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SEPTEMBER 2025

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## The Editor's Letter

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Welcome back, Readers, and, after a long, hot summer, here's hoping for a clement cruise towards Christmas. I wouldn't have mentioned it so soon but Pylle is already thinking Yuletide (P6) as well as having a past and present residents' dinner in the Village Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> October (P35).

Most of the regular events start up again – Rendezvous on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the Village lunch on the 30<sup>th</sup> at Ditcher (P10). (Big Screen doesn't kick off until next month with *Mr Burton* – a look at the early life of actor Richard Burton; you can see the full programme on P14).

The East Pennard Community Drop-in starts again on Tuesdays (P22) and Pennard Plants has one of its open days when you can 'meander at leisure through the available plants' on the 11<sup>th</sup> (P30).

Haddon Wood is back with its celebratory Apple Day on 7<sup>th</sup> September – apple pressing, kids' activities, local artists, live music, guided nature walk ...(see P21).

And a bit of a new twist at The Tin Tabernacle in Alhampton – it will be the setting for an informal evening of music with the Bristol Ensemble and you can take advantage of a meal-deal with the Ally, too (P23).

Wishing all the students going to new school/colleges a happy start to their year and best wishes to all.

*Margy Cockburn Tim Sanders*

Front cover: Hedgerow Harvest,  
Robbie Labanowski ©.  
Please send your cover photos to:  
[editor@fossetrinitynews.co.uk](mailto:editor@fossetrinitynews.co.uk).

The Fosse Trinity News is a community magazine delivered free to all households in Ditcher, Alhampton, East Pennard and Pylle and online: [www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk](http://www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk).

We reserve the right to edit but welcome contributions from everyone in the community.

Editorial and adverts to be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of month preceding the issue.

Contact: [editor@fossetrinitynews.co.uk](mailto:editor@fossetrinitynews.co.uk) or [adverts@fossetrinitynews.co.uk](mailto:adverts@fossetrinitynews.co.uk).

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## Dates for your Diary



### Regular Events

	Weekly	Monthly		
<b>Mon</b>	✓		Pilates (9.00)	Michelle XXXXXX
	✓	✓ 4 <sup>th</sup>	Crafternoon (2.00)	Marion XXXXXX
		✓ 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rendezvous (10.00)	Lynda XXXXXX
		✓ 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Ditchheat Art Group (10.00)	Liz & Stewart XXXXXX
	✓		East Pennard Drop In	Frances XXXXXX
<b>Tue</b>		Last Tues	Village Lunch	Jessica XXXXXX
		2 <sup>nd</sup>	Fosseway Gardening	Barbara XXXXXX
			Ditchheat History Group	Roger XXXXXX
	✓		Badminton	Sam XXXXXX
<b>Wed</b>	✓		Ditchheat Short Mat Bowls (7.00)	Martin XXXXXX
<b>Thu</b>	✓		Yoga (9.15)	Clare XXXXXX
			Chair Stretch for Seniors (10.45)	Clare XXXXXX
<b>Fri</b>		✓ 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Folk Dance Club (7.00)	Ama/Peter XXXXXX
<b>Sat</b>		✓ 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Men's Breakfast (8.30)	Roger XXXXXX
	✓		Yoga (9.00)	Clare XXXXXX

### September

Sun 7 <sup>th</sup> Sept 1.00pm	Haddon Wood Apple Day	P21
Tue 9 <sup>th</sup> 10.00am	Rendezvous	Lynda XXXXXX P10
Tue 9 <sup>th</sup> 7.00pm	Fosseway Gardening Club	Barbara XXXXXX P6
Fri 26 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm & 8.30pm	Bristol Ensemble, Alhampton Chapl	P23
Tue 30 <sup>th</sup> 12.30pm	Village Lunch	Jessica XXXXXX P10

### Further Ahead

Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Pylle Vill Hall Fundraiser Lunch	Barbara XXXXXX P35
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> Oct 6.30pm	Ditchheat Big Screen – Mr Burton	P14

**Please check with the organisers for the latest information. Updates will be notified on the magazine website [www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk](http://www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk).**

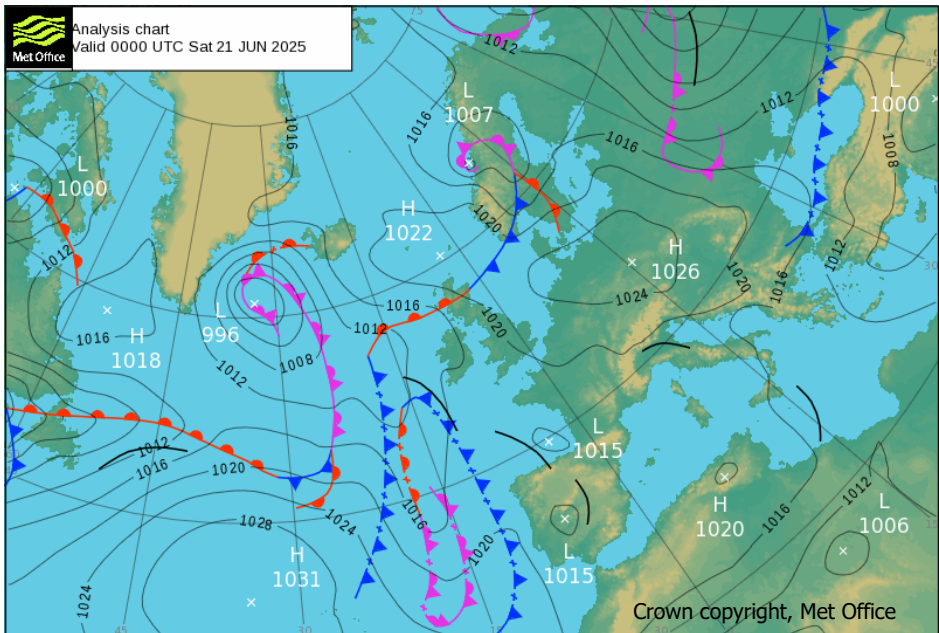
## Alhampton Weather – June and July 2025

For those who look forward to long sunny summer days, this year has been one to remember and there is every indication that this will continue throughout August. However, for those who also want some rain to help the gardens and crops it has been woefully inadequate.

The mean temperature for the two months has been a full  $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{C}$  above the average and rainfall about half what is normal. The chart below is typical of what has persisted over both months with very warm air being drawn up from the south and little of the moderating influence of the Atlantic. This chart was in the build up to the temperature getting to  $35^{\circ}\text{C}$  in Alhampton.

Looking back over the years, what is relatively unusual is to have both June and July as hot and dry with so few cool, damp periods. As recently as three years ago we saw a similar amount of sun, but a little more rain, so this year is certainly not exceptional.

Looking ahead, the consensus of the long-range forecasts is for an early Autumn that is milder than average, but with more rain than normal. Sitting at the tail end of this is a possibility of a cold November, so I hope that you enjoy the warmth while it lasts.



John Clarke





## **PYLLE VILLAGE HALL**

### **SATURDAY DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> 5.30 FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION EVENING**

Mince pies, soup, children and adults Christmas craft.  
More detailed information nearer the date.

## **Fosseway Gardening**



**Meeting:** Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September at Pylle Village Hall.

New start time of 7 pm

**'Bulbs that will create a sparkle of delight'**

with speaker Micky Little.

Members don't forget to bring your geraniums back for judging.

New members always welcome.

Contact Barbara Cary Tel xxxxxx



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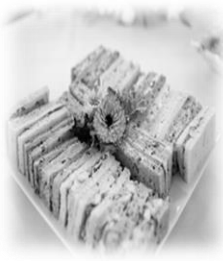
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### **VILLAGE LUNCH**

The Village Lunch is held on the last Tuesday of the month  
in the Jubilee Hall at 12.30pm.

#### **Menu for 30<sup>th</sup> September**

Chicken Divine  
Herbed Pork Fillet  
Sweet Potato & Celeriac Parmigiano  
Selection of Puddings. Tea or Coffee.

**£6.00 per person.**

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If you would like to come let Jessica Leach (xxxxxx) or  
Vee Lees (xxxxxx) know by the previous Wednesday.  
There will be a raffle as usual - any prizes will be welcome.

## **RENDEZVOUS**

**Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September**  
**10am – 11:30 am**  
**Jubilee Village Hall**  
**Ditcheat**

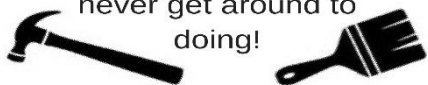


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## East Pennard and District Royal British Legion



Whilst it is a couple of months before we are involved with the annual Poppy Appeal, I thought you would like to know that the Poppy Appeal Manager for Somerset, Paul Bunce, was recognised as a Medallist of the Order of The British Empire, BEM, in the 2025 King's Birthday Honours, for services to veterans.

We offer our congratulations to him.

In my article for July and August I talked about the ending of the Second World War, and the end of hostilities, but the unconditional surrender papers were not signed by the Japanese until 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1945, so that is the official end date.

During July and August, the Legion was proud to partner the South Asian Heritage Trust. The South Asian Heritage Month (SAHM) celebrated South Asian culture and history. Each year the Legion helps to highlight the crucial role of South Asian service personnel throughout the British Armed Forces history. It is vital to remember the contribution of the British Indian Army, who were pivotal in the fight against the Japanese in the Far East and Pacific during the Second World War.

Many of you are either Legion members and/or contribute to the Legion by donating to the Poppy Appeal, so I thought you should be aware of the Legion's Ten-Year Strategy:

The Vision – Bringing Society together to recognise, remember and support the Armed Forces community.

The Mission – The Legion will support our Armed Forces community and ensure their unique contribution is not forgotten.

The Values - Stand together – We stand with an ever-evolving Armed Forces community, sharing a life-long commitment to support and comradeship. We share knowledge and build connections. Together with a national network of charities and partners, we ensure life during and after service is filled with purpose and community.

Be respectful - We stand with the Armed Forces community, valuing and respecting all experience with empathy. We put people first, treating everyone with fairness, and kindness, acting with integrity.

Take pride – We exist to make a positive difference to the Armed Forces community, remembering and honouring service and offering support. We are thoughtful and focus our passion in the right way, taking ownership to ensure every action counts.

Embrace change – We look ahead to better understand the needs of those we serve, leading with confidence, expertise and relevance. Guided by evidence and committed to learning, we are responsive and adaptable, empowered to ensure what we do is meaningful and impactful.

Back to local matters now. We will be holding our annual quiz night again during October, and with their agreement, this will be at The Den, so look out for details in the next FTN, or your email inbox.

Charles Evans



# Ditcheat Big Screen



## AUTUMN 2025 FILM PROGRAMME

All showings commence at Ditcheat's Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm but our doors open at 6.30pm so don't miss the chance to meet up with friends for a drink and a snack in our popular, cosy new snug bar. Tickets are £5 on the door or you can book online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk) (booking fee applies).

Our Autumn programme features:

### **MR BURTON – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October**

#### **Film rating 12A Running time 124 mins**

Life is difficult for Richard Jenkins (played by Harry Lawtey) in 1942, caught as he is between his school in Port Talbot, the pressures of an alcoholic father, a devastating war, and his own ambitions. However, opportunity knocks when Richard's natural talent for drama catches the eye of his teacher, Philip Burton (Toby Jones). Richard thrives under Philip's tutelage and the guidance of kindly landlady, Ma Smith (Lesley Manville), but as the acting world comes within his reach, the burden of Richard's past risks holding him back forever...

Mr Burton is the gripping account of the early life of Richard Burton, arguably Wales's greatest actor.

### **THE PENGUIN LESSONS – Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November**

#### **Film rating 12A Running time 111 mins**

World weary teacher Tom (Steve Coogan) gets a job teaching English and rugby in a rich kids school in Buenos Aires. It's 1976 and Argentina is controlled by a military dictatorship but Tom is far more interested in time on the beach than his pupils or the political situation. During a short trip to Uruguay he rescues an orphaned penguin and smuggles it back into the school, little suspecting that this is the beginning of a personal and political awakening.

Adapted from Tom Michell's autobiographical book of the same name, Coogan's deadpan humour, and the brilliantly scene-stealing penguin, make for a little gem of a film.

### **BRIDGET JONES: MAD ABOUT THE BOY – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

#### **Film rating 15 Running time 124 mins**

Bridget Jones is navigating life as a widow and single mum with the help of her family, friends, and former lover, Daniel (Hugh Grant). Back at work and on the dating apps, she's pursued by a younger man (Leo Woodall) and perhaps even her son's science teacher (Chiwetel Ejiofor)...

This is the Bridget Jones movie we never knew we needed and fans will absolutely LOVE it!



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## The Natural World

Between July 18th and August 10<sup>th</sup> this year, Butterfly Conservation held a 'Big Butterfly Count' across the UK, which also includes the counting of any moths seen, and by half way through they realised that 2025 was going to be a bit of a bonanza. Last year they declared an emergency for moths and butterflies, as the appalling weather had done serious damage to the numbers reported. This year is different though and numbers have soared. You have probably noticed yourself that there are far more butterflies on the wing than usual, and this can only be a good thing. Sure, butterflies and moths are just insects with pretty wings, but they are a very visible indicator of trends, and given the huge decline in insect numbers in recent years, it's good to see an increase for a change. I've said it before, but pestilential as some of them can be, they are a vital part of the food chain.



*Jersey Tiger moth –  
Creative commons*

This year's survey has shown a large increase of sightings of the Jersey Tiger Moth. About 10 years ago, a lady who has now moved from Ditchat, had the reputation of reporting exotic species. These ranged from nightingales to coypu and then she informed me that she had seen a Jersey Tiger Moth. I treated it with the same discreet disdain with which I had taken the news of a coypu. It turned out, however, that she could have been right, as we had one in our garden last year, and Butterfly Conservation have reported that they are now being seen in Cambridgeshire and as far north as the

Midlands. Global warming is allowing some species to move into areas where they couldn't previously survive.

The warm spring and similar summer has provided a bounty in other respects too. We normally have a hedgehog come to our patio for food during the warmer months, but as the best thing to feed them is cat food, we suspected that a neighbour's cat was supplementing his diet at the expense



*Three hedgehogs – Stewart Gould*

of the hedgehogs. Placing a track camera each night soon revealed that he was helping himself, but leaving enough for the hedgehog. Feeding neighbours' cats is a no-no, so we built a cat proof feeding station, and it worked. We have a lot of footage of a perplexed cat trying to push bricks to one side, while trying to gain entrance, but we also have video of an adult hedgehog – and surprise of surprises, in June a second, smaller one turned up as well, and about a week

later, a third juvenile joined the team. It seems we had a mother and two young. It soon became apparent though that the two juveniles were becoming rivals, because there was a lot of barging each other out of the way to get to the water bowl. This photo shows them while they were still on speaking terms. The harmony didn't last long. One stopped coming, and then the other – just leaving the mother as our only night time guest.

Each year it's a race against time for adults of all descriptions to get their young to maturity before the cooler months set in, and the story doesn't always end well. The sad reason that some species produce so many young is because not all of them will make it to adulthood. Some, when going out into the big wide world, are not as prepared as others, and we had a diligent pair of blackbirds feeling one chick for what seemed like an inordinate amount of time. Although perfectly able to fly, and presumably feed itself, it would sit in a tree and demand to be fed. It took the parents a long time to catch on.

Less conspicuous animals have similar problems, and handle them differently. They turf their young out and say 'Get on with it'. My wife, Liz, alerted me to something on the wall outside the dining room which 'you ought to see'. I looked, but struggled to see what she was referring to. About eight feet off the ground was a very small dark patch, about 30mm (1¼") in length. 'I think it's a bat', she said, and sure enough, it was a very small bat indeed. Mid-afternoon and it was clinging to the stonework. We didn't want to interfere, but a bat that small was obviously very young. We decided to see if it flew off after dark, but by 10.00pm it was still there, and the next morning too. We tried several bat rescue charities, but had no luck whatsoever. Then we tried Secret World in East Huntspill. They were very helpful but didn't have a volunteer close-by. 'Could we bring it in?' After preparing an escape proof box, we (Liz) managed to grab it. I made sure that the box was secure, and off we went, carrying a bat the size of a wrapped toffee in a box that even Amazon would have considered too large. It's only a 24 mile drive after all. Early evening and we were greeted warmly, then waited nervously while the 'bat expert' took charge of the box and disappeared, only to return a few minutes later with the good news that our baby pipistrelle bat had suckled on some puppy milk and seemed in fine fettle, considering how very young it was and the trauma. Two days later and apparently 'Pip' is suckling well and has put on weight. He will join the other 12 baby pipistrelles that they have and be released. Incidentally, it seems that it is all young male bats that leave the nest too soon.



*Baby Bat – Liz Gould*

Stewart Gould



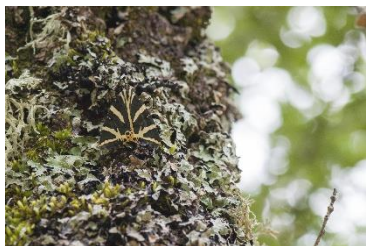
## The Wildlife Group Update

### Share a close encounter:

It has been a fantastic year for Gatekeeper butterflies, so many in fields and hedgerows everywhere I go. They are an attractive member of the "Brown family" a group of butterflies that include Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Ringlets and Marbled Whites in it. You'd have thought that the latter would be in the Whites group, but there you go, that's nature for you.



*Gatekeeper, picture by Graeme*



*Jersey Tiger moth, by Graeme*

The other flying insect that has had an explosion this year is the Jersey Tiger Moth. It can be spotted by its bright orange as it flies and the very strong Zebra-like markings on the upper wing. Also, a goodly number of Hummingbird Hawk moths can be seen.

### What we have done:

**Heal Somerset:** This trip was in early July. The aim of it was to visit this rewilding project in its infancy. As there is open access to two major parts of the project, visitors can go back to see how it is developing over the years. (The car park must be booked and costs £3.00). Heal Somerset is a charity and has a web site which gives you much of the information you need forgetting to know what they do.

We had the most glorious visit. We saw a very small Beaver dam, more of a starter dam than a fully-fledged project, but interesting to see. Because of the streams, there was opportunity for the Beavers and Otters which they have seen on their cameras. There are also plants and insects because of the water; we saw a Gold-ringed dragonfly and a Beautiful Demoiselle, a Damselfly.

The site comprised mainly long grass with paths mown through the fields with boundary hedges. Over the last two years it has been left to do its own thing, and the observable outcome was masses of common butterflies and Oak seedlings coming up in the meadows.

It was an incredibly tranquil place, and we had a joyous outing.



### Margy's Field with the Family WLG:

Margy, Nicola, Hilary and I welcomed a small, select band of children with their parents on a day that threatened storms, but as it turned out was a perfect morning for us. Margy made it all beautiful for us and we had so much fun, making a fire, some of the children striking a match for the first time, as we made, then lit the bonfire. The children played and played and played and we even got some time to look for wildlife.

Notable things that we saw were a Roesel's Bush-cricket and iNaturalist identified a Cuckoo bee (*Psithyrus rupestris*). The latter mimics the colours of its prey and parasitises the nest of Bumble bees.



Margy with some of the FWLG, Hilary

### WLG Photo Competition for September:

Can you identify this bird, seen in Parbrook? Answers by 9<sup>th</sup> October

### Photo competition results for

**July:** Congratulations go to Paul again; the picture was of a Scorpion fly. (*Panorpa* sp.) It can be found in gardens and woods.



### Meeting up:

We were so enthused by the morning that we might do another Family WLG event in the Autumn half term.

Please note that you do not need to be a member of the WLG or FWLG to attend a gathering, but please do RSVP to any invitation, so that you will be looked after. The benefit of being a member is you get notified of events.

### Contact information:

**Bridget Wadey** email: [thewildlifegroup@btinternet.com](mailto:thewildlifegroup@btinternet.com),  
or phone: 01749 860240. *You can follow our activities by:*

- **joining the Wildlife Group - it is free!**
- through the **Fosse Trinity News** (FTN) parish magazine
- **The FTN** website: [www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk](http://www.fossetrinitynews.co.uk)



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# Apple Day

SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

Apple Pressing - Kids Activities - Raffle

Apple cake competition - Live Music

Local Artists - Guided Nature walk

**FREE ENTRY - BA4 6PZ**

1:00 PM till 5:00 PM

Find More Details on the  
Haddon Wood, Alhampton Facebook page







East Pennard Village Hall (Church Rooms)  
East Pennard Community drop-in is going well!  
Join us - Tuesday mornings between 10:30 & 12  
All welcome  
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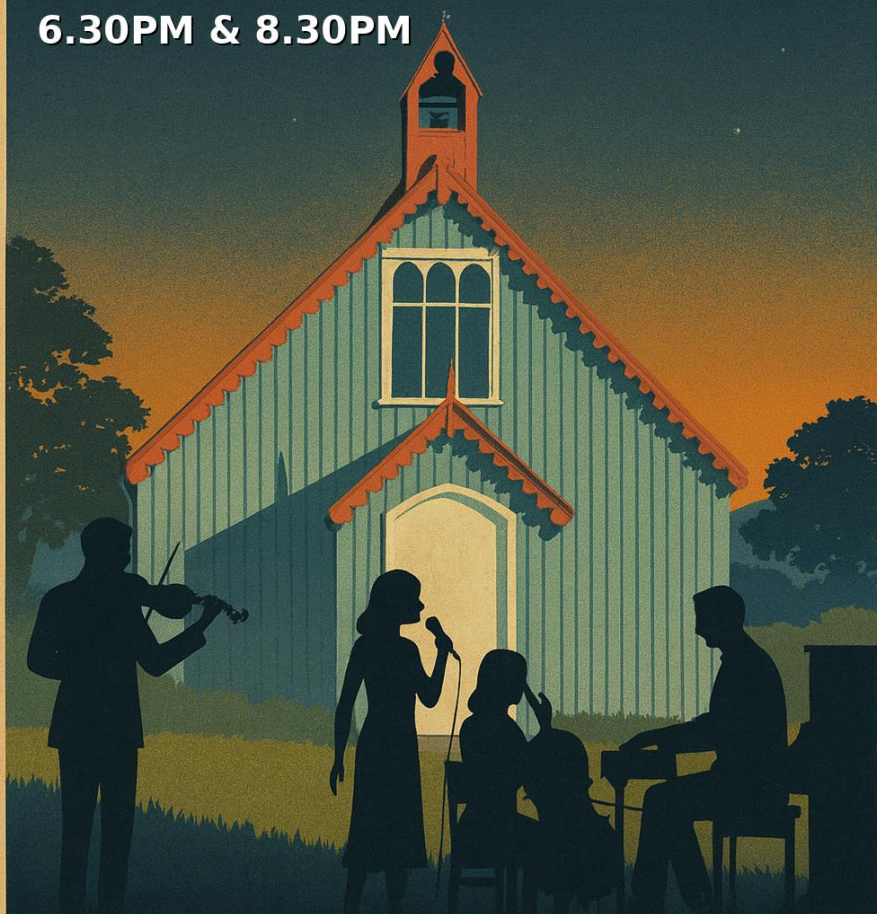
### **Salon Sessions at The Tin Tabernacle, Alhampton Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September**

The Alhampton Tabernacle will be transformed into a cosy, atmospheric setting for *Salon Sessions* — a one-night-only musical soirée with the acclaimed Bristol Ensemble and vocalist Kat Kleve. This intimate concert blends timeless classics, soulful ballads, and lyrical instrumentals, performed by violin, cello, keyboard, and voice. With just two performances at 6.30pm and 8.30pm, it's the perfect opportunity to enjoy high-quality, live, music right on your doorstep.

Tickets are £23, or why not make a night of it with our special dinner deal — delicious fish and chips at the Alhampton Inn plus your concert ticket for only £36. A wonderful evening of music and good company, without travelling far.

# SALON SESSIONS

6.30PM & 8.30PM



**BRISTOL ENSEMBLE WITH KAT KLEVE**  
**FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER**  
**ALHAMPTON TABERNACLE**

Enjoy velvet-toned music as the evening draws in



## Ditchheat School



2024/25 has been a wonderful year with many successes at Ditchheat Primary School.

Year 6 have achieved the best SATs results EVER with 100% EXP in Reading and Grammar, 90% in Maths. Year 6 celebrated with a residential trip to Okehampton for a week with the other Year 6 across the Federation. They also had a FODS treat to Longleat for the day at the end of term. We wish them the best of luck for their new secondary schools in September.

Here are some of the highlights from this summer:

### **The Summer Fair**



## KS2 Summer Performance – Darwin Rocks



We look forward to welcoming our new Reception children into school in September and everyone starting another exciting academic year at Ditchheat Primary School for 2025/26.

### Art Workshop – Magic Lantern funded by Castle Cary Arts Society



Keep in touch with us on our school website: [www.ditchheatprimary.org.uk](http://www.ditchheatprimary.org.uk)

Elaine Cosser Head of School





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[www.higher-farm.co.uk](http://www.higher-farm.co.uk)



## Vegetable Gardening



Even in autumn we are still transplanting spinach and salad rocket sown in August. You can still sow these now, in the first few days of September only. Plus lambs lettuce, claytonia, mizuna and mustards, all to grow outside. Also coriander and chervil. The picture above shows my September garden.

Then around mid-month, sow any salad plants you fancy to harvest through winter, when planted in a polytunnel or greenhouse.

For green manure, sow mustard *Sinapis alba* in any ground you won't need for vegetables this autumn. Another option is broad beans, and they are not for cropping, but to bring carbon into the soil through photosynthesis, also some nitrogen from their root nodules. It's convenient that both of these are killed by frosts below about  $-4^{\circ}\text{C}$ . That results in a residue of stems on the surface, which can be left to decay in place and are good food for earthworms, who come up to forage at surface level.

Many of you tell me that brassicas have been shredded by caterpillars. There is a remedy, but only a few people have heard of it. The soil bacteria, *Bacillus thuringiensis* was discovered as a caterpillar preventative in the 1870s, by Louis Pasteur. In the UK for some reason, it's not encouraged, and yet it's freely



available for use as caterpillar killer on box hedges. It's allowed in organic standards and does not affect any other insects, nor mammals.

Winter squash are close to harvest. They are ready to harvest for winter storage when their stalks have turned from green, to yellow or brown.

Each variety matures at its own time, and the earliest usually is onion squash/ Kuri, often in early September. They turn a bright red colour. After harvest, bring them into your house to help them dry fully. Then they can be stored in any warm, dry place. Even in sunshine!

If you suffer with any of bindweed / Convolvulus, ground elder, creeping buttercups, couch grass, and so on, no dig offers the chance to eliminate them. That is only through initial thick mulching, followed by regular weekly removal of new shoots, until they stop growing. That's when the old roots - which you never see - run out of energy.

It's a commitment and quite a bit of work. But much less work than regular digging of soil to try and remove all existing weed roots, followed by re-digging and depletion of soil fertility each time you do that, through escape of carbon, and damage to soil microbes.



*Charles and a barrow-load of Kuri squash.*

Charles Dowding



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the plants & trees available  
(10.30am to 2.30 pm)



*Thursday - 11th September 2025*

*Wednesday - 15th October 2025*



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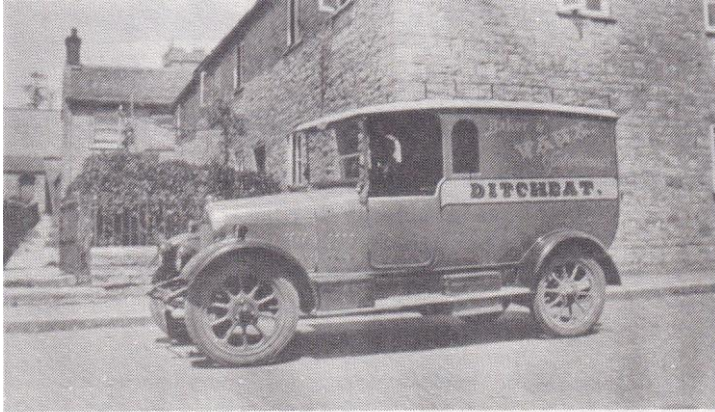


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## From the Archives

Some of us have fond memories of our village bakery. Fred Vaux built the Model Bakery in 1931, the business closed in 1957. Fred's first delivery van parked at the path leading up to the Church Room, Cops cottages were demolished in early sixties when Coplands was built. Part of the property we know as Holmeswood, visible here, was preserved from demolition.



Ditcheat not so long ago — the Vaux delivery van

*photo courtesy Sue Blackmore*

This picture is the builder and wheelwrights yard, run by Mr Castle (from where the Vaux van picture would have been taken)







## **Minutes Ditchheat Annual Parish Council Meeting Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025.**

PRESENT: Chairperson - Councillor Roger Hutton (RH) and Councillors Clark (HC), Thring (CT), Annetts (PA) and Evans (CE).

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss P Griffiths - Clerk to the Council.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – there were no members of the public present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Councillors Sergeant (PS) Adams (LA) and Pearce (RP).

SOMERSET COUNCIL – MENDIP SOUTH DIVISION COUNCILLOR REPORT – noted.

CODE OF CONDUCT – Declarations of interest and dispensations. RH declared a disclosable interest in Item 139/25 a)1) as he is the neighbour of the applicant for planning permission. CE declared a personal interest in Item 140/25 c) 2) as recipient of the payment. HC declared a personal interest in Item 140/25 c) 1) as recipient of the payment.

There were no requests for dispensation of disclosable registerable interests.

MINUTES – The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025 - approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING - from the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

Unstable walls – agreed that as the Clerk had yet to receive a response from the landowner that the situation should be monitored and put on the agenda if necessary –

Health and Wellbeing initiative – the Clerk will continue to follow up.

Higher Farm – update on the lack of clarity with regard to the activities that are taking place and what consents should be in place for those operations. The Clerk reported that following the letter sent to the Planning, Highways and Environmental Departments replies had been received from the Highway Department indicating that the increase in traffic was a planning related matter, the Environmental Health department which includes the licensing department were current dealing with the current application to vary the licence. The planning Department had not responded. Resolved that contact should be made with the Mendip South Division Councillors expressing the concerns of the Parish Council.

Alhampton speed restriction invoice from Somerset Council - The Clerk reported that the invoice was expected imminently and that the group raising the funds had been informed. The actual cost was still not known. Any matters not on the

agenda – there were two highway matters which were deal with under Item 142/25 b).

MINUTES – The minutes of the planning meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – approved and signed. There were no matters arising.

MINUTES – To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - approved and signed. There were no matters arising.

#### PLANNING

APPLICATIONS – the following planning applications were considered:

RH left the meeting; HC was elected to chair this item on the agenda.

Variation of condition 2 - Plans List (Compliance) of Planning Consent 2023/0442/HSE (Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of 2 storey extension and detached garage). Bridge Farm, Alhampton. Ref: 2025/1197/VRC.

**Outcome:** Resolved to support the granting of permission on the grounds that the proposal was in keeping with the general feel of the original plan.

RH returned to the meeting and resumed as chair of the meeting.

Minerals and Waste application dealt with by Somerset Council Minerals and Waste Planning Team - Proposal: Section 73 application to vary conditions 2 (approved plans), 3 (noise mitigation) and 4 (night time noise limit) in respect of planning permission reference 2017/3147/CNT (section 73 application to amend condition 2[approved plans and specification], 3 [noise mitigation] and 5 [dust control] in respect of planning permission 2013/2083 for the construction of an Anaerobic Digestion plant)". Unit 22, Evercreech Junction. Ref: SCC/3854/2021. **Outcome:** Resolved that the response of the PC is that in the absence of further evidence the current conditions should remain. Furthermore, the matter of the right hand turn lane when going south on the A371 should be considered and assessed on a site wide basis and not piecemeal basis in terms of every individual application relating to the site.

CHANGES TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT The PC accepted that there were problems with the current planning process and that steps needed to be taken to improve the situation. Resolved to reconsider the changes to the management of planning applications and enforcement in 3 -4 months' time once the proposed temporary changes had had an opportunity to address the current backlog.

#### FINANCE

Reconciliation of accounts for period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – resolved to approve the reconciliation of the accounts which was signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

Balance of accounts – £31,850.81.

Approval of Parish Council payments and authority to sign cheques for the following:

- 1) Mrs H Clark for purchase of spikes to prevent birds resting on swings - £36.97.
- 2) Mr C Evans for materials to install kissing gate - £13.49 + £13.08 = total £26.57.

3) Vita Play for repairs to safety matting - £2220.00.

4) Miss P Griffiths – Clerk's expenses for period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 - £28.95.

RESOLVED - that the expenditure be approved, and the cheques issued.

Payments to the following were noted:

S.L.H. Services Ltd for grounds maintenance in June £315.00. (Invoice 2025.053).

QSS for IT support for months April, May and June 2025 @ £221.74 p/m.

It was noted that the payment to the ICO for year 2025-2026 was £47.00 not £35.00 as anticipated and previously minuted - see Min 094/25.

#### PLAYGROUND

Update on maintenance – Noted that the repairs to the safety matting had been completed.

#### HIGHWAYS

Briefing note on the Volunteer Highway Scheme - agreed that the main area which affected DPC was the annual litter pick. The risk assessment needs to consider the requirement to inform SC in advance and to assess specifically the risk on the stretch of road from Arthurs Bridge going towards Ditchat.

Update on items/matters for repair previously reported – It appeared that the road edge and culvert on the Wraxall road had been repaired. Still outstanding – the edge of the road on the corner opposite Folly Drive. The Clerk will follow up. RH confirmed that the meeting of the A371 Safety Action Group had not yet been arranged. The Clerk reported that the Traffic Management Unit had confirmed that there was no evidence to extend the 40mph limit at Wraxall after turning off the A37.

New matters for report to the Highways department – The road on the corner when turning right at the 'T' junction of the Alhampton Road when entering Ditchat has a pothole and surface erosion.

#### FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY.

Update on the 'lost' path that runs behind Moff Motors towards Castle Cary station which would allow pedestrian access from Alhampton - The Clerk reported that following a meeting with the new Rights of Way Officer for Mendip East that there were supplies of gates and small bridges which could be used to implement this proposed path. However, as already acknowledged the proposal to put a pedestrian bridge alongside the road bridge would be an expensive and long-term project. SC would also supply any gates particularly if they were going to replace stiles in the parish. In order to progress the proposed 'permissive' path a draft agreement between the landowners and the PC would be required – the Clerk will endeavour to get a draft agreement which RH will adapt prior to meeting with the landowners to seek their agreement. The Clerk will also inform the PC insurers to check if this affects the existing policy. Agreed to ask for a couple of kissing gates which CE will arrange to get stored.



Grove Path resurfacing – The Clerk reported that the Rights of Way officer has looked at it again and confirmed that as it has a tarmac surface this is the responsibility of the Highways Department; the Clerk will report the poor surface to the department.

UTILISING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) – Resolved to undertake a trial of utilising AI to record and draft the minutes of the September meeting with a view to continuing the use of AI for the same purpose.

CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.

City, Town and Parish Clerks' Working Group – The Clerk reported that the meeting had involved a corporate update, the Volunteer Highway Maintenance programme and the financial situation at SC.

Correspondence – nothing in addition to that circulated via email.

Reports/items for information – Dealt with under Item 143/25 a).

ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON AGENDA FOR THE NEXT MEETING – Update from the Annual General meeting of the LCN (PS) and to discuss any feedback from parishioners regarding the recent Glastonbury Festival in preparation for briefing the authorities concerned about what went well this year.

Date of next meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024, at 7.30 pm

To be held in the Church Room, Ditchat.

Please check the website/noticeboards for agendas and dates.

Members of the parish and press welcome.

---



**A special meal for current and former Pylle residents**

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 11<sup>th</sup>**

at the Village Hall 6:30pm.

This is a sponsored fund raiser for the hall and church.

There is a voluntary suggested donation of £10 per head for the two-course meal and drinks.

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Jay Smith on XXXXXX or phoning

Barbara Cary on XXXXXX

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## St Mary Magdalene, Ditcheat

	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Brass</u>
Sept 7 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup>	Lin Adams	Tony Worner
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup>	Pat Dando	"
Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Jess Leach	Mavis Beresford
Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	Team Flowers	"

We would welcome new members of the team for flowers and brass cleaning. If you are interested please contact Jess Leach on XXXXXX.

## East Pennard Church Flowers & Cleaning Rota

September	Cathy van den Bosch
	Henrietta Mazur
October	Carol Stuart
	Andrew Stuart
November	Georgina Dearden
	Bridget Wadey



New, or now settled into the area? Please do come and join our friendly flowers and cleaning team. Together we make sure East Pennard church is cared for and beautiful. If interested please contact Bridget: Tel. XXXXXX



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## Rector's Note

Dear friends,

Beware of nematodes, which I wrote about in my July/August Note – they completely killed off my raised vegetable bed, and nothing will now grow in it except bindweed! That sounds like a good parable, a sort of parallel to the Parable of the Sower in the New Testament – if you scatter the wrong kind of seed on good earth, it will kill off all the goodness and only allow weeds to grow! I should perhaps have consulted our local guru before taking the advice of a stranger.

At any rate, it has been fascinating to watch the vagaries of the weather and the way in which it has affected the growth rate of my plants this year – is it my imagination, or have most plants (especially weeds) been much more prolific and much earlier than last year?

I hope you have had a good summer and are looking forward to what the rest of this year may hold for you. I know that for some this will mean meeting brand new grandchildren for the first time; for others it may mean moving on to a new school or college, or to a new job or home. Whatever is new in your life, I hope you will be able to embrace it with enthusiasm. May it grow deep and positive roots that will produce flowers or fruits that will enrich your life.

God bless you and yours.

Rosalind Paul (Retired Priest)



*A group of nematodes, Wikimedia Commons*



**Church Services for September  
In the Parishes of Ditchheat with  
Alhampton, East Pennard, Pylle,  
Pilton, North Wootton and Croscombe**



<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup></b> 10.30 am	<b>Trinity 12</b> <b>Joint Holy Communion at Croscombe</b>
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Holy Cross Day</b> <b>Holy Communion at Ditchheat</b>
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist</b> <b>Holy Communion at East Pennard</b>
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Trinity 15</b> <b>Holy Communion at Alhampton</b>

**Church Services for October**

<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup></b> 10.30 am	<b>Trinity 16</b> <b>Joint Holy Communion at Ditchheat</b>
<b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Harvest</b> <b>Holy Communion at Ditchheat</b>
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Trinity 9</b> <b>Holy Communion at East Pennard</b>
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup></b> 10.00 am	<b>Last Sunday after Trinity</b> <b>Holy Communion at Alhampton</b>



*Email contacts are on page 42*

**PERSONAL DETAILS REMOVED**

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### General

Ditchat Parish Council	Pam Griffiths	<a href="mailto:clerk@ditcheatparishcouncil.org.uk">clerk@ditcheatparishcouncil.org.uk</a>
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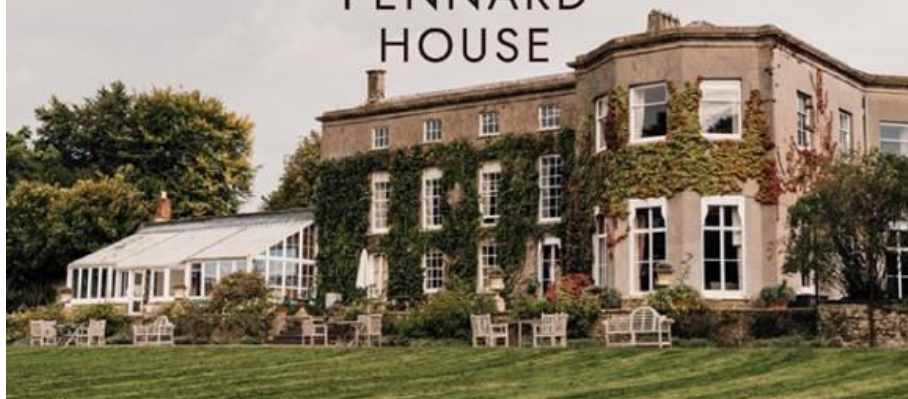
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## WEDDINGS | EVENTS | MEETINGS

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