

A photograph of two brown rabbits standing on their hind legs in a field of green plants. The rabbits are facing each other, with their front paws raised towards each other. The background is a soft-focus green field.

*M*ere  
atters

*& so does  
West Knoyle*

*March 2023*

## **Mere Town Council**

I am pleased to report that a design for the refurbishment of the Walnut Road Play Area has been approved by the council and work will start there shortly. Also, the plans for the improvements to the footpath from Clements Lane to Angel Lane are coming along well. Both these projects will be funded from the contributions from the C J Fry's development of the old Hill Brush Factory site at Woodlands Road.

I regret that it has been necessary for me to order the closing of the public toilets in the Salisbury Street car park, from dusk 'til dawn, for a trial period of one month. The abuse and vandalism of the toilets has been building up over the past weeks and rectifying the damage is taking up a lot of our groundsmen's time. Not to mention the costs involved. The town council is keen to keep this free amenity going and we are currently considering plans and tenders for their refurbishment. However, encouraging signs of respect for the toilets is needed. We don't want to have to consider charging for their use.

A report on traffic issues made by a working group of councillors, was on the agenda at the February meeting. The group originally had a list of over a dozen suggestions for changes but in order to have credibility with Wiltshire Council it was necessary to give priority to the more pressing issues. These included, the repainting of all lines (double yellow lines and parking area as well as junction give way lines) & the re-instatement of the white line down the centre of Castle Street from The Malthouse to The Square. The on-street parking in Hazzards Hill and around the junctions of Water Street was the subject of much discussion and concerns were expressed, by members of the public attending the meeting, that the introduction of double-yellow lines right the way along the road would result in an increase in traffic speeds. It was agreed to ask a Highways Technician from Wiltshire Council to assess this and make a recommendation to the Council and also to assess and make recommendations for the problems associated with vehicles loading in Boar Street and the conflicts this sometimes causes for the Pettridge Lane priority system. The repainting of the old and faded lines is the responsibility of the Highways Authority and should bear no cost to the Town Council but the other work will require a contribution of 25% of the total cost by the Town Council.

The Annual Town meeting will be held at **7.00 pm on April 26th** at the **United Reformed Church**. This is very much a meeting for the public to attend and to participate in. The Town Council would like to hear your suggestions for agenda items for this meeting so please contact the office (01747 860701) if you have an item you would like discussed.

*Lesley Traves, Chair, Mere Town Council*

*for information on Town Council activities, minutes, agendas etc.*

[lindseywood@merewilts.org](mailto:lindseywood@merewilts.org)  860701  [merewilts.org](http://merewilts.org)

**Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes**

We have tourists and visitors who use our many footpaths, pubs, hotels and more. I have been written to because the author finds it of real concern that one element of the Council's proposed budget will have a serious negative effect on our communities in Wiltshire. They refer to the proposed cessation of future funding of Wiltshire Council's partnership from 1 April 2024 managed by Visit Wiltshire (VW). Before the formation of VW each town/city in our county were undertaking their own promotion. In the period from 2000 - 2009 Wiltshire as a visitor destination experienced a year of little growth.

It is claimed "after the formation of VW the income in the tourism and hospitality sector in Wiltshire rose from £1billion in 2011 to £1.5billion in 2018 with employment increasing over the same period from 20,000 to 28,000 (9% of the county's workforce)."

It is further claimed "Any visitor destination whose Destination Management Organisation (DMO) is not accredited as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) would not be included on Visit England and Visit Britain (VE/VB) websites or in campaigns, would not be able to bid for Government/VE/VB tourism grant programmes, and would not have access to training programmes and travel trade and press visits support. VW has secured significant marketing campaign funding from government and has hosted many international and national tour operator and press visits to our county."

Mere Chamber of Trade paid an annual fee to VW, which they have ceased to do. It remains to be seen what cutting these funds to Visit Wiltshire will have on the Mere area.

I have always requested Mere Town Council calls the Mere Town Carnival AGM, as they have done historically. The Mere carnival committee is elected at the AGM. Should a committee fail to be formed, the following year the Carnival AGM will get called again by Mere Town Council and one would hope the carnival would not die for ever. Mere has had an Annual Carnival which has been organised by its Carnival Committee. This involves organising that large event once a year as well as smaller events like the Christmas Santa visit. Each year donations are made to local causes from the money raised by Carnival and its other events. The present Carnival Committee is a small group and is not able to carry on without new members to join in and actively take on roles through the year. Come along to an emergency meeting on Friday, 3rd March at 7:30pm at The Walnut Tree Inn. Contact [mereprocsec@outlook.com](mailto:mereprocsec@outlook.com).

Regular users of Wiltshire Council car parks are being encouraged to consider buying a parking season ticket as a more convenient way to commute and to save money. Having a season ticket can help drivers save approximately 50% on the daily rate at Wiltshire Council car parks. Currently a permit for the central long

stay car park in Salisbury, is £97 per month. Season tickets are available in one-month, three-month, six-month or 12-month options.

For the Salisbury/Water Street area of Mere, the January rain fall total of 24cm. was given to me by Penny Fennon. The wettest day was the 12<sup>th</sup> Jan - 4cm, rained on 13 days out of 31.

**Recycling – let's sort it!** – new campaign aims to reduce increase recycling and reduce contamination. Wiltshire Council is asking everyone in Wiltshire to help recycle more, by ensuring they put the correct things into their blue-lidded bins. They have seen an increase in items that can't be recycled through the kerbside collection scheme being put in blue-lidded bins. The Wiltshire Council waste crews will be stepping up their checks of recycling bins before emptying them, and from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February they will attach an amber hanger to any contaminated bins they come across. This hanger will advise people that their blue-lidded bin has the wrong items in it, but it will still have been emptied on that collection. Then, from **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March**, crews will begin rejecting more heavily contaminated containers and will attach a red hanger that explains why the bin has not been emptied. In these cases, residents will need to remove the contamination ready for their next scheduled collection. Some of the common items incorrectly placed in blue lidded bins include: Carrier bags and bin bags. Hard plastics, such as toys and plant pots, Scrap metals, and Nappies. The council has generated more than £2.7m in income from the sale of recyclable materials so far this financial year. This income is used to offset operational costs and allows the council to invest in essential services. However, the income could have been far greater if there was less contamination in people's bins.

King Charles III's coronation will take place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at Westminster Abbey in London. Zeals are well on course with their commemorative function. Mere will have flags through the main streets, which I will help with.

Road condition, fading of yellow and white lines remain a high priority. I can continue to request for remedial work which is often a bag of tarmac in a pot hole, I have twice requested time scales for resurfacing in the Mere Division and I am still awaiting a reply, I shall pursue until I receive a reply.

George Jeans 📞 07710 441599 [george.jeans@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:george.jeans@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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### **Mere Social Club**

We present **Bad Uncle** back by popular demand **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April.8.30** till late free entry. All are welcome

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### **Mere Amateur Dramatic Society**

We started the new year with rehearsals for a murderously funny and lighthearted play. It's called '**A Tomb with a View**', last performed by MADS in 1994. Contrary, perhaps, to your impressions of this play from its title, it is in fact a comedy thriller, set in an eerie, ancient library dominated by a disquieting portrait of a sinister old man. An elderly lawyer is reading a will (involving millions of pounds) to members of an equally disturbing family which includes one who has werewolf tendencies, another who thinks he is Julius Caesar and yet another who plants all sorts of unlikely things in her flower beds. By Act 3, even with the ministrations of an empathetic nurse and the arrival of a writer of romantic novels, there appear to be more corpses than live members left in the cast. Are they all what they claim to be? Come and find out how it all unfolds in the **Lecture Hall on Thursday, Friday or Saturday, March 23rd, 24th, or 25th at 7.30 p.m.** Tickets are £8 each, obtainable from the Library, 'Sprout and Flower', members of the cast, or at the door. Don't leave it too late to book, or you may never know whodunnit.

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

### **In Memoriam - Alan Greenland**

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you all that we had to say goodbye to my dad this morning (20/2/23), his granddaughter Jess and I were by his side.



Dad was born in Mere in one of the old cottages behind the George, he spent most of his working life at Hill Bush as factory electrician.

He was president of Mere Tennis Club in his youth and a stalwart member of Mere Drama Society, often playing the lead. He. Supported the Drama Society by providing the lighting for many more years.

Dad came to live with us in Cardiff after my Mum died and he had been with us for nearly 9 years. He loved to visit Mere and to keep in touch with friends. Until recently he followed Mere Mutters, although he wasn't very good at posting, he loved to know all the gossip and how the goats were getting on.

It was Dad's wish to go home so I will post about the funeral arrangements when they have been made.

*Helen Greenland*



### **In Memoriam - Di Potter**

A Long -Serving member of Mere Amateur Dramatic Society

There was much sadness at the MADS meeting on Feb.20th when chairman, Mary White, paid tribute to long-serving member, Di Potter, whose death was announced the same day. MADS was the first society Di and her late husband joined after they moved to Mere in the autumn of 1963.

In her long membership of nearly six decades Di Potter's name never appeared in The Cast list. Her talents were in directing, stage-management and being a member of The Crew. She was a talented and formidable director, demanding and getting good performances from her cast. Her credits included Murder in Play, They Came To A City and Lord Arthur Saville's Crime. She was always ready to offer advice to actors and directors and never minced her words; any compliment from Di was very well earned.

When ill health reduced her mobility Di remained undaunted. She'd arrive at the Lecture Hall on her buggy to check on rehearsals and never missed a performance. She remained an active member of The Crew as MADS Front of House until the Covid Lockdowns.

A rave review for a real trouper!

Tribute was also paid to Alan Greenland, a founder member of MADS. He acted in the late 1940s /1950s and was MADS first electrician.



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### **Mere Art Group**

This contribution is by Tom Beall using Acrylics. In this case, "The Woman in a Yellow Straw Hat", originally painted by Alexej von Jawlensky (1864-1941), was the stimulus to Tom Beall who added his own 'options' to his interpretation.

Helge Brock [helgewallenbrock@gmail.com](mailto:helgewallenbrock@gmail.com)



### **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](mailto:jane.kennedy83@btinternet.com) ☎ 860450

## **Mere Rivers Group**

Be careful what you wish for!

At the end of September we asked for lots more rain and boy did we get it. October to January was the 8<sup>th</sup> wettest 3 month period since records began in 1891.

January rainfall was 133% of long term average, most at the beginning of the month. Of course, with this volume of water stream support on the Ashfield has been turned off and the planned stream support for the Shreen is well under way and should be in place by late summer 2023.

It's been good to see the number of children this half term playing in the streams, dams being built, fish caught and lots of wet wellies.

Spring is on its way; Mallards are back and the Moorhens will soon be building their nests. Little Egrets and Kingfishers have been regular visitors. Please enjoy our wonderful chalk streams.

Ian Sheppard [ianjsheppard@outlook.com](mailto:ianjsheppard@outlook.com)

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## **Mothers' Union and Open Members' Group**

We enjoyed our interesting talk last month about one of our Ukrainian families who have been living in Mere in a caring host family. The warmth shown to this lovely family and how they were able to be made to feel at home when in fact their own home is where they would love to be. There were a number of visitors to our talk and we had a short time of worship. As always our numbers are growing.

**On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30 pm in The Grove Building** we are having a Craft Afternoon as Easter is not far away. Our speaker is Catherine Potter, her business logo is "Recycling Beautifully". She will be talking about recycling old buttons and has asked us to bring buttons and possibly a small pair of scissors and some cottons, there will be plenty of these to share if you don't have any. We have a cup of tea and the cost is £1, so a warm comfortable friendly afternoon being creative is something we would like to share.

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

### **Fascinating Fonthill - A Talk by Caroline Dakers**

The Hinton Hall, Tisbury, Church Street, SP3 6NH **Thursday 30th March 6.00pm** for 6.30p.m. Paying Bar and Raffle (Bring cash) Tickets: £15.00. Available from: Wren's Shop, East Knoyle or me

Katie Page ☎ 830278 [katiepage@copac.org.uk](mailto:katiepage@copac.org.uk)

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### **Fair Trade Fortnight - 27<sup>H</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> March**

In order to participate in this year's Fair Trade Fortnight, I am organising a **Big Brew Coffee Morning on Wednesday 15th March**. Come and help me celebrate my more than 40 years involvement in Traidcraft's work supporting smallholders, farmers and craftsmen and women around the world to raise them out of poverty. Enjoy a Fair Trade cuppa and lots of Fair Trade goodies to try. Everyone is welcome.

To be held at Wits End, North Road, Mere 10.00-12.00

Janet Way ☎ 860884 [jwaywitsend@gmail.com](mailto:jwaywitsend@gmail.com)

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### **Mere Jelly**

Working from home all the time can get a bit lonely...

The Mere Jelly is an informal, co-working event for creatives, freelancers, home-workers and small business owners. It's a chance to work in a different environment, bounce ideas off others, get some office chat in or just get your head down. The Mere Jelly meets on the last Wednesday of the month at Visit Hillbrush from 9 am - 12 noon. Join us for the morning or just drop in for a coffee and a chat.

Jenni Bell ☎ 860400

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**Yoga classes** each Monday evening at **Mere Lecture Hall, 6pm to 7pm**. If you would like to improve strength, balance and flexibility yoga is very beneficial. It can also assist with heart health, mental health, managing stress and sleeping well. Our classes are a supportive community and consist of breathwork movement and final relaxation.

There will be no class on Monday 20th March due to the hall being unavailable.

Contact Claire to book on 07517803611 email [clairefrancesca4@gmail.com](mailto:clairefrancesca4@gmail.com) or on Facebook YogawithClaire. Discount block booking and pay as you go available.

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### **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 13th March** at 7.30pm. Check out our Facebook page 'Ukes at The Butt' for our song list.

Maggie Holmes [maggieholmes101@gmail.com](mailto:maggieholmes101@gmail.com)

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### **Mere & District Railway Modellers**

The year began with the highly successful Frome Model Railway Exhibition where over 1500 people attended. The club took two of its smaller layouts to the event.

Now that some warmer weather is on its way the members have started the spring cleaning programme that is including the rebuilding of the collapsed wall in the car park. This work is on behalf of the Town Council. We apologise in advance as some building equipment and old furniture will be placed temporarily in the pathway between the club and the car park.

Finally we are all looking forward to our annual coach journey to the London Festival of Model Railways at **Ally Pally on 18th March**.

Should anybody be interested in the many aspects of railway modelling, they are more than welcome to drop in of a Wednesday evening from 7-9pm for a cup of tea.

Tom Snook  861977 [tomsnook29@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tomsnook29@hotmail.co.uk)


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### **Mere Theatre Club**

Spring is in the air and we will be out and about seeing musicals and drama's in Bath and a trip planned for **May to Hampton Court Palace and Gardens**. When you read this there may be a few places left for Hampton Court, so do enquire through the contact details below.

You don't have to be a member, but if you join you'll be on the list for details of future outings as well.

Membership is still only £5 per household per year - a bargain!

Madelaine Morris  861833 [madsmorris@gmail.com](mailto:madsmorris@gmail.com)

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

## Venue Key for Diary :

**AYP** - Andy Young  
**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  
**WT** - Walnut Tree Inn

1	Wed	09:30	Tai-Chi	GB
			Pilates (every Weds)	L
		14:00	Fitness & Friendship	GB
		18:00	Karate (every Weds)	L
			<i>Railway Modellers</i>	
2	Thurs	10:00	Art Group (every Thurs)	GB
		11:00	Rhyme Time (every Thurs)	Lib
		14:00	Quilters (every Thurs)	GB
		14:00	Rubber Bridge (every Thurs)	L
		17:00	Girlguiding (every Thurs)	GB
		19:30	Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)	URC
3	Fri	13:45	Duplicate Bridge (14:00 start. Every Fri)	GB
		19:30	Emergency Meeting of Mere Carnival Comm	WT
4	Sat	10:30	Coffee Morning (every Sat)	URC
5	Sun			
6	Mon	09:30	Tiddlers and Toddlers (every Mon)	L
		17:45	Yoga (every Mon)	L
		12:00	Lent Lunch (every Mon)	GB
		18:00	Scouting (every Mon)	GB
7	Tues	10:30	History Society	GB
8	Wed	19:00	Gardening Club	GB
			<i>Tai-Chi, Pilates, Karate, Railway Modellers</i>	
9	Thurs	14:00	Janet Way's Short Walk	CP
			<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Girlguiding, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony</i>	
10	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
			<i>Dup Bridge</i>	
11	Sat		<i>Coffee Morning</i>	
12	Sun	14:00	Mere Short Walk	CP
13	Mon	19:30	Ukes at the Butt of Sherry	
			<i>Lent Lunch Scouting, Yoga</i>	
14	Tues	09:00	Little Angels (every Tues)	GB
		14:30	Mothers Union	GB
		18:00	MADS Rehearsals	L
		18:20	Zumba	L
			<i>MADS Rehearsal, Zumba,</i>	
15	Wed	10:00	Big Brew Coffee morning @ Wits End (Janet Way)	
			<i>Tai-Chi, Pilates, Karate, Railway Modellers</i>	
16	Thurs	14:00	Health Diabetes Prevention	L
			<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Girlguiding, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony</i>	
17	Fri		<i>Dup Bridge</i>	

18	Sat	<i>Fair Trade Stall &amp; Coffee Morning</i>		
19	Sun	Fair Trade Stall after morning service		StM
20	Mon	<i>Lent Lunch, Scouting, Tiddlers &amp; Toddlers, Yoga</i>		
21	Tues	18:00	<b>MADS Rehearsals</b>	L
			<i>Little Angels, MADS Rehearsal</i>	
22	Wed	<i>Tai-Chi, Karate, Pilates, Railway Modellers</i>		
23	Thurs	<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Girlguiding, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony</i>		
24	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
		18:00	<b>MADS Production</b>	L
			<i>Dup Bridge</i>	
25	Sat	18:00	<b>MADS Production</b>	L
			<i>Coffee Morning</i>	
26	Sun			
27	Mon	<i>Lent Lunch, Scouting, Tiddlers &amp; Toddlers, Yoga</i>		
28	Tues	<i>Little Angels, MADS Rehearsal, Zumba</i>		
29	Weds	09:00	Mere Jelly	Visit Hillbrush
		14:30	PennyBank Writers	L
30	Thurs	<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Girlguiding, Rubber Bridge, Shreen Harmony</i>		
31	Fri	<i>Dup Bridge</i>		

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

## Mere Walking Group

A variety of walks is now organised for this year, all listed below. The walks are normally around 4 miles long and cater for all as they are generally fairly easy going and not too strenuous. We normally meet at the **Salisbury Street Car Park** (by the Doctors) and when walks are outside of Mere, we share transport. All ages are welcome, just come and join us.

Sun Mar 12<sup>th</sup>, 14:00, Sun April 16<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Wed April 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00, Sun May 14<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Tues June 6<sup>th</sup> 09:18 (meet at the square, bus to Gillingham), Sun June 25<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Mon July 3<sup>rd</sup> 20:00 (moon walk), Sun July 16<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Sun Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Tues Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 10:00, Sun Sept 24<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Sun Oct 15<sup>th</sup> 14:00, Wed Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024 10:00 (Christmas Lunch after walk).

Roger Laidler ☎ 863447 Mary Wilson ☎ 229609 [wilsonsmere@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonsmere@gmail.com)

### **It's back!**

The Wylde Valley Art Trail is taking place again this spring, from **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April until Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May**.

Colourful and eyecatching Wylde Valley Art Trail brochures will be available from early April at Tourist Information Centres, Arts Centres, libraries and many other places.



For more information please contact [info@wvat.co.uk](mailto:info@wvat.co.uk) or phone 07730 400784.

[www.wvat.co.uk](http://www.wvat.co.uk)

### **Communities encouraged to celebrate Coronation of King Charles III**

The Coronation of His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort will take place at Westminster Abbey on Saturday 6 May 2023, and communities are being encouraged to get together to celebrate and mark the occasion with local events involving as many people as possible.

A special national Coronation Concert will be held on Sunday 7 May 2023, while neighbours and communities are being encouraged to share food and fun together with the Coronation Big Lunch on the same date. Following the allocation of an additional bank holiday on Monday 8 May, it has been dubbed as "The Big Help Out" with members of the public encouraged to volunteer within the local community.

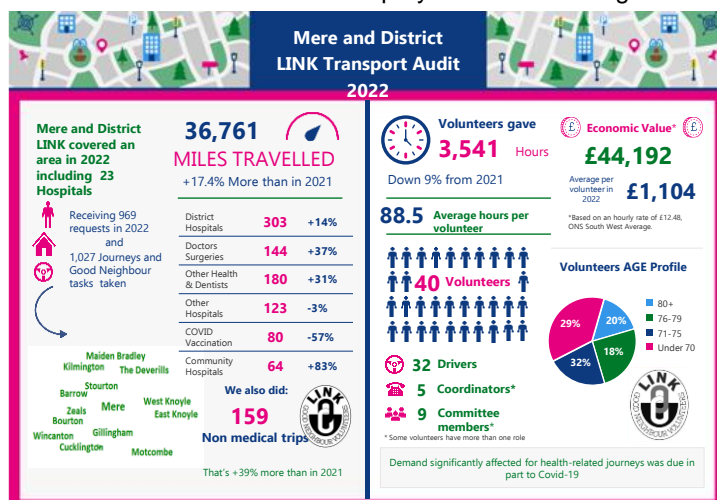


Following last month's request for volunteers to form a working group to organise Mere's Celebrations, the Town Council has only had one person come forward and so they are assuming that there are no aspirations for a large community wide event. If you are planning a street party or more low-key event then there is a lot of information on the Wiltshire Council website regarding funding, celebration considerations and procedures for road closures for street parties: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-king-charles-coronation>

## Mere & District Link Scheme

We had a busy start to 2023 with 92 trips in January 26 of which were to Salisbury District Hospital.

I mentioned last month that Link drivers did 975 trips in 2022 (982 in 2021) covering 36,761 miles (31,313 in 2021) and our volunteers worked 3,541 hours (3,893 in 2021). One of our volunteers, Elaine Noble has kindly produced an infographic of our work in 2022 which I hope you find interesting.



At our Committee meeting on 13 February we co-opted Judy Fray as our new secretary. Judy is very welcome and takes over from Hamish Bell who kindly agreed to continue as a Trustee and Committee member until our AGM. We are grateful to Hamish for all his work as Link Secretary.

Talking of our **AGM** this 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](http://merelink.org.uk)

## **Mere School**

I expect you are aware that we have had some building works at school to accommodate the children from the new houses in Mere and a wonderful new car park and drop off zone. We were extremely grateful for the community patience when contractors were on site!



As a condition of planning permission for the new car park we had to update our Travel Plan. This document has now been approved and Mrs Cocker and Mrs Shannon will be taking control of our Travel Plan with help from our School and Eco Councils.

Thank you to the community, parents and staff for contributing to the document.

### **The aim of our travel plan is:**

*to support students, parents, carers and visitors in travelling to and from the school in active and sustainable ways where possible to reduce the proportion of private cars at the school gate.*

### **The objectives to achieve this are to:**

- 1 *improve the safety of all users, particularly those walking, wheeling and cycling.*
- 2 *improve the air quality surrounding the school and reduce exposure to harmful pollutants.*
- 3 *help support and encourage people living within Mere to travel to the school by walking, wheeling and cycling.*
- 4 *support and encourage people driving to the school to car share and 'Park and Stride' where possible.*
- 5 *reduce unsafe parking practices and make the trip to and from school a safe, healthy and social one.*

The plan noted that 'footways in Mere are poor, pedestrian safety on White Road was a concern and there is a lack of cycle routes'. However, the new car park had made a significant positive impact on the safety of our children and the access roads leading to the school.

We will continue to work closely with you and the Town Council to make Mere and the school site as safe as possible for our children and their families.

*Catriona Williamson. Head Teacher*

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## **Mere Toddlers Foodbank**

We would like to thank all those wonderful people who kindly donated at the collection point on the 11th Feb, whether with items or with cash donations. We



are always so touched by the generosity and thoughtfulness of the people in Mere and the surrounding area. Please accept our grateful thanks.

If you missed the opportunity, there is always a food donation point in Mere Co-operative. All cash donations are being used to purchase gift card vouchers for the local Co-operative store for emergencies.

The current list of items which we need are below:

Tinned puddings	Long life Custard
Small instant coffee	Tomato sauce
UHT milk	Longlife fruit juices
Tinned meat	Tinned carrots



Finally many people kindly donate regularly by bringing items to Iyemead Cottage. Thank you so much - you are the essential lifelines needed by so many people who are struggling at the moment.

Thanks to Penny Fennon for all her hard work and enthusiasm in organising the event, and to Rose , Ann and Kim, who not only collect regularly from Waitrose but also helped on the day .

Any queries or volunteers who wish to help, please make contact.

Anne Rich ☎ 07413512023 [arich4@icloud.com](mailto:arich4@icloud.com)

## **Mere Bowls Club**

The Bowls Club held their Annual Presentation Dinner at The George in Longbridge Deverill. A great time was had by all who attended, good food, drink and company what more would someone need. The service could have been better and the choice of vegetables was slightly lacking, but overall a good night.

Now for the news everyone has been waiting for – we open for the 2023 season on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April at 3pm**, however if you want to come along early, 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.

Who knows, before long you could be representing your County or even your Country?

For more details about the Club please contact Don Butchers on 01747-860775 also [don.butchers@btinternet.com](mailto:don.butchers@btinternet.com) or visit the Club web site at "<https://www.hugofox.com/community/mere-bowls-club-10160/home/>".

Don Butchers – Club Secretary ☎ 860775 [don.butchers@btinternet.com](mailto:don.butchers@btinternet.com)

## **Friends of Mere Museum**

### **THE GREAT PLANT SALE**

Spring is (nearly) here and the Friends of the Museum are delighted to announce - in good time that their famous and popular PLANT SALE will be held in the Grove Building on **Saturday May 13th at 10.a.m.** It's THE sale to go to for bedding plants and geraniums and much more besides. Put the date in your diary now so you don't miss it!

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

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## **Lent Lunch 2023**

We are holding the Lent Lunches on three Mondays in March – the **13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>** and also **Good Friday April 7<sup>th</sup>**.

The lunches are held in the **Grove Building 12.30 p.m. – 1.30 p.m.** We are serving a variety of soup with bread and cheese plus fruit and coffee and tea. There will also be a **Bring and Buy Stall**. Come along and meet friends, relax and chat over lunch.

The cost is £6 and all proceeds are for Christian Aid and CAFOD.

Hope to see you there.

*Sandra Fisher and Judy Bickerstaff*

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## **Mere Gardening Club**

We had an excellent turnout for our meeting in February with Mike Burks from Castle Gardens who gave us an interesting and humorous talk.

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March at the Grove Building** with a new start time of **19.00 for 19.30**. We will be serving tea and coffee before the talk which gives members and guests time to have a chat before the talk. Our speaker for the evening will be one of our members, **Tom Smith**, who will give us a talk on the subject of **"Common Garden Toxins and Pets"**. Tom is a specialist emergency and critical care and ICU vet nurse, working for Langford vets small animal referral hospital and University of Bristol.

This meeting will also include our A.G.M. So if you think you can spare a little time to join our committee, we will welcome you with open arms. If you are giving this any consideration please give me a call for a friendly discussion.

Our Scarecrow festival is going full steam ahead for the week of **12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June**. Entry forms will be available soon, so watch out for more detail in next month's Mere Matters. The theme is a character from a book.

A reminder to all members that subscriptions are due in March which will be staying at £10 per annum. Your membership entitles you to all club talks plus you can get a 10% discount at Plantworld when you show your current membership card. We also welcome new members and guests who will be charged £3.00

The committee look forward to seeing you on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March**.

*Les Manwaring Chair Mere Gardening Club*

Rose Heesom 📠 07791 559674 [roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk) 🌐 [meregardenclub.org.uk](http://meregardenclub.org.uk)

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### **Mere Historical Society**

There are 4 more talks to come in our current programme in March and April.

On **Tuesday 7 March**, Tony Davis will be giving a talk on **Game Changing Warfare** at **10.30am**.

This is followed by 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.

**Notices and/or Committee Nominations** for the AGM must be submitted in writing to the Secretary or a member of the Committee by **Friday 17 March 2023**.

For current Committee members please see [www.merehistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://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](mailto:plandymore@outlook.com)

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### **St Michaels**

Flower Arrangers for St Michael's Church Mere wanted.

Do you enjoy arranging flowers? We really need people to join our happy team. We get together for festivals - Christmas, Harvest, Easter and Remembrance - and we try to make sure there are flower displays in the church most weeks of the year.

You do not need to have experience or be trained, just have a love of arranging flowers which will beautify the church for the local community and our many visitors.

If you are interested and would like to see if it's for you, please get in touch with Elisabeth or Sandra 861980.

Elizabeth Howden [elizabethhowden44@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethhowden44@gmail.com)

### **Shreen Harmony**

We have welcomed several new members and are busy learning new songs ready for our concerts this year. There are two local concerts, one is held on the **17th May (Alzheimers Week) in Gillingham Methodist Church**, and the other is on the **1st July in the St Michaels Church, Mere**. We would much appreciate your support.

If you are interested in joining the Choir, do come along to the **United Reformed Church** on a **Thursday evening at 7.30 p.m.** You will receive a warm welcome.

Sandra Fisher ☎ 861980



We go to press on the very day of our Shrove Tuesday Quiz and Pancake evening, which we hope will be enjoyed by all and make a welcome boost to

Suchana's income. Kirsty Milward, who founded the project in 2004 but now lives in UK, is currently on one of her regular visits to West Bengal, so we will soon have more up-to-date news of current developments and needs. Although life in West Bengal took a very long time to get back to normal after Covid, Suchana is now back to full strength and more, in working to enable very marginalised children and communities to be included in educational and life opportunities.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553, Chair, Mere Suchana Support Group  
[judithvthompson@aol.com](mailto:judithvthompson@aol.com)



### **in Mere and District**

Our AGM will be held on **Thursday 2nd March at 3pm in the Grove Building**. Everyone with connections to any of our local Churches is very welcome to attend.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553, Acting Chair

## **Letter from the Churches**

### ***What's holy about Holy Week?***

What is Christianity? Is it a set of out of date theories...or a quaint folk tale from long ago that we can now discard...or an emotional prop for sad, inadequate people who need an imaginary friend?

During *Holy Week*, the week that leads up to Easter Day, Christian churches all over the world, including our own parish church which has stood for hundreds of years at the heart of our community, celebrate events that are rooted in history. These events took place in the city of Jerusalem, then in the Roman province of Judea. The events are recorded not only in the texts that came to be included in the Bible, but also by historians of the Roman Empire, such as Josephus.

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, when the crowds lining the road expected him to lead an uprising against the Roman authorities, is celebrated on *Palm Sunday*. The Last Supper when he washed his disciples' feet as a sign of servant leadership and associated the bread and wine, elements of the Passover meal, with his body and blood, is celebrated on the evening of *Maundy Thursday*. His journey to the place of execution and his death by crucifixion is celebrated on *Good Friday*. His resurrection is celebrated often during the night between Saturday and Sunday but here in Mere, at daybreak on the Sunday we call *Easter Day*.

These events *are* the Christian faith. The story of Holy Week is the story of God, whom many of us struggle to grasp, picture or understand, entering human experience in the knowable person of Jesus of Nazareth. It's a story of love triumphing over hatred, self-sacrifice triumphing over self-interest, forgiveness triumphing over enmity and of life triumphing over death. In a whole host of ways these are things that our world desperately needs today, as we see every time we watch the news coming to us from around the globe.

In St Michael's Church, in common with churches worldwide, the events of Holy Week are celebrated so that we can enter the story and connect with it: no longer a vague theory or an old folk tale but something we can experience for ourselves, today. All are welcome to come and explore what's taking place day by day during the week that's called *Holy Week: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> April*.

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Simon Evans [frsimonevans@outlook.com](mailto:frsimonevans@outlook.com)

Copy date for the **April 2023** Issue

Closing deadline is: **16:00hrs on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March**

Email contributions are preferred, to the Editor, Richard Jefferies ☎ 863425  
[editor@merematters.co.uk](mailto: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.

## **Church Contact and Service Details**

### ***The Parish Church St Michael's the Archangel:***

Priest in Charge: TBA [vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

Churchwardens: Mrs Elizabeth Howden ☎ 863424

Mr Richard Wilson 📞 07966 244373

PCC Secretary: [office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

5 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Family Service
12 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
19 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Mothering Sunday – informal Communion
26 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Parish Communion

### ***West Knoyle Parish Church St Mary the Virgin:***

Priest in Charge: TBA [vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

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

5 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	Lay Led Service
12 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	Holy Communion
19 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	Holy Communion
26 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	Matins

### ***All Saints Church, Maiden Bradley***

Priest in Charge: TBA [vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

Contact: [diana@dianabourne.co.uk](mailto:diana@dianabourne.co.uk)

5 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:00	Catch up in the Village Hall
12 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:00	Morning Worship - Lay Led Service
15 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	18:00	led by Rt Revd Stephen, Bishop of Salisbury at St Martins, Zeals - followed by refreshments.
18 <sup>th</sup>	Thur	10:00	Decorate the church, for Mothering Sunday, all welcome
19 <sup>th</sup>	Tue	10:00	Mothering Sunday Service
26 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:00	Holy Communion



**The United Reformed Church**

Minister - Rev'd Duncan Goldie

Mere Contact: Elaine Laurence ☎ 0740 3845711 [elainelaurence57@gmail.com](mailto:elainelaurence57@gmail.com)

5 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mr. David Burfitt
12 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mrs Jane Hurd
19 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Rev. Colin Marsh (Holy Communion)
26 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mr. Dudley Coates

**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](mailto: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:	<a href="mailto:admin@grovebuildingmere.org.uk">admin@grovebuildingmere.org.uk</a>	☎ 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](http://merewilts.org)



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