



QUANTOCK
for Nether Stowey & Over Stowey

Messenger

July 2021

50p



Photo Competition

Win £100 or £50 gift voucher!



Village Life- must be taken within a village or settlement in the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area.



People of the Quantocks- an image representing the people of the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area



Quantock Working- an image of working life within the Quantock Hills AONB and surrounding LPS area

Go to <https://qlps.org/qlps-photo-competition> for full details

send entries to qlps@somerset.gov.uk with completed entry form
by 31st March 2022



CLUBS & SOCIETIES IN NETHER STOWEY & OVER STOWEY

Allotment Association
 Bruce Roper 732 043
 Active Living Group
 Call 734 613 or 733 040; 733 151; 732 609
 Coleridge Probus Club
 Philip Comer (01984) 656 720
 Coleridge Cottage
 Tel: 732 662
 Friends of Coleridge
 Eliza Sackett 733 660
 Thomas Poole Library, Nether Stowey
 Sian Stafford 732 741
 Friends of Over Stowey Church
 Christopher Stone 732 907
 Friends of Quantock
 Mary ter Braak (01984) 656 633
 Friends of Nether Stowey School
 Lisa Rendle 732 508
 Nether Stowey Football Club
 Chair: Nigel Waterman 732 310
 Seniors: Steve Easden 07788 370014
 Juniors: Nigel Waterman 732 310
 Minis: Richard Marriott 07890 451694
 Nether Stowey Playing Fields Committee
 Jane Erskine 732 025
 Nether Stowey Short Mat Bowls
 Cath Roberts 732 789
 Nether Stowey Twinning Association
 Open to everyone. Ian Pearson 732 228
 Nether Stowey Village Hall
 Jan Miller 733 436
**Nether Stowey & Fiddington Women's
 Institute**
 Margaret Harris 734 613
 Terry Binding 732 710
 Over Stowey Bellringers
 Over Stowey Bowls Club
 Wendy Hill 732 194
 Over Stowey Cricket Club
 Phil Rich 732 675

Over Stowey Rights of Way Group
 Richard Ince 733 237
 Over Stowey Social Club
 Sue Thomas 732 905
 Over Stowey Tennis Court
 Liz Onions 732 195
 Quantock AONB Office, Fyne Court
 Tel: (01823) 451 884
 Quantock Beekeepers Association
 Ken Edwards 671 544
 Quantock Players
 Wendy Hobbs 733 197
 Quantock Quilters
 Gill Griffiths 733 709
 Quantock Tennis Club
 Robin Bendall 732 633
 Royal British Legion - N/Stowey & District
 Viki Fielder 238 691
 Stogursey Forget-Me-Not Cafe
 Helen Cuttell 734 818
 Stowey Green Spaces Group
 Judith Greig 732 483
 Stowey Walking
 Lynne Abbott 732 228
 The Quantock Musical Theatre Co.
 Brian Williams 732 325
 Stowey Bears (pre-school)
 Tina Miller 734 636
 Stowey Book Club
 Alison Whittingham 732 446
 Stowey Gardeners
 Juliet Harkness 733 245
 Wednesday Club (formerly the Day Centre)
 Maggie Harrison 732 532

July 2021

Dear All,

Whilst some events have been postponed due to the delay in the lifting of restrictions, we continue to receive new diary dates for clubs and events, which is exciting!

I hope you have been able to enjoy some of the glorious weather we have experienced, and some of you may even have been enjoying the rain, particularly if you have a thirsty garden. We have certainly seen some amazing skies and have been able to include a couple of photos taken locally with permission from the photographers.

We are delighted to share with you this month's Stowey Star, Helen Stacey, (p.24) Practice Manager at the Quantock Medical Centre. Congratulations to Helen for being awarded a Somerset medal.

Along with various updates and articles, we have a fantastic poem written by **Sam Down, a Y6 pupil at Nether Stowey School, titled 'The House of Animals'** on p.13. It is lovely having such talented and creative young people within our community.

I hope you have a lovely July - please continue to share your news and photos!

Take care, Annabelle

Your Messenger Team

Please email articles / photos to editor@quantockmessenger.org.uk

Ruth Richardson	Editor	229 682	Annabelle Whitlock	Editor	By email
Sally Dymock	Advertising	732 298	Richard Beer	Printer	732 412
Sally & John Dymock	Collating	732 298	Phil & Kath Peckham	Assembly -	732 288
			- Molly Bradner	Distribution	732 166

Please send adverts to advertising@quantockmessenger.org.uk.

We are always pleased to receive articles in any form (by phone, handwritten, typed or by email). You may leave articles for The Messenger at the Church Centre or at the Parish Council Offices, on the Cross in Nether Stowey. Deadline for articles is the 15th of the preceding month.

Cover Photos (L-R): A low Quantock rainbow from Birches Corner taken by Dawn Mahoney; a surprise Library visitor - Mr Williams, headmaster of the school, prior to it becoming a library; our Stowey Star, Helen Stacey (see article on p.24); a Sky on Fire taken by Bex Renton (Instagram: bexrenton22); Weather vane on Lime Street taken by Terry Abbiss.

DIARY DATES 2021

Wed 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th July - Nether Stowey Wednesday Club - 10:30
- NS CC

Tues 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th July - Health Walks - 10.30am - NS CC

Thurs 8th July - WI: Musical Quiz with Adelaide and Claire - 2pm - NS CC

Sat 10th July - Wild World Heroes - Summer Reading Challenge starts -
see p.19

Weds 21st July - Over Stowey Parish Council Meeting

Fri 23rd July - Knit and Natter - 10am - TPL

Fri 6th August - **Marion Evered Trust's Annual Duck Race** - Fiddington -
6pm

Sat 7th August - Party in the Park - 3-11pm - Nether Stowey Playing Fields

Thurs 12th Aug - WI: *Can you Hear me at the Back?* with Michael
Malaghan - 2pm - NS CC

Sat 21st Aug - Nether Stowey Flower Show - 2pm - NS VH

Weds 8th Sept - A talk about the Battle of Sedgemoor - TPL

Thurs 9th Sept - WI: Driftwood Art with Emma Duke - 2pm - NS CC

Sat 25th & Sun 26th Sept - The Quantock Hills Walking Festival

Weds 13th Oct - A book launch of 'The Touch of the Magdalene' with
author Diana Barsham - TPL

Thurs 14th Oct - WI: Marie Antoinette's Guide to Farming - 2pm - NS CC

Thurs 11th Nov - WI: Christmas Theme Decorations with Jenny Barnham -
2pm - NS CC

Weds 17th Nov - The history of the Commonwealth War Graves
Commission - TPL

Thurs 9th December - WI: Christmas Celebration Tea with Jan McNeill -
2pm - NS CC

NS CC - Nether Stowey Church Centre

NS VH - Nether Stowey Village Hall

OS VH - Over Stowey Village Hall

TPL - Thomas Poole Library, Nether Stowey



COLERIDGE COTTAGE

We are now open and the first weekends have been quite busy in terms of how many we can allow to enter at any one time.

All our visitors to date have enjoyed their visit to the cottage and felt safe here. The weather brightening up has helped too as visitors have been able to go out into the garden and enjoy it. We are now well into June and the cottage is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. For July, if you visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coleridge-cottage, you can see what days we are open as we will increase by 1 day more in July and you will find details of how to book and what to expect from your visit.

The cottage garden is looking lovely with lots of colour coming through now from the spring and summer flowers coming up. Lots of bees in the garden too and the grass has grown lots over the last weeks with all the rain followed by the warm weather. Our garden volunteers have done a lovely job with the garden and our cottage volunteers have been inspiring our visitors with their knowledge.

If you've ever thought about volunteering at the cottage, feel free to drop us an e-mail at coleridgecottage@nationaltrust.org.uk or call us on 01278 732662. Our volunteers help with everything from welcoming visitors, gardening, talking about Coleridge, to running our shop and tea room once we are open running those once again, so there's definitely something for you to get involved with! So if you think it's something that you would be interested in with the National Trust then let us know!

Charlie Sinclair

THANK YOU - **Mary's Meals** - Super Summer Sock Sale



My heartfelt thanks to those kind souls who bought socks and to those who didn't buy socks but left a gift in the Mary's Meals blue mug. Your donations mean that 287 hungry children will receive a nutritious free school meal, energising them and enabling them to focus on their lessons instead of the stomach cramps and nausea of an often empty stomach. Who would have thought socks on a washing line could do so much good. On behalf of the children and Mary's Meals, 'thank you'.

Ann White

A POEM TO SHARE

Whilst clearing out some old correspondence, I found this poem written by a Grandmother aged 71 to her Grandson aged 8 years.

Do what you can,
Be what you are,
Shine like a glow-worm
If you cannot be a star.
Work like a pulley
If you cannot be a crane,
Help to grease the wheels
If you cannot drive a train.



Phil P

HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE OR CELEBRATE?

Contact editor@quantockmessenger.org.uk.

Pictures are welcome, with permission, of course!



STOWEY SHUTTLE

We have increased the scope of our covid-safe service to customers old and new, and now provide transport to all medical appointments, including vaccinations, doctors, hospitals, opticians, dentists, and chiropodists. Journeys will be subject to the newly-introduced conditions for travel.

For further information, or to make a booking, contact us on
07943 923742.



The Quantock Hills Walking Festival is back!

25th & 26th September 2021

This year's walking festival will be bigger and better than ever with a variety of new walks venturing further into the Quantock Hills and surrounding area. We have nature rambles, history walks, high level hikes and even a family treasure hunt, all followed by delicious tea and cake here in Nether Stowey.



The event will be fully COVID secure.

For further information on the various walks and to book your place contact us at:

enquiries@stoweywalking.co.uk

www.stoweywalking.co.uk

Hosted by Stowey Walking, the Walkers are Welcome steering group for Nether Stowey and Over Stowey and sponsored by the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme



**HERITAGE
FUND**



**Quantock Landscape
Partnership Scheme**

Reimagining the Manor

GARDENING WITH NICK RIGDEN

July and August 2021



These two months start to see the culmination of all your hard work over the previous months. The flower borders are producing maximum colour and you will be enjoying **good quality home grown vegetables and soft fruit**. It is not quite 'sit back and enjoy' as there are still garden jobs to do!

Vegetables: often July and August weather can be quite damp and a watchful eye should be kept on potatoes and tomatoes for any sign of potato blight. Foliage affected with brown/black markings should be removed and burnt and not put onto the compost heap. As you use early crops, clear the ground so that it can be prepared for a succession crop. Carrots, lettuce and salad leaves, spring cabbage, turnips and oriental leaves together with mangetout peas can still be sown to maintain a succession of vegetables. Ensure that brassicas already planted are protected from cabbage white butterfly by using small mesh netting supported above the crop and not resting on the foliage. It is important to be sensible and not waste water. Priority should be given to crops such as courgettes and squash, peas which are responsive to extra moisture at the flowering and pod swelling stage, potatoes when the new tubers are marble size and runner and French beans ensuring the roots do not become stressed. Keep root crops moist to avoid stop/start growth resulting in tough and tasteless vegetables. Regular hoeing between crops minimises weed development competing for water and nutrients.

Fruit: once strawberries have finished fruiting it is an opportunity to rejuvenate the crop. Old straw should be raked out and composted and the foliage cut down to about 2 to 3 inches (50-75mm) and any weed removed. Apply a general fertiliser and water in, or liquid feed, and in no time quality new foliage will appear. This all helps to remove pests and diseases. Strawberries are not long-lived plants and quality declines after four to five years. Runners provide an opportunity to propagate new plants but only take them from strong healthy plants. Excess runners can be removed.

New growth on cordon, espalier and fan trained apples and pears should

be summer pruned to restrict size and build up fruit bud for next year. Thin heavy crops of apples, pears and plums to increase fruit size and avoid branch breakage.

Ornamentals: Wisteria should be pruned, and the new whippy growth cut back to a bud at about 6 inches (150mm). This will encourage the build up of flower bud for the following year. Keep regularly deadheading blooms for continuity of flower and with some such as lupins, poppies and delphiniums they can be cut back hard down to the basal cluster of leaves to produce new growth and some late flower. Bearded iris that have flowered can be lifted and old rhizomes cut out and young vibrant sections replanted with their foliage cut down by half. Apply a fertiliser dressing or well rotted manure and water well in. This will ensure good bloom next year. Wall trained shrubs such as Pyracantha and Chaenomeles (Japonica or Japanese quince) can be summer pruned in a similar way to fruit. During August many shrubs can be propagated by semi-ripe cuttings – more plants for free!

Nick Rigden



NETHERSTOWEY FLOWER SHOW
Saturday 21st August
Village Hall



Though we need more willing contributors, the mini Flower Show will take place on the 21st August with doors open between 11-1 on the Saturday for people to set up their table and then everyone welcomed at 2:00. Posters will be up in early August.

Please consider having a table to display what you have grown, sewn, knitted, painted photographed, cooked etc. And it can be individuals, friends, neighbours, streets, clubs or groups. If interested please ring Robin Brierley on 01278 732574 or email familybrierley@gmail.com.

We can all look forward to the more usual Flower Show in 2022. We are a small and aging committee so if anyone is interested in joining us you'd be very welcomed- do contact me.

Robin Brierley



The Walled Gardens of Cannington

The Walled Gardens, shop, tea room (takeaway offer only) and plant sales are open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am-4pm.

Relax in the beautiful Walled Gardens of Cannington. Open air theatre returns in the summer.

Keep an eye on our website and social media pages for more information.

www.canningtonwalledgardens.co.uk 01278 655042







 BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE

The Over Stowey PATRONAL FLOWER FESTIVAL 2021

to be held in
The St Peter & St Paul Church



Postponed

on Sunday 27th June 2021

...s, cream teas, stalls.

Admission : Free



NETHER STOWEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

I would like to extend my warmest wishes to our community and hope you are safe and well. We are fast approaching the end of the Summer term and the end of another school year! Time really does fly! It still never ceases to amaze me how quickly a school year goes by and just how much the children grow and develop in that time. Schools are very busy places where we often don't take the time to stop and reflect on the achievements we make and the differences we make to the children's lives in our care.

We have been through another year of turbulence, however that has not stopped my staff and the children of the school. This month the school celebrated a poetry slam where the children learnt poems to perform to each other. Our Years 4, 5 and 6 have attended residentials which is a fantastic opportunity for the children to partake in outdoor activities and have the chance to spend some time together, team build and learn new skills.

I've had lots of children visit me in my office to share with me their wonderful achievements that they have made outside of school. It makes me very proud as Headteacher to hear the children tell me about their swimming achievements, their musical exams and having their very own poem published in a book!

As a School we strive for all the children to flourish in and out of school. The staff of the school have worked tirelessly at revamping and reshaping our curriculum that we offer the children to help them grow and develop. The school has worked with Somerset Literacy Network to develop its English curriculum. The whole school worked together on a poetry week. I would like to share with you a poem all about collective nouns written by a Year 6 pupil.

Chloe Holt, Head Teacher

The House of Animals.



There's a bike of bees in my garage,
and an army of ants too.

There's a school of fish in my dish,
and a shiver of sharks.

There's a business of meerkats,
and a flamboyance of flamingos,
all hopping round my study.



There's a mess of moles
digging up my garden;
which is rather annoying, I think!

There's an army of apes,
eating my chips.
And in my pond,
there's a fleet of ships.



There's a gaggle of geese,
eating some cake,
and a pod of orcas,
which, thank goodness, are fake.

By Sam Down.

NETHER STOWEY FOOTBALL CLUB



Senior Football

A very disjointed 2020-21 season is now finished, and the club's thoughts are focused on the new season, starting in September.

End of season meeting: In May the club had a player's meeting to discuss the 2021-22 season, it was agreed that there will be two senior Saturday sides playing in the Taunton and District Saturday League and a Sunday side playing in the Bridgwater League. This marks significant progress within the club, having, until recently, only one senior side. With this in mind, more help is needed on Saturday match days to help make operations run smoothly. If interested, please contact Steve Easden.

Preseason: The club have arranged a comprehensive list of preseason friendlies. With three senior teams there will be plenty of games for players to get good game time before the new season. A full list of friendlies can be found on the club's Facebook page.

Subsequently, the first senior training session and signing on evening will be Wednesday 30th June at 6pm at Nether Stowey recreation ground. **Signing on will be £40 to include a club polo shirt. Senior training will continue every Wednesday thereafter.**

If you are looking to play, the club welcomes anyone and everyone, please contact Steve Easden. His contact details can be found on page 3 of this publication

New Sponsors: The club are delighted to announce four new sponsors: Jimer Ltd. MMES Ltd, Lee Villis Personal Trainer and Evolution Farm Vets. With the first three appearing as shirt sponsors and the later as a club partner. The club welcomes the new sponsors and thank them for their interest in NSFC.

There are still some sponsorship opportunities still available, especially of you wish to become a Club Partner rather than a full sponsor. For full details, please contact Mark Sells on 07896 644636 or email marksell2016@outlook.com.

That's it for now, have a great summer everyone.

Mark Sells

THE LATEST FROM OVER STOWEY CRICKET CLUB

Both senior teams have managed to consolidate their respective positions in the West Somerset League and I have outlined below in a little more detail the results since my last report.



29th May: 1st XI v Churchinford :Churchinford 148 Over Stowey 152-4 won by 6 wickets Mark Hill 62*

29th May 2nd XI v Watchet: Over Stowey 49 Watchet 50-3 lost by 7wickets

5th June 1st XI V Roadwater : Roadwater 124 Over Stowey 83

12th June 1st XI v Samford Arundel: Walk over (30PTS) to Over Stowey as the opposition could not raise a team.

12th June 2nd XI v West Monkton: West Monkton 104 Over Stowey 105-3 won by 7 wickets. Mark Sortwell 39* Simon Burland 29* Simon Pickard 29. Hayden Langlois 3-24, Will Merchant-Saunders 4-21, Tyler Coleman 2-23.

The Under 11's played North Curry on 8th June and lost a keenly fought encounter North Curry 256 Over Stowey 195.

In conclusion, I invite you to attend a match at our ground. Most games start at 2pm and the precise fixture list can be found on the West Somerset League website.

1st XI P7 W4 C2 (2ND place in Division 2) 148 PTS

2nd XI P5 W3 L1 C1 (3RD place in Division 5)104 PTS

Over and Out

Simon Pickard

"YESTERDAYS.....IN NETHER STOWEY" - In the Old Gaol on The Cross



On display in the Old Gaol through July and August: 'Nether Stowey - Birthplace of Robert Parsons. A Jesuit priest and a major figure in establishing the 16th century "English Mission" of the society of Jesus.'



NATURAL THOUGHTS WITH NIGEL

Swifts can still be seen high over Stowey in the summer months. They are masters of the sky, often flying so high they disappear from sight, they also sometimes fly very low, and fast, screaming up and down Castle Street just over your head, a spine tingling experience. They arrive with us, from their wintering grounds in sub-Sahara Africa, around the end of April and depart south again in July. Swifts nest in church towers and in the roofs of our houses. Around the Stoweys they might squeeze into your roof through a gap under the pantiles, just above the gutter.

But Swifts are in trouble, and there has been a 53% reduction in their numbers in the UK between 1995 and 2016. This huge reduction in Swift numbers is thought to be caused almost entirely by restoration and repair work on our houses! When house roofs are repaired with new materials, insulation and draft proofing, we inadvertently block up all the hidden cavities where Swifts nest. But all is not lost. There is now a huge campaign to compensate for the loss of these Swift nesting **places by putting "Swift bricks" bricks with built in nest cavities in new houses** when they are built and when you have your roof repaired putting up wooden Swift nest boxes. If you love your Swifts, are worried about your Swifts, want to know more about Swift conservation, two really goods about them have been published in 2021.

The Screaming Sky is by Charles Foster and published by Little Toller Books. It follows their migration route from Africa to the UK with the author visiting the route and the places used by Swifts during their migration. This is a very evocative and personal book from someone who is a vet and also has Swifts nesting in his own roof.

Swifts and Us is by Sarah Gibson and published by Collins. Sarah Gibson has written a fascinating story of discovery, exploring what is known about these mysterious birds, their ancient ancestry and how they have been regarded through history. She also includes a lot of practical advice on nest boxes.

nigelphillips@thesomersetcoast.co.uk



Party in the Park

Nether Stowey Playing Field

BRINGING THE
COMMUNITY TOGETHER

NEW DATE!!!!

Saturday 7th August 2021
3pm - 11pm

Local Artisans Bar Music BBQ

Food Stalls Local Groups

**BRING YOUR PICNIC BLANKETS, DECK CHAIRS AND
SENSE OF FUN!**



**NETHER
STOWEY**
VILLAGE HALL & RECREATION CENTRE

To contact organisers:

Ron Scales: 07709580695 / ronandlynn.scales@sky.com

Jo Scoins: 01278732601 / joscins64@gmail.com

Facebook: @NSVHRG

stowey.org.uk

CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT

If you are self-isolating or need extra support, contact:

Somerset Local Authorities' Coronavirus Support Line - 0300 790 6275
- 8am-6pm 7 days a week (they can put you in touch with local groups who can help with fetching shopping, medication and other essentials supplies, as well as other aid).

Somerset Bereavement Support Service - 0800 3047 412 - Monday to Saturday, 9am-5pm

Somerset Mindline - 01823 276 892 - is open 24 hours a day for mental health and emotional wellbeing support.

Samaritans - 116 123 - 24 hour support line.

Papyrus - 0800 068 4141 - If you are concerned about a young person who may have suicidal thoughts.

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) - 0800 58 58 58 - Offer support to males of any age.

Educational Psychology Service - EPSHelpline@somerset.gov.uk (email best method of contact) or 01823 357 000

Listening Chaplaincy Phoneline for people of all faiths - 0330 229 1700 - 8am-11pm 7 days a week.

Daily Hope free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers - 0800 804 8044 - 24 hours a day

Over Stowey Neighbourhood Watch - Tam Weeks - Mobile: 07841 866 596 (between 8am-8pm only please) - Email: tam.weeks@yahoo.co.uk

If you want to contact outside of 8am-8pm, please contact using text message, Facebook Messenger, Nextdoor or WhatsApp.

See Community Directory (p.37) for Parish Council and Medical Centre contact details.



Registered Charity No 1181213

With summer finally here and remaining restrictions hopefully being lifted in a few weeks' time, we are very much looking forward to resuming normal service!

If you haven't visited us for a while, just a reminder that we have a fantastic selection of books, audiobooks and DVDs for you to choose from. We also have free Wi-Fi and 2 public network computers (with free online access to Ancestry.co.uk) which are available to use during opening hours.

If you are unable to visit the library in person, Somerset Libraries have a range of online services such as free Books, Audiobooks and Magazines to download. For more information visit their website at www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/ or their Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/somersetlibrariesuk/

**** WHAT'S ON ****

- * Knit and Natter hope to start meeting weekly again from Friday 23rd July, 10am – 11.30am. All ages and abilities are welcome! Just bring your own project which could be knitting, sewing, crochet, embroidery etc. or just come for a natter and see what others are working on. It's a great way to get inspired, pick up new tips and make new friends
- * Our monthly talks will be returning in September:
 - Wednesday 8th September – A talk about the Battle of Sedgemoor with re-enactment soldiers in uniform
 - Wednesday 13th October – A book launch of 'The Touch of the Magdalene' with author Diana Barsham
 - Wednesday 17th November (NB, this will be on the 3rd Wednesday of the month) - The history of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

**** WILD WORLD HEROES - SUMMER READING CHALLENGE **** **STARTS SATURDAY JULY 10TH**

Are you ready for the challenge? This year, The Reading Agency have teamed up with WWF for a very special nature-themed challenge that will inspire you to stand up for the planet!



Pop by the library to sign up or complete online. Visit www.summerreadingchallenge.org.uk for more details.

Our opening hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am – 1pm,
Saturday 10am -12pm.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!



NEWS FROM THE QUANTOCK MEDICAL CENTRE

At last we are able to start up the Health Walks programme again with the enthusiasm and support of our volunteer Walk Leaders Elisabeth, Lynne, Ian and Geoff. We will be starting on 6th July with all walks starting locally from the Nether Stowey Church Centre at 10.30 am. This is to avoid the need to share cars to get to the start point with the aim of moving to start points further afield when things get safer.

We would advise participants to wear appropriate footwear and clothing and to take a bottle of water. There will be a Health Declaration form and register to complete and walkers are advised to make Walk Leaders aware of any significant health conditions or disabilities that need to be taken into account during the walk and of course all walkers are advised that they are responsible for themselves.

We are also advising that all walkers whether joining our group walks or out walking alone should consider downloading an app called 'what3words' which will help pinpoint your specific location for emergency services if you were ever lost or in trouble.

July programme as follows:

Two Boot – 1 – 1 ½ hours, may include steps, inclines, uneven paths, stiles and gates. All walks start at 10.30am. No Dogs please.

Tel Nos: QMC: 01278 732696; Elisabeth Woolcock: 01278 733293; Lynne Abbott: 01278 732228; Geoff Every: 01278 733570; Ian Faris: 01278 733180

Date	Meeting Point	Walk	Toilet	Refreshments	Leader
TUESDAY JULY 6TH	NETHER STOWEY CHURCH CENTRE	WATERY LANE, HACK LANE	Y QMC	NO	IAN FARIS
TUESDAY JULY 13TH	NETHER STOWEY CHURCH CENTRE	FIDDINGTON WHITNELL	Y QMC	NO	ELISABETH WOOLCOCK
TUESDAY JULY 20TH	NETHER STOWEY CHURCH CENTRE	PARSONS ROUND	Y QMC	NO	LYNNE ABBOTT
TUESDAY JULY 27TH	NETHER STOWEY CHURCH CENTRE	TO BE ARRANGED	Y QMC	NO	GEOFF EVERY

We would like to advertise that we have Grace Fildes a Health Coach from the Somerset Sports and Activity Partnership joining the Practice on a Wednesday afternoons to work with patients of all ages to support you on a 1:1 basis to get you moving and active to help your mobility and mental health , please do book in for an appointment if you feel you need some help and support with becoming active

I would also like to promote the Somerset Mental Health Hub: <https://www.somersetmentalhealthhub.org.uk/>, which is a good resource for groups and services available to everyone, as well as emotional well being support. They have a regular podcast with Somerset GPs Andrew Tressider and Dr. Peter Bagshaw, as well as special guests for a friendly and informative chat about a range of health topics including a recent one on **demystifying the menopause (they also have men's health topics too)**! All episodes are now available for free through Spotify, Apple podcasts and all other podcast apps, or online at: <https://somersetemotionalwellbeing.podiant.co/>.

So download and have a listen - you might find it interesting.

Helen Stacey, Practice Manager

THE MARION EVERED TRUST

Although we haven't been able to hold any fundraising events so far this year, the 100 club draw has continued to run. Here are the latest draw results.

March

£20 Stewart Modley £10 Micheal Barrow £5 Lynda Robinson,

April

£20 Mary Epps £10 Clive Bellamy £5 Nicky Rich

May

£20 Ricky Burland £10 Sally Holt £5 Diana Evans



A reminder that we are beginning to get back to planning some fundraising events.

On Friday 6th August we are planning to run our popular duck race at Fiddington playing field starting at 6pm, Ducks will be for sale prior to the event and information will be posted nearer the time.

We are also planning to hold a Christmas raffle with some great prizes, more details on this will also be released later in the year.

Thanks for your continued support and hopefully we can see you all soon.

Ian Barrow

QUANTOCK PLAYERS: PANTO 2021

A message from our Chairman, Mike Onions:

Will there be a pantomime this year?

There has been a lot of hard thinking about our 2021 pantomime. Like the professional thespians, we were 'resting' last year!

This year? Well, it is unfortunately another year of 'resting'. We have given the subject a great deal of thought and reluctantly come to the decision that there won't be a pantomime this year. In these difficult times, there are so many 'what ifs' and we really could not risk having to cancel. We have a duty to keep our crew and audiences safe. That is a top priority. We very much hope you will understand our decision, and that you will

continue to support us in the future - without our members and audience there would not be a pantomime, and we know that the village does enjoy our shows.

So a big thank you to you all, and to our advertisers whose support is also very much appreciated.

Stay safe, and take care. Fingers crossed for our next show.

*Mike Onions
Chairman
Quantock Players*



From 1st March – 31st July dog owners are required by law to keep their dogs on a lead when being walked across Open Access Land including the open Quantock hilltops and combes. In all other areas of the countryside dogs should be kept under close control.

It's not just physical attacks that cause harm to sheep and lambs, but simply allowing a dog to chase sheep may cause ewes to abort or become injured. Dogs need to be on leads to also protect ground nesting birds, as dogs run about in the undergrowth they flush birds such as Nightjars and Skylarks off their nests and may cause them to abandon them.

If your dog does kill or cause harm to livestock, you can be liable for a significant fine and for the value of the livestock harmed - your pet may also be dispatched, the cost of which will also have to be borne by you. Moreover, if your dog is seen in action harassing livestock it could be shot on sight.

If you witness an attack in progress, call 999 otherwise any incidents witnessed should be reported to the Police on 101 or directly to the Quantock Hills AONB Office at quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk.

For further information on enjoying the countryside visit: www.gov.uk and search for The Countryside Code

To find out more about the Quantock Hills AONB, look on our website at www.quantockhills.com

STOWEY STAR

Shining a light on a local individual each month who is worthy of the moniker 'Stowey Star'. If you know of a local artist / craftsperson or someone who has done a lot for charity / worthy causes, please get in touch so we can contact them. editor@quantockmessenger.org.uk or 01278 229 682.

Most people in the local area will know Helen Stacey, the Practice Manager at Quantock Medical Centre. As we mentioned last month, Helen has been awarded a Somerset Medal for her work at the vaccination hub at North Petherton. The Somerset Medal is a new accolade created by Somerset County Council to honour those who have stepped up and kept Somerset going during the Covid-19 Pandemic.



Helen had no idea that this accolade had been created or that she'd been nominated until she received an email to tell her that she had won. It was another local practice manager who had nominated her and she **was overwhelmed to receive it.** *"The medal is not just a recognition of me, it recognises all the GP practices in the area that have pulled together to make the vaccine roll-out work. It was a massive team effort across all the practices and all the staff in the clinics and at the vaccination centre."*

With almost no days off since the start of Covid March 2020 until end May 21, Helen was part of a team organising the effort to get our local population vaccinated at the North Petherton Vaccination Hub. With a high number of elderly people in our district and being one of **the practices furthest away from the hub, Helen's key priority was** ensuring that her patients did not miss out. Not only did the facility need to be set up, but vaccination appointments had to be co-ordinated and training on new technology, new computer systems and the brand-new vaccines themselves had to be carried out. This was in addition to the regular work of running the busy practice.

Helen was very clear that she couldn't have done everything she did for the vaccination hub without the fantastic support of the whole team at Quantock Medical Centre. The nursing, administration and dispensary staff all stepped up to free her time for the vaccine effort. The Somerset Medal is as much their medal as it is hers. She was also **very grateful for her family's support, particularly her husband who kept the house and family going.** The systems are all now in place and many other vaccination centres are now available (such as pharmacies), so the 'all hands on deck' of the new year is no longer required.

Huge congratulations, Helen!

Helen Stacey is the Practice Manager at Quantock Medical Centre. Whilst all of the practices have worked hard to contribute to the local vaccination hubs, Helen has gone above and beyond for her patients in the rural villages as well as being the lead manager at the North Petherton Vaccination hub far more than her allocation. She has ensured it runs smoothly on the ground and not had a day off for months. Her biggest strength is putting the needs of the patient first – making sure services work around them.



**STOGURSEY FORGET-
ME-NOT CAFE
CHURCH ROOMS**



WE'RE RE-OPENING ON WEDNESDAY JUNE 23rd

10.30am – 12.00

**Helen and Rose are looking forward to
welcoming friends old and new for a cuppa and a
chat.**

Forget-Me-Not Cafés provide support, companionship and a warm welcome to those who are recognising issues with their memory, as well as their carers, family and friends. There are a variety of activities such as music, singing, arts and crafts, quizzes, or just a chat over a cuppa and a slice of cake.

Volunteers and Guests can be reassured that everything will be done to stay Covid Secure.

More helpers are always welcome. If anyone would like to offer to help in any way, or just join us for a chat – it would be very much appreciated.

Stogursey Forget-Me-Not Café is held in the Church Rooms, Castle Street, Stogursey every other Wednesday from 10.30 – 12.00.

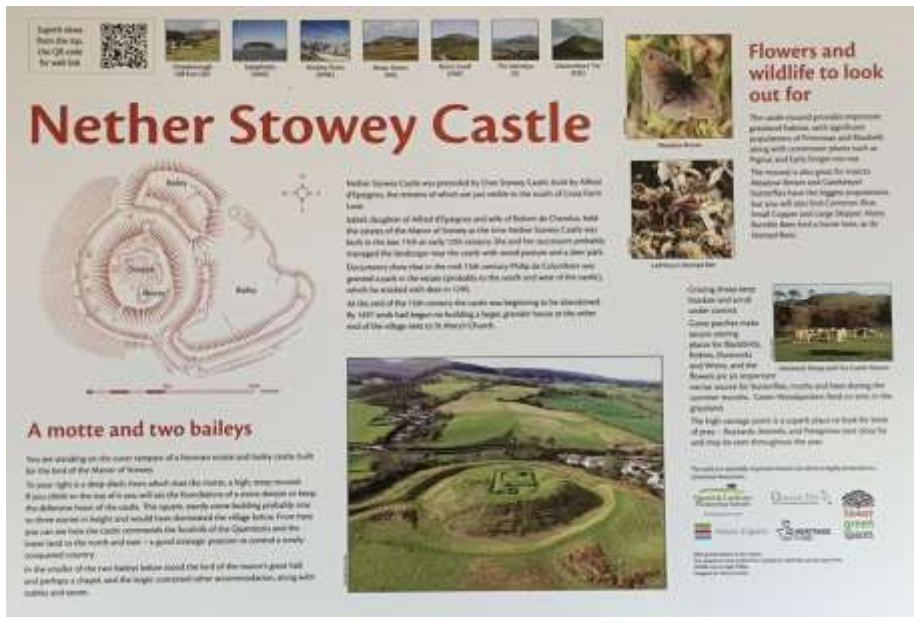
Please contact Helen: 01278 734818 – cuttellhelen@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook and Instagram

STOWEY GREEN SPACES

Keep an eye out for a change on The Mount!

With thanks to the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme for funding, the voluntary hours of design work by Terence Sackett and the willing agreement of Sue Aubrey, we are preparing to install a new interpretive panel to replace the rather worn existing panel on The Mount.



IN MEMORY

Sadly, Brian Williams, previously of Castle Stores in Nether Stowey, died on 20th June.

Details of his funeral will be available later from Grandfield & Son.

Phil P

THE NETHER STOWEY WEDNESDAY CLUB

WE ARE BACK!

Hello members, we have started back with a coffee morning 10.30 to 11.45am each week with 4 members and 2 volunteers (keeping to the rules). This is on a rota basis so members can catch up with each other over a coffee and biscuit.



It's not long to wait until the 19th July and we hope to have a meeting with all members before the summer break.

In September we hope to resume our normal session which will include lunch cooked by our local primary school.

As always, we are looking for new members Ladies and Gentlemen and we can always arrange transport so give us a call. Contact details below.

Maggie 01278 732532 or Tina 01278 732382

WI REPORT



On 20th May the WI held a very successful "trial run" for getting the WI back to some normality. We weren't sure how many ladies would feel happy about meeting up again after so long, but over 20 ladies turned up to the Church Centre at 2.00! We were prepared for maybe 10-12 people, but in fact we had to lay out more chairs. Also, our 6 new ladies came from Fiddington and said they felt very welcome, thought we were a friendly bunch and would be coming regularly. We also had 2 new joiners and a couple of ladies who expressed an interest in joining. It was lovely to see our friends and neighbours again, who we had not seen for quite a few months. Our next meeting will be on 24th June, which will be our AGM where we give out information from the County and also elect officers for the following year. Then on 8th July we will be holding a "nearly normal" meeting, with a speaker, hopefully – guidance permitting, and our monthly competition – this one is a single flower from your garden in a vase. Things are improving very gradually, until then, stay safe and well.

AB

COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Police (emergency: 999 or non-emergency: 101)

Email somwestnptsedgemoor@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

PC Tony Freeman, PC Claire Allen, Kim Wrixon, Jason Wyatt,
Sue Marks (Hinkley issues only). @avonandsomerset.police.uk

Antisocial behaviour **0800 298 2009**

Vandalism on the Quantock Hills use **101**

Household noise problems (Environmental Health) **0845 408 2540**

County Councillor: **Michael Caswell** 01278 652 043
MCaswell@somerset.gov.uk

District Councillors **Michael Caswell** 01278 652 043
michael.caswell@sedgemoor.gov.uk
Julie Pay 01278 732 956
julie.pay@sedgemoor.gov.uk

Nether Stowey Parish Council

Clerk: **Caro Slaymaker**

01278 733 779

clerk@netherstowey-pc.gov.uk

Over Stowey Parish Council

Clerk: **Amanda McMurren**

01278 734 689

clerk@overstoweyparishcouncil.co.uk

Bookings secretaries

N/Stowey Church Centre	Pat Stacey	01278 732 518 (9am—9pm)
N/S Village Hall	Jan Miller	01278 733 436
O/Stowey Village Hall	Wendy Hill	01278 732 194

Quantock Medical Centre (if closed call the NHS on 111)

Reception 01278 732 696 Dispensary 01278 733 385

Centre open 8am - 6:30pm (Mon-Fri)

Dispensary phone line open 10am - 12pm & 4 - 5pm (Mon-Fri)

Pick up from Dispensary 10am - 12pm and 4 - 6pm (Mon-Fri)

quantock.mc@nhs.net <https://quantockmedicalcentre.gpsurgery.net/>

Cannington Health Centre (if closed call NHS on 111)

Reception 01278 652 335

Prescription line 01278 651 311

Other Community Facilities

Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline 03454 040 506

Thomas Poole Library 732 741 (Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-1pm / Sat 10am-12)

Quantock Hills AONB, Amanda Sampson - 01823 451 884, quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk

Community Car Scheme Stowey Shuttle - 07943 923 742 (48 hours in advance)

Nether Stowey Post Office 732 235 (9am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-12:30 Sat, closed Sun)

CHURCH SERVICES – JULY 2021

	4th July 5 th Sunday after Trinity	11th July 6 th Sunday after Trinity	18th July 7 th Sunday after Trinity	25th July 8 th Sunday after Trinity
Nether Stowey	11:00am Morning Worship (C/Centre)	11:00am Holy Communion (Church)	11:00am Morning Worship (C/Centre)	11:00am Holy Communion (Church)
Over Stowey	6:30pm Evensong	9:30am Holy Communion (BCP)	9:30am Holy Communion	9:30am Morning Worship
Aisholt	11:00am Matins	6:30pm Evensong (BCP)	11:00am Holy Communion (BCP)	11:00am Matins
Enmore	11:00am Holy Communion	11:00am Family Worship	6:30pm Evening Prayer	11:00am Holy Communion
Goathurst	9:30am Holy Communion	6:30pm Evensong (BCP)	9:30am Family Worship <i>Pet Service</i>	6:30pm Evening Holy Communion (BCP)
Spaxton	9:30am Holy Communion	11:00am Morning Worship	11:00am Holy Communion	9:30am Morning Worship

Dear All,

Over the last couple of weeks, I have listened to the story of a man who was given a canoe for his birthday and how he loved to get out on the water. His descriptions were so vivid that I could almost hear the water splashing on the kayak as he steered it through the water. Life has not been easy for him, but I could hear the more upbeat tone in his voice as he shared his story.

I find that sharing stories is a good thing to do especially as we are beginning to come out of lockdown. Listening to friends and family talk of times – both bad and good - during the pandemic can help and enable us to look forward again to the months ahead and the making of new memories. A cup of tea and a piece of cake or a glass of wine and a packet of crisps always seem to aid the storytelling!

With the news that step 4 is being delayed for four weeks, many will find the extra time challenging and difficult, and it is for us to continue to support one another as we can. These challenges, these storms of life, are hard and trying and it is through mutual support that we can move beyond them.

The Bible tells of a storm that Jesus calmed while he was with the disciple in a boat on Lake Galilee. Storms on the lake would rise up with little warning and so it was with Jesus and the disciples in their boat. The disciples found the storm hard to cope with and woke Jesus. Jesus' response was to calm the storm, easing their worry, but then to question the disciples – 'Where is your faith?' he asked. No answers came, just the comment – 'Who is this man that the wind and waves obey him?'

Who do you turn to when the storms of life batter you? I turn to Christ. I know that the storms will rage on, but with Jesus alongside me I know he will share the load and direct my way. I know he will bring his calm to situations and to me.

As the restrictions ease - may we all be able to safely share our stories together and help one another to recover from the restrictions and embark on making new stories and memories.

May you know the presence and calmness of Christ this month and always,

Eleanor

Looking at the services rota for July, I would like to draw your attention to a new colleague joining the Ministry team and two services.

On 1st July we welcome Nicki as a training curate in the Benefice. Nicki will be with us for just over three years and during the next couple of months she and her husband, Steve, will be attending services in each of the churches. Please do say 'Hi' to her and to Steve. We welcome you both to this new ministry and place.

Sunday 4th July – Zambia Sunday

On 4th July churches around the Diocese will be celebrating our long-standing relationship with the Province of Zambia. This was a vision of Bishop Peter's and involves mutual prayer and celebration so Zambian churches will be praying for us on this day too. There are many links between parishes and schools, and it is hoped that more links can be made this year.

To join in this special day, there will be a Celebration Service at the Church Centre, Nether Stowey at 11.00 am and all are welcome. Prayers, video clips and Zambian music will bring us closer to our brothers and sisters in Zambia.

Sunday 18th July – Pet Service

On 18th July at 9:30am, there will be a Pet Service in Goathurst churchyard – all are welcome. More details to follow.

CHURCH CONTACT POINTS

ST. MARY'S, Nether Stowey *with* ST. PETER & ST. PAUL, Over Stowey

Rector	Revd. Eleanor King The Rectory, 25 St Mary St. Nether Stowey TA5 1LJ eleanor.king@hotmail.com	Tel: 734 777
Associate Priest	Revd. Kate Sax The Vicarage, Church Road, Spaxton TA5 1DA kate.kinkiizi@gmail.com Working days: Sun, Tues, Wed	Tel. 671 168
Curate	Mrs Nicki Bradford nicki.bradford@hotmail.com	Tel. 327 681
Readers	Mrs Viv Chesterton, B.A. 3 Bishop Road, Nether Stowey TA5 1NP Mrs Maggie Harrison 32 Old Farm Road, Nether Stowey, TA5 1PE Mrs Alison Hoare 2 Park Cottages, Over Stowey Mrs Jeanette Bole Putsham Mead, Kilve TA5 1DZ	Tel: 733 568 Tel: 732 532 Tel: 732 350 Tel: 741 297
Church Wardens - Nether Stowey	Mr. Alan Simson Weacombe Gate, West Quantoxhead, TA4 4EB Mrs. Gerry Wright 1 Mount Road, Nether Stowey, TA5 1LU	Tel: (01984) 632 773 Tel: 734 584
Church Warden - Over Stowey	Mr. Peter Higginson Bincombe Tops, Over Stowey	Tel: 732 102
Church Centre Contact:	Mrs. Barbara Beer	Tel: 732 412
Church Centre Bookings:	Mrs. Pat Stacey	Tel: 732 518
Benefice Office:	Benefice Administrator Mrs. Rebecca Tinnelly Church Centre, 27 St. Mary Street, Nether Stowey TA5 1LJ Office hours: normally Thu. 10am - 1pm Otherwise phone & leave a message or email Email: qv.benefice@gmail.com	Tel: 732 855

Hinkley Point C - Monthly Update

Environment Special



65,000

new and shrubs planted at
site



£540,000

donated to
environmentally focused
projects through the HPC
Community Fund



50

environmental audits
across our sites



2 months

of operations on other
sites by Hinkley Point C
construction based on best
practices



99%

of material and resources
used is recycled

As part of Hinkley Point C's commitment to environmental protection around the construction site, the project has been monitoring birds on the river Parrett and on the coast close to the Hinkley Point C site.

The monitoring is being undertaken by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) who operate Steart Marshes – the closest nature reserve to the construction site. As part of a wider support package for the reserve, Hinkley Point C is funding a warden. As well as monitoring activities, the warden engages with the many walkers, dog walkers and bird watchers visiting Steart Marshes.

The monitoring we've completed so far shows there is minimal disturbance to birds by Hinkley Point C vessels.



It's important for us to protect the shoreline nearby and invest in projects which match our own ambitions.

Somerset's Brilliant Coast programme, led by the Somerset Wildlife Trust, has been awarded over £159,000 from the HPC Community Fund. The programme raises awareness and engagement in local coastal communities of the county's coastal wildlife and landscapes, encourages exploration and helps volunteers look after the coastline.

"The Hinkley Point C funding will leave a really good legacy because of the training we're giving such as sea watch training looking for porpoises and dolphins as well as the ShoreSearch training." Mark Ward, Somerset Wildlife Trust

Visit our website below to learn more about environment protection measures, find videos of Steart Marshes, Somerset Wildlife Trust plus our Southern Area. You'll also get to see what wildlife we've spotted across our sites recently including otter, hare and deer!

Get in touch

Website: edfenergy.com/hpc

Email: hinkley-enquiries@edf-energy.com

Telephone: 0333 009 7070



The most recent Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 16th June and all health and safety procedures and protocols regarding Covid-19 were followed.

Items discussed included;

Cllr Weeks gave feedback on possible uses for the phone box at Aley, which had been requested from local residents. The most popular ideas were for a book swap and seed and plant swap within the phone box. A number of people have also stated that they would be happy to volunteer to keep everything clean, tidy and up together. It was proposed that in the first instance Cllr Peaster contacts a local carpenter and meet with them to discuss what would be most suitable regarding shelving to display the items. An update on the progress made will be given at the July 2021 meeting.

A recent tree inspection undertaken by a local tree surgeon at the cemetery in Over Stowey highlighted that the Sycamore tree is of concern due to the fact that it has become multi-stemmed. In time branches will compete with each other and may fall, possibly causing damage to headstones and the wall. It was recommended that this tree is removed and replaced with appropriate hedging/bushes. Quotes are currently being obtained for this work, which will take place in the autumn.

Feedback from the Highways Department at Somerset County Council regarding road safety and speed limits within the parish came back with the same response as before regarding criteria and traffic policy at Somerset County Council. It was proposed that the Clerk go back to the Highways Department to request a change in policy for the parish (which would be a long-term project and this would be the starting point), a site visit to establish what additional signage and road markings can be implemented and a speed check set up on the road from Halsey Cross to the first gate on the left for information on average speeds. Feedback will be given at the next meeting.

Concerns have been raised about the number of ash trees with ash die-back in the area. It is the landowners or the Highways Department at Somerset County Council responsibility to remove any trees that are considered a danger to the highway. This not only applies to ash, but any tree and if anyone notices a tree which could cause problems, this can be

reported at [Report a Problem With a Tree By The Road](#)

Results from the recent poll regarding the move to a Unitary Authority have been published and further details from both groups can be found on their respective websites [One Somerset](#) and [Stronger Somerset](#).

An issue that was raised at the Annual Parish Meeting in April, was regarding concerns about how the Parish Council is perceived. Comments that have been made about how the Parish Council operate made Cllr Barrow reflect on what has been achieved over the last 4 – 5 years. These can be found listed within the [draft minutes](#) from that meeting.

The Parish Council considers that these achievements are something to be proud of and that areas that are out of the ultimate control of the Parish Council and where the Parish Council may only have limited influence (particularly with regards to local or national policies) are when members of the public may feel that their voices are not being heard. One such area is planning.

Cllr Barrow has suggested that once the pandemic is at a more manageable and safer level, if possible, an open meeting for members of the public to attend with a planning officer from Sedgemoor District Council would be a way to inform all of what a Parish Council can realistically do and more importantly how a decision on a planning application by the Planning Department at Sedgemoor is reached. This will be discussed at a future meeting to see what can be arranged.

With regards to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, despite more positive signs, caution is still advised and if anyone does need any help or support from the Parish Council, please contact the Clerk. Alternatively, if you require more specific information or advice, the Clerk can signpost you to the relevant group or agency, to ensure you get the correct and appropriate response.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 21st July 2021. If you have any other concerns or issues you would like to bring to the attention of the Parish Council, please contact us in the usual ways:

Website: <https://www.overstoweyparishcouncil.co.uk/>

Email: clerk@overstoweyparishcouncil.co.uk

Phone: 01278 734689 (please feel free to leave a message if there is no reply)

If you could leave your contact details, we can then ensure any concerns raised are on the agenda for the next meeting.

Amanda McMurren, Clerk to the Parish Council

NIGHTJAR ENCOUNTER

Every year the Quantock Hills AONB service carry out a survey of nightjars on the Quantock Hills. Nightjars are summer visitors. They're here only for a short breeding season and they're nocturnal, so in June, when the days are long, surveys can only take place either late at night or first thing in the morning.



This year's dusk survey takes place on

Thursday, 10 June. Throughout the day I keep an eye on the weather. It is thankfully mild and dry, with the temperature forecast to remain around 16-18C well into the evening, but before heading out I put on a couple of extra layers. My survey area, from Triscombe Stone to Wills Neck and Cothelstone Hill, will feel chilly once night falls and the temperature drops. I park at Triscombe Stone at 8pm and make my way towards Wills Neck. **Even at this relatively early hour on a summer's evening it is eerily quiet.** Somewhere in the distance I can hear a cuckoo calling and closer to me a willow warbler. I move slowly, even though nightjars, if they are present, will make no sound until it starts to get dark. I have with me my mobile phone, a whistle, just in case (although I can't imagine that anyone will hear a whistle up here) and my binoculars. By 8.30pm I am standing motionless, looking down across Aisholt Common. Owen Jones, a Ranger, calls to check that I am in position. I confirm that all's well, and that I'll call him back when I leave, just before 11pm. I hear the "clack, clack, clack" of a green woodpecker somewhere ahead of me, and then a rush of tyres as three mountain bikers shoot past. They are as surprised to see me as I am to see them.

Just before 9pm, I watch as a red deer emerges from Aisholt Woods and makes it way carefully down the Combe. Deer have an uncanny ability to materialise from nowhere and then merge into the background. **Somewhere nearby I hear the "peep-peeping" alarm call of a meadow pipit.** Gradually the light begins to fade. Far below me, the twinkling lights of Bridgwater disappear in misty cloud, only to re-emerge as the cloud thins moments later. I am aware that hardly any moths and insects are on the wing. How can a nightjar possibly find food? When I was a lad, a

balmy summer evening would have been alive with insects and moths. I begin to doubt whether I'll record any nightjars. I walk very slowly and quietly, stopping every few moments to listen, but hearing only silence. I walk back from Cothelstone Hill, along the tree line above Bagborough woods, and in the half-light stand still, perhaps for five minutes. Silence rings in my ears, broken only by the sound of my own breathing and heartbeat. I listen for any sound. And then it starts, somewhere in front of me; the unmistakable churring of a nightjar. A sound unlike any other. I cup my ears. It appears to be coming from the bare, upper branches of a dying tree. I see movement and hear a strange clapping sound as the nightjar circles its territory, making at the same time a metallic "poing" sound, which I have never heard before. I focus my binoculars as a silhouette leaves a bare branch, to which the nightjar returns unerringly after every flapping circuit. The nightjar must be able to see me clearly, and in the gathering darkness it is almost as if this particular bird is putting on a performance just for me.

I walk on towards Triscombe quarry, hoping to hear another nightjar, but something draws me back to where I started. The nightjar is still there; churring, circling and clapping. It is now 10.30 and almost completely dark, apart from a far-off glow in the sky above Hinkley Point. I turn on my torch and start to head back. For the next 20 minutes I can see only the few metres of track in front of me, lit up by my torch beam. I trip and stumble my way to the car, which looks very alone in the darkness at Triscombe stone. I sign off with Owen, assuring him that, although I may have encountered only one nightjar in almost three hours, I have enjoyed a memorable and very special one-to-one connection and an experience which will live with me.

Roy Osborne

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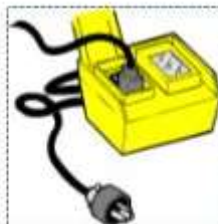
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