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*December 2025 - January 2026*

Your community magazine  
including a diary of local events

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**Jeans  
Electrical**

Missed from November edition

**West Knoyle Social Club** Harvest Supper evening on Friday 24th October. The hall was packed to capacity. As in previous years a supper of cold meats & salad followed by apple crumble as well as a Cheeseboard was served.

During the evening a huge wooden spoon was awarded to the club's number one stirrer for the past year, this year it was awarded



to, Mel Hull, married to Stuart Hull who was awarded the huge spoon the previous year. Corinne Leonard presented this superb spoon. A raffle with many prizes was held.

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George Jeans

### **Mere 1st Brownies and Guides**

Halloween party, was held at the Grove Building on Thursday 23rd October. All were dressed and made up for the occasion including fake blood (or was it) . The volunteer DJ was Craig and Nikki helped with the evening. Apple bobbing which resulted in some wet faces and fallen Witches hats in the water. All the children and the Witches enjoyed the great evening, fun for all.



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Christina (Snowy Owl) and Sue Jeans

### **Correction to Macmillan Coffee Morning** article in October edition.

Ann Rich has informed me that it was not her who organised it, but the lovely **Judy Cooper**, with help from **Jos Holmes** who did all the very hard work. Ann merely helped! All the hard work meant £700 + was raised.

Front cover picture courtesy of David Bell

# Castle Lodge Care Home

*Opening January*

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

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## The Editor Writes

I am delighted to receive many submissions of photos and other graphics for inclusion in these pages. To avoid major loss of detail within the photos, you should always email these as 'attachments' and not embed them within a document or within the email text. If you 'have to' paste photos in any Word document they will be degraded straight away. If you wish to know how to avoid this happening drop me a line.

As the festive season draws near and as this is the last edition for 2025, I would like to firstly express my thanks to my team of little elves; Alison for looking after the money, Ann-Marie for managing our advertising and Vivien with hubby Ian, for managing circulation. My thanks also go to George Jeans for keeping photos and articles pouring in and to all the other contributors, to all our advertisers and those who have donated and to you, the readers.

We should all give thanks to those who give so generously of their time to keep all the things that happen in Mere alive. I challenge anyone to say there is nothing to do in Mere. If you have a little time to spare, could you volunteer?

Season's Greetings to everyone and let's hope for a healthy and peaceful 2026.



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Richard Jefferies 863425 [Editor4MM@outlook.com](mailto:Editor4MM@outlook.com)

## Mere Town Council

### Team Halloween

Well, what a success Halloween turned out to be so many thanks to give: Jaki and Seeds4 Success for allowing us to use their building for Cllr Sam Dean to host an arts and crafts session, this was so busy and a had a real buzz of excitement. Cllr John Jordan for compiling the quiz for the body part hunt, and spending time at Seeds4Success handing out sweets and collecting quiz sheets.

Mark Perry, David Rich and Cllr Rachael Hansford for decorating the Town Clock and Chapel. Jane Belcher for photographer support and letting us use her converted church for the perfect back drop. Tor Reynolds for the design of the flyers, distribution and help with publicity. Helen Watts for staging advice and loan of smoke machine. Cllr George Jeans who stepped up at the last minute to spend hours taking photographs for the costume competition. Cllr Sam Dean for her arts and crafts in the Town Clock Tower on Halloween night. The young people at Seeds4Success for providing Hot Chocolate at the end of the night. The Wookey Hole Witch, what a fabulous witch she is – her story telling and energy was fantastic.

I must give a personal thank you to Cllr Rachael Hansford as we started the Halloween journey together and but I became unable to help due to poor health – she grabbed the reigns and pulled the whole evening together. WELL DONE Rachael, you made it happen.

Of course, a huge thanks to the community and those that decorated their homes for our children and young people to Trick or Treat. And to all of those that came out for Halloween. See YOU next year.

On Sunday the 2nd November the Vice-Chair, Rachael Hansford, and I met the Veteran Bikers Wessex Brigade as they climbed Castle Hill to remember those that had fallen, then going on to the Clock Tower to lay a wreath and have a bike blessing by the Vicar of Gillingham. It was a privilege to be involved and to meet such wonderful people.

The following week, on Remembrance Sunday I attended the Remembrance Service at the Clock Tower to lay a wreath, on behalf of the Town Council, for those that have fallen to give us the freedom we so enjoy now. Many thanks to Stewart Walker for again arranging the event and our lovely Vicar, Michael Molano, for the service. I would like to thank the following groups for attending and laying Wreaths it was a very special day. Royal British Legion, Wiltshire Council, Mere Chamber of Commerce, Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Fire Service, Gillingham & Shaftesbury Lions, Mere Guides, Brownies, Rainbows, Cubs and Beavers. And not to forget all of those that came along, public and veterans to support this very important day.

We would like to congratulate Mere School for their Firework Event. A tremendous amount of work goes into organising an event like this so well done to all involved. It is an extremely popular event and raises a huge amount of money to benefit the pupils at Mere School.

The Town Council has been working on a project to refurbish the Public Toilets in the Salisbury Street Car Park and I am pleased to report that this work has now completed. We have reopened the gents toilets and ladies toilets from 7am until 6 pm & the disabled toilet is now accessible 24 hrs for those that hold a radar key or via a card payment of £1. Cllr. Rachael Hansford has also been successful in obtaining a grant to provide solar energy for the public toilets and so, once installed, this will make a difference to the ongoing running costs.

Date for your diary: The Christmas light will be turned on **Friday the 5th December when the Mere Carnival Committee have arranged for Father Christmas** to be in his grotto at the Clock Tower. I look forward to seeing you all there.

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

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

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## **Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes**

I continue to attend Town and Parish Council meetings in the Mere Division of Wiltshire Council, as well as many community events, keeping in touch with what the majority want and publicising information where I can. I have been amazed by the funds raised recently: £12,500 from Mere School Fireworks, around £23,000 for the Bobby Van at a local function I attended, and—over the border in Somerset—I was told one event raised more than £30,000.

All library buildings across the county offer a warm and welcoming space for anyone to spend time in during the colder months. All Wiltshire libraries provide a friendly environment where people can relax, read, get online, access information and advice, or simply have a chat. Many libraries also host winter activities, including communal jigsaw tables, crafting groups, and other sessions designed to bring people together.

Wiltshire Libraries will be joining libraries nationwide in celebrating Green Libraries Week 2025 – a national campaign highlighting how libraries can help build a more sustainable future. Running from Monday 27 October to Sunday 2 November, this year's theme is "Seeds of Change – Make a Difference with Your Library." Activities will include free energy-advice drop-in sessions; demonstrations of thermal-imaging cameras to help identify heat loss (with information on how to borrow a camera for free); and eco-themed events for all ages, including green rhyme times, story times and child-friendly drop-ins.

As temperatures drop, Wiltshire Council's highways teams are preparing for winter with the return of the county's 24-strong gritter fleet. Last winter, crews were deployed 50 times and spread 6,500 tonnes of salt on Wiltshire's primary routes.

I recently experienced a relatively rare situation while sitting on the Southern Area Planning Committee: the committee, on legal advice, could not lawfully overturn an officer recommendation and grant planning permission immediately. Not all members agreed, but the application was refused. Without the legal constraints, the committee might have looked on the application more favourably.

The most recent ICB Dementia Diagnosis Rate statistics (October 2025) show that Mere Surgery has 73 registered patients aged 65+ with dementia. The Area

Board is exploring the idea of establishing a memory group in Mere—anyone interested, please let me know.

Wiltshire Council has successfully prosecuted a resident who repeatedly failed to pay parking fines and then damaged a wheel clamp placed on his vehicle. He was fined £200 and ordered to pay £165 in costs and surcharges. While he was in court, enforcement officers seized his vehicle, which will now be sold to recover the outstanding debt. This case was part of a wider joint operation between Wiltshire Council and Rundles Enforcement Agents, using ANPR technology to target persistent evaders. The initiative recovered more than £3,470, resolved 32 cases in full, and led to eight vehicles being clamped.

A proposal is being made to simplify the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Currently, support levels can change every month—even with minor income fluctuations—making the system complicated for residents. From April 2026, it is proposed that support will only be updated when there is a significant change in circumstances, such as: moving house; starting or leaving a job; a substantial change in income; or someone moving into or out of the household.

Wiltshire Council has confirmed that Blue Badge holders will once again be able to park for free in all council-operated car parks, following a vote at Full Council on Tuesday 21 October. I supported this decision, as the issue is not only about affordability but also about the difficulties disabled people face when parking. Previously, charges had been introduced in car parks (though on-street parking remained free), with Blue Badge holders receiving a one-hour grace period.

A total of 635 learners have gained new skills and taken positive steps toward improving their lives through adult learning courses in Wiltshire. The Family and Community Learning (FACL) Team has had a record year with more than 600 online and face-to-face learners. The team supports people in building confidence, developing employment skills, improving digital, financial, and communication abilities, and helping parents and carers support their children's education.

Wiltshire Council has now delivered 215 new affordable homes across the county as part of its commitment to high-quality, energy-efficient housing. This follows the completion of eight homes at Corsley Heath, with a further 576 in

development and more planned. The council aims to deliver 1,000 affordable homes to address local housing need and the cost-of-living. These homes use modern modular construction: units are built in Ringwood, Hampshire, delivered to site with kitchens, bathrooms, wiring and plumbing already fitted, and then finished with a traditional roof and interior decoration.

The Renters' Rights Act has now become law, with implementation set for next May. The Act abolishes Section 21 "no-fault" evictions and introduces stronger repossession grounds to protect legitimate landlord interests.

Wiltshire Council has added a third Bobcat machine to increase the speed and efficiency of pothole repairs. Bobcats can remove large areas of damaged road surface within minutes, allowing repair teams to work more quickly and complete more jobs with less disruption.

Wiltshire Council has also successfully prosecuted a Trowbridge business owner for failing to meet legal responsibilities for disposing of commercial waste. The court imposed fines and a five-day prison sentence in default. Businesses must ensure waste is handled by licensed carriers, keep waste-transfer notes for two years, avoid presenting commercial waste as domestic waste, and register as waste carriers if transporting their own waste.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire and Swindon was informed just one hour before the Commons announcement that the PCC role and office were being disbanded. No consultation had taken place. The police minister stated the function had failed nationally and that disbandment would save £100 million. The PCC noted Wiltshire receives £115 per head in central grant funding, compared with more than £400 per head for the Metropolitan Police, despite Wiltshire having the lowest crime rate per capita in the country.

The Wiltshire FUEL Winter Programme opens for booking on 14 November. The programme, funded by the Department for Education, primarily supports children eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals but can also offer limited places for refugees, children in care, young carers, and other vulnerable young people. Families previously enrolled have been notified. Bookings can be made through the FUEL booking system and must be completed at least two weeks in

advance; bookings close on 12 December. Enquiries can be emailed to [fuelprogramme@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:fuelprogramme@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Dog fouling continues to be a recurring issue, with growing numbers of complaints. I am highlighting it again in the hope that awareness will help curb the problem, although improvements often seem short-lived.

Penny Fennon recorded October rainfall for Salisbury Street at 15 cm, with the 3rd being the wettest day at 3.0 cm.

Pam Baldock recorded 75 mm (3 inches) for Lordsmead, with no measurable rainfall from Sunday 5th to Monday 20th. The wettest day was Sunday 19th October with 18.5 mm.

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

### MERE FOREST CHARITIES - Assistance Available

The charities exist to support those persons resident in the Parishes of Mere and Zeals who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress.

Currently supporting a number of individuals with an annual grant before Christmas, applied for in October. Applications for assistance are welcome at any time during the year. For further details and application form please write and enclose an AS stamped addressed envelope to:

9 Clements Lane, Mere. BA12 6DF

[Mereforest@gmail.com](mailto:Mereforest@gmail.com)

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## Mere Halloween Spooktacular 2025

Halloween in Mere has long been a full-on community occasion. You're guaranteed to see hordes of families out trick or treating, though to be fair there's not a lot of tricking. Many householders get into the spirit of the night, so there are plenty of lit pumpkins welcoming visitors. This year the town was even more buzzing than usual, with added attractions courtesy of Mere Town Council.

During half term week, a body parts quiz kept children busy hunting for items in shop windows. On Thursday, a Halloween themed arts and crafts session at Seeds4Success – our amazing youth centre – proved popular.



On Halloween itself, there were free fake tattoos and nail art at the clock tower, while the Brownies and Guides had a fundraising stall with spooky treats and lucky dip. At the former Methodist Church, our costume competition attracted lots of entries – hardly surprising considering the cash prizes up for grabs!

In one of the chapels in the old cemetery, atmospheric candlelit storytelling was a highlight. Storyteller (and witch of Wookey Hole) Sarah Mooney entertained families and teenagers with tall tales, before sending them off into the night to find the entrance to the underworld. Come to think of it, we haven't seen them since...



Rachael Hansford



### Advanced Warning

There will be no hearing Aid clinic at the URC in January.

## Mere School

Mere School Fireworks was an amazing success again and raised **£12,500** for the school.

Thank you to everyone who came along to support us – it was a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together. Everyone who came told us that they had really enjoyed the event and the incredible fireworks.

This FREE event relied on so much support and help from local businesses, Mere Town Council, school parents, governors and staff, The Friends of Mere School, school and community friends and our children and we are incredibly grateful.

The money raised last year was put to good use! We reconditioned our Astro-turf, paid for all of our children to go to the pantomime, enjoy and learn from a visiting scientist and Forest Schools practitioner, a 'Boom Box' (which is now in huge demand!), Christmas activities and training courses for new school ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants). We have plans for this year as well – more ipads, a charging trolley and new stock for our library, to start with.

We appreciate the patience and understanding of Mere residents as parking, again, proved to be a challenge. The Fireworks Committee will meet with Wiltshire Police in the new year to consider how parking and traffic flow can be improved.



Plans are in motion for next year – please make a note in your diary – **SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2026**. We look forward to seeing you again!

Photos: left by Robert Nutter above by George Jeans

Catriona Williamson

# THE MERE LECTURE HALL TRUST

## Grants Available for 2026

This independent Christian Trust was established in 1924 to promote the spiritual, moral, educational and social welfare of the inhabitants of the town of Mere and the surrounding area. The Trust supports a number of small schemes, charities and voluntary groups with grants for practical action.

The Trust is benevolent in a broad sense and seeks to help people of all ages to enjoy facilities they would not otherwise be able to access. It operates within a Christian ethos for the benefit of the whole community and welcomes a wide range of creative initiatives.

Applications for grant support are now invited for activities or projects based within 8 miles of Mere. The closing date is **28<sup>th</sup> February 2026** and successful applicants will normally be paid within two months of this date.

For further details and an application form please either send an email request to [t.white615@btinternet.com](mailto:t.white615@btinternet.com) or write enclosing an A5 stamped and addressed envelope to: The Grants Committee, The Mere Lecture Hall Trust, c/o Monkswell Cottage, Mill Lane, Mere, Wiltshire, BA12 6DA.

Mary White

## Mere Remembers

The Town clock on a slightly wet winters morning chimed across the Town during the two-minute silence at 11 O' Clock, Sunday 9th November. The "bugler" Mary Burfitt sounded the two minutes silence with the last post and finished with Reveille. The



Remembrance Service in Mere was very well attended with approx 200 people, as was the Church Service afterwards. The service was organized by Churches Together in Mere and District. The Town Council chairman, Sandra Catley and many other local people laid wreathes on behalf of their organizations.

## Walking in Mere

Looking forward to a winter walk or maybe a stocking filler for a walker close to you? The new Walking in Mere cards are available at the Library, the Angel Cafe or The Sprout & Flower. Still at the old price of £3 for a waterproof, recyclable holder containing 6 walks of varying lengths with map, instructions and some history – you may even learn something about Mere just sitting by the fire!

Enjoy the highways and byways of Mere during the festive season

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Madelaine Morris & the footpath group 07481 555101 [madsmorris@gmail.com](mailto:madsmorris@gmail.com)

### "Get Wiltshire Walking", Wednesday 'Starter' Walk:

Two of our walking groups are taking a break over the winter months but this hardy group of walkers just keep on going! Why not join us for a 40 minute stroll around the footpaths and lanes of Mere? We're a sociable and welcoming group, there's always lots of chat and laughter, both while we walk and afterwards at the Angel Tea Room.



We meet by the surgery every Wednesday, whatever the weather, at 10.00 a.m. Unfortunately, for safety reasons, no dogs are allowed on these walks, except assistance dogs.

---

Dave and Wendy Drewett 07508 340105

## Ukes at The Butt of Sherry

Our next session is on Thursday, 8th January 2026

at 7.30pm at The Butt of Sherry. There will NOT be a session in December at The Butt of Sherry. See you in 2026! Our first session of the year will be at The Butt Of Sherry on Thursday 8th December 2026 at 7.30pm.



I would like to say a huge thank you to Karen at The Butt of Sherry for hosting us throughout the year.

We are a group of ukulele enthusiasts who meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month for an informal evening of strumming and singing. We play a wide range of popular songs and welcome all abilities. If you don't have a ukulele, but would like to join us you would be most welcome. Let me know if you would like to come along and we can have a ukulele for you to play. An evening of fun, laughter and song is guaranteed. You can check out our Facebook page 'Ukes at The Butt' for our song list.

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

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## Mere PPG

Staff from Mere Surgery pictured accepting the new defibrillator from the Mere Surgery Patient Participation Group.



A series of fund-raising events held during the summer allowed the purchase to be made.

A huge thank you to everyone who gave so very generously to raise the money for the defibrillator

Lucy Woolley [lucywoolley1@gmail.com](mailto:lucywoolley1@gmail.com)

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## The Wiltshire Bobby Van

A Black-Tie Dinner and Musical Journey performed by renowned concert pianist Rupert Egerton-Smith was held on Saturday, 1st November, at Hillbrush, Mere.

Rupert has performed three times in support of the charity: once in St Michael's Church, Mere, once at Salisbury Cathedral in front of the charity's Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, and now at Hillbrush.

An online auction, which concluded during the evening, raised over £23,000.

Examples of some of the 50 lots on offer at the annual auction included a 50-inch TV, a Center Parcs break, and a weekend sailing experience. One of the star lots was a £10,000 voucher donated by Howdens.

Additional funds were raised from the dinner, the sale of drinks, and donation envelopes.

The Stay Safe Online Volunteers team offers one-to-one home visits and community talks on online safety. The Bobby Van works in collaboration with Wiltshire Police, who are the main source of referrals. Each year, they visit around 1,500 homes and deliver approximately 200 talks to community groups.



*Philip Coward, Rupert Egerton-Smith,  
Emily Tulloch*

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## New Year! – New Bottom!

We will be setting off from the Clock Tower in Mere at 11 am on **New Year's Day!**

Put the date in your diary and start 2026 with a breath of fresh air.



If you haven't been on a Great Bottom walk – it is a four mile walk with a climb of 370 feet (6.6 kilometres and 112 metres, if you prefer). Splendid views and lungs full of fresh air throughout. We will be providing badges, a hot toddy or other warming drink for those who complete. Walkers will be wearing their badge and enjoying a hot drink between 12:30 and 1 pm.

Let us know that you are walking so we can prepare, register on:

<https://forms.gle/ztwvV6fMWc3NZyMr7> or use this QR code.

Or, you can leave a message for John on 01747 861567 (while we still have a landline) and contact David or Wendy Drewett on 01747 228343 to register for the shorter walk.

Like last year, an alternative shorter, level walk starting at the clocktower at the later time of 11.45 will also be available. This group will walk for about 45 minutes and meet up with the Great Bottom walkers for the hot toddy at the finish line. Contact David or Wendy on 01747 228343 to register for the shorter walk.



We could do with some volunteers: a few to lead the walk and three people to serve drinks at the end of the walk. Contact John if you can help, many thanks.

John Jordan [john.a.jordan@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:john.a.jordan@hotmail.co.uk)

Copy date for the **February 2026** issue

Closing date deadline is: **16:00hrs on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

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

## Wiltshire Libraries 'Warm space'

- Our libraries provide a warm space that anyone can spend time in, find their next good read, get online, pick up information and have a friendly chat.
- Many libraries run activities throughout the colder months from communal jigsaws to crafting groups, with a free hot drink where available, ask what's happening at your library.
- Borrow a thermal imaging camera from any Wiltshire library to check your house for heat loss.
- If you need advice on how to stay warm this winter speak to Wiltshire Libraries and we can help you find information and support from trusted organisations.

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## Mere Toddlers

Can you support a trolley collection on **Friday 5th Dec** outside the Co-op from 4-6 pm in aid of the Foodbank? It's a chance to donate a

couple of long-life items such as tins, dried goods, squash, jars, even toiletries, or any extra little Xmas treat.

The people of Mere are always so kind hearted at times like this, we are always bowled over by the response, so thank you in advance for your help.

Anne Rich : 07413512023



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## **CHURCHES TOGETHER In Mere & DISTRICT**

Everyone is very welcome come to any of our Churches for our Christmas services (see details on pages after the monthly calendars) and also to join us singing carols in Mere Square at 11am on Christmas Eve.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held, as usual from 18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January, and on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January, instead of our usual morning services in our different Churches, we will meet together for a joint service led by the Revd Michael Molano at St Michael's, Mere, using the service provided by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. There are also half-hour weekday prayer and discussion meetings planned for the following days and times:

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January at St Michael's Mere at 9.30am

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January at St Mary's Kilmington at 9.00am

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January at Mere URC at 9.30am

Everyone is welcome to come to any of these services, but the Churches maybe chilly, so please come wearing plenty of warm clothes!

Our AGM will be held at 10am on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026 in Mere United Reformed Church at 10am (following the WPCU 9.30 service). All members and supporters of any of the Churches in Mere and District are invited to our AGM

Judith Thompson, Secretary, Churches Together in Mere and District 860553



### **FOOT HEALTH PRACTITIONER**

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

### Venue Key:

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

### December

1	Mon	09:15 <b>Pilates</b> (every Mon)	GB
		09:30 <b>Tiddlers and Toddlers</b> (every Mon)	L
		17:45 <b>Yoga</b> (every Mon)	L
		18:00 <b>Scouting</b> (every Mon)	GB
2	Tues	09:00 <b>Little Angels</b> (every Tues)	GB
		10:30 <b>Craft &amp; Chat</b> (every Tues)	Lib
		18:20 <b>Zumba</b> (every Tues)	L
		19:30 Full-Body Function for Women	GB
		19:00 <b>MADS</b> (every Tues)	L
3	Weds	09:00 <b>Chair Yoga</b> (every Weds)	L
		09:30 <b>Tai-Chi</b> (every Weds)	GB
		10:00 <b>Get Wiltshire Walking (GWW)</b> - every Weds)	SCP
		14:00 <b>Pilates</b> (every Weds)	L
		18:30 <b>Karate</b> (every Weds)	L
		19:30 Move Her Ignite	GB
		Railway Modellers (every Weds)	RMC
4	Thurs	09:00 <b>Walking Zumba</b> (every Thurs)	L
		10:00 <b>Art Group</b> (every Thurs)	GB
		10:00 Hearing Aid Clinic	URC
		10:30 <b>Harmony 4 Health</b> (every Thurs)	L
		11:00 <b>Rhyme Time</b> (every Thurs)	Lib
		14:00 <b>Rubber Bridge</b> (every Thurs)	L
		17:15 <b>Girlguiding</b> (every Thurs)	GB
19:00 <b>MADS</b> (every Thurs)	L		
		19:30 Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)	URC
5	Fri	14:00 <b>Duplicate Bridge</b> (every Fri)	GB
6	Sat	18:00 Christmas Quiz and Stalls	L
		<b>Coffee Morning</b> (every Sat)	URC
7	Sun		
8	Mon	<i>Pilates, Scouting, T&amp;T, Yoga</i>	
9	Tues	10:00 <b>Keep a Beat</b>	L
		09:30 Little Angels	GB
		14:30 Mother's Union	GB
		19:30 Historical Society	GB
		<i>Craft &amp; Chat, Zumba, MADS</i>	
10	Weds	19:00 Gardening Club	GB
		<i>GWW, Karate, Tai-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates</i>	

11	Thurs	Rhyme Time, Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H	
12	Fri	Bridge	
13	Sat	Coffee Morning	
14	Sun		
15	Mon	10:00 Historical Society Pilates, T&T, Yoga	GB
16	Tues	19:30 Full Body Function for Women Little Angels, Craft & Chat Zumba, MADS	GB
17	Weds	19:00 Merekits (WI) GWW, Karate, Tai-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates	GB
18	Thurs	Rhyme Time Xmas Special Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H	Lib
19	Fri	Bridge	
20	Sat	16:00 Shreen Harmony Concert Coffee Morning	StM
21	Sun		
22	Mon	Pilates, T&T, Yoga,	
23	Tues		
24	Weds		
25	Thurs		
26	Fri		
27	Sat		
28	Sun		
29	Mon	T&T, Yoga,	
30	Tues	Craft & Chat, Zumba, MADS	
31	Weds	GWW, Ti-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates, Karate	

Any events in RED are unconfirmed

## January

1	Thurs	09:00 <b>Walking Zumba (every Thurs)</b> 10:30 <b>Harmony 4 Health (every Thurs)</b> 14:00 <b>Rubber Bridge (every Thurs)</b> 19:00 <b>MADS (every Thurs)</b> 19:30 <b>Shreen Harmony (every Thurs)</b>	L L L L URC
2	Fri	14:00 <b>Duplicate Bridge (every Fri)</b>	GB
3	Sat	<b>Coffee Morning (every Sat)</b>	URC
4	Sun		
5	Mon	09:15 <b>Pilates (every Mon)</b> 09:30 <b>Tiddlers and Toddlers (every Mon)</b> 17:45 <b>Yoga (every Mon)</b>	GB L L
6	Tues	10:00 <b>Keep a Beat</b> 09:00 <b>Little Angels (every Tues)</b> 10:30 <b>Craft &amp; Chat (every Tues)</b> 18:20 <b>Zumba (every Tues)</b> 19:00 <b>MADS (every Tues)</b> 19:30 <b>Historical Society</b>	L GB Lib L L GB
7	Weds	09:00 <b>Chair Yoga (every Weds)</b> 09:30 <b>Tai-Chi (every Weds)</b> 10:00 <b>Get Wiltshire Walking (GWW - every Weds)</b> 14:00 <b>Pilates (every Weds)</b> 18:30 <b>Karate (every Weds)</b> 19:30 <b>Move Her Ignite</b> <b>Railway Modellers (every Weds)</b>	L GB SCP L L GB RMC
8	Thurs	11:00 <b>Rhyme Time (every Thurs)</b> 19:30 <b>Ukulele</b> <b>Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H</b>	Lib BS
9	Fri	10:00 <b>Merely Women</b> <b>Bridge</b>	GB
10	Sat	<b>Coffee Morning</b>	
11	Sun		
12	Mon	18:00 <b>Scouting (every Mon)</b> <b>Pilates, T&amp;T, Yoga</b>	GB
13	Tues	14:30 <b>Mother's Union</b> 19:30 <b>Full Body Function for Women</b> <b>Little Angels, FBF, Craft &amp; Chat, Zumba, MADS</b>	GB GB
14	Weds	19:00 <b>Gardening Club</b> <b>GWW, Karate, Tai-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates</b>	GB
15	Thurs	<b>Rhyme Time, Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H</b>	
16	Fri	<b>Bridge</b>	
17	Sat	<b>Coffee Morning</b>	
18	Sun		

19	Mon	Pilates, Scouts, T&T, Yoga		
20	Tues	Little Angels, FBF, Craft & Chat, Zumba, MADS		
21	Weds	19:00	Merekits (WI)	GB
		GWW, Karate, Tai-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates		
22	Thurs	Rhyme Time, Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H		
23	Fri	10:00	Merely Women	GB
		18:00	Cine Club Film Night	GB
		Bridge		
24	Sat	Coffee Morning		
25	Sun			
26	Mon	10:30	Historical Society	GB
		Pilates (TBC), Scouts, T&T, Yoga		
27	Tues	Little Angels, FBF, Craft & Chat, Zumba, MADS		
28	Weds	am	Mere Jelly	VH
		14:30	Pennybank Writers	L
		19:30	Move Her Ignite	GB
		GWW, Tai-Chi, RM, Yoga, Pilates, Karate		
29	Thurs	Rhyme Time, Art, Guiding, Shreen Harmony, Zumba, Bridge, MADS, H4H		
30	Fri	18:00	Cine Club Film Night	GB
		Bridge		
31	Sat	Coffee Morning		

Any events in RED are unconfirmed

## Mere Toddlers Foodbank

A Very Big Thank you: from Mere Toddlers Foodbank to Mere Kits (WI), for their generous donation, which was accepted at the Nov 19th meeting. The donation is to be used towards a special Christmas family fund helping those in need in Mere and the local district, which is only possible with support from Mere Foresters, plus Warminster Foodbank and is orchestrated through Mere School, all of whom we would also like to thank again this year.

We would also like to thank Sprout and Flower-who will be running a big Christmas raffle on our behalf this year, and Country Court Care Home for their very kind donation of cakes!



Anne Rich [annerich\\_99@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:annerich_99@yahoo.co.uk)

## Church Contact and Service Details

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

Vicar: The Rev'd Michael Molano 07396 979448

Churchwardens: Mr Kit Stallard 07803-086161 Mr Richard Wilson 07966-244373

Admin Secretary: [administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

### December

7 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Family Service
9 <sup>th</sup>	Tues	12:00	Mothers' Union Carol Service
14 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:00	Parish Communion
18 <sup>th</sup>	Thurs	18.00	Carol Service
21 <sup>st</sup>	Sun	08:00 10.30	BCP Communion Parish Communion
24 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	16.00 23.00	Crib and Christingle service – children encouraged to dress as a Nativity character Midnight Mass
25 <sup>th</sup>	Thurs	10.30	Christmas Day Family Communion
28 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10.30	Parish Communion

NB – in Dec, Jan & Feb the 8am service will be on the first and third Sunday of the month only. There is no Roman Catholic Mass this month.

### January

4 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	08:00 10:30	BCP Communion Family Service
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:30	Parish Communion
18 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11.00	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity joint service at URC
25 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:30	Parish Communion
NB in Jan and Feb the 8am service will be on the first and third Sunday of the month.			
There is no Roman Catholic Mass this month.			

Thinking of Advertising in Mere Matters?

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

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

Vicar: The Rev'd Michael Molano 07396 979448

Churchwardens: Mrs Jill Randall 830534 Sir Charles Burnett 01747 812089

**December**

7 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	DIY Service
14 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09.30	Communion
21 <sup>st</sup>	Sun	18.00	Carol Service
25 <sup>th</sup>	Thurs	09:30	Communion - Christmas Day Service
29 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09.30	No Service

**January**

4 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	DIY Service
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09.30	Communion
18 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11.00	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity joint service at URC, Mere
25 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	09:30	Matins

**The United Reformed Church**

Minister: Vacancy

Mere Contact: Derek Fisher – 07935 266375 [delfisher@btopenworld.com](mailto:delfisher@btopenworld.com)**December**

7 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mr Dudley Coates
14 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Rev Penelope Dent
21 <sup>st</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mrs Jane Hurd (Carol Service)
25 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	10:30	Worship Service (10.30 start)
28 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Rev Colin Marsh (Communion)

**January**

4 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	TBA
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mrs Christine Marsh
18 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	WPCU United Service at St Michael (10.30)
25 <sup>th</sup>	Sun	11:00	Mrs Jane Hurd

## The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.

Parish Office: 01963-34408 [hope.stlukeswincanton@outlook.com](mailto:hope.stlukeswincanton@outlook.com)

St Mary's has closed and weekend Masses are on Saturday 5.30pm and Sunday at 11:00am and take place at SS Luke and Teresa, South Street, Wincanton BA9 9DH.

Christmas Mass times at St Luke's are:

Christmas Eve 5:30pm - Family Mass

Christmas Eve 10:00pm - Carols leading into...

Christmas Eve 10:30pm - Vigil Mass for Christmas Day

Christmas Day 11:00am - Mass

Boxing Day - No Mass.

Mass at St Michael the Archangel is usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 10.30am but there will be no Mass in December. The next Mass at St Michael's is scheduled for **Tuesday 20 January** at 10.30am

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

John FitzGerald 860867

## Mere Library

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

Tuesday: 09:30 – 17:00

Wednesday: 10:00 – 13:00\*

Thursday: 09:30 – 17:00

Friday: 09:30 – 17:00

Saturday: 09:30 – 13:00

\* Volunteer operated opening hours.

Julia Upton 01985 216022 [julia.upton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:julia.upton@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## Booking Meeting Venues

Grove Building:	<a href="mailto:administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk">administrator@stmichaelsmere.org.uk</a>	07942 291266
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	861063
URC Church Hall:	Derek Fisher	07935 266375

## Mere Art Group

We saw our maximum attendance of 19 in November – a real social gathering, including 5 from Gillingham. There is room for more, so come along and enjoy the atmosphere, the coffee and food – and first visit is FREE!

This Issue's art work is VERY Different from the 'norm'. It was done digitally by David Allen on an iPad. I leave him to explain:

'Juno' was painted on an iPad Pro 24, with the digital watercolour brushes, on an app named "Sketchbook", using an Apple Pencil Pro.

The app is free and can be downloaded to an iPhone or iPad from the App Store.

On completion of my work, I uploaded a JPEG of the image to eFrame, chose a size for the image, a mount and a frame from their vast selection. They did the rest and the picture was delivered by Royal Mail.



You might have seen other products of David's work at the recent Exhibition.

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

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## Mere Theatre Club

When you read this, Christmas will be knocking at the door closely followed by another new year and we shall be looking forward to welcoming many members at The Butt of Sherry on December 10th from 12.00 for a festive drink and snacks. By invitation only.

The winter and spring programme is booked up with a wide range of outings to 3 different theatres and a non theatre visit to Marlborough and the Silk Merchant's House. More outings are being planned for the summer. So if you don't want to miss out next year join us! Contact details below.

Happy Christmas and a fascinating new year!

Madelaine Morris 07482 555101 [madsmorris@gmail.com](mailto:madsmorris@gmail.com)

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**CHRISTMAS  
QUIZ & STALLS**

**Saturday 6th December**  
**Mere Lecture Hall**

**£5 per head- Pay on entrance**

**Doors open @ 6.00pm for Stalls**  
**Quiz starts @ 7.30pm**

**Bring your own drinks along, limited  
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**Website: [www.meredentistry.co.uk](http://www.meredentistry.co.uk) Mere Dental Practice, Duchy Manor, Springfield Road, Mere. BA12 6EW**

## Friends of St Michael and Church events 2025/26

**Thursday December 18th** Time to be confirmed

Singers from the choir of University College Oxford. Service of 9 lessons and Carols. Wine and Mince pies. Free entry with a retiring collection

**Saturday 20th December 4pm**

Shreen harmony Christmas Concert. Free entry with a retiring collection for the Mere Food bank

**Saturday Jan17th 2026** The Belle St Duo " The Ratpack Gals"

The Grove building Doors & bar open at 7:30. Performance 8pm.  
Price £18 with Early bookings at £15 up until Christmas

**Sunday April 12th 5:30 pm**

Fiddling with history. Violin concert by Emma- Marie Kabanova, who studied privately with Dagmara Kalashkova, a principal violinist of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra in Moscow until Feb 2022. Free entry with a retiring collection.

**May 3rd Ensemble** May Hesperis

This is a visiting Quartet from London who play Baroque music with a Violin, Cello Sunday, Baroque recorder & a Harpsicord.

For full details of all concerts see <https://friendsofstmichaels.org/> If you would like to be added to our mailing list please e-mail to [membership@friendsofstmichaels.org.uk](mailto:membership@friendsofstmichaels.org.uk)

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## Mere Museum

I am pleased to announce that there is now a plaque in the Museum dedicated to Doctor Longbourne alongside a tribute to him in the tower cabinet. Without his dedication and hard work during his life time the Museum would not exist. We have a wonderful collection of photos and artefacts giving us a rich history of the local area many of them sourced by Doctor Longbourne. I will be adding to the tribute as items become available to me.

Rose Heesom Hon. Curator 07791 559 674 [roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk)

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YOU ARE INVITED TO

# *Shreen Harmony* & FRIENDS

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

SATURDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2025

4.00PM ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH  
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CHARITY CONCERT IN SUPPORT OF  
**MERE FOOD BANK**



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



## CineClub prepares for 2026

As this issue of Mere Matters closed for press CineClub Mere was finalising the programme for its first season of film screenings for 2026, starting in January, as well as planning its first AGM.



The programme for the coming year will follow the now-established mix of classic and contemporary British and international productions. Screenings include refreshments provided with the help of committee members and a dedicated band of volunteer club members and there is time before and after the screening to chat about the film and about movie matters more generally.

"We've had fantastic support from members, most of whom have already renewed for next year," said the club's joint chair Rosie Jordan-Barr. "But there is still time to renew, and for anyone who is interested in becoming a member to join-up.

"As in 2025 films will be shown in the Grove Building, usually on the fourth Friday of the month."

The AGM will include refreshments and a free short film and is likely to be on February 6 – date will be confirmed to members and advertised locally. All members and prospective members welcome, though only paid-up members will be able to speak in formal discussions or vote.

Spenn Gunn [spengunn@aol.com](mailto:spengunn@aol.com)



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## From Times Gone By!

*Dancing and Gymnastic Exercises.*

*MR LOWE (late Pupil Monsieur Coulon, principal Maître de Danse à Paris), respectfully intimates that his PUPILS, taught at the Mere Academy, will go through part of their LESSONS, at the Ship Assembly-Room on Wednesday the 14th inst at seven o'clock in the evening; after which an ASSEMBLY BALL will begin at nine o'clock, directed by Mr. Lowe. Tickets 3s each.*

Salisbury & Wilts Journal, 4 December 1831

*To be SOLD by AUCTION, by Mr. Guy at the Ship Inn, Mere, on Monday, the 28th January 1839 at three o'clock in the afternoon - The following very desirable FREEHOLD PREMISES:*

*All that old-established and well-accustomed INN, POSTING and COMMERCIAL HOUSE, called the "The Ship", with Stabling for fifty coach and post-horses, lock-up Coach-houses, Malthouse, walled-in Gardens, and a Piece of exceedingly rich Pasture Land, close adjoining ... now in the occupation Mr. John Toogood, who is retiring from the Public Business. The situation is extremely desirable, being on the Great Western Road, between Deptford Inn and Wincanton. The Devonport Mail, Telegraph, Vivid, Defiance, Subscription, and North Devon Coaches pass daily to and from Exeter and London, as well as a Coach to and from Bath and Poole.*

Salisbury & Wilts Journal, 7 January 1839

Martyn Beardsley



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## Mere Mortals Petanque Club

Mere Mortals continue undeterred by the weather Gods to throw steel boule around their terrain of four pistes on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings. I read somewhere that doctors are prescribing petanque to patients to get them out in the fresh air and to be more active. What would the French make of that? The medics are making a good point as the game gets you moving, stretching, throwing and, as we haven't an indoor bouldrome yet, one is forced out into the open. Only rain and snow stop Mere Mortals as extra layers are donned. Our AGM will be held in January at HQ, the Social Club and we are already looking forward to defending the titles won this summer in the Nadder and Stour Petanque League. New members are always welcome (we have a newby who is under 40!), kit and instruction provided for free.



Colin Senneck 706008 [colin2423@sky.com](mailto:colin2423@sky.com)

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## Friends of Mere Museum

Due to high levels of interest, The Friends of Mere Museum will be having a second screening of Mere on Film, featuring the people and places in Mere from previous decades. This will be on **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January** at 7pm in The Grove Building. Tickets cost £7.50 and this includes a welcome drink on arrival. As before, the film will be shown in 2 parts with a chance, during the interval, to discuss what you've seen. There will also be another raffle and drinks for donations in the interval. By the time you read this, people who had expressed an interest in attending a second screening will have been contacted. Any remaining tickets will be available from the Library during its opening hours (apart from Mondays AM or Wednesdays) If you cannot get there, please contact 01747 861567 to arrange.



Rosie 861567 [rosiejb77@gmail.com](mailto:rosiejb77@gmail.com)

---



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### Fun

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Head Office | 39 Commercial Rd | Poole | BH14 0HU

# Care South

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Care South, a not-for-profit charity and leading provider of residential, dementia, nursing, assisted living and care at home across the south of England. Registered Charity No. 1014697. \* Correct at time of print.

## Mere Bowls Club

The Outdoor Bowls season has finally come to an end for 2025, and what an amazing season it has been. We have done what no other club in the Westbrook League has ever done before and won not only the league title but the Gala Day and the Harold Ford Cup. We've also now won the Harold Ford Cup two years in succession. The final day of the outdoor season consisted of the Aussie Pairs, a strange game with sometimes difficult rules to follow, invigilated by Alan Inwood who kept a list of infringements, and eventually won by Les Manwaring and Ron Heesom; 16 players took part.

This was followed by the Narine Trophy, which is a match between the greenkeepers and the ladies, it was won by the greenkeepers but the ladies said they deliberately lost it because they didn't want the trophy.

The day was concluded by an indoor barbeque which was much enjoyed.

The greens team are now beginning the work of preparing the green for next season which begins at the end of April 2026.

We have started the Indoor Bowls season now at the Clarrie Dunbar Indoor Bowls Club at Standerwick and are regularly getting 10-12 players each Monday.

Jon Wright [jon252@btinternet.com](mailto:jon252@btinternet.com)

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## Shreen Harmony

This year's **Christmas concert** is on **Saturday 20th December** in St Michaels Church at 4.00 p.m.

We have decided to try an earlier time as this is such a busy period for people, with so many events to attend, so maybe the afternoon will work better for everyone. We will be serving hot sausage rolls and mince pies and of course Mulled Wine. Our chosen charity this Christmas is the **Mere Food Bank**.

It will be a lovely way to start the Christmas Season and we hope to see you there.

---

Sandra Fisher 861980 [www.shreenharmony.co.uk](http://www.shreenharmony.co.uk)

## Mere Gardening Club

Our members enjoyed a very interesting talk from Stuart Pocock about roses last month. We had a brilliant turn out and hopefully we will all have masses of blooms next year.

Next month December is our Christmas Social which is open to members only. We will be having some fun and games so please make sure you let us know if are attending before the end of November in order to help us with catering. Please come in festive attire if you wish.

January see us welcoming a speaker from Castle Gardens advising us on how to get the best out of seeds, looking at sowing, pricking them out and potting on. Venuve the Grove Building, 19.00 for 19.30 start on both months.

The committee wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year. We look forward to seeing you soon.

---

Rose Heesom 07791 559 674 [roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk)

Help us save printing costs by having Mere Matters delivered direct to your Inbox.

Register here: <http://eepurl.com/i44fBo>, it costs nothing.

## Mothers Union

We were very fortunate in November to hear Elizabeth Barrett sharing the amazing story of her great great grandfather's life, moving on from being a young lad in Lincolnshire to the position of Dean's Verger at St. Paul's Cathedral. This gave us interesting information about the workings of the Cathedral in the 19th Century as well.

As usual, on **December 9th** we shall be holding our Service of Lessons and Carols in the Church rather than a meeting, followed by refreshments in the Grove Building. We would like to welcome as many people as possible to join us.

We send Christmas Greetings to all our friends in Mere

Margaret Oliver 860111 [megoliver83@gmail.com](mailto:megoliver83@gmail.com)

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## Mere Jelly

A new year often brings big ideas, but it can also feel a bit lonely starting afresh. Mere Jelly is the perfect way to ease into the year, with friendly faces, shared conversations, and a space where both work and community come together. Some of us open our laptops, others just open the conversation. Why not start your year with us? We meet on Wednesday 28th January, 9am to noon at The Brush and Broom, Hillbrush and hope to see you there.



Jenni Bell 07956-869699

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## Mere Amateur Dramatics

Thank you all for attending "ALLO ALLO 2" and sharing this experience with us, we hope you enjoyed the performance as much as we did creating it. We are grateful for all the amazing support we have had, it was a pleasure to see you all there; your enthusiasm made each and every performance special.

Going forward we have Forest Forge Theatre co. performing "PINOCCHIO" on Thursday 18th December @ Mere Lecture Hall. Tickets are £10 and can be

purchased from Sprout & Flower and The Angel Tea Rooms with doors opening at 6.45pm & the performance starting at 7.30pm.

Thank you again and we look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Holly Robert on behalf of MADS- 07801901912

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We are now approaching the end of 8 weeks closure of the Day Centre due to post-operative sick leave for our Centre Manager, Sandie

Hawkins. I am pleased to report that she is doing well, and we are all looking forward to re-opening on December 1st. On her return to work, Sandie will be plunging straight into our Christmas programme of festive activities culminating in the Christmas party on December 19th. After that we will be closing for the annual break until Friday January 2nd 2026.

During the current closure we have been keeping an eye on all our guests through visits and phone calls. At the half-way point of the closure, our deputy manager, Sue Slack arranged a get-together for lunch at the Walnut Tree, which was a great success, ensuring that everyone continued to feel connected.

I am delighted to announce that we have a new Treasurer. Simon Moon will be taking over from our Vice Chair, Peter Gane who has carried us through the intervening gap since Andrew Thomas left us to relocate to Wales. Simon brings a wealth of experience in financial matters relating to the older generation.

This leaves one space remaining on our management committee. It would be wonderful to hear from anyone with experience of charity governance (either as a trustee or in another form of management). Even better if that experience is in the health or social care sectors. The role would be an excellent opportunity for a newcomer to get involved and make friends in the community. For further information, please contact me, Jane Mason, on 01747 861296 or [chair@meredaycentre.org.uk](mailto:chair@meredaycentre.org.uk).

Jane Mason 861296 [chair@meredaycentre.org.uk](mailto:chair@meredaycentre.org.uk)

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## Mere & District Link Scheme

We are happy to confirm that the Link will continue to take people to medical appointments over the Christmas and New Year holidays. However, please note that our phone will **not** be "manned" on 24, 25, 26, 31 December 2025 and 1 and 2 January 2026. If you have a medical appointment between these dates, please let us know by Friday 20 December, if at all possible to give us the best chance of getting you a driver.

October was the busiest month so far this year with 143 trips completed, 21 cancelled and only 1 with no driver available. Our drivers did 5,803 miles and 343 hours and the co-ordinators made/received an estimated 800+ phone calls. A staggering effort from everyone.



We need more drivers to help us meet the demand and if you are interested in volunteering as a driver please call our co-ordinator on 01747 860096. This could be one of your New Year's resolutions! Our volunteer drivers choose when they want to drive and to where they want to go and receive 45p/mile to cover the additional costs of using their own car.

If you want to use the Link, once you have an appointment please call 01747 860096 to book a driver. But please remember we are not a taxi service! **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, we require, wherever possible, 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.

With best wishes for Christmas and 2026 to our current and future users and all our generous volunteers.

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John FitzGerald Chair 860096  [merelink.org.uk](http://merelink.org.uk)

## Historical Society

The Society's Autumn programme continues in December with an evening talk on **Tuesday 9th December** at 7.30 p.m., when Jennifer Parker, Assistant Curator of the Bath Fashion Museum, will speak on a subject that may be guessed and speculated upon, but whose True Name and Nature is, at the time of writing, known only to herself. (Clue: something to do with fashion in Olden Times, possibly.) As this is the last evening meeting before Christmas, a festive glass of wine will be offered.

Next on **Monday 15th December**, at 10.30 a.m. Christopher Foster, Curator of the Wincanton Museum, will speak on "Be sober, be vigilant", a history of the mounted branch of the Metropolitan Police.

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 in Church Street.

Peter Landymore, Chair: 228819

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## PennyBank Writers

PennyBank Writers was started over twenty years ago under the leadership of Adrienne Howell who continues to be our mentor and inspiration. Many of you will be aware that Adrienne is now unwell, but she wishes to thank everyone for all the kind wishes she has received. Meanwhile our monthly meetings continue on the last Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm in the Lecture Hall and if anyone would like to join our group please contact me for more details. We still have a few of our three booklets available at £3.00 each – Merely Flash, Mere Metre and Mere Miscellany – which might perhaps be an unusual birthday or Christmas card.

We have no meeting in December but instead gather together for a Christmas Lunch and to celebrate our year of writing. With that in mind PennyBank Writers would like to wish all our readers, supporters, and in fact everyone, a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Mary White [t.white615@btinternet.com](mailto:t.white615@btinternet.com)

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## Merekits - Women's Institute

In November, the members of Merekits WI enjoyed a delightful evening focused on the craft of creating art with pebbles. The session was expertly led by Mandy, who began by teaching us how to find sea glass. Following her demonstration, everyone was given the chance to try their hand at pebble craft, resulting in a collection of wonderful artworks. The event was filled with laughter and creativity, providing a fantastic opportunity for members to socialise and share time with like-minded individuals.

**December Meeting** is scheduled for the 17th, at the Grove building from 19:00 to 21:00. This gathering will be a festive occasion, featuring a Christmas get-together with a range of seasonal activities. We warmly invite anyone interested in meeting new people and discovering more about Merekits WI to join us for this special evening. Looking ahead on the **16th January** we will meet at the Grove building for an exciting demonstration of Lebanese cooking which promises both entertainment and inspiration for all who attend.

Merekits WI offers a variety of other groups for its members to join which includes regular walking activities as well as coffee and cake, a craft group, book club, skittles, and international dining evenings, to ensure there is something to suit everyone's interests. So, if you are interested to find out more about us, please come along to one of our regular meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Grove building between 19:00 to 21:00. There is always something enjoyable for members to take part in throughout the year, looking forward to seeing you there.

Verena Cooper 07971-790256 [verenacooper2@gmail.com](mailto:verenacooper2@gmail.com)



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