

More Matters

*& so does
West Knoyle*

April 2023

Mere Town Council

The March meeting of the Town Council was preceded by the AGM of the Carnival Committee. Unfortunately, recently, there has been real uncertainty about the future of the Carnival. Committee members were dwindling and there seem to be a lack of support, generally, for new members. I am pleased to report, however, that an open meeting arranged at The Walnut Tree, brought forth some interested parties and it has been possible to form a new committee, with all officers confirmed at the AGM, thus enabling the Carnival to go ahead this year. I must thank everyone involved, past and present, willing to give their time to organise this annual event.

The Mere Rivers Group met on March 16th to hear a presentation by Wessex Water on The Progress of the Stream Support Project, which recycles local water to ensure our rivers do not run dry in the summer. The meeting was well attended by Rivers Group members and representatives of the Town Council, the Environment Agency and the Duchy of Cornwall. Stream Support for the Ashfield has been in place for over a year - enabled by the Duchy of Cornwall who facilitated the necessary pipework to convey water from the Mere borehole up to the source of the Ashfield, just to the north of the A303. The recycled water has meant that the mill pond did not run dry through the summer. Now that it has proved a success, work will begin to do the same for the Shreen-aiming to be in place by 2024.

I reported last month that the refurbishment of the Play Park next to The Walnut Tree was due to commence next month. On the back of this, our Project Co-ordinator contacted the school and they agreed to organise a competition, where the children were asked to draw a playground, with the winning picture to be put on a sign for the park. There were many excellent entries, which were judged by local children's author Kathryn Lamb. Congratulations to the winner Liberty Raynes in Year 4. The picture and sign will be unveiled when the park is officially re-opened in May.

As you know, the Town Council has signed into an Environment Stewardship Scheme for Castle Hill & Long Hill which has been very successful, largely due to the goat grazing on the hills. I can report that there has very recently been a change of goat ownership and the day-to-day management of the goats on the hills will now be undertaken by Neil Maitland and I am sure that Neil will be posting some information about this in due course. In the meantime, Stephen Horn, our previous goat farmer, has written to the Council asking us to pass on his appreciation to all members of the public that have offered assistance with the goats and communicated with him to pass on information as to their frolics and antics.

Also, last month, I informed you that it was necessary for me to authorise the closing of the public toilets in the Salisbury Street Car Park between dusk and dawn, due to the abuse and vandalism of this amenity. This was to be for a trial

period and has been successful in reducing the vandalism. The longer term opening times of the toilets will be on the agenda for discussion at the next Town Council meeting.

The grass cutting season is upon us and as you can imagine this takes up a lot of the groundsman's time over the Spring and Summer months. Every year the Council has to review the condition and serviceability of our machinery. Inevitably, even with regular servicing and maintenance, machines come to the end of the road and have to be replaced. This year it was necessary to buy a tractor and we are currently appraising the need for new mowing machinery.

Now that the events season will soon be with us, we expect to see lots of advertising posters on posts throughout the town, proving what a vibrant place Mere is. While we are happy to support anyone who needs to advertise, can we please remind whoever puts up a poster that they are responsible for taking them down once the date has passed. Anyone should feel free to remove a tatty poster.

There will be a **Coronation Service at St. Michael's Church on May 7th at 11am**. The Town Council has ordered bunting and flags to erect in the town for the Coronation weekend.

I hope to see you at the **Annual Town Meeting at the URC on April 26th**, starting at 7pm.

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

Litter Picking in Mere

As part of the **2023 Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean** a community litter pick is taking place in and around Mere on **Sunday 2nd April 2023**. We will be meeting at **10.00am in the Castle Street Car Park** in Mere. We appreciate this is somewhat short notice but we were only contacted a few days ago to ask if Mere could participate in the national event.



Litter picking equipment will be provided, including gloves and hi-vis vests.

If you cannot join us then, please help keep Mere beautiful by using our litter bins or taking your litter home.

Mere Town Council ☎ 860701 lindseywood@merewilts.org

Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes

Wiltshire Council is investing an extra £333,000 each year until 2024/25 to empty gullies and help prevent flooding in the county. The investment, which is in addition to the £1.27m the council spends annually on emptying gullies, is being spent on an extra combination jet vacuum unit that allows the council's highways teams to focus on problem areas throughout the county that are at most risk of flooding. The council currently uses three gully tankers that empty gullies on main roads each year, and those on all other roads once every three years. The new tanker that is being used thanks to this extra funding features a high-powered jetting facility that can blast through thick layers of silt and debris. To report flooding or block gullies, people can go to www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywilts or call 0300 456 0100. For information, MILESTONE is the new contractor for Wiltshire Highways

Wiltshire Council's budget has been approved at Full Council. The budget confirmed at £466m for 2023/24 with £69m added into service budgets. The Council also outlines its budget plans right through to 2025/26. £13m of the council's reserves to be spent on business priorities, rather than required to help balance books. £1.1bn approved to be spent on capital projects over a number of years to improve and maintain the county's infrastructure. The council is in a position to be able to allocate around £13m of reserves to spend on business priorities, particularly in supporting housing provision during the cost-of-living crisis. An increase of £1.57 per week for those in an average Band D property is now in place. Around 84% of the council's core funding comes from local taxes, business rates and council tax. The majority of funding goes towards the council's statutory services, which include adult social care and children's services.

During Eco Week some schools got involved with a range of different activities that contribute to the promotion of protecting our environment and eco-friendliness, as well as promoting recycling within schools and protecting the planet. Eco Week ran from the 6th March and aimed to raise awareness about important environmental issues.

After a member of the public entered a Trowbridge establishment to 'Ask for Angela', Wiltshire Council and its partners are emphasising the importance of night time safety and the measures in place to provide people with help and reassurance should they need it. The safety initiative 'Ask for Angela' is used in bars, clubs and other licensed businesses and aims to reduce sexual violence, whereby people who feel unsafe, vulnerable or threatened can discreetly seek help by approaching venue staff and asking them for 'Angela'. Any premises that has signed up for the scheme will display a poster, normally in the toilets. The phrase was recently successfully used in Trowbridge when a male customer used it to get the attention of staff members. Staff immediately understood that the gentleman was asking for assistance and kept the man safe until the police

arrived to deal with the situation. People can find out more about 'Ask for Angela' by going to www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1113/Ask-for-Angela.

98% of Wiltshire families have been offered one of their three secondary school preferences for this September, with 95% offered their first preference.

The £2 single bus fare promotion has been extended until 30 June, so people in Wiltshire can enjoy cheap and convenient travel until the summer. Most bus services are included in the promotion, including services operated in Wiltshire.

Two Government schemes that have recently launched to help people who haven't yet received automatic financial assistance from any energy support scheme. Government's Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS AF) The Government scheme is now open to all eligible households until 31 May 2023. Support under EBSS AF may include those in the Mere Area. Applications are made directly to the Government, not to or via Wiltshire Council. For those who do not have online access, they can apply via a contact centre on 08081 753287. The Government has also announced a 'sister' scheme called Alternative Fuels Payment (AFP) for people that use alternative fuels for heating. People may be eligible for a £200.

Improvements to the Rights of Way from Clements Lane to Angel Lane and on to the centre of Mere is still progressing and a grant application for £35k has reasonable expectations of being achieved from Wiltshire Council. This hopefully will make some of the south of Mere more safely accessible to the centre.

From Money Matters to Gardening: a range of Multiply, numeracy courses are now on offer across Wiltshire. People looking for help with their budgeting, spreadsheets or basic maths skills can benefit from the latest free courses being offered as part of the Multiply programme. Wiltshire Council was awarded £2.1 million of funding from the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, offering tailored courses targeted at adults (over 19 years of age) who do not currently have Level 2/GCSE maths at grade 4 (previously known as a C grade). Wiltshire College are running Basic Maths Courses in a number of locations across Wiltshire. Wiltshire Citizens Advice providing support with money and budgeting to assist with the current cost of living crisis. Further information on the Multiply scheme, the course providers and courses offered is found www.workwiltshire.co.uk/multiply

With the Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort taking place in under eight weeks, Wiltshire Council wanted to send out an update that can be shared with anyone planning events to mark the occasion. Information on the coronation is available at <https://coronation.gov.uk/> There are two main events where community participation is being encouraged – Coronation Big Lunch on Sunday 7 May and The Big Help Out on Monday 8 May.

The Big Lunch is made possible by The National Lottery, that brings millions of people together annually in June (but this year moved to coincide with the Coronation), boosting community spirit, reducing loneliness and supporting

charities and good causes, with £22m raised last year. Whether it's a full-blown street party, a picnic or a small gathering over a cup of tea and something to eat, the idea is simply to meet and have fun together over food. Event holders are encouraged to register their events and claim a free Big Lunch Pack containing invites, posters and digital resources, as well as entertainment ideas at Organise a Big Lunch | Eden Project Communities and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party>. The Mere Town Council have agreed to support flags on the entrance roads and streets of Mere.

Guidance around events and the licences/applications required for events is available on www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-special-event-road-closures and Wiltshire are asking for applications to be sent in by 31 March, an extension of more than two weeks on the original date provided, to give the highways teams enough time to approve with the required consultation periods. Information about The Big Help Out is found at The Big Help Out, with further details released after the 20 March.

Wiltshire have a number of single adult males staying at a Home Office contingency hotel in Wiltshire. The asylum seekers are from a number of countries. The government has determined that every local authority area must take a proportion of asylum seekers. The hotel is providing accommodation with security and welfare staff on hand.

Wiltshire Council has been successful in securing more than £3.6m of Government funding, which will help go towards increasing the energy efficiency of existing housing in the county. It will be spent on retrofitting up to 210 Wiltshire homes by March 2025. This additional funding will allow the council to support retrofit for owner occupied and privately rented homes that are not connected to mains gas and are EPC band D-G subject to household income levels. More information about the scheme can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/18-billion-awarded-to-boost-energy-efficiency-and-cut-emissions-of-homes-and-public-buildings-across-england>.

I was interested to hear the claim at a Wiltshire Council meeting that only 1 in 8 road collisions get reported.

For the Salisbury/Water Street area of Mere, the February rain fall total of 4cm. was given to me by Penny Fennon. The wettest day was the 16th February – 1.5cm. Mrs Baldock of Lordsmead will also give figures in future which seem on occasion to indicate different readings even though probably only less than a mile apart.

Sorry but again have you or someone you know considered fostering. Wiltshire Council still campaign to find more foster carers for children in Wiltshire. Fostering with your local council means all money is spent on frontline services and the child is more likely to be able to stay close to their school, friends and family networks. On my travels I note this campaign is not just limited to Wiltshire.



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

West Knoyle Village – King's Coronation Celebration

West Knoyle will be celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III on Sunday 7th May at the Village Hall. Starting at midday, you are invited to bring your own picnic to celebrate 'The Coronation Big Lunch' with an afternoon of games for all to play. There will be a selection of cake to accompany your picnic and the Social Club's bar will be open for drinks.

Look out for local posters nearer the time and come along to join in the celebrations at the Village Hall.

Corinne Leonard ☎ 07783 157361

Mere Short Walk (J Way)

Owing to family commitments, I am afraid there will be no short walk this month. Hope to see you in May

Big Brew: I'd like to thank all the people who attended my coffee morning in aid of Transform Trade last month. I raised a marvellous £164 which will help support the many artisans and smallholders affected by the closure of Traidcraft, the pioneering Fair Trade organisation I have supported for over 40 years. I will still hold my monthly stalls until my stock is exhausted. They will be on:

15th April at the URC Coffee Morning and after the morning service at St Michael's on Sunday 16th.

STOP PRESS: I have just heard the marvellous news that a smaller company (with the same ethical principles) is being saved from Traidcraft. Therefore their wonderful pioneering work in the Fair Trade field will continue – and so will I! It is to be known as: **'We are Fair Trade'**

Janet Way ☎ 860884 jwaywitsend@gmail.com

West Knoyle Village Hall & Social Club

It's been a while since any news has been written for these pages, but that does not mean the West Knoyle Social Club has been quiet – far from it! So, here's what's been going on.

At the end of August, we held a BBQ as a fundraiser to top up our Queen's Jubilee Commemorative Bench Fund.

Our popular Harvest Supper was held in October. During the evening a raffle was held and, as is customary at this event, a rather large wooden spoon is presented to West Knoyle's Biggest Stirrer. Someone who has stirred things up, in a light-hearted way, and the recipient of the Biggest Stirrer spoon went to.....now that would be telling!

Then November saw a Quiz Night and our Christmas Get Together was a buffet supper where everyone brought food to share. A Hamper Draw took place and two wonderful hampers were won. Thanks to all those who kindly donated towards the draw. We opened for New Year's Eve for a Chinese takeaway, playing party games to see in 2023 with Big Ben on the TV - and a little help from some bubbly!

We ended a rather gloomy January celebrating Burn's Night. Welcoming the return of Ian as our Master of Ceremonies, who ably led the evening starting with the Selkirk Grace and, after piping in the Haggis, he recited the Address in a fine Scottish accent. After a traditional four-course supper and an entertaining Toast to the Lassies from Mark and Janet's enlightening Response to the Laddies, the Master of Ceremonies was then joined by his two talented musicians for some excellent music and song.

Thanks go to everyone involved in putting on these events which are well supported and enjoyed by all.

Annual Membership to the West Knoyle Social Club is only £5 and is open Friday 7.30-9.30pm and Sunday 1-3pm.

RNID Hearing Aid Clinic

We are moving to the United Reform Church, Boar Street BA12 6DD.

This will be a Drop in Clinic (no appointments) held the **first Thursday** of the month running from 10.00am until 12.00pm. Starting **Thursday April 6th 2023**. Please stagger when you visit, if everyone arrives at 10.00am there will be a long wait!

This service is for Salisbury Hospital Audiology hearing aid wearers for retubing, cleaning hearing aids or batteries. Please bring your battery issue card with you.

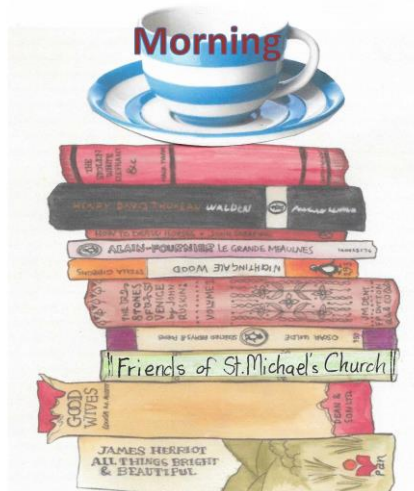
Gill Drayson ☎ 01722 580014 📠 07570670643 Gillian.Drayson@RNID.org.uk

Mere Drama Society presented A Tomb With a View by Norman Robbins on Thursday 23rd, Friday 24th and Saturday 25th March, 2023, at Mere Lecture Hall. Described as a "comedy thriller" rather than a "murder mystery", perhaps because there are rather more corpses in this than are usually found in the latter! Four younger member took leading roles. From left to right, Penny Allen as Dora Tomb who often used her special wine to keep a supply of corpses to nourish her rose bed, Tom Cassidy who at only 15 gave a superb performance of Lucien Tomb, Lucien hoped to become the head of his household and ended up being an "experiment" of how to make a corpse in his own laboratory. On the right is Allan Guide as Marcus Tomb who recited Shakespeare word perfect. Marcus was "mad" with the rest of the family, he thought he was Julius Ceaser reincarnated. It was an absolutely excellent performance played to a full house. New members are always welcome for stage or behind scenes



Mary White ☎ 861257 www.mereamdram.co.uk

Book Club Coffee Morning



Friday April 14th 10am to 12 noon

St Michael's Church

Read Swap Chat

£1 for a book and a coffee

Mere Bowls Club

Now for the news everyone has been waiting for – we open for the 2023 season on **Saturday 22nd April at 3pm**, however if you want to come along early on **Tuesday 18th April**, meet the crowd and pay your fees, or just to express your interest in learning the fine art of bowling, we have a Social Evening starting at **6.30pm in the Andy Young Pavilion** for just such an occasion.

We think that all is now ready for the 2023 season in that, the fixtures are all done, the green will be cut ready for bowling and all the surrounds all spruced up and looking their finest (for the time of year at least), we have a couple of meetings prior to opening so should get it all sorted in time. Do not forget that the club is dependent on volunteers to keep it running.

Don Butchers – Club Secretary ☎ 860775 don.butchers@btinternet.com

Mere and District Day Centre (The Rosemary Goddard Centre) provides a safe place where folks over 60 who may be feeling isolated can meet and enjoy a meal together. Sessions are run twice a week, Mondays and Fridays 10:30am-3pm and cost £10.00 per session, which includes all activities, hot drinks and a hot two course lunch. Art & craft, Bingo, Quizzes, Exercise, Card & Board games are all on the list of things we get up to as well as visiting speakers and musicians. Our sessions are always full of fun and laughter with guests really valuing their time spent at the centre. Here are a few comments made by our guests:

'Attending the centre keeps us focused & keeps our minds active'

'It's often the only time I leave the house'

'The centre offers age appropriate activities and the ability to mix with people our own age'

If you would like any further information about attending the day centre, please get in touch with the manager, Sandie Hawkins (details below).

The charity is currently looking to recruit new Trustees; volunteers that are responsible for overseeing the running of the day centre, it's policies and governance. Are you an enthusiastic person with a few hours to spare each month? Do you have any skills that might enrich our charity? Would you just like to make a difference to the lives of older people in your community? If so, we would love to hear from you!

For further details about becoming a Trustee, please contact Jane Mason, our Chair of Trustees on 01747 863926 or email: chair@meredaycentre.org.uk.

Sandie Hawkins 📞 07835 272406 manager@meredaycentre.org.uk

The Carnival is safe for one more year.



Following our call for volunteers and potential committee members it is great to report that the Carnival has been saved.

It was fantastic to report at the AGM and Town Council Meeting that we have secured the service of enough good citizens of Mere to put on a full carnival on **September 16th 2023.**

We have officially notified the council that the Carnival Committee has secured the services of all the Officers we need. It is also with great pride that I can confirm that I have also been confirmed Chairman of the committee which I personally consider to be a great privilege and an honour.

We will be putting on a number of events prior to the Carnival which we sincerely hope the residents of Mere and surrounding areas will support over the next few months, and indeed the first date for your diary is **June 9th** at the PoW club for a fun Grand Bingo Night. Full details will be posted a bit closer along with any other events we organise.

We have been working very hard to get a website up and running which we are determined will be the one stop shop for everything Mere Carnival. Again this is in a temporary form but is already secured with a very catchy www.merecarnival.co.uk address. We will have a news section, entry forms and any updates that we need to forward to the local residents as well as those people involved in the many other aspects of carnival.

Thank you again from the entire committee to all for the support you have shown us.

Mel Wilkinson Chairman Mere Carnival Committee 2023

Speedwatch in West Knoyle

A small team of stalwart ladies have been doing Speedwatch in West Knoyle for some years now with great success in slowing the rat-runners to and from the A303!

Unfortunately we will be reduced in number this year and we need 3 volunteers from West Knoyle to help with these duties which are quite light, just two half-hour sessions for alternate 3-week periods following a short training session with the Police Speedwatch team.



Janet Howard ☎ 830656 jaroho74@gmail.com

Letters to the Editor

I have clear road safety concerns at the three 'Gateway' points into Mere, which I think many readers share.

Castle Street and the sometimes gridlocked junction of Manor Road.

Hazzards Hill where traffic speed and parking are in conflict.

Edgebridge where pedestrians feel unsafe crossing Pettridge Lane.

As a driver I do obey speed limits. I understand the need to stay within speed limits. Unfortunately, we all regularly see vehicles exceeding our 30 mph limit, often by a considerable margin.

A 20 m.p.h. limit would bring more calm to Mere and improve safety for all road users.

It is within the power of our Town Council to impose a 20 mph speed limit, yet they voted against it last year.

If you think a lower speed limit would improve Mere, please let our council know.

David Drewett Davidgdrewett@hotmail.com

Finalise your plans for His Majesty The King's Coronation

How will you be celebrating the Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort?

Perhaps you're thinking of having some family or friends over, or organising a street party?

If you're planning an event that needs any involvement or permissions from Wiltshire Council, such as road closures, you will need to submit the relevant applications before the event to enable it to take place.



Mere Theatre Club

Although we're called a theatre club, because we visit theatres, we also organise other outings from time to time. Last Autumn we went to Kew Gardens and this May we are visiting Hampton Court (sorry bookings now closed). So if you fancy joining a sociable club that gets out and about - coaches provided from Mere - get in touch.

Madelaine Morris ☎ 861833 madsmorris@gmail.com

Mere Rivers Group

Mere Rivers Group recently held a meeting with Wessex Water, primarily to discuss the effect of stream support on the Ashfield, also the planned stream support on the Shreen. Present at the meeting were representatives of the Environment Agency, Duchy of Cornwall, Wiltshire Wildlife, CPRE and Mere town council.

Stream support on the Ashfield has been in place for two years. When required the input is 1 million a day. If natural flows are sufficient this is switched off.

Through the summer of 2022, one of the driest on record, the mill pond at Burton had water, where in previous years it would have dried.

One concern in the trial was that water would be lost through the bed of the stream but this proved not to be the case, 75% of the water was still flowing at White Bridge, therefore achieving the objectives of Wessex Water and deemed a success.

The project for stream support on the Shreen is now in the design phase and projected to go ahead late summer, early autumn of 2023, ready to be operating in 2024.

This has been made possible with the support and co-operation of the Duchy of Cornwall.

We wait with anticipation that we will have a constant flow all year in both Mere streams. This should benefit and encourage more diversity of our wildlife.

August 2019: without Stream Support



August 2022: with Stream Support



Ian Sheppard ianjsheppard@outlook.com

Mere School

It is one of my greatest pleasures showing new, potential parents around our school especially when some of these parents came to Duchy Manor Middle School for their education. We spend a lot of time talking about what Duchy Manor used to be like and how the building has changed. It makes me feel quite old!



We were so grateful to the Mere community for the patience shown when all the building works were being completed – I know there were some significant traffic issues and walking across the Duchy Manor Field was difficult also.

I am still working with the Local Authority and builders to solve several issues but on the whole the extension works have been a huge success and we have a spacious, well cared for building and excellent outside facilities.

I know that our school is the envy of many schools regionally and nationally. We have a modern building on an attractive site and our children benefit from the unlimited access we have to the Duchy Manor Field for sport. We have a large hall for gymnastics, dance and theatrical productions and our pupils enjoy hot, nutritious meals (made on site from locally sourced, fresh produce) from our school kitchen. Mere School currently consists of 9 well-equipped classrooms, a specialist languages room, a music room, a DT room, a library and hall as well as offices and staff room. Our school grounds include a hard playing surface area and an astro-turfed area with a good variety of play equipment for all ages. There is a quiet area, school garden, science area, reception play area and a pond – much of which have been provided by our active Friends Association from their fund raising activities.

Many ex-pupils have expressed a wish to look around the school but this can be difficult due to safeguarding. However, members of the community are more than welcome to our termly Open Mornings when you can come and see the school 'in operation'. The date for this in the summer term is published on our website. Our website is worth a visit with lots of information and photographs – www.mereschool.co.uk. We look forward to seeing you in June.

Catriona Williamson. Head Teacher

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

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

Venue Key for Diary :

AYP - Andy Young Pavilion
CP - Main Car Park
Drs - Surgery
GB - Grove Building

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

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

1	Sat	10:30	Saturday Hot Rock Carnival club Pre Loved Sale Coffee Morning (every Sat)	URC
2	Sun			
3	Mon	17:45 18:00	Yoga (every Mon) Scouting (every Mon)	L GB
4	Tues	09:00 18:20 19:30	Foot Clinic Zumba (every Tues) History Society (AGM)	GB L GB
5	Wed	09:30 18:30	Tai-Chi (every Weds) Karate (every Weds) <i>Tai-Chi, Pilates, Karate, Railway Modellers</i>	GB L
6	Thurs	10:00 10:00 11:00 14:00 14:00	Art Group (every Thurs) Hearing Aid Clinic @ United Reform Church Rhyme Time (every Thurs) Quilters (every Thurs) Rubber Bridge (every Thurs)	GB Lib GB L
7	Fri	10:00 12:00 13:45	Carpet Sale Lent Lunch Duplicate Bridge (14:00 start. Every Fri)	L GB GB
8	Sat		<i>Coffee Morning</i>	
9	Sun			
10	Mon	19:30	Ukes at the Butt of Sherry <i>Scouting, Yoga</i>	
11	Tues	14:30 19:30	Mothers Union History Society <i>Zumba,</i>	GB GB
12	Wed	10:30 19:30	Link Scheme Coffee Morning @ Visit Hillbrush Gardening Club <i>Pilates, Karate, Railway Modellers</i>	VH GB
13	Thurs	14:00	Health Diabetes Prevention <i>Rhyme Time, Art, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony</i>	L
14	Fri	10:00	Merely Women <i>Dup Bridge</i>	GB
15	Sat		<i>Fair Trade Stall & Coffee Morning</i>	
16	Sun	14:00	Mere Walking Group Fair Trade Stall after morning service	CP StM
17	Mon	09:30	Tiddlers and Toddlers (every Mon) <i>Scouting, Yoga</i>	L
18	Tues	09:00 19:30	Little Angels (every Tues) History Society	GB GB

		Zumba		
19	Wed	Karate, Pilates, Railway Modellers		
20	Thurs	17:00	Girlguiding (every Thurs)	GB L
		19:00	Wiltshire Women's Institute ←   Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony	
21	Fri	Dup Bridge		
22	Sat	Coffee Morning		
23	Sun			
24	Mon	Scouting, Tiddlers & Toddlers, Yoga		
25	Tues	Little Angels, MADS Rehearsal, Zumba		
26	Weds	09:00	Mere Jelly	VH CP L
		10:00	Mere Walking Group	
		14:30	PennyBank Writers	
		Tai-Chi, Karate, Pilates, Railway Modellers		
27	Thurs	Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Girlguiding, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony		
28	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
		Dup Bridge		
29	Sat			
30	Sun			

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

Mere Jelly

Once a month, Mere's creatives, freelancers, home-workers and small business owners emerge in public! You will find us, armed with cappuccinos and shiny laptops, at Visit Hillbrush on the last Wednesday of every month between 9am and noon

Join us for the morning or just drop in for a coffee and a chat on the **26th April**.

Jenni Bell ☎ 860400



Mere Snooker Club

Mere Snooker Club is thriving, but still looking for new members. Whatever your skill level, you would be welcome to join this friendly club.

Mike ☎ 860163 meresnookerclub@gmail.com

Emergency Alerts service

The new government Emergency Alerts service is now live.

The system enables you to be contacted via your mobile phone if your life is at risk in an emergency.

Emergency Alerts are messages sent to all

compatible 4G and 5G mobile phones when there's a danger to your life, health or property in the area you're located. They don't need your location or phone number. Only the government and the emergency services can send them.

A UK-wide test will take place on Sunday 23 April.

If you get an Emergency Alert on your phone, you'll hear a loud, siren-like sound. A message on your screen will tell you about the emergency and how best to respond.



Friends Of St Michael's Book Stall

The Friends of St Michael's have opened a book stall in the church. Please pop in to choose a good read for only 50p a book. In order to launch this new venture we are holding a Book Club Coffee morning on Friday April 14th. Come along for a literary natter, a cup of coffee and a book for just £1.

Donations of paperback novels are gratefully received and can be placed on the Book Stall shelves.

Maggie Durkee

Mere Gardening Club

Mere, Wiltshire. BA12 6DS

Scarecrow Festival

Following on from the success of last year's inaugural competition we are looking forward to an even bigger and better event in this year's Scarecrow Festival.

We will be producing a trail map of Scarecrows with a marking sheet on the reverse. Marks out of 10 to be awarded to each Scarecrow.

This year the competition is being sponsored by *F J Chalke, L C Hill Funeral Services, Jeans Electrical, The Beauty Box, The Butt of Sherry and Walton House Antiques*. There will be bigger cash prizes and the public will be invited to judge the competition.

The Scarecrows will be up by the **10th June** with judging taking place in the week of the **12th June** leading up to and including the weekend of **17th and 18th June 2023**. Members of the public will be able to purchase Scarecrow Trails for £1 from **the Library** and **The Angel Tea Rooms** and on the weekend from the United Reformed Church, Boar Street, Mere.

The Angel tea Rooms will be open to welcome you for meals and refreshments. The Gardening Club will offer light refreshments at the United Reformed Church along with a plant sale.

Please come along and enjoy a great day out, there are prizes for the public too as ten completed trails will be selected from all those returned to win a prize.

Any queries please contact 07791 559 674

Photos showing last year's winners.



Mere Gardening Club

We held our A.G.M. on Wednesday 8th March 2023 at the Grove Building and all the committee were re-elected to their positions. Our speaker for the evening was one of our members, Tom Smith, who gave a fascinating talk on Common Garden Toxins and Pets.

Our speaker for next month on Wednesday 12th April at 19.00 for 19.30 is "The Wiltshire Beekeeper". Fred Swift is a jolly beekeeper who spends his days travelling around the Wiltshire Countryside looking after his bees, collecting swarms, giving talks and selling his honey products.

Membership renewals are now due, the subscriptions are still £10.00 per year which entitles you to attend all our talks and as a bonus you get a 10% discount at Plantworld with a current membership card. New members are always welcome and guests may attend any of our talks at a cost of £3.00.

Our Scarecrow Festival is going full steam ahead, look out for our full page advert in this edition of Mere Matters.

Now is the time we should all be busy in our gardens – so make it fun – not a chore! Happy gardening

Les Manwaring Chair Mere Gardening Club

Rose Heesom ☎ 07791 559674 roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk 🌐 meregardenclub.org.uk

Mere Walking Group

We have two walks planned for this month, **Sunday April 16th** and **Wednesday April 26th**. The walk on Sunday April 16th is an afternoon walk with hopefully some bluebells, meet 2pm. The Wednesday walk is a morning walk around the Fox & Hounds pub, East Knoyle, with the option of lunch at the pub, meet 10am. Walks are approx 4miles and in both cases meet at Salisbury Street Car Park and share cars where possible. All welcome.

Roger Laidler ☎ 863447 Mary Wilson ☎ 229609 wilsonsmere@gmail.com

Ukes at The Butt of Sherry

Calling all ukulele players. Come along to The Butt of Sherry and meet other players who enjoy strumming and singing. We have great fun and play well known songs from the sixties, folk, country and songs that are easy to play! All abilities welcome.

We normally meet on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm. Bring your ukulele and join us on ****Monday 10th April 2023 at 7.30pm**. Check out our Facebook page 'Ukes at The Butt' for our song list or contact me.

**** . Date may change due to Easter. Please check our FB page or email.**

Maggie Holmes maggieholmes101@gmail.com

Mere & District Railway Modellers

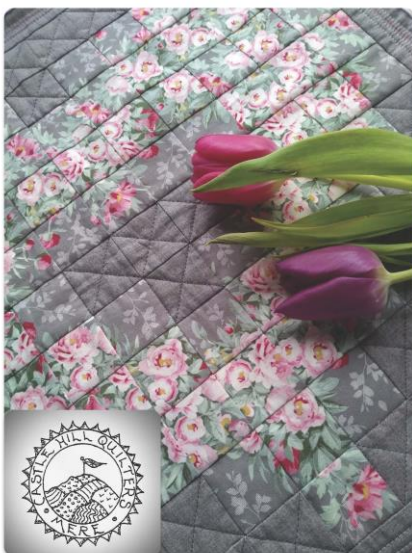
March was a particularly busy time for the club with two visits in addition to our normal weekly meetings.

Firstly a group of us, together with members from other local clubs groups in the Wessex area, went by coach to the annual London Festival of Railway Modelling at the Alexandra Palace in North London on the 18th March. With over 40 fantastic model railway layouts, both large and small, and over 80 traders to visit, at least half of which were to a very high standard, there was more than enough to keep us enthralled all day. In addition, the venue itself is spectacular, as the architecture of the exhibition halls is second to none. All members of the club who went to the exhibition enjoyed the experience.

Secondly, on Tuesday 21st March, we had a club tour of Somerset and Devon visiting specialist model railway sales outlets. Our first stop was at 'Buffers' the well-known (to railway modellers) at Colston Cross near Axminster, then on to Axminster Tools, an engineering equipment supplier, followed by visits to Peco, a respected railway modelling company based in Bere, Devon and finally to Ray Heard Models at Stewley, South Somerset before returning to Mere.

These two visits have given us many ideas for our own Model Railway exhibition in the Lecture Hall over the weekend of 17th/18th June. More about that next month!

Graham Avory, Chairman ☎ 860439 graham.avory@btopenworld.com



Castle Hill Quilters Open Day and Exhibition

This is taking place on Saturday April 22nd, from 10am until 4pm, at The Grove Hall, Mere.

Entrance is free and any donations will be going to Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

All are welcome to come and have a look at our work. There will also be demonstrations, a tombola, items for sale and refreshments.

Mere Historical Society


This are 3 evening talks in April. The first of these is on **Tuesday 4 April** and will follow our **AGM** at about **7.50pm** when Dr Amy Frost will be talking about William Beckford. On **Tuesday 11 April at 7.30pm** Susan Winch will be giving a talk entitled Saxons, Swineherds, Weavers and Convicts – one family's ties to Mere. Finally on **Tuesday 18 April at 7.30pm**, Nicola Turner Inman will present a talk on The Royal Collection. Do make a note in your diaries.

We welcome both current members, and non-members (for whom a charge of £3 is payable on the door). All our talks are held in the Grove Building.

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 4 April at 7.30pm in the Grove Building. Membership subscriptions of £10 for 2023-24 will be due then and cash or cheques will be collected before the AGM from 7.00pm. Cheques should be made payable to Mere Historical Society.

Alternatively subscription payments can be made by bank transfer to Lloyds Gillingham account, Sort code 30-93-45, Account No 01735722; or cheques, payable to Mere Historical Society, may be sent to the Chair, Peter Landymore, at Whispers, Pettridge Lane, Mere BA12 6DG.

For current Committee members please see www.merehistoricalsociety.org.uk where you can also view minutes of our last AGM held in April 2022 as well as accounts.

Peter Landymore  228819 plandymore@outlook.com

 merehistoricalsociety.org.uk

St Michaels - Angels on High

Last year while scaffolding was in place in St Michael's Church Steve Hawkins climbed up to take pictures of the wooden carved angels flying high above the nave.

Come to the church over Easter to see a display of the pictures and find out the story of these beautifully carved angels and what they are holding in their arms.

Maggie Durkee and Kate Symons

Mothers' Union and Open Members' Group

We enjoyed our interesting talk in March, Catharine Potter came to show us the many things she had made by "recycling beautifully" we were all very impressed and had an opportunity to make bracelets or ornament using buttons. Possibly our largest gathering and enjoyed by us all having a cup of tea and rather nice biscuits.

On Tuesday 11th April at 2.30 pm in The Grove Building there will be a short service and we will be enrolling two new members, this will be followed by our AGM when the new committee will be elected.

We will welcome our guest speaker Jill Jenkinson. She will talk to us about Wheels for the World, the charity which she supports, which changes and transforms the lives of disabled people and their families in developing countries through the gift of a wheelchair. This gives increased independence and demonstrates the love of God in a practical way.

If you think you might enjoy Mother's Union on the second Tuesday of the month, please visit us and see if it is for you. We are a very friendly, caring group and enjoy a small service followed by interesting speakers and seasonal events.

Carol Lord ☎ 861923. Christabelle Kriticos ☎ 861065 Christine Marsh ☎ 861212



What **CAN** you put in your blue-lidded bin?



Plastic bottles



Plastic pots, tubs and trays



Clean foil and trays



Food and drinks cans



Empty aerosols



Food and drink cartons



Paper and cardboard



www.wiltshire.gov.uk/recycling



Easter Letter from the Churches

If you have been following the Philip Pullman trilogy “His Dark Materials” on TV or have read the original books, you will remember that the climax of it all comes as the heroine, Lyra and her friend Will resolve to cross the river into the land of Death. Lyra has to leave behind her ‘daemon’ Pantalaimon, the animal representing her soul, crying out to her from the shore, as she goes seeking a childhood friend, Roger. She travels through a land of soulless caverns and corridors, where people move mechanically, like zombies. She is not certain that she will achieve her goal, or whether she will find a way out from Death. But in the event, she is able to lead Roger and all the other departed out toward the light, and restore to all the worlds the life-giving imaginative power of Dust.

Philip Pullman was no friend of God. He parodied the institutional Church as the sinister Magisterium that seeks to eliminate all vestiges of freedom and imagination in order to make a land of conformity and uniformity. However, the Church is not the only regime which the Magisterium resembles. We can think of many examples today of states that worship war and death, seek to subjugate weaker states, and are careless even of the lives of their own fighters. And it is interesting that when he wishes to put forward his vision, Pullman, presumably unintentionally, uses the story of Jesus and his journey through death to new life as the basis for Lyra’s similar journey.

Like Lyra, I believe, Jesus went to his death not knowing where it would lead. Many ancient songs and icons of the Church tell of his journey into the underworld, where he goes to take Adam by the hand and lead him and all his descendants upward towards the light. So through his courage in facing his own death, Jesus leads us all to resurrection and freedom. That is the Easter message the Churches celebrate at this time.

To be sure, death – our own, or that of loved ones – is a daunting prospect. Nobody knows very clearly where it leads us. But if there is any truth in the resurrection story, we do not need to be afraid. We do not need to kowtow to the regimes that threaten people with prison or death unless they conform. We can live in courage and hope, that in the darkest times there is always a way to the light, and that we have been given a loving guide to help us find it.

Ross Thompson (St Michael's)

Mere Social Club

Mere Social Club presents **Bad Uncle** back by popular demand **Saturday 1st April.8.30** till late free entry. All are welcome

Church Contact and Service Details

The Parish Church St Michael's the Archangel:

Priest in Charge: TBA vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

Churchwardens: Mrs Elizabeth Howden ☎ 863424

Mr Richard Wilson 📞 07966 244373

PCC Secretary: office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

2 nd	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Palm Sunday Eucharist - Palm Procession from the Clock Tower
3 rd – 5 th		19:00	Compline
6 th	Thurs	19:00	Maundy Thursday - Eucharist of the Last Supper
7 th	Fri	09:30 11:00 14:00	Good Friday – Stations of the Cross Walk of Witness – starting in the Square The Last Hour
9 th	Sun	06:00 08:00 10:30	Easter Day – Sunrise Vigil and Service of Light BCP Communion Parish Communion
16 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
23 rd	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
30 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion

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

2 nd	Sun	09:30	Palm Sunday Service
9 th	Sun	09:30	Holy Communion
16 th	Sun	09:30	Matins
23 rd	Sun	09:30	Holy Communion
30 th	Sun	09:30	Lay Led Service

All Saints Church, Maiden Bradley

Priest in Charge: TBA vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

Contact: diana@dianabourne.co.uk

2 nd	Sun	10:00	Palm Sunday Service
9 th	Sun	10:00	Easter Day - Holy Communion followed by refreshments
16 th	Sun	10:00	Songs of Praise
23 rd	Sun	10:00	Catch up in the Village Hall
30 th	Sun		No Service

The United Reformed Church

Minister - Rev'd Duncan Goldie

Mere Contact: Elaine Laurence ☎ 0740 3845711 elainelaurence57@gmail.com

2 nd	Sun	11:00	TBC
9 th	Sun	11:00	Mr. Peter Kershaw (Holy Communion)
16 th	Sun	11:00	TBC
23 rd	Sun	11:00	Mr. James Hepburn
30 th	Sun	11:00	Mrs Christine Marsh

The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.

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

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

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

Contacts: Carole Marshall ☎ 861905 or John Fitzgerald ☎ 860867

Mere Library

Monday: 10:00 – 14:00* and 14:00 – 19:00

Tuesday: 09:30 – 17:00

Wednesday: 10:00 – 14:00*

Thursday: 09:30 – 17:00




Friday: 09:30 – 17:00

Saturday: 09:30 – 13:00

* Volunteer operated opening hours.

Sally-Ann, Mere Senior Library Assistant

Booking Meeting Venues

Grove Building:	admin@grovebuildingmere.org.uk	 0771 471 8625
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	 861063
URC Church Hall:	Mrs E Laurence	 07403 845711

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

The Rainbows and Brownies in Mere need help!

Could you spare an hour or two a week?

We have a Rainbows and a Brownie unit with a healthy number of girls at each and meet every Thursday evening during term time at Grove building Mere. To keep offering the girls of Mere the fun and activities we currently do; we need some more adult support. If you can come along and support girls with activities, please go to Girlguiding.org and register on the Join Us section.

Rainbows are from 5.15 pm to 6.10 pm.

Brownies are from 6.20 pm to 7.30 pm.



Mere Girlguiding

Mere Art Group

The Art Group continues to meet between 10:00 and 12:00 hrs each Thursday morning in The Grove Building.

Anyone wishing to join - it is so easy. First attendance is "free", thereafter it is £3.00 per session with coffee, tea and biscuits provided, and of course - good social company.

This month's contribution of art is by Hilary De La Ceaux - 'Pastels-on-Card' of a Turtle Dove. Hilary has an interest in Nature and Wildlife, well displayed here.

Helge Brock helgewallenbrock@gmail.com

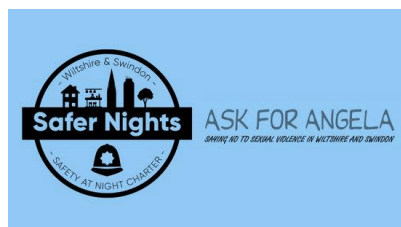


Night time safety measure to help keep you safe

The safety initiative 'Ask for Angela' is used in bars, clubs and other licensed businesses and aims to reduce sexual violence. People who feel unsafe, vulnerable or threatened can discreetly seek help by approaching venue staff and asking them for 'Angela'.

The phrase will indicate to staff that they require help in their situation and a trained staff member will assist them to safety. Any premises that has signed up for the scheme will display a poster, normally in the toilets.

Bars, restaurants, cinemas, and other night-time venues are also being encouraged to sign up to the Safety at Night Charter, developed by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon in partnership with Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council.



Mere & District Link Scheme

In February we did 80 trips in total with 30 to Salisbury District Hospital including six for visiting an in-patient. This was less than January but more than February 2022.

A reminder that the Link Scheme AGM will be held on **Friday 23 June at 7pm** in the **Grove Building**. After the meeting we will have a drinks and nibbles social. Everyone is welcome.

Our volunteer drivers are available to take you to medical appointments, including Covid vaccinations, and even shopping, if resources allow. 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 try to give us 48 hours notice, if possible, as we cannot guarantee 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. If you would like to find out more about volunteering as a driver please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096.

John FitzGerald Chair ☎ 860096 🌐 merelink.org.uk

Copy date for the **May 2023** Issue

Closing deadline is: **16:00hrs on Friday 21st April**

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.



Our Shrove Tuesday Quiz and Pancake evening, held just as the last Mere Matters went to print, proved to be a

very happy and productive event, raising the amazing sum of £733.76 towards Suchana's work of enabling very marginalised children and communities in rural West Bengal to be included in educational and life opportunities. Kirsty Milward, who founded the project in 2004 but now lives in the UK has just returned from one of her regular visits there and reports that Suchana is not only now back to full strength in its basic teaching and literacy programmes for children of all ages, but is also able to hold special events such as the First Language Education 'mela' held over two days in February. This provided the opportunity to promote and showcase its pioneering work in developing First Language teaching methods and materials through demonstrations and discussions and lively performances along with food stalls run by the children and bookstalls with books written in the 'tribal' Santali language, the mother tongue of many of the children.

There will be another chance to support this small but life-enhancing project on **Tuesday 25th April** when a Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy will be held from 10.30 onwards at Downside, North Street, home of Joan and Hamish Bell. Everyone is very welcome to come to this event.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553, Chair, Mere Suchana Support Group
judithvthompson@aol.com



If you have so far missed the Churches Together Lent Lunches – to which everyone is very welcome – there is still a chance for you to come to the last one for this year, to be held in the Grove Building on **Good Friday, 7th April**, from 12.30-1.30. This follows on from the **Good Friday walk**, setting off from Mere Square at 11am, carrying the wooden cross to be placed at the top of Castle Hill. Everyone is very welcome to join in this special annual event, whether or not you attend one of the local Churches.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553, judithvthompson@aol.com

Mere & District Railway Modellers

March was a particularly busy time for the club with two visits in addition to our normal weekly meetings.

Firstly a group of us, together with members from other local clubs groups in the Wessex area, went by coach to the annual London Festival of Railway Modelling at the Alexandra Palace in North London on the 18th March. With over 40 fantastic model railway layouts, both large and small, and over 80 traders to visit, at least half of which were to a very high standard, there was more than enough to keep us enthralled all day. In addition, the venue itself is spectacular, as the architecture of the exhibition halls is second to none. All members of the club who went to the exhibition enjoyed the experience.

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Graham Avory, Chairman ☎ 860439 graham.avory@btopenworld.com



Teeandee Productions

Web Design
Web Hosting
Domains

Mob: 07799 325214

www.teeandee productions.com