



Mere Matters

May 2024

*& so does
West Knoyle*

Your community magazine
Including a guide to local events

ENTRANCE
FREE
FOR ALL THE
FAMILY



The Proms

IN MERE

July 13th 2024

Gates open at 4.00pm Concert starts at 5.30pm

By Shrewton Silver Band

In St Michael's Churchyard, Church Street, Mere BA12 6DS



A celebration to mark the restoration of St Michael's Church Tower.

Live music from a 26 piece big band.

Bring a picnic or buy food from our excellent food outlets in Mere.

Butt of Sherry pop up bar on site from 4.00pm - 8.30pm.



FRIENDS OF
ST. MICHAEL'S
CHURCH

THE
Tower
STORIES

Editorial

I cannot remember the last time I received a hand written letter in the post but one came from a lady who is now resident in Sherborne and used to live “in the centre of the earth” (her words). She still gets her copy of Mere Matters from a friend still resident in Mere and comments on the number and variety of clubs and events we have, all run by ‘loyal and active volunteers which make Mere a very special place’. I have my trip to Buckingham Palace booked for the third time later this month to formally receive the British Empire Medal for and on behalf of all the volunteers who ably helped get us through the Covid pandemic – almost a forgotten memory. Whilst the medal is in my name, it was earned by all who supported me. You have not been forgotten and thankyou again.

If you are part of a group run by one of the many fantastic resident volunteers of Mere please do make sure you applaud their work. Could you perhaps step up and do something for the community?

Richard Jefferies ~ Editor  863425 editor@merematters.co.uk

Mere Town Council

It seems, at times, that progress is slow with the work of the Town Council but there are hurdles to overcome which can seem endless. My appreciation goes to our staff who persevere with these matters. It is our ambition that Salisbury Street car park has a couple of charging points for electric vehicles but getting the legal side of this has taken so long. I hope that we will soon have an agreement and that charging vehicles there will be commonplace. Likewise, we have been working on improving the public conveniences there. At the moment we are getting advice on the costs for a design which will provide a disabled toilet open to radar key users and two other toilets, one of which will be open at night by payment. Following public consultation, we will then arrange a loan so that we can have a modern and suitable provision in the town.

I have been pleased to hear from so many people that the resurfacing of the path from Angel Lane out to Clements Lane has made such a difference to that route. There are still a few snags to finish and we await agreement between Wiltshire Council and the electricity providers to see the light on the southern end of the route. As I mentioned previously, we have adopted the suggestion raised at the public part of a Town Council meeting to name this path, the Eric Mitchell Way. It will be a great pleasure to have an opening ceremony in honour of Eric, who had done so much for Mere in his role as Councillor for many years.

The Activities in Mere (AIM) event, that I mentioned last month, is taking shape and there is an exciting list of activities for the over 50s on the way, in this year’s occasion which will be held 9th – 11th August. Some of which I feel will introduce us to new activities and some which will challenge us. I hope to try walking football for the first time and to re-acquaint myself with climbing (though not too high). I may leave the

axe-throwing to others but hope to watch them take part. Watch this space and further publicity to find some things for you!

I had the pleasure of trying out a walk devised by the Cranbourne Chase National Landscape (used to be the AONB) with 20 members of the Mere Walking Group. Although Mere is not in the CCNL they are including us in the development of local walks and a Heritage Trail. I am going to meetings to aim for greater involvement for Mere in how the CCNL develops. For those of you who want to get out and walk locally, I strongly recommend coming along with the Walking Group – details of the next walk will be in this issue.

I like to finish with a thank you, and that goes to the volunteers who came out last month to litter pick around Mere. Our town council team do a great job but these extra hands do help and are much appreciated, well done and thank you.

John Jordan, Chair, Mere Town Council

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

The Town Clerk would like to report that once again, the Town Council will be keeping up appearances by planting the tubs around the town to give impressive floral displays. Last year we were very grateful to the various sponsors (business and members of the public – see below) who helped to make these floral displays possible. The scheme was a great success. There are 14 tubs & four planting display areas within the town and they are planted twice a year for summer/autumn displays and winter/spring displays. Mr. Clive Hazzard has graciously agreed to replant the tubs again this year and I should point out that this is done at cost price and at no profit to him and we thank him for this generous offer. We also thank the willing volunteers who water the tubs & deadhead the flowers. We estimate the cost of planting each tub is £40 per year and once again, we are looking for sponsors and we would be grateful to any businesses or members of the public who would like to sponsor a tub. We will publish a list of all sponsors in a future edition of Mere Matters. If you would like to help with Mere's floral enhancements, please contact: Mrs. Lindsey Wood, Town Clerk, Duchy Manor, Springfield Road, Mere. Tel: 01747 860701

We would like to thank the following, who sponsored the tubs during the 2023/24 financial year:

Michael, Joy & Grandchildren	Margaret & John Heap
Roy Sims in memory of Millie Ann Sims	Jane Hurd
Mere Gardening Club	The Hill Brush Company Ltd
Frank & Geraldine Legge	Johnnie & Georgie Moore
Chris Mills	F. J. Chalke Ltd
	G. E. & S. M. Jeans

+ 5 other sponsors who wish to remain anonymous

lindseywood@merewilts.org ☎ 860701 🌐 merewilts.org

Get Wiltshire Walking is a funded project which aims to ensure every community within the county has access to a free weekly led walk. Each walk has its regular starting venue on the same day and time each week. Routes are varied and always ensure that the slowest walkers are looked after.



The free, graded, weekly walks are led by fully qualified walk leaders, who are predominantly volunteers, and are both friendly and fun. They are a great opportunity to get fit, meet new people and get to know your local area.

Across the county many walks take place every week and offer three grades, for either Starters, Strollers or Striders. So, there's a walk for every level, you pick the one which suits you best.

- **Starter walks** are a 30 minute walk across largely flat, stable terrain at a gentle pace with frequent pauses. Suitable for those wishing to become more active or those recovering from surgery, illness or injury.
- **Stroller walks** are a 45-60 minute walk across varied terrain with some pauses.
- **Strider walks** are 60-90 minutes, largely continuous across varied terrain including some gradients. A walk intended to offer a more rigorous pace and workout.

Sorry, no dogs, other than sensory dogs are allowed.

We are delighted to announce that Mere will be offering **Starter walks**, beginning on **Wednesday 8th May**. Each week we will meet at the **surgery car park on Salisbury Street for a 10.00am start**.

If you would like to take part but would prefer a **Stroller** or **Strider** walk then please look at the following website for these level walks in other parts of the county.

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-cycling-walking-and-running>

Do come and join us if you feel the **Starter** walks are for you. You don't have to commit to every week, just come when you can.

Alternatively, if you are a regular walker and would like to become a qualified walk leader so you can help out leading these walks, please contact us on one of the numbers below. We hope to see you there.

Wendy & David Drewett. ☎ 07508 340105 or ☎ 07392 409439

From Times Gone By!

Inquests held by George Sylvester Esq

May 10th, at Maiden Bradley, Jane Young, aged 62, who accompanied a girl to a well near her residence to draw water; the girl in lowering the bucket let slip the handle, and the deceased, in endeavouring to lay hold of the tumbler, lost her footing and fell down the well, which was reported to be ninety feet deep with ten feet of water. On being taken out, the vital spark had fled but the only bodily injury she had suffered was a wound of the scalp. Verdict – Accidentally drowned by falling into a well

Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette, 16 May 1844

John Toogood, Mere, innkeeper, was charged on the information of John Perrett, Inspector of Police, with suffering certain persons to become drunk in his house on Sunday, the 26th of March last. Several witnesses were examined, and after carefully going through the whole of the evidence, the defendant was convicted in the penalty of 50s and costs.

John Toogood and Henry Hazard, were summoned for non-payment of poor-rates. Toogood, 21. 4s. 8d.; Hazard, 3s. 1d... Ordered to pay the same, with costs.

Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 13 May 1848

Martyn Beardsley

Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes

I spend many hours visiting local function across the Division from Kilmington to West Knoyle. I find this is a good way to find what people want, number one being good roads and housing. At Easter I was alerted to "The Welcome to Mere" sign on the B3092, which is the Mere to Frome Road, was coming adrift, has to be holiday time, therefore I personally secured it as best I could and I must thank the Mere Town Council for quickly repairing it.

The resurfaced footpath across the Meads which I continue to support, now called Eric Mitchel Way, has been well received by the majority of people locally. It is pleasing that Wiltshire Council, Mere Town Council and Mere Footpaths Group have worked together to achieve this supper enhancement, which I was not sure if I would have seen in my life time. It has been made possible by developers' money and grants from Wiltshire Council and indeed Mere Town Council and The Mere Footpath Group.

A further reminder from last month, you now need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections, including Parliamentary elections, general elections, local elections and by-elections, Police and Crime Commissioner election – which takes place on 2 May. If you want more information on Voter ID and what to do if you don't have photo ID, please visit **Registering to vote** - Wiltshire Council.

Building Digital UK (BDUK) has entered a contract with Wessex Internet to build gigabit capable infrastructure in South Wiltshire. Wiltshire Council have welcomed

the appointment and look forward to developing our working relationship with Wessex Internet, providing operational support to enable the build. Wessex Internet anticipate connecting 14,500 premises over the next five years. BDUK and Wiltshire Council are currently in the process of analysing the deployment phases and where Wessex Internet plans to start and finish infrastructure in South Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Council is hopeful for further flexibility through the BDUK Gigabit Voucher Scheme (GBVS). This scheme can provide vouchers worth up to £4,500 for homes and businesses in the hardest to reach rural areas to support the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections to their doorstep when part of a group. Currently the voucher scheme is paused in Wiltshire and many other parts of the UK, although this can change.

As part of its continued zero tolerance approach to tackling fly-tipping, Wiltshire Council has successfully prosecuted a Calne woman who had dumped waste on a public footpath.

A Melksham man was given a 24-month Conditional Discharge and ordered to pay £1,465 in costs for significant fly-posting across Wiltshire. I am hoping enforcement do not see some of our very worthy local community groups impacted by this, they do not fly post across Wiltshire. However, I have made you all aware.

More additional school places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) will be available in Wiltshire following a successful bid by Wiltshire Council to secure a new free school.

Update on the next stages of Local Plan and Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan. Wiltshire had a huge response to the Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation, which closed on 22 November 2023. Since then, Wiltshire have been working through more than 10,000 comments from many different stakeholders and all parts of the county. Wiltshire are working to identify potential sites for allocation as part of the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan, which is taking time.

Penny Fennon gave February rainfall for Salisbury Street in March as 27.5cm with 28th March being the wettest with 7cm of rain. Pam Baldock gave rainfall for Lordsmead area as 137.25mmmm, (5.49) To help clear the highway of water, you can report blocked gullies using the **My Wilts app**.

Wiltshire Council is encouraging families to access healthy lunchtime free school meals in reception and years one and two if eligible, and to check if they remain eligible in year three and above. The initiative helps to save families more than £350 per year.

Wiltshire are still short of placements for foster children and looking for those interested. There are situations that arise unexpectedly which mean young people need emergency care and support at short notice. Foster carers under this scheme provide temporary emergency care to any child or young person needing a safe place to stay until a suitable home is found. Young people in this situation are dealing with uncertainty and may also be traumatised and will need extra support. Emergency foster carers receive £900 per week per child when they have a child to stay with

them and £500 per week when they don't have foster children to care for. The council would like to recruit more carers to help meet the demand.

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

D Day 80th Anniversary Thursday 6TH June.

D-Day was a monumental campaign to rid Europe of NAZI horror, and the 80th anniversary of this remarkable operation deserves the recognition and gratitude of our country. Please join us at the **Mere War Memorial on Thursday 6th June at 10:50** for a short wreath laying ceremony by the Town Council dedicated to those brave men and women who gave their lives to allow us to enjoy the freedoms that we have today.



Stewart Walker (Lt Col(retd))

Mere Pharmacy – Walk in consultations

Mere Pharmacy are now able to provide walk in consultations every weekday for the following conditions:

Acute Otitis Media	(1-17 year olds) (Ear infection)
Impetigo	(1 year old and over)
Infected insect bites	(1 year old and over)
Shingles	(18 years and over)
Sinusitis	(12 years and over)
Sore throat	(5 years and over)
UTIs	(Women 16 to 64 years old) (Urinary tract infection)

PennyBank Writers

Readers may remember that, before the Covid restrictions, themed readings by PennyBank Writers were a popular alternative to groups engaging a speaker, particularly for holiday or 'end of term' meetings.

PennyBank members have now decided to re-instate this performance activity and can offer local groups and societies a programme of readings for a modest donation of choice to our funds.

If this is of interest to your group please contact the number below for further details.

PennyBank member, Mark Grant, was recently short-listed in the 2024 Latin Programme Poetry Prize. His poem, *Tempestatem Significat*, is to feature in an anthology of the short-listed poems.

Adrienne Howell 📞 860475 howellatmere@aol.com

Mere Gardening Club

As I am writing this article the sun is shining and it looks as though we may be able to get into the garden and catch up with all those jobs we have been putting off due to the wet weather.

We are sorry for the quality of last month's speaker. Hopefully all the other speakers for the rest of the year will be up to scratch.

Our next meeting on Wednesday 8th May at 7pm at the Grove building will be a talk from Sue Carter on Growing Flowers for Cutting.

Our club notice board has the lists for those members who wish to go on our outing in June and also to Castle Gardens. The Hidden Gardens of Mere will soon be here and we are looking for volunteers to help with refreshments at the Grove Building on both days. So if you could spare a couple of hours we would be grateful.

The Winner of two tickets to Garden's World Live was Sue Edkins, congratulations, and we hope you have a lovely day.

We always welcome new members and visitors are welcome too at a cost of £5.00.

Les Manwaring Chai 📞 861941 lesmanwaring@yahoo.com

1st Mere Brownies recycling project

Our sincere thanks to everyone that supported our recent fundraising quiz which raised a much needed £164.50 for unit funds

It was supported by a fabulous raffle with many worthwhile prizes to select from Many were kindly donated by local businesses

Grateful thanks to Carol Payne for her support in compiling and running the event for us It was very kind and much appreciated by us all

Sue Jeans Barn Owl leader

Spring Covid Booster Vaccinations

Mere Surgery are offering Spring booster Covid vaccinations for over 75-year-olds and at risk patients on the following 2 days:

Thursday 2nd May and Tuesday 14th May – morning clinic

You will be sent a text message or email if you are eligible to book an appointment.

Mere Surgery 📞 860001

Mere Jelly

Once a month, Mere's freelancers, home-workers and small business owners emerge in public!

You will find us, armed with cappuccinos and shiny laptops, at The **Brush and Broom at Hillbrush** on the **last Wednesday** of every month between 9am and 1pm.

Working in groups gets you away from the isolated experience of working at home, and the Mere Jelly is a chance to meet new people in your environment. Come along for the whole morning or just pop in for a chat.

Jenni Bell 📞 07956 869699



MERE CROQUET & BOULES CLUB

Steep Street, Mere, BA12 6ED

CROQUET OPEN SESSIONS

Saturday 11 May 2024, from 14.30 hours
Thursday 23 May 2024, from 18.30 hours
Wednesday 12 June 2024, from 14.30 hours

**Come along and
try your hand at croquet!**

Croquet is a sociable game as well as being challenging, sometimes frustrating but always fun. Equipment and tuition is provided by the club.



Refreshments will be provided at the Open Sessions. Parking can be found in Mere at the main car park, in Deans Avenue and in North Road.

Each Open Session can accommodate 20 people. To book a slot on the session of your choice please telephone Jill on 07393 560459.

Mere School Welcomes Wiltshire Air Ambulance: A Day of Lifesaving Learning



Excitement buzzed through the corridors of Mere School as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance team made a special visit, bringing with them a wealth of lifesaving knowledge. The day was one of discovery and empowerment as children eagerly engaged in hands-on activities and insightful demonstrations, immersing themselves in the world of emergency response.

Under the expert guidance of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance team, students dove into an array of practical exercises aimed at equipping them with essential skills for handling emergencies. From mastering the basics of making a 999 call to learning crucial techniques like CPR and the use of an AED, each lesson was met with enthusiasm and determination.

Paired up and armed with mannequins, the children practised various emergency procedures, from the recovery position to aiding someone who is choking. These interactive sessions not only imparted valuable skills but also instilled a sense of confidence in the students, empowering them to respond effectively in times of crisis.

In addition to hands-on activities, the visit provided insight into the vital role of the air ambulance in serving the Wiltshire community. Students learned about the dedicated efforts of the air ambulance team and gained a deeper appreciation for their lifesaving work.

As the day progressed, children delved into topics such as controlling bleeding, treating burns, and managing head injuries, further enhancing their preparedness to assist in emergencies. The visit served as a reminder of the importance of being proactive in learning lifesaving skills, fostering a culture of safety and community resilience.

Catriona Williamson Head Teacher

Mere Theatre Club

For those who don't know us, we've been going since 2009 and arrange visits to theatres within roughly a 2 hour range from Mere e.g. Bath, Bristol, Salisbury, Southampton, Chichester. A coach is always provided and we usually aim to arrive in good time to have lunch or go shopping or whatever you choose. We go to matinees.

We also sometimes offer non theatre trips to interesting houses and gardens, this summer we are visiting The Wyne in Hampshire and Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire.

Our subscription is only £6 per household per year. So if you fancy getting out and about this autumn and meeting some like minded friendly people, do get in touch.

Madelaine Morris 📞 861833 madsmorris@gmail.com

The Tower Stories

What a month! As you will have seen the Tower repairs are nearly finished and I expect when you read this they will be completed. Colin Avery our Stonemason has done a fantastic job, guided ably by Brian Watts, the Architect, to see this important project through. At present we are on budget and on schedule. Just the scaffolding to come down now.

The closure date for applications for the Writer in Residence and the Composer in Residence for The Tower Stories was Friday 5th April. We were thrilled (and not a little overwhelmed) to receive 62 applications - 42 for the Writer and 20 for the Composer. They came from as far as the USA! Mere's message is travelling far and wide. As I write Bill Price, Helen Watts, and I, in consultation with others, are busy drawing up a shortlist for final interviews in mid-May. As soon as we have any more information we will let you know but the key job of the Writer and Composer is to identify and interpret the stories of the Tower through writing, music, drama and dance. Watch this space!

A quick thank you to all those who are volunteering on various key projects supporting The Tower Stories from historical research to social media. If you would like to be involved in any way just get in contact with me elaine@towerstories.co.uk.

Finally put **July 13th** in your diaries! You will see our ad on the inside front cover of this issue announcing **The Proms in Mere**. This event kicks off the community part of the Tower Stories made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Friend's of St Michael's. The Proms are a celebration of the completion of the Tower repairs – so long awaited and now finally completed. It should be a joyous evening.

Elaine Stallard The Tower Stories

Mere Short Walk (J Way)

Join me for a 2-3mile walk around the paths and lanes of Mere on Wednesday 8th May. Meet in the Surgery Car Park at 2p.m. and refresh yourself with a welcome cuppa at the Angel Tea Rooms afterwards.

Janet Way 📞 860884 jwaywitsend@gmail.com

Friends of Mere Museum plant sale and quiz in May

As promised here are the details for these events which are important fundraisers for supporting the work of the museum. Plant sale is on **Saturday 11th May** from 10am at the Grove Building and will focus on geraniums and patio plants. Entry is free. The quiz is on **Friday 17th May** from 7pm at Grove Building. £2:50 per person and bring your own drinks. Snacks will be provided and a raffle with quality prizes! You can book a table by contacting me on the email below. Good luck!

Rosie 📞 861567 rjordanbarr@hotmail.co.uk

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	Wed	09:30	Tai-Chi (every Weds)	GB
		14:00	Pilates (every Weds)	L
		18:30	Karate (every Weds)	L
<i>Railway Modellers</i>				
2	Thurs	Election		L
		10:00	Art Group (every Thurs)	GB
		10:00	Hearing Aid Clinic @ United Reformed Church	URC
		11:00	Rhyme Time (every Thurs)	Lib
		14:00	Quilters (every Thurs)	GB
	19:30	Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)	URC	
3	Fri	10:00	Walking Zumba (every Fri)	L
		13:45	Duplicate Bridge (14:00 start. Every Fri)	GB
4	Sat	10:30	Coffee Morning (every Sat)	URC
5	Sun			
6	Mon	10:00	Garden Furniture Sale	L
		18:00	Yoga	L
		19:00	Slimming World (Book with Sally) (every Mon)	L
7	Tues	08:00	Foot Clinic	GB
		09:30	Little Angels	GB
		18:20	Zumba (every Tues)	L
8	Weds	10:00	Get Wiltshire Walking Group – Starter Walks (every Weds)	CP
		14:00	Fitness & Friendship	GB
		14:00	May Short Walk (J Way)	CP
		19:30	Gardening Club	GB
<i>Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers</i>				
9	Thurs	10:30	Harmony for health Respiratory wellness thro' music (every Thurs)	L
		14:00	Rubber Bridge (every Thurs)	L
		17:00	Girlguiding (every Thurs)	GB
		19:30	Ukulele	Butt of Sherry
<i>Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Guides, Shreen Harmony</i>				
10	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
<i>Dup Bridge</i>				
11	Sat	09:00	FoMM Plant Sale	GB
		14:30	Croquet and Boule Season starts – (every Sat)	Steep Street
<i>Coffee Morning</i>				
12	Sun	14:30	Croquet and Boule Season starts – (every Sunday)	Steep Street
13	Mon	09:30	Tiddlers and Toddlers (every Mon)	L
		18:00	Scouting (every Mon)	GB
<i>Slimming World, Yoga</i>				

14	Tues		<i>Little Angels, Zumba</i>	
15	Weds	10:45 19:00	NHS Diabetes Prevention Merekits Womens Institute <i>Get Wiltshire Walking Group, Pilates, Tai-Chi, Railway Modellers</i>	GB GB
16	Thurs	19:3	Shreen Harmony Concert for Mindful Memory Café <i>Harmony Health, Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Guiding, Shreen Harmony</i>	URC
17	Fri		<i>Dup Bridge</i>	
18	Sat		<i>Coffee Morning and Fair Trade Stall, Croquet and Boule</i>	
19	Sun	14:00	Mere Walking Group (Laidler & Wilson) Fair Trade after morning service <i>Croquet and Boule</i>	CP StM
20	Mon		<i>Scouting, Tiddlers and Toddlers, Slimming World, Yoga</i>	
21	Tues	08:00	Foot Clinic <i>Little Angels, Zumba</i>	GB
22	Weds	10:00 14:00	Mere Walking Group (Laidler & Wilson) Fitness & Friendship <i>Get Wiltshire Walking Group, Tai-Chi, Karate, Pilates, Railway Modellers</i>	CP GB
23	Thurs		<i>Harmony Health, Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Guiding, Shreen Harmony</i>	
24	Fri	10:00	Merely Women <i>Dup Bridge</i>	GB
25	Sat		<i>Croquet and Boule</i>	
26	Sun		<i>Croquet and Boule</i>	
27	Mon		<i>Scouting, Tiddlers and Toddlers, Slimming World, Yoga</i>	
28	Tues		<i>Little Angels, Zumba</i>	
29	Weds	am 14:30	Jelly Group Pennybank Writers <i>Get Wiltshire Walking Group, Tai-Chi, Karate, Pilates, Railway Modellers</i>	VH L
30	Thurs		<i>Harmony Health, Rhyme Time, Art, Quilters, Guiding, Shreen Harmony</i>	
31	Fri		<i>Dup Bridge</i>	

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

Mere Bowls Club

We opened as planned on the 20th April, on a warm spring day with plenty of sunshine; a good time was had by all who attended. Added to all the good news we had a possibility of four new members of the club and another who will hopefully attend next week, so a good start to the season, but we could do with additional younger members as our membership is getting older each year.

We have a number of matches in the schedule that are basically for novices and newcomers to the sport, these are our friendlies and Westbrook League matches; so newer members get your names down on the team sheets that the captain has put on the notice board, one of the good things about the sport of bowls is that no one laughs at you or calls you names for a not so good, or an unplanned, shot.

If you would like to try bowls please join us on any day that suits (give me a call to check the day as we cut the green on Tuesday and Friday mornings) or on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th May between 2pm and 5pm on both days (note the change of times, due to an internal competition on the Saturday) when we will hold a Big Bowls session for members of the public to come along and have some fun on the bowling green. Fun is the operative word here as there will be no mention of the Laws of Bowls or the etiquette of the sport during the time we are open.

If you are at all interested in trying the sport of bowls yourself, or the whole family for that matter, please do not hesitate to get in contact with Don on the number, or email, below and he will take it from there.

Mere has a very well-kept Bowls club, which was founded March 1964. Mere Bowls Club opened for the season on Saturday the 20th April. A Big Bowls session was held for members of the public to come and have some fun on the bowling green. Fun was the operative word as there was no mention of etiquette of the sport. The sun shone and many attended. The green has recently been drilled with 40,000 holes and filled to aid drainage.



Picture by George Jeans

<https://www.hugofox.com/community/mere-bowls-club-10160/home/>

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

Mere Model Railway Exhibition – 15th-16th June 2024

Mere & District Railway Modellers are delighted to be able to present to the community next month what will probably be the best small railway exhibition in the South West this year.

The two-day exhibition will be held in the Lecture Halls, Salisbury Street, from **10.00am until 4.00pm on Saturday, 15th and Sunday 16th June**. With the support of our eminent trader, Ray Heard Models, we are offering several award winning layouts together with some smaller layouts, which will illustrate that the hobby can easily be carried out in a limited space. In all we will display 10 layouts across 6 gauges, so most of our visitors will be able to identify with their particular interests from what is on show.

As usual we have the facility for paying for purchases by credit card. Refreshments will be provided by our in-house team together with some excellent home baked cakes. So please come along and support your local club.

If the show clashes with other dates in your diary, we will be on show with our own layout at 'Creative Mere 3', which will be held over the weekend of **16th/17th November**.

Graham Avory, M&DRM Chairman, ☎ 860439

Ukes at The Butt of Sherry

We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month for an informal evening of strumming and singing. We play a wide range of popular songs and welcome all abilities. If you don't have a ukulele, but would like to come along you would be most welcome. We do have a ukulele for you to play. An evening of fun and laughter guaranteed!

You can check out our Facebook page 'Ukes at The Butt' for our song list.

Maggie Holmes maggieholmes101@gmail.com



Mere Spring Fair and Family Fun Day.

Well known local band Mustang Sally, Bar, BBQ, Stalls, Raffle, Tombola, Cafe and Cake, face painting, bouncy castle, Kiddies Activity and much more took place. Fundraising in support of Salisbury District Hospital Charity Stars Appeal, Neonatal Unit. Around 300 people attended through the day. A good time was had by all on a lovely sunny Spring day.

Pictures and text by George Jeans Mere



Shreen Harmony

In May we are holding a concert in support of: **The Mindful Memory Café in Gillingham**. This is in the Dementia Action Week and this café is run to support people struggling with dementia together with their families and carers. It is such a good cause as so many are having to deal with this problem in their lives. Please come along, enjoy the music and the refreshments and support this cause.

Shreen Harmony and friends – **Spring Concert. Thursday 16th May 7.30 p.m.** in the United Reformed Church, Mere.

All welcome, free admission and refreshments with a retiring collection in aid of the Mindful Memory Café.

Sandra Fisher ☎ 861980

Mere Toddlers Foodbank Quiz

This popular event was well received again with a good turnout. Thanks to the brilliant Penny Fennon , who is the Quiz maestro, the teams were able to enjoy ten rounds of tricky questions.



The winning team were the Purple Pants, who also took the prize of the good old traditional ‘How many Sweeties in the Jar?’ The wooden spoon went to ‘George and His Dragons’.

The prize for the best name went to the ‘Universally Challenged’ team.

Thanks to the amazing Jill Rousseau for collecting all the raffle prizes, and huge thanks to all the kind donors listed below. LC Hill and Son Funeral directors kindly sponsored the prize money of £100.

Thanks went to the marvellous Judy Cooper, Michel Rousseau and George Jeans for their help on the night, plus all the participants who helped clear up, and as always to my long suffering husband, Steve without whom the Foodbank would flounder.

John Jordon also was thanked for his excellent adjudication.

The foodbank could not exist without all our amazing volunteers and Jill and Judy are part of that team. If you are interested in joining us there are various ways you could help.

We raised an invaluable £479.35. All proceeds go to the Foodbank .

Anne Rich /Mere Toddlers Foodbank 📠 07413 51202 arich4@icloud.com



Mere & District Link Scheme

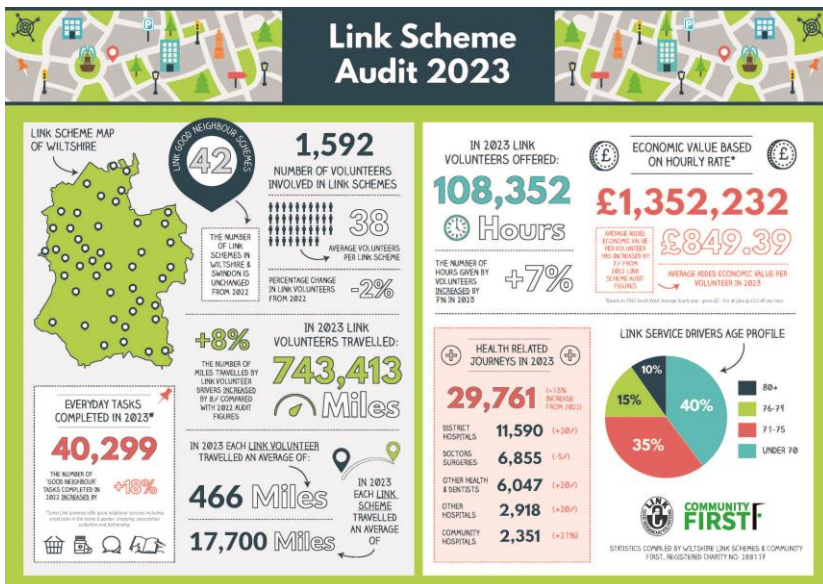
Community First, which oversees the 42 Link Schemes in Wiltshire, produce a summary of the annual audit of Link Scheme activity. The 2023 details are shown in the infographic below and we are preparing one for Mere's Link Scheme. One figure which jumped out at me was the average mileage for each Link Scheme in 2023. This was 17,700. In 2023 Mere Link Scheme drivers covered an amazing 46,121 miles. A tremendous effort from all of our drivers.

In March we did 104 trips so we are still averaging 100 trips per month this year. As ever, Salisbury District Hospital was the busiest destination with 27 trips.

New drivers are always welcome. You choose when you want to drive, use your own car and we pay 45p/mile to cover your costs. If you are interested in volunteering as a driver please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096.

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

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



John FitzGerald Chair 📞 860096 🌐 merelink.org.uk

Mere Carnival Committee

Well I had to look at my calendar just to confirm it really is very nearly or by the time you read this it actually is May... wow how time flies when you are enjoying yourself.



Anyway moving on to Mere Carnival plans are coming together and already we have secured some professional entertainment for the Square on Carnival day. This year we will have JAY singing and playing in the afternoon along with the fancy dress, stalls and food and hopefully who knows that Dalek might even make an appearance again.

We are hoping to put on a quiz night in June and also another Bingo night at the social club on Friday July 5th so we look forward to seeing you there.

You will also see around town that we are now selling our Megadraw raffle tickets at £1 each which will be drawn the Sunday after the Carnival. It really is a Megadraw this year with 4 prizes (£1000 £500 and 2 x £250) so pick up yours at locations around Mere.

We are still in desperate need of new committee members and volunteers so please consider getting in touch with our Secretary Jaine and join our team no matter how much time or special skills you can offer. secretary@merecarnival.co.uk

There were a few clashes of events recently so in an attempt to avoid any overlap we have put a diary in the library so that your event can be logged and you will see if any other events are planned on any given date.

We have now moved into our new storage unit and would like to thank Sturdy Storage for their very generous help they have given us, please look out for their logo on our posters etc.

Mel Wilkinson melvinwilkinson@gmail.com

Castle Hill Quilters Open Day with Coffee and Cake

We are inviting you to an Open Day with Coffee and Cake on **Saturday 4th May** from 10am until 4pm in the Grove Building.

This event is not only to showcase our work but to raise funds for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Our members will be demonstrating quilting techniques both traditional and contemporary. There will be a display of our work on show and the opportunity to purchase items handmade by our members.



Tea, coffee and cake will be served throughout the day.

Please come and join us, all proceeds will be donated to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Mere Mortals Petanque Club

Last month during the school holiday, the Town Council team of Simon, Paul and Sam swooped on the old school swimming site. In no time they transformed the rough and ready petanque terrain created by Mere Mortals and left behind a 3/4 piste terrain, surrounded by picket fencing, with a much more playable surface, MMPC are more than grateful. We look forward to more folk joining us to play on Tuesday evenings from 6pm, Wednesday afternoons at 2.30pm and Saturdays at 10.30am.



Colin Senneck ☎ 706008 colin2423@sky.com

Mere Rivers Group

Wessex Water Situation: March 2024

March was largely a continuation of the very wet weather of February. An average of 125mm rain fell in March, which is 178% of the long term average (LTA). This made March 2024 the ninth wettest since records began in 1871. The last 6 months have been the wettest 6 month period (October to March) since records began.

Both our rivers have been flowing very strongly. The upper Shreen has burst its banks in a couple of places and along Waterside it was going over the bridges as well as under. Not all bad news as the Water Voles have enjoyed the extra water and have been seen most days with new holes appearing in the banks.



The stream support pipe line for the Shreen is progressing well and should be ready for testing in May, although at the moment it seems unnecessary but I am sure that we will need it if we have a hot dry summer.

Our summer migrant birds are arriving slowly - Chiffchaffs and Willow Warblers first, followed by Swallows, Martins and Swifts. Apparently, migration is much slower this year due to the constant north-east winds. Hopefully this will change, bringing us better weather and our skies full of screaming Swifts.

Ian Sheppard lanjsheppard@outlook.com

The Walk of Witness

On Good Friday each year people meet in the Town Square to walk with the cross to the top of Castle Hill. Churches Together in Mere and District organised the event this year.

On the 29th March, the young and old followed and helped carry the cross up the hill performing readings that were made by many at different stops on the way. The Walk of Witness this year called *The Way of the Cross*, was carried out in the morning from The Square and up to the top of Castle Hill. The cross of sorrow was carried and erected on Castle Hill.

The weather was very poor at the start but very quickly being replaced by sunshine for a slippery walk-up Castle Hill. The Walk was well attended. Afterwards at 12-30 Lent Lunch was served at The Grove Building, Mere.



Pictures and Text by George Jeans

Copy date for the **June** issue

Closing deadline is: **16:00hrs on Friday May 24th**

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

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

Mere Walking Group

We have two walks this month, Sunday afternoon on May 19th, at 2pm and Wednesday May 22nd, 10am with the option of a pub lunch at the end of this walk. Both walks meet in Salisbury Street Car Park to share cars, if required. We welcome all ages, the walks will be around 3 to 4 miles.

A new walking for health initiative starts on May 8th at 10am, As part of the "Get Wiltshire Walking" campaign, there will be a weekly short half hour flat walk for those people who wish to become more active or are recovering from surgery, illness or injury. These walks will be every Wednesday. Meet by the surgery in the car park.

Roger Laidler 📞 863447 roger46laidler@talktalk.net

Mary Wilson 📞 229609 wilsonsmere@gmail.com

Mere Art Group

We are open on Thursdays from 10.00am till 12.00 noon. Tea, coffee and biscuits are included in our modest charge of £3.00.

This month's artwork is different from the normal. Our well-respected Artist, Dave Aslett, has experimented with ALKYD OIL PAINT at home and has produced this fine example using pallet-knife and paint brushes. The paint dries off in a week, permitting time for manipulation of the paint.



Helge Brock helgewallenbrock@gmail.com


Merekits - Womens Institute

Merekits WI meet on the third Wednesday of the month in the Grove Building at 7pm. We are a group of ladies whose aim is to get to know other like-minded people in the local area and have fun.

In April we held our AGM, where the committee was re-elected to stand for another year. It was lovely to remind ourselves how far we have come in our first year and what we have done with lots of very interesting meetings and many different social activities such as various walks, book club, craft mornings, local plays and also dining out.

On May 15th we are holding an open meeting where our speaker David Leaky will share with us "The laughs and Sagas of life as a General and Black Rod". If you would like to join us it will be at 7pm in The Grove Building costing just £4 for non-members. Tickets will be available before the event and if you are interested to attend please contact Yvonne on 01747 860035 to secure your ticket and to be sure of getting a seat as numbers are limited. The evening will be open to men and women so please do tell your friends and family and come along and join us.

We have a fun filled programme of events for the remainder of 2024 with talks, demonstrations and lots of different activities planned so if you want to make new friends and learn new things, please come to any of our meetings and find out more. There's always something going on both locally and nationally for you to get involved and participate in as much or as little as you would like.

Verena Cooper  07971790256 verenacooper2@gmail.com

Mothers' Union and Open Members' Group

At our April meeting we held our AGM. This year our Branch Leaders for the past few years both retired. We thanked both Christabelle Kriticos and Christine Marsh for their excellent leadership especially over and after the Covid period, maybe the highlight was serving Christmas Dinner, prepared by our members and Christabelle to the many people who were on their own on Christmas Day. This was done by the Kriticos family in a Meals on Wheels format and enjoyed by everyone. We have had an excellent programme of events and we look forward to our new leader Victoria Goodfellow taking over and our next meeting on May 14th at 2.30 pm in the Grove Building will be an interesting talk about Hospital Chaplaincy so we will welcome Rev. Joanna Percival.

A few of our members in the past have been on the Hospital Chaplaincy Team as part of their role of Lay Pastoral Assistants at The Westminster Memorial Hospital in Shaftesbury and in the Community so a wealth of experience will be shared. We know how the patients of all hospitals value their Chaplains. This will be followed by tea. Our meeting always starts with a small service. Please feel welcome to join us on the 14th.

Carol Lord  861923. Vicky Goodfellow 840443

Church Contact and Service Details

The Parish Church St Michael's the Archangel:

Priest in Charge: Vacancy

Churchwardens: Mr Kit Stallard ☎ 07803 086161

Mr Richard Wilson ☎ 07966 244373

Admin Secretary: administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk

5 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Informal Worship
9 th	Thurs	07:30 08:00	Ascension Day – Hymns outside the church Ascension Day Communion
12 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
19 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
21 st	Tues	10:00	Roman Catholic Mass
26 th	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Parish Communion

West Knoyle Parish Church St Mary the Virgin:

Priest in Charge: Vacancy

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

5 th	Sun	09:30	DIY Service
12 th	Sun	09:30	Communion
19 th	Sun	09:30	Matins
26 th	Sun	09:30	Communion

The United Reformed Church

Minister - Vacancy

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

5 th	Sun	11:00	TBC
12 th	Sun	11:00	Mrs Jane Hurd
19 th	Sun	11:00	TBC
26 th	Sun	11:00	TBC

The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.

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

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

Mass at St Michael the Archangel usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 10.30am but please check with John FitzGerald

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

Contacts: John FitzGerald ☎ 860867

Mere Information

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




Mere Library

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

* Volunteer operated opening hours.

Sally-Ann, Mere Senior Library Assistant

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



Churches Together in Mere and District can report that, in spite of the muddiest and most slippery route ever on Castle Hill, and starting off in pouring rain, about 25 stalwarts made it to the top on Good Friday, led by the Revd Graham Southgate, new Rector of Upper Stour. The wooden cross was safely carried and installed at the top of the hill and we were well rewarded with unexpected warm sunshine for the homeward journey and the last of this year's excellent Lent Lunches in the Grove Building.

We are also happy to report that the once-a-month weekday Catholic Mass at St Michael's is now well established and well appreciated by all of us. We are also looking forward to the Shreen Harmony Concert for Dementia Week at Mere United Reformed Church (URC) at 7.30 on 16th May.

Looking ahead: on June 1st there will be a St Michael's Celebrating Summer sale of plants and cakes and more in the Grove Building, together with some fun stalls and refreshments. And on 30th June at 3pm we will have our annual Churches Together Songs of Praise in Stourhead Gardens. The sun will shine – so put the date in your diary! More details next month.

Meanwhile: Calling all gardeners! Please save or pot up any spare plants or seedlings for the Plant Stall at the Celebrating Summer event in the Grove Building on Saturday 1st June. Please bring them along between 10am and 12 noon..

Our next Churches Together Meeting is at 10.30am at Mere URC on Wednesday 5th June.

Judith Thompson, Acting Chair Churches Together in Mere and District. ☎ 860553

Mere Social Club

Congratulations Louise on another successful fundraising day for the Neonatal Unit at Salisbury hospital. The weather was kind and a good day was had by all. It was so nice to see the club buzzing with people and welcome to all our new members.

There is still time to enter the Summer Skittles competition. Once all entries are in, (closing date **12th May**) we will be able to let you know the exact dates when this will take place during June and July.

Live music this month will take place on **Saturday 25th May** and will be supplied by **Set Ready**

Elaine Laurence, club steward. elainelaurence57@gmail.com



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