
- Open Spaces - Castle Hill, Long Hill & Kingsmere

- Planning matters – consultee on planning applications to **Wiltshire Council**
- Play Areas - Recreation Ground, Castle Hill & Walnut Road
- Recreation & Sports Facilities
- Street Cleaning & Floral Enhancements

THE TOWN COUNCIL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR:

Wiltshire Council is responsible for most other things – this is a selected list but a detailed breakdown is available on the **home page** of the **Wiltshire website** www.wiltshire.gov.uk

- Adult Social Care
- Environmental Health, Food Safety & Standards
- Highways including road maintenance
- Parking restrictions & enforcement
- Housing
- Libraries
- Planning, building & land
- Public Transport

You may report problems directly by the **MyWilts** website

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts-online-reporting

also available as an **App** via

[App Store \(Apple\)](#) and [Google Play \(Android\)](#)

Common areas of concern are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ➤ abandoned vehicles | ➤ public roads & paths – |
| ➤ dog mess | overgrowth & obstructions |
| ➤ fly tipping | ➤ road markings |
| ➤ graffiti | ➤ street lights |
| ➤ potholes & drain covers | ➤ weather emergencies – |
| | road salting |

For all other **Wiltshire Council enquiries**, phone **0300 456 0100** or go to the **Wiltshire website** www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Our Councillors and Town Clerk can advise you.

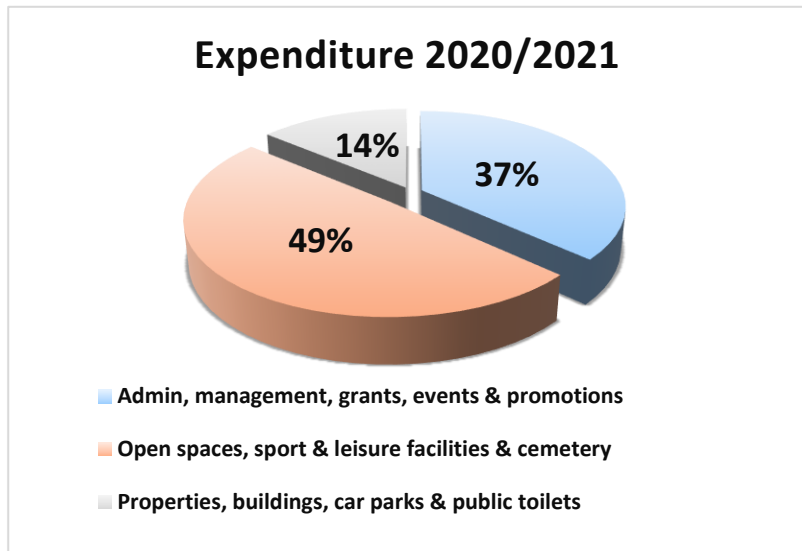
Voluntary Organisations

There are numerous voluntary organisations, groups and charities in Mere. The Town Council is proud to offer them support and advice and we are open to small Grant Applications and can often direct them to larger grant sources

WHAT IS MY COUNCIL TAX SPENT ON?

Mere Town Council always seeks to keep the local element of Council Tax to a minimum. This is difficult as **Wiltshire Council** passes an increasing number of services to us. For example, we now have to maintain the Public Toilets – if we had not agreed to do so they would now be closed.

This chart shows how we spent last year:



You can see that the maintenance of the large number of open spaces for which we are responsible, takes almost half of our budgeted expenditure. Full details of the Town Council's accounts including the Annual Report are available on the **Mere Town Council** website merewilts.org and on application to the Town Clerk.

Your Elected Town Councillors are unpaid volunteers. We hope you appreciate that we are all doing our best to serve you, but we are always happy to learn where we can improve what we are able to do.

Our thanks to you all from your Mere Town Council.

SCHEDULE OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2021/22

Monday 5 th July	No scheduled meeting for August
Monday 6 th September	Monday 4 th October
Monday 1 st November	Annual Budget Meeting (Date to be confirmed)
Monday 6 th December	Monday 10 th January
Monday 7 th February	Monday 7 th March
Monday 4 th April	

All meetings will start at 7.00pm and will either be held at Duchy Manor or in the Andy Young Pavilion



Did you know ...?

Mere is fortunate to be serviced by a few different public transport options each week. With a focus on increasing use of public transport, here is a summary of the routes available from the Turning Circle/ Clock Tower in Mere. More details can be found by following the links.

Wednesdays – Frome Bus 80

Mere Departs 09:30 Departs 13:05	via Stourton, Kilmington, Maiden Bradley, Horningsham, West Woodlands, Tytherington	Frome -Sainsbury's Arrives 10:18 Arrives 13:30 (request stop)
Frome -Sainsbury's Departs 12:22 Departs 13:52	via Tytherington, West Woodlands, Horningsham, Maiden Bradley, Kilmington, Stourton, Zeals	Mere Arrives 13:03 Arrives 14:33 (request stop)

Thursdays – Frome Bus 81

Mere Departs 09:30	via Zeals, Stourton, Kilmington, Maiden Bradley, Horningsham, Frome, Westbury	Trowbridge Arrives 10:55
Trowbridge Departs 13:10	via Westbury, Frome, Horningsham, Maiden Bradley, Kilmington, (request only) Stourton, (request only) Zeals (request only)	Mere Arrives 14:30 (request only)

Fridays - Frome bus 82

Mere Departs 09:12	via Zeals, Stourton, Kilmington, Norton Ferris, Maiden Bradley, Horningsham, Crockerton	Warminster Arrives 10:10
Warminster Departs 12:20	via Crockerton, Horningsham, Maiden Bradley, Norton Ferris, (request) Kilmington, Stourton, Zeals	Mere Arrives 13:10 (request stop)

Monday to Friday – Salisbury Reds 25

Mere		Salisbury (Rail)
Departs 07:11 Departs 09:24	via Hindon, Fonthill Bishop, Chilmark, Teffont Magna, Dinton, Barford St Martin, Wilton	Arrives 08:17 Arrives 10:22
Salisbury (Rail)		Mere
Departs 13:40 Departs 16:10 Departs 17:50	via Wilton, Barford St Martin, Dinton, Teffont Magna, Chilmark, Hindon	Arrives 14:38 Arrives 17:08 Arrives 18:44 (request stop)

Monday to Friday - Beeline Coaches 57

Mere	via Kingston Deverill, Monkton Deverill, Longbridge Deverill, Crockerton	Warminster – Morrisons
Departs 1037		Arrives 1110
Warminster - Morrisons	via Crockerton, Longbridge Deverill, Monkton Deverill, Kingston Deverill	Mere
Departs 1320		Arrives 1352

Monday to Friday - South West Coaches X4

Mere	Gillingham Station		Sturminster Newton
Departs 06:49 Departs 09:17 Departs 11:12 Departs 13:48 Departs 15:43	Arrives 07:11 Arrives 09:39 Arrives 11:34 Arrives 14:10 Arrives 16:05	via Madjeston, East Stour, Stour Provost, Todber, Marnhull	Arrives 07:41 Arrives 10:09 Arrives 12:45 Arrives 14:40 Arrives 16:42
Sturminster Newton	Gillingham Station	via Bay, Peacemarsh, Milton on Stour, Bourton, Zeals	Mere
Departs 17:20	Departs 17:50		Arrives 18:23 (request stop)

Saturdays – Salisbury Reds 25

Mere	via Hindon, Fonthill Bishop, Chilmark, Teffont Magna, Dinton, Barford St Martin, Wilton	Salisbury (Rail)
Departs 11:27 Departs 17:22		Arrives 12:25 Arrives 18:15
Salisbury (Rail)	via Wilton, Barford St Martin, Dinton, Teffont Magna, Chilmark, Fonthill Bishop, Hindon	Mere
Departs 09:54 Departs 15:44		Arrives 10:43 Arrives 16:38

Saturdays – South West Coaches X4

Mere Departs 09:17 Departs 11:12 Departs 15:43	Gillingham Station Arrives 09:39 Arrives 11:34 Arrives 16:05	via Madjeston, East Stour, Stour Provost, Todber, Marnhull	Sturminster Newton Arrives 10:09 Arrives 12:45 Arrives 16:42
Sturminster Newton Departs 17:20	Gillingham Station Departs 17:50	via Bay, Peacemarsh, Milton on Stour, Bourton, Zeals	Mere Arrives 18:23 (request stop)

Mere – Gillingham - Mere

Mere	Gillingham Mon, Weds, Thu, Fri Departs 09:08 – Salisbury Reds 25	Mere Arrives 09:24
Mon, Weds, Thu, Fri Departs 14:38 – Salisbury Reds 25	Arrives 14:54 – Salisbury Reds 25	
	Wednesday only Departs 09:15 – Frome Bus 80	Arrives 09:30

Other local transport options

Taxibuzz operates **9am - 3pm**, Monday to Friday. Local journeys to nearby towns and villages. To book call **01985 218754**

Mere Link Scheme – volunteers help people in Mere and surrounding villages get to their medical appointments, shops and social events. Monday to Friday **9am – 5pm**.
To book call **01747 860096**

To London via Coach - Berrys Coaches (current timetable)

Wincanton – departs 09:50
Hammersmith Bus Station – arrives 11:55

Warminster – departs 09:55
Hammersmith Bus Station – arrives 12:10

Useful Websites



Seeds4Success are looking for local people who have a passion to improve the lives of young people, to join our team of volunteer mentors.

Seeds4Success is a local award-winning charity that exists to support young people in our communities that face additional barriers to achieving their goals. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people's lives means our role is more vital than ever. An independent positive role model in their life will be all the difference many will need.

Our mentors meet with a young person regularly for a year or so and use their skills and experience to build a positive relationship with a young person, helping them to develop their social skills, self-esteem, confidence and resilience, as well as achieving their goals and reaching their potential.

Our mentoring programme is possible thanks to the generous donations of many local people, including the family and friends of Jamie Mackaness. During his time in the military, Jamie mentored young recruits and peers, leaving a lasting impression and legacy. He wanted to put these skills into practice in his local community through his support of Seeds4Success. Following Jamie's sad passing in 2018, his family and friends raised and continue to raise a significant amount of funding in support of Seeds4Success.



If you are 18 or over, able to attend three training sessions during weekends or evenings as well as a first aid course, commit to an hour or so per week or fortnight for a year or so, and want to change the lives of young people in your community for the better, then mentoring may be for you.

Please visit our website to find out more about mentoring with Seeds4Success or get in touch.

Lee, Mentoring Manager 07570 819140 lee@seeds4success.org.uk

Registered Charity number 0049132 [seeds4success.org.uk](https://www.seeds4success.org.uk)

Mere Bowls Club

Over the late May bank holiday weekend the Club held a series of Open Days to allow the public to try the sport of Bowls. It turned into a great success for the Club in that we obtained eleven new members including our local councillor, George Jeans. Other new members include Penny Allen, Chris Bixby, Jeff and Geraldine Cornford, Karen Elliott, Peter and Pat Gear and Pam Lambshead who are all bowlers of varying standards as well as Tony and Angel McDonald who have joined as Social Members.

As a general reminder for our readers we hold roll-ups (formal practice periods of 1 or 2 hours each) on a Tuesday and Thursday evening starting at 5.30pm and on a Saturday afternoon starting at 3pm. Everyone is welcome to turn up at the club at any of these times wearing flat soled shoes and we will be more than happy to take them through the rudimentary steps of Bowling.

*Don Butchers – Club Secretary ☎ 860775 don.butchers@btinternet.com
 hugofox.com/community/mere-bowls-club-10160/home/*

Mere Bridge Club

We are a small friendly group and meet in the small hall in the Lecture Hall every Thursday afternoon from 2.00pm until 5.00pm. We play Rubber Bridge and have been in existence here from the early 1990's. We charge £1.50 at present but that may have to go up to £2.00 or more if there are not enough members to cover the cost of the hall.

We stop for tea or coffee and biscuits sometime in the afternoon. We always welcome new people whether beginners or much better players, we all learn from each other, and have a good laugh and are not too serious. We've not started back yet but will let you know when we do. Please come and join us and see how you get on.

Avril Fletcher ☎ 861285 avril.fletcher52@gmail.com

Mere Amateur Dramatic Society

It's all happening!! Almost! MADS has held a meeting - properly distanced and sanitised etc. - and as a result we are now all eagerly and positively looking at plays and other entertaining possibilities which will allow us to present the Perfect Post Pandemic Performance, with which we shall re-launch ourselves onto the Mere Stage. We shall meet again when we can to compare notes and see how we are getting on. Our AGM can't now go ahead as we had hoped because of ever-changing rules and restrictions, but we plan to name a date for this in the September issue. By then we should have real news to announce!



Jenny Wilding ☎ 860908 jennv@flaxmill.org.uk

Mere School

Preparing new starters for school in September

We've all been looking forward to life starting to go back to normal, but there are still sadly some things that school hasn't been able to do. Many school trips and events have had to be cancelled or change format, and important induction activities for children who are starting primary school in September have not been able to take place.

Before starting at Mere School, children would normally get to visit and spend time in their new classroom on several occasions, to get to know their new classmates, and to meet their new teacher with their parents. All of these things ensure that they can hopefully start school with confidence.



You will sit back on the carpet and your teacher will give you your book bag. You will take a reading book and a 'sounds' book home every day to look at with your grown-ups.

Your grown-ups will wait outside. Your teacher will go to the door and when they see your grown-ups, they will call your name and you can go.

"Hello, Grandad," says Oliver when he sees his grandad waiting for him.

"I have had so much fun today," he says.

"I can't wait to hear all about it," says his grandad.

Do you like reading books?

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COVID restrictions have obviously meant that much of this just hasn't been possible, but the school have devised other means of providing contact and reassurance. One of these has been the production of personalised books for each new child, to give them an idea of what to expect at school. The books are illustrated with drawings of Mere School's classrooms and outside space, and will hopefully provide an

opportunity to prepare children (and their parents!) for this next exciting stage of their lives.

Catriona Williamson, Headteacher ☎ 860515 🌐 mereschool.co.uk
admin@mere.wilts.sch.uk

Mere Art Group

Our 'Open Air' sessions at St Michaels took off with the arrival of better weather on 3 June. Thirteen attended, including 3 of our 4 new members. We have met every Thursday with 'rain-stopping- play' only once.

The Church and its surrounds provide a number of great subjects, but those opting to draw portraits do wish the subjects would keep still!

Helge Brock ☎ 861972 helgewallenbrock@gmail.com



Link Scheme

It looks like we may be getting back to something like normality as only 17 trips of the 76 we did in May were to Covid vaccinations. A larger than usual number of people had dentist and optician appointments possibly reflecting catch up work as some of the restrictions ease. On some days it has been very difficult to find drivers as many are taking the opportunity to go away for a few days so if you would like to help by volunteering as a driver please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096.

Three more of our drivers, Martin Leahy and Jean Kantharia who between them have been volunteering for the Link for 27 years and Peter Dethick, have decided to stop driving. Their work for our local community has been much appreciated by our passengers and I have written to them thanking them for their help.

Our volunteer drivers are available to take you to medical appointments, including Covid vaccinations, and shopping, if resources allow. Once you have an appointment please call 01747 860096 to book a Link driver. Please try to give us 48 hours' notice if possible but we will try to arrange last minute requests. Also, please remember that our co-ordinators work in their own homes so keep calls to 9-5 Monday to Friday and only use the 01747 860096 number and no other.

We continue to use the safety guidelines we introduced to protect both clients and drivers from the risk of spreading the coronavirus. Both driver and passenger have to wear a face covering while in the car and passengers have to sit in the back where this is practical. Drivers carry hand sanitiser and wipe down all surfaces that may have been touched by the passenger while in the car at the end of each trip. Unfortunately, we remain unable to take people from different households in the same car.

John FitzGerald, Chair ☎ 860096 🌐 merelink.org.uk

Friends of Mere Museum

Since long before Lockdown 1, the Friends have had in the pipeline detailed plans for a fund-raising Quiz Evening. It has proved to be an extraordinarily long and tedious pipeline (relieved somewhat by our very successful plant sale in May), but we have spotted, possibly, the proverbial End of the Tunnel. This means that we expect, in the next issue, to be able to announce a date for this event, and perhaps also dates for further events, long planned, such as a talk from Martin Papworth, archaeologist for the National Trust, about the archaeology of the Stourhead estate. Something to look forward to! Meanwhile enjoy the summer - provided we have one!

Jenny Wilding ☎ 860908 ✉ jennyv@flaxmill.org.uk

Mothers' Union and Open Members' Group



After a very enjoyable Tea Party in Christabelle's garden at the beginning of June where most of our members attended and really enjoyed seeing each other face to face again. They said farewell to three members who are moving from Mere. We are now planning to have a service in church to celebrate Mary Sumner Day, our founder. This will be held on **Monday 9th August at 11am** in St Michael's Church followed by a picnic lunch, hopefully outside but in church if the weather is unsuitable.

We are also hoping to restart our meetings in September in The Grove Building but this will be confirmed at a later date of course. We once again warmly invite anyone who would be interested in joining our friendly organisation. Please contact one of us and we can tell you more.

Christabelle Kiriticos ☎ 861065 Christine Marsh ☎ 861212 Carol Lord ☎ 861923



Sadly, with Covid restrictions still in place, we obviously can't go ahead with our Quiz-and-Pudding evening planned for early July. Many thanks to everyone who had phoned to book. We'll be in touch with you as soon as we're able to arrange a new date. We'll also advertise as widely as possible, including on Mere Mutters – so here's hoping.

As ever, the Suchana project in West Bengal is as deserving as always of our support. Here's an edited version of their recent news bulletin:

After being shut for two months, Suchana has restarted providing education for the most marginalised children in adapted, creative ways.

Each teacher now provides lessons for children in their own village community, ensuring that they and the children remain within their village bubbles. Classes include basic literacy and numeracy as well as dance and games for younger children, and personalised tuition for older students. Of course, social distancing rules are maintained as much as possible, and masks and sanitisers are provided.

The beauty lies in the flexibility of this method - any open space creates opportunities for learning in a safe way! With just basic teaching materials, Suchana's staff can help a lot. Since government schools have not even contacted most of these children throughout the pandemic for the past year and a half, contact with educators from Suchana is essential.

The world is our classroom!! Let's hope we can be equally positive and adaptable as we begin to emerge from the pandemic.

Please keep your eyes peeled for our posters re the new date for the Quiz evening.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553 judithvthompson@aol.com

Letter from the Churches ~ Deacon Michael Hughes *writes*:

Although I am a typical loner in daily life, my consciousness of belonging to the invisible community of those who strive for truth, beauty, and justice has preserved me from feeling isolated.
Albert Einstein.

Many of us have felt lonely in the last year. It is worth thinking about the above statement by one of the world's great minds, for it would not be a total surprise if we were kept apart from each other for some of next winter.

He did not feel lonely though he was mainly alone.

The reason he gives is his feeling that, as he works for good, all over the world there are others working for good, and this "invisible community" supports him.

During the last year, has that worked for you?

Do you feel part of a community of love and action?

Einstein calls it the community of those who strive for Truth, Beauty and Justice.

The Christian Church which formed the mind, culture and society of the West, has been, at its best, the main worker for Truth, Beauty and Justice (though it is true that at other times, it has been either inactive or downright wicked.).

The provision of free schooling and health care, and the insistence on the equal value before God of all people; men, women, and children of all races - and much else of value - have spread though the world from the teaching of the Church. She has spoken Truth valiantly to those in power who would not hear it. Our churches and museums, our music and our art, bear witness to the Love and Beauty which has poured out, and still does pour out, from the community of the Church.

Today, the virus has hugely damaged our churches. Members have drifted away due to the lockdowns. If the force for good is to flourish again in our country, we are all begged to get back into active Christian communities which work for truth, beauty and justice.

Together we can work effectively to defend the defenceless – not the least of which is our poor mismanaged planet. If we do not, there is another maxim of Einstein's to consider:

The world is in greater peril from those who tolerate or encourage evil than from those who actually commit it.

The times when you can be part of a church in Mere are to be found below, though we Catholics are meeting for Holy Mass at our church in Wincanton at 5.30pm on Saturdays or 1030am on Sundays.

Be there! Be part of the family of Faith!

Church Contact and Service Details

The Parish Church, St Michael's the Archangel:

Priest in Charge: TBA

vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

Churchwarden: Derek Fisher ☎ 861980, Jean Knapp ☎ 860142

PCC Secretary: office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

4 th July	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Service of Worship
11 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion
18 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion
25 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion

1 st Aug	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion
8 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion
15 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Benefice Service @ West Knoyle
22 nd	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Parish Communion
29 th	Sun	8.00am 10.30am	BCP Matins

West Knoyle Parish Church, St Mary the Virgin:

Priest in Charge: TBA

vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

Churchwardens: Mrs Jill Randall ☎ 830534, Mr Colin Seaford ☎ 830263

4 th July	Sun	9.30am	Holy Communion
11 th	Sun	9.30am	Lay Service
18 th	Sun	9.30am	Act of Worship
25 th	Sun	9.30am	Holy Communion

1 st Aug	Sun	9.30am	Lay Service
8 th	Sun	9.30am	Holy Communion
15 th	Sun	10.30am	Patronal Festival (Benefice Service) Celebrant & Preacher: The Revd Ben Rundell-Evans
22 nd	Sun	10.30am	Parish Communion
29 th	Sun	9.30am	Holy Communion

All Saints Church, Maiden Bradley

Priest in Charge: TBA

vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

Churchwarden: Mrs Celia Blay ☎ 01985 844817

4 th July	Sun	10.00am	Coffee Catch up
11 th	Sun	10.00am	Service of Worship
18 th	Sun	10.00am	Lay Service
25 th	Sun	10.00am	Holy Communion

1 st Aug	Sun	10.00am	Coffee Catch up
8 th	Sun	10.00am	Act of Worship
15 th	Sun	10.30am	Benefice Service @ West Knoyle
22 nd	Sun	10.30am	Show Service
29 th	Sun	9.30am	Lay Service

The United Reformed Church

Minister - Rev'd Duncan Goldie

Mere Contact: Molly Burden ☎ 860007

Church Services.

July 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th.**August 1st, 15th, 29th.**

All services at 2 p.m. in the church.

We were pleased to be able to hold our first service in the newly renovated church on June 20th. The Grand Opening will be delayed until September, when we hope as many of you as possible will join us for a united service. To give people an opportunity to see the renovations, we shall be arranging an Open Weekend prior to the service.

The exact date of the opening will be announced as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, anyone interested in using the hall, please contact Mrs. Eileen Burfitt on 860 685 for further details.

The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.

Father Louis Beasley-Suffolk: ☎ 01963 34408

hope@stlukeswincanton.org.uk

Contacts: Carole Marshall ☎ 861905 or John Fitzgerald ☎ 860867

Thinking of Advertising in Mere Matters?

To find out the costs or to book an advert, please contact Jane Kennedy directly by phone or email.

jane.kennedy83@btinternet.com ☎ 860450

**Statement on the Clergy Vacancy
in the Benefice of Mere, West Knoyle and Maiden Bradley:**

Following the departure of The Revd. Carol Green to a new post in Devon, the Archdeacon of Sarum has met with the three Parochial Church Councils [PCCs] to plan the vacancy. The oversight of the three parishes will be led by the Rural Dean, The Revd. Pauline Reid, who is based in Longbridge Deverill. The ongoing pastoral care of the three communities, together with church services, will be met by local ministers wherever possible.

The Church Wardens, and PCC members will work with the Archdeacon to produce a statement of needs for future mission and ministry and it is hoped that this will be part of a local consultation, and shared widely. As with all parishes across the Diocese at present, there will need to be some consideration of potential changes of boundaries and ministry workloads, as well as the future funding of ministry. In order to maximise the income for future ministry, the Archdeacon aims to let the Vicarage in Mere during this vacancy.

The Church Wardens and Archdeacon will advise on progress when the way ahead is clearer.

Booking Meeting Venues

Grove Building:	Derek Fisher administrator@grovebuildingmere.com	☎ 861980
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	☎ 861063
URC Church Hall:	Eileen Burfitt	☎ 860685

Mere Information Point @ The Library

The following Support/Advice Centers are normally held on a regular basis:

Wiltshire Dementia Adviser Service	1 st Friday in month	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Registrar of Births & Deaths	Thursdays by appt only	☎ 0300 003 4569 9.30am – 11.30
Health Trainer	Last Tuesday in month	10.00am – 12.00pm

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



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