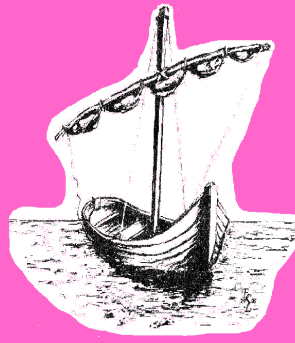


The Parish Magazine



Ashton-under-Hill
Beckford
Overbury
Alstone &
Teddington

April 2021

70p



**Spring's pardon comes, a sweetening of the air,
the light made fairer by an hour, time
as forgiveness, granted in the murmured colouring
of flowers, rain's mantra of reprieve, reprieve, reprieve.**

from Spring
Carol Ann Duffy

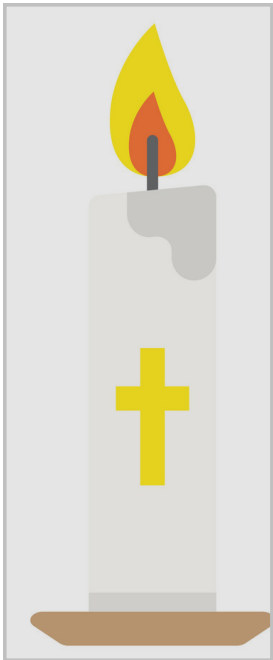
“Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news; “I have seen the Lord””.

Some of you will recognise these words as being said by one of Jesus’ closest friends on Easter morning, Mary Magdalene, as she visits the tomb where Jesus was laid following his crucifixion, which we commemorate on Good Friday. It is a story of shock, mystery, and joy, as Mary instead of seeing the dead body of Jesus as she expected to, encounters two angels



who tell her Jesus is not to be found in the tomb. In her distress as she turns away, she meets someone who she at first believes to be the gardener, and who asks why she is crying; She tells him she cannot find the body of her beloved Jesus and asks if he knows where the body has been taken. This gardener, then calls Mary by her name; And with that one word, Mary recognises him to be her Lord, alive and standing in front of her, talking to her and bringing her the comfort and hope she so desperately needs.

This story from St. John’s gospel of the bible, is one of the great accounts of many people who witness to the resurrection of Jesus on that first Easter Sunday morning. It is a story of revelation, new beginnings, rebirth, and the dawn of a new era; And this April, we too are offered a potential time of new beginnings and a return to a new normal, as we emerge from what we hope will be the last Lockdown of the Corona Virus pandemic. It has been a hard year, when many of us have suffered loss, have been deprived of the fellowship of family and friends, and when churches have been closed, along with so many other activities. No one yet knows what the ongoing and long-term implications of all we have gone through will be, but as we come out of the darkness of isolation, shielding, and being locked into our homes, we look forward once again to being able to see people and returning to all those activities from which we have been unable to participate.



We hope this Easter to gradually start opening up our churches once again for physically worship, and on Easter Sunday some churches across Bredon Hill will be welcoming people to share in that Easter joy, as we remember the victory Christ won over death through celebrating his resurrection. Churches will light a Paschal candle to celebrate the coming again of the light of Christ, and although we may not be able to sing, we will see in words of that well known hymn by C. F. Gellert, the faithful promise which the resurrection brings, *“Jesus lives! Our hearts know well, naught from us his love shall sever; life and death nor powers of hell, tear us from his keeping ever. Alleluia.”*

I, like many, will be looking forward with great pleasure to celebrating Easter by indulging in a chocolate egg or two. But I also will take some time to give thanks that we can now look forward to a future of new life and beginnings as we journey out of this pandemic. Therefore, may we, like Mary, see Jesus with renewed hope and vision as we journey forwards. Happy Easter!

Allison

**Vicar of Eckington, Defford cum Besford and Associate Priest
for the Bredon Hill Group of Churches**

Magazine printed by David Good, Goodmusic Publishing Ltd.

Welcome to the April Parish News.

On March 23rd the UK fell silence for 'Covid Reflection'. One year on and we're still in lockdown, but there is light at the end of the tunnel—the vaccine program continues at pace and infections in the area are very low. April will hopefully see the first signs of normality return, we will have more flexibility to see friends and family outside, and some businesses will start to re-open. Let us hope that progress continues and the "Government's Road Map" will not be delayed.

As we move towards summer our local sports clubs have lots to offer (see pages 17-19), have fun and enjoy these friendly teams

I would like to end by saying a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the magazine this month, I could not have produced this edition without your help.

If you have an article or notice to publish the deadline for contributions for May edition is 18th April.

Happy Easter—and don't eat too much chocolate!



**April Service Rota for the Beckford Group and Bredon Hill Group of Churches
subject to COVID restrictions during April**

Unfortunately there is not much progress over the April services as we are waiting to see how things go over the next couple of weeks. PCC's will be invited to consider how they want to move forward later this month,

What I can tell you is that there will be:-

- a Zoom Good Friday service at 10.30 comprising of a mixture of readings, hymns and silent meditation;
- 4 physical Easter Sunday services at 10.30am. The locations will be at Holy Trinity Eckington, St. Giles, Bredon, St. Mary's Elmley Castle and St. John the Baptist, Beckford;
- A 4.00pm Zoom Easter Songs of Praise. People are invited to choose their favourite Easter hymn and say why they like it;
- The 10.30am service on 11 April will be a Zoom Morning Prayer service.

Thereafter we are not sure and will be deciding whether to return to physical worship gradually or continue with Zoom services for a further few weeks.

Allison Davies

Date	Church	Time	Minister
4th April	St. Mary's, Elmley Castle	10:30 am	Canon Rev. Roger Spiller
4th April	St. John the Baptist ,Beckford	10:30 am	Bishop Martin Gorrick
4th April	St. Giles, Bredon	10:30 am	Rev Allison Davies
4th April	Holy Trinity ,Eckington	10:30 am	Bishop Michael Hooper

Opening Times around the Parish for Private Prayer		
Church	Days Open	Hours of Opening
St John the Baptist, Beckford	Wednesday & Sunday	10:00am-4:00pm
St Faith's, Overbury	Wednesday Sunday (only when there is no service in the church)	10:00am-4:00pm 10:00am-4:00pm
St Barbara's, Ashton Under Hill	Wednesday, Friday & Sunday	10:00am-5:00pm
St Margaret's, Alstone	Wednesday	10:00am-4:00pm
St Nicholas', Teddington	Daily	10:00am-4:00pm

Easter Sunday Service in Beckford

Now that the planned service of Holy Communion is definitely going ahead at 10.30am on Easter Day, 4th April, we look forward to welcoming friends from across the Beckford Group as we come together once again for our first public service after the weeks of closure. In a happy reflection of last summer, Bishop Martin will lead us in this important milestone event, as he did in August after the first lockdown.

Of course it will still be necessary to observe all Covid protocols. As explained in last month's magazine, prior booking is essential and ***please note: the list of bookings already received by 15th March will fill the church under current distancing regulations, so unless your name is already on that list it would be difficult to accommodate you. If you've overlooked making an application so far, then by all means register an interest with David Carvill (for contact details see Directory Page) against the possibility of a cancellation. Please don't arrive unannounced as it would be heart-breaking to have to refuse admission!***

Beckford Annual Church Meeting

As advertised in the February magazine, our Annual Church Meeting was held in the church at 7pm on Wednesday 10th March. After the weeks with no services, it was perhaps not surprising – though no less disappointing – that not one member of the church family attended, apart from the small committee which strives to run the church's affairs throughout the year. Though such attendance has never been high, it was the first time that the wider congregation has been completely unrepresented.

For the third year in the vacancy, it fell to David Carvill, as Churchwarden, to deliver what would normally be the Vicar's Report, in addition to the customary Fabric Report. Pam Grice presented the Treasurer's Report. Following three deletions, resulting from two sad deaths and one person moving away, Beckford's Electoral Roll now stands at 26.

We were delighted that Graham Galer, as Secretary, and Pam Grice, as Treasurer, were content to continue in those roles which they fill with such efficiency and enthusiasm, and we are very grateful to them for all their hard work. Jonathan Grice was re-elected to represent Beckford Church on the Beckford Group Parochial Church Council (PCC): another vacancy exists. (In addition, as Churchwarden, David holds an ex-officio position on the PCC.)

Though he had intended standing down this year, as there were no candidates for the post of Churchwarden, David agreed to be nominated, for one further term, for possible election at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in April. However he made it clear that should he be elected he would not be prepared to serve beyond that time and it is hoped that a replacement – or two (there should two wardens) - will be found in the coming year.

The Children's Society – Beckford Representative

Following last month's appeal for a replacement as local representative following the death of Doreen Byrd, it was a delight to receive no less than three expressions of interest! It's a pleasure to announce that the role will be undertaken by Sarah Booth who will bring a great deal of energy and care to organising the Society's affairs in the village and will promote its interests in all it does to assist children in need. Sarah will be getting in touch with collecting-box holders in due course.

David Carvill

Remembering Ronald George Compton 'Ronnie'

Born in 1942 in Beckford at New Cottages, Ronnie had a troubled childhood. The family moved to the new houses on the Cheltenham road in 1947 and he spent many years of his life living in a shed at the bottom of the two-hundred-foot garden. He struggled at school and was strangely very proud of his nickname Corky. The local youth of that era took great delight in placing a barrel in the Carrant brook with him in it, to see if he floated. He always did!

He led a simple life, working for local market gardeners and was an excellent poacher. Rumour has it that he never got caught and was regarded as a wily old devil by the local game keepers.

He took great delight in shocking the customers of Beckford Stores where he used to shop. Clutching a pheasant in the feather or a rabbit in the fur and swearing did not go down well with the locals, who would quickly move out of his way in the post office queue on pension day!

He had a great sense of humour and told wonderful stories some true, some not of his antics and was part of life's rich tapestry of characters that one rarely now meets.

Ill health forced him into hospital where he died from Covid. He is now at peace in Beckford churchyard in a village that he never left. He would laugh at being close to the farming family where he enjoyed his poaching. A true countryman.

Sally Stringer

News from St Barbara's Church, Ashton under Hill

Like everyone else, we feel we are emerging into the spring sunshine, and keen to get back into the world. The churchyard ironically has looked beautiful this year, with the succession of snowdrops and now primroses and daffodils. A lot of things have been put on hold recently, with no physical services possible. Our last events were Christmas and the "Christingle" at the start of January. On 14th March, Mothering Sunday, posies were put in the church porch, free to all, to commemorate the day. Sad to say, this service was the first casualty of lockdown in 2020.

However, St Barbara's has continued to be open for private prayer on three days a week, and hopefully this arrangement can be reviewed soon. Regular Sunday Zoom services for the Bredon Hill group run by Rev Allison and her team have been much appreciated, and kept us in touch with a wider community. It is impressive how these have developed into a professional offering over the months, much helped by Alison Khan, the parish co-ordinator. Many thanks to both of them.

The following services are planned for Easter Day in the parish.

Easter Day Sunday 4th April: 10.30am Holy Communion at both Beckford and Elmley Castle churches.

Bishop Martin, and Canon Roger Spiller will take these services. Please contact them if you wish to attend. A quiet time of contemplation, accompanied by readings, will take place in St Barbara's on Good Friday at 3pm. Please see Noticeboard for details

Good news

Malcolm Nelson reports: We have now received planning consent from Wychavon DC to connect a water supply pipe from the road outside the Lychgate to a standpipe at the base of the tower. There are conditions on how the work is to be carried out, as clearly, excavation in a churchyard will always need to be handled sensitively. This is the first stage in installing a disabled access toilet in the church at some time in the future, when funds permit.

This has been a long-running process, so thanks to Malcolm for his patience and perseverance.

Advance Notice

PLANT SALE AND COFFEE MORNING for Christian Aid

Will take place on Tuesday 18th May. 10am to 12 noon. In the garden.

We wish you all a Happy Easter.

Update from The Chapelries

We are still hoping to hear that all our churches will be opening soon but to date the Beckford Easter Sunday Holy Communion service on 4 April at 10.30am is the only definite service in the Beckford Group. Details of any ZOOM services and meetings are on p3. We will of course let you know immediately of any good news or updates.

The Chapelries AGM

The Teddington and Alstone Churches Annual Meeting was held on Zoom on Thursday March 4th at 7.30pm when David Marsh gave his last Chairman's report before his move. The following members agreed to continue on the committee: -

Reg Squires (Chairman). Mike Wingfield (Treasurer), Nick Bentley (Secretary), Kieran Whelan and Anne Kyle as deputy church wardens and DCC members Joan Perkins and Libby Hopkins. Kieran, Anne, and Joan are also members of the PCC.

We would like to give a big thank you to all of you who have helped with our services, give to the church, deliver the magazines, arrange the flowers, do the cleaning, lock the churches, tidy the churchyards, or help on other occasions. However, we would still welcome new members to assist in running our two well-loved churches so please do get in touch with Reg (01242 620388), Kieran (01242 620762) or Anne (01242 620351) if you feel you can contribute in any way.

As usual both churches continue to be open for private prayer as follows: -

Teddington daily, 10am-4pm, and Alstone on Wednesdays, also from 10am-4pm.

Alstone Churchyard

We hope to arrange a churchyard tidy up in the next month to keep the borders, bushes, and trees well-trimmed and the gulley's free of moss. We have also had to replace our badly damaged water butt and many thanks to John Perkins who has supplied and installed the new one for us.

Stay Safe

Anne Kyle



Overbury First School ~ April 2021

On 8th March we finally welcomed our lovely children back in to school. We are extremely proud of how well they managed their home-learning but we are so happy to have them settled back into school life and they are delighted to be back with their friends.

We are hoping the weather continues to be warm enough to enable our forest school and outdoor learning to continue.

Don't forget to socially distance wave if you see us!



If you would like to see some of the fantastic work our children have done, along with up-to-date information, you can find it all on our website: <https://www.overbury.worcs.sch.uk/>

Whilst online, check out The Friends' Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/Overburyfriends.

With best wishes from us all at Overbury First School ☺

St Nicholas Church, Teddington. Rota April – June 2021

<i>Date</i>	<i>Cleaning</i>	<i>Security</i>
04/04/21 (Easter)	M Healey	J Julyan
11/04/21	C Godfrey	P Ellis
18/04/21	M James	M Healey
25/04/21	J Whelan	D Duggleby
02/05/21	M James	R Godfrey
09/05/21	M Healey	K Whelan
16/05/21	C Godfrey	A Stinton
23/05/21	M James	R Philips
30/05/21	J Whelan	M Wignall
06/06/21	M James	J Julyan
13/06/21	M Healey	P Ellis
20/06/21	C Godfrey	M Healey
27/06/21	M James	D Duggleby

Many thanks to all the volunteers who support the church here. Put simply, if we did not have you, then the church would have to be locked up/closed.

If you are unable to fulfil a duty, please try and arrange cover. But if there's a problem then please let me know. If I've got the above wrong, then please let me know! If you are aware of anyone who would like to join the rota, then please do let me know. He/she must live locally but does not need to be a churchgoer!

Many thanks. Kieran. kieranjwhelan@gmail.com

ASHTON UNDER HILL WI Report

It is with a great sense of satisfaction that Ashton W.I. can report our first successful Zoom meeting for members, held on 6th March. Speakers' organiser Jane Wilson had wondered whether it would be possible and whether there would be enough support for a Zoom meeting. In the event, twenty-one people joined the call, about two thirds of our membership. The meeting opened as usual with a few words on business matters from Doreen. Then local photographer Steve Gledhill kindly hosted the event on line which enabled him to show his beautiful photos of Bredon Hill. Steve exhibited his collection at Open Gardens in 2017, so it was a pleasure to see them in a better medium on the screen. The photos were mostly taken over the year of 2016, in all months and seasons, and at differing times of the day. Like many a dedicated photographer, Steve has been up on the hill before dawn to catch the sunrise for a planned shot. He must also have been up there on some very chilly occasions. He said that there are 50 miles of public footpaths on Bredon Hill. Some of the photographs were printed in black and white, giving a special effect; they were all stunning. It is possible to visit his website if anyone wishes. Some of the members recognised the location of Sundial barn near us in Ashton and we are determined to make it a spot for a visit when we can resume our WI walks on the hill. Our next meeting is scheduled for 5 April when David Seymour will talk about his years as a print journalist on the Daily Mirror. This should be interesting, as he let slip he had worked with Piers Morgan for a while. Very topical! Many thanks to both for their participation, and well done Jane for the organising.

In the meantime the Book Club is continuing to take in a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction; the latest was by Lady Glenconner with her reminiscences of the Royal family. Thanks to Linda Richardson for organising this. We were sorry to learn that Mollie Groom had a brief spell in hospital but we hope she is recovering now.

An Easter surprise is being planned – details secret at the moment. Happy Easter to everyone.

Judith Hunter



BECKFORD WI

Our President Margaret Darby welcomed 21 members to the online March meeting of Beckford WI. She then introduced two members of the Everyman Theatre Education and Community Team who were going to give an illustrated talk about the history and general work of the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham. The speaker, Caro Day explained that she would begin by giving a brief history of the development of Cheltenham as a spa town and how this linked with the history of the theatre that we now know as the Everyman. Using the power of technology members were able to view the slides on their computers at home. It was the patronage of royalty, in particular, George III, which contributed to the growth in popularity of Cheltenham as a spa town. One consequence of this was the need for places of entertainment which included theatres, and several were set up. In 1891 it was decided to build a new, large theatre in Regents Street and the famous architect, Frank Matcham was commissioned to design it. It was smaller than the present theatre, but the present frontage still incorporates his design for the New Theatre and Opera House. The first play to be presented was "Lady Clancarty" and was a great success. More than 1300 people could be accommodated in the audience, though for the cheaper seats, the bench seats provided were not very comfortable. Nowadays 700 people can be seated in considerable comfort. The theatre was well-attended and even spent a short period in the 1920s when it was used as a cinema. During WWII it thrived as the London theatres were affected by the Blitz and many famous actors came to Cheltenham. These included Roger Moore, Laurence Olivier and Richard Burton as well as the dancers Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann. For a time, it became the garrison theatre for the US troops stationed nearby. After the war with the resurgence of the London theatres, the Cheltenham theatre fell into a decline and in 1959 it closed, and plans were made to sell the site for development. The Cheltenham Theatre Association was set up and managed to raise enough money to reopen the theatre and it became known as the Everyman Theatre. In the 1980s it was beginning to need refurbishment, and it closed in 1983 for three years while the Regent Arcade was being built. Cheltenham Borough Council contributed £1.4 million towards the building of a substantial extension which included a Fly Tower which allows scenery to be put in place from above using counterweights. In 1986 the theatre reopened with a performance of "My Fair Lady". There is a small studio theatre where a lot of local work is carried out in a more intimate setting with an audience of 50 people. The Education and Community Department work with local groups and provide workshops and skill training sessions. In 2011 a major restoration took place and the decoration inside was restored to the colour scheme and decoration of the original 1891 pattern. At the end of her talk Caro said that performances would be restarted as soon as the lifting of current restrictions allowed. There are several performances in the pipeline.

Margaret thanked Caro for her talk and hoped that we would be able to come on a visit to the theatre in the near future. After a short break the meeting resumed, and Margaret welcomed three new members to our ranks. The Bookworms Book Club is due to meet online to discuss the book "Wilding" by Isabella Tree and it is hoped that the members' walks can resume in April when the restrictions are lifted, and the weather improves. There are plans to make our annual visit to the bluebell wood on Bredon Hill above Beckford. Birthday posies to three members have been distributed and we were reminded of the online programme of courses offered by



Denman at Home which can be accessed easily now we have improved our IT skills. There are virtual coffee mornings that have proved very popular and help members keep in touch, but we look forward to seeing each other properly soon.

Our next meeting on 12th April will be another Zoom meeting, we have a talk by Liza Jones – **Knickers!** - *The history of underwear with examples of Victorian & Edwardian drawers, pantaloons, and combinations plus a selection of 20th Centaurus pieces ranging from the liberty bodice to extravagant undies.*

Clare Henderson Meeting Secretary

Beckford Community Village Hall Ltd

Since last month, the scaffolding has been removed and the walls and doors have been painted. The Canadian Maple floor, put down in 1998, has been sanded and is having clear Hardwax-Oil applied. The new LED ceiling lights and wall lights are stunning. We have already thanked our sponsors, and this month we would like to thank Dan and Steve Wood of Wood Brothers Ltd, together with electrician Paul Hopkins of Dumbleton for their hard work on our hall which they have totally transformed into a bright modern inviting village hall.

With the major work completed, only bits and pieces remain on the To-Do list. The piano will be taken away by Wychavon DC unless anyone gets in touch with us. The old hanging lights were carefully taken down, and the bar will be stored in the PC container pending decisions.

Meanwhile, we are obtaining quotes for a reshaping of our website, which is much used by people outside the district for gaining information about the hall, but which is badly out of date. We are also trialling Hallmaster, a system for taking bookings and sending invoices, which will hopefully ease the work of our booking secretary and treasurer.

We are planning an Official Grand Opening Event as part of a much larger exciting event this summer. Watch this space! - or frequent posts on our Facebook site, which has more photos of progress and other news.

Yo Yates & Graham Galer

The Elizabeth Wood Trust

The Elizabeth Wood Trust is a fund offering financial assistance to anyone suffering hardship in Overbury, Conderton, Alstone, Teddington and Little Washbourne. If you have been impacted by current circumstances or know of someone who needs help please don't hesitate to contact any of the people below who will be pleased to assist with your request. Your privacy will be completely respected, and details will only be used on a strict "need to know" basis. We can help with provision of food parcels or a contribution to towards something you need up to a maximum of £200 per recipient.

Christine Clark 01386 725405

Faith Hallett 01386 725206

Anne Kyle 01242 620351

Kieran Whelan 01242 620763

Teddington Church Flowers

Further to our notice in the March Parish Magazine, we would like to thank everyone who has kindly donated to our flower fund. We are most grateful, and we hope you like how we have decorated the church for Easter. Please do pop in to have a look after Saturday 3rd April.



We thought we might trial an idea that has proved popular in other local Parishes. We are inviting people to sponsor the church flowers for a month, perhaps to mark an anniversary, a special occasion or in memory of a loved one. The name(s) of sponsors and details of the occasion could be published both in the church and the Parish magazine, but this would only be with the Sponsor's express permission of course. If you are interested, please contact Jan on 620765 or Sue on 620112 in the first instance to discuss arrangements.

Finally, the existing flower ladies would like to invite anyone who loves flowers to join our group as a church flower arranger. No special experience is needed, and you would be made most welcome. Again, please contact Jan or Sue if you are interested or have any questions.

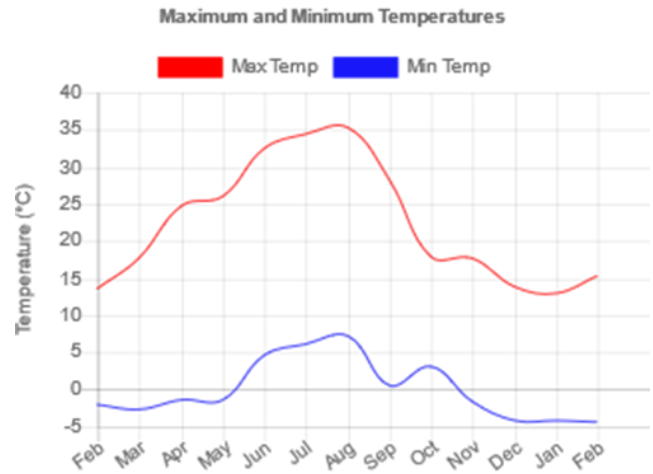
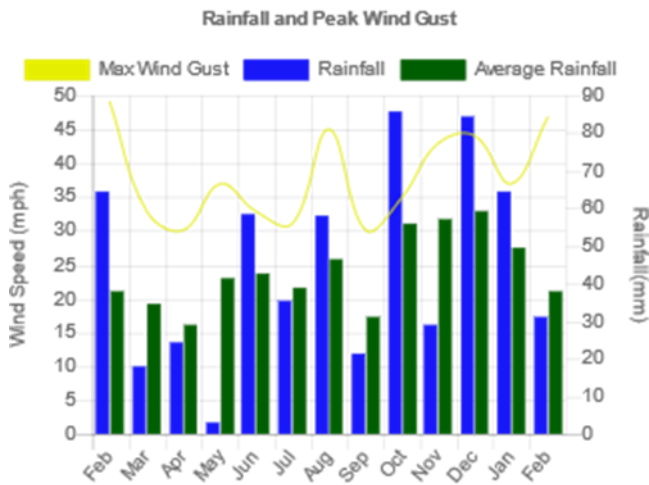
Thank you.

Teddington Church Flower Ladies

Weather Diary – February 2021

February has been another depressing sort of month – although the rainfall was about half what we had in January. The ground was still very wet and our daily walks still needed a warm coat and waterproof shoes (or wellies). We had a few very windy days

We are certainly looking forward to the spring to cheer us all up and hopefully see some warmer weather.



February 2021 statistics

Highest Temperature: 15.3°C, on the 24th February

Lowest Temperature: -4.5°C on the 11th February

Highest rainfall rate: 15.4mm per hour on the 9th February

Highest daily rainfall: 5.4 mm on the 4th February

topped by 7.2 mm a few miles further east on Overbury Farm on 20th February

Number of rainy days: 14

Total rainfall: 31.0mm

Highest wind gust: 47.0 mph on 14th February

Average daily peak wind gust 32mph

The next full moon (Pink Moon) will be on Sunday 27th April, in the very early morning. This is also a supermoon.

All this information, and more, can be viewed on our website –

<https://www.theshieling.net/weatherdavis.php>.

I have also added some data from the Overbury Farms weather stations to give you some idea of how much the weather varies in the local area.

Andy Slade

Advertising in the Magazine

The current ad pages, which run from April 2021 to March 2022, are full—thank you to all our advertisers.

Please contact Jean Croft (details in the Directory, page 28 if you would like to go on the waiting list should spaces become available.

Update from St. Faith's, Overbury

Spring is probably my favourite time of year; every walk I spot more signs of life returning- flowers bursting out with those delicate spring pastels, birds frantically flying here and there in bright plumage busy seeking safe refuge to raise their young. Bredon Hill never looks more beautiful, especially when dotted with new-born lambs. This year in we really need those signs of hope and renewal after a long and lonely winter missing those who we love the best.

Although St Faith's is not hosting a service on Easter Sunday, the church will be open on Good Friday and Easter Sunday and anyone who wishes to go in will be welcome. The usual Covid safety rules will apply and the church cleaned thoroughly in between.

We are optimistic that we will soon be able to hold services again soon; as ever this involves the help of many people to whom we are indebted. If you feel you could help in any way with cleaning the church , arranging flowers or mowing and tidying the churchyard we would love to hear from you; a couple of hours here and there will be greatly appreciated. A Spring churchyard spruce-up is planned for Saturday March 27th and any help would be welcomed; please contact Simon Sweeting on 01386 725 552 or simon@ovstud.co.uk.

Contact numbers;

Mowing and churchyard: Simon as above

Flowers: Stef LeMarechal: 07947 629913

Cleaning: Anna Horton : 0776 596 8091

Thank you to everyone who has placed donations for Caring Hands in the box in the church; these have been gratefully received and distributed.

The need is growing all the time and anything you can spare will be put to good use

Chris Clark

Easter Fun

On Easter Saturday, 3 April, there is to be a Churchyard "Find The Pictures" trail with Easter Egg prizes for all. This will primarily be aimed at First School aged children – although younger ones will be very welcome to join in too. To make sure there aren't too many people taking part at once, please contact Faith Hallett (725206, 07702 892791 or faith.hallett1@gmail.com) to arrange a time between 10am and 3pm. It is anticipated that the trail will take around twenty minutes to half an hour.

Teddington farewell.....

We have been extremely touched, and somewhat overwhelmed, by everyone's kind words. Thank you all so much. We have made some great friends and have very much enjoyed living in this wonderful village where we have been made so welcome, we shall miss you all. However, age is catching us up and it is time to move on and downsize – particularly to a smaller, flat garden! We will only be in Stow, so be reassured we'll be back from time to time.

David and Caroline Marsh



Please remember that donations for Tewkesbury Foodbank can be left in the porches of the Alstone and Teddington churches - the Foodbank collects the donations weekly from St Nicholas, Teddington.

Thank you for your support.

Mary James, Teddington



VALE WILDLIFE HOSPITAL



Open Day 2021

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 4th July

11am → 4pm

Entry £5pp (Under 5's free)

Beckford (Nr Tewkesbury) GL20 7AN

For more information call Natalie on 01386 882288

or email info@valewildlife.org.uk

Early Bird Discount Tickets Available Online



Vale Wildlife Hospital &
Rehabilitation Centre

www.valewildlife.org.uk

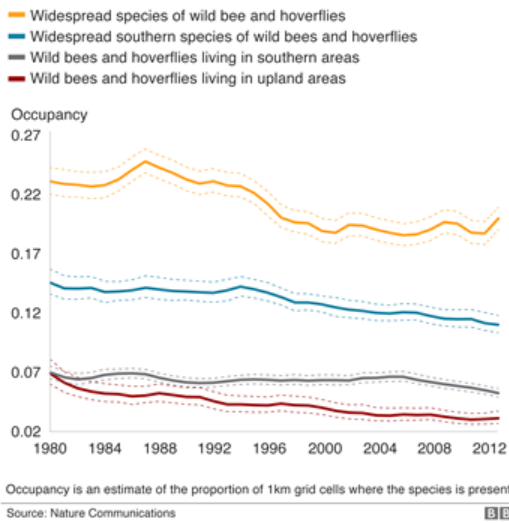
Registered Charity No 702888

37 YEARS OF
HELPING BRITISH
WILDLIFE

The Decline of Bees in Britain

Recent studies have shown a worrying trend in the decline of pollinators such as British wild bees and hoverflies. This worrying decline could eventually impact on food crops as pollinators are lost.

Decline in pollinating insects in Britain



Scientists suggest that the decline is probably due to several factors: -

- Habitat loss - since the Second World War, we have lost 97% of our wildflower meadows, leaving our bees with little natural habitat.
- Climate change which disrupts bee behaviour
- The use of insecticides Scientists have found that exposure to pesticides can impair honeybees' ability to navigate, bumblebees' ability to reproduce and solitary bees' ability to reproduce any young at all.
- Pests and diseases, such as the varroa mite. Some honeybee diseases can spread to wild bumblebees. It is yet unclear if they spread to solitary bees.

- Invasive species such as the Asian hornet and the small hive beetle could damage both Honeybee and Bumblebee colonies if they become established.

These threats have led to nearly 1 in 10 of Europe's wild bee species facing extinction.

What can we do to help?

We can all do our bit to encourage pollinators such as bees by leaving a corner to few wild plant / weeds. Complex flower forms, such as double peonies or cactus dahlias, do not encourage pollinators, simpler forms, where nectar can be readily accessed, are preferred by insects such as bees.



Why not set-up your very own Nectar Café? **Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust** suggests that you -

- Choose a sheltered sunny spot.
- Place each plant in groups or drifts so that the colour and scent are easy to detect.
- Prolong the flowering season – select plants so that you have a show of flowers from early spring to late autumn.
- Choose flowers with a simple (often flat) structure, like old cottage varieties, as they are the easiest for insects to feed from
- Remember to provide a night-time feast for moths. Plant some night-scented flowers.
- Add herbs to the mix as they are highly attractive to insects or design a dedicated herb garden.

The **Bumblebee Conservation Trust** also suggests providing undisturbed nesting sites.



Bumblebee queens need a place to set up home to raise their colonies for a few months of the year. Many will nest underground in disused burrows or underneath garden sheds, some nest on the ground in long grass and moss, and others will nest higher up in compost bins, bird boxes, walls, and roof spaces. Leaving wild areas, putting up bird boxes or creating potential underground nesters can encourage queens to nest in your garden. If you are lucky enough to have a nest in your garden, simply give them a little space and enjoy watching their busy little lives.

Helen Wilkes

People Around the Hill



David Hunter—Ashton-Under-Hill

Why did we move here? Some friends thought it an eccentric move after 35 years commuting from Hampshire to various Whitehall offices. But then, it had always been an odd career choice for someone reared in urban Southampton and possessed of a degree in Eng. Lang. and Lit. to join MAFF. Had I ever even been on a farm before joining the Ministry? Not sure; but I certainly wasn't a country person and farming had never figured as a career option. In today's woke-speak I should perhaps claim it was *a first step on the journey to discovering my truth* but in reality the future just turned up when I wasn't looking and by the time I reached 30, I had a wife and three (later four) children to think about.

Come to think of it, I had been on a couple of farms in the USA where I spent an academic year after graduation. Tobacco farms in the Deep South were however a poor preparation for Whitehall. I had been an oddity in Dixie where Brits were scarce as hens' teeth and several of them, to put it kindly, had a wavering relationship

with reality (like the Welshman who told me he had settled there to avoid marrying Princess Margaret.) My hosts had skills I was unlikely to need on English farms – what to do if an alligator appeared in your carport, for instance - and the whole experience taught me that Americans and we did not hold congruent world views. For example, one otherwise sane professor asked me, in all seriousness, why Winston Churchill's son had not become Prime Minister. How long you got, Prof?

We spent almost 40 years in Hampshire after we married, equally divided between the Sussex border and Southampton city. (Much as we liked East Hants, it was difficult for a red-blooded Sotonian to live in an area served by the Pompey newspapers.) It was however interesting to observe the social geography of the area. For instance, the further you moved from Portsmouth itself, the more senior the Navy ranks you found. In the Meon Valley and villages around us, a glance at the sidesmen's rota in the parish church suggested that you should really be of flag rank before you offered to take up the collection.

My career? For all but a few months at the start, the UK was a member of the EU (well, we joined the EEC and it became the EC before morphing into the EU but few people thought that the changing name might actually mean something.) So over the years I did a lot of Europe-facing things which ranged widely, including food standards, poultry imports, meat processing, the WTO agriculture negotiations and banana trade policy. No, you didn't misread that last: bananas were an especially knotty international problem and, to their obvious surprise, a succession of Foreign Secretaries had their ears royally warmed by assorted Commonwealth delegations on the subject.

An aside. During a visit to Central America, I was taken to an unscheduled meeting with the local Prime Minister to discuss the Banana Question. The going was sticky. But on the corner of his desk was a well-thumbed Bible so I took a chance and referred him to Matthew 5.25 (look it up.) He grinned and finished the quotation. I hadn't previously known that he had in youth been a seminarian and was fond of quoting scripture.

Perhaps surprisingly, MAFF had a lot of international business and there is no denying that the scent of tea gardens in Assam or banana plantations in the Caribbean were some of the privileges to be weighed against long hours of unimaginably technical wrangling in the smoke-filled rooms of Brussels. These last? You don't want to hear about corrective factors for testicles in bull carcass

dressing, do you? I thought not. Neither did my mother in law who, on asking what had taken me to Brussels that day, fell into a pale silence on being so informed.

One 25th anniversary this March has passed with little comment. A puzzling animal disease suddenly became a major health scare in late March 1996. This isn't the place to anatomise the BSE nightmare in any detail, but the horror and the initial sense of helplessness is still unforgettable by those of us closely involved. Here was a disease which had unexpectedly crossed from cattle into humans by an unknown route. Individuals could have been infected years before; there was no test, cure or palliative; but if you had it, the prognosis was disability followed by madness followed by death. No-one could tell how big the problem would prove to be but a number of scientists and commentators talked up the risks suggesting that the death toll might exceed 200,000 and – unsurprisingly - all this spooked politicians and the public alike, here and overseas. For a few harrowing weeks, it looked as if the British beef industry was doomed.

For the record, I believe that the human death toll eventually reached about 180 over 20 years – every death a wretched tragedy, of course, but that *total* figure is markedly less than the *daily* rate of fatalities during much of the Covid epidemic. I doubt that present Ministers have the BSE experience in mind but those of us who struggled in 1996 to find policy options which protected the public, salvaged the industry and reassured our international partners can at least sympathise with their dilemma.

The economic consequences were huge and it often seemed as though it suited many parties to give us a good kicking: whatever measures we took were never good enough and we were repeatedly told we had to do more, specifically to slaughter more and more animals. How far do you go, though? (The eventual figure was something like 4.4 million beasts.) I made a few rough calculations to use in such exchanges. If, for instance, we imagined all the cattle that were slaughtered to stamp out the disease and put them in a line, how far would the queue stretch? Answer: from London to Seoul in South Korea. No-one came close to appreciating the real scale of what we were doing; but few were deterred from disparaging our efforts.

With hindsight, I wonder if the whole experience coloured later public discourse where 'risk' became an issue. Journalists and politicians alike asked whether there would be zero risk from each relaxation of the BSE rules and to call it 'vanishingly small' was not enough – so if something was not absolutely, copper bottomed, 100% safe, the presumption became that it should be banned. Some of these arguments are being replayed as we move forward out of Covid Lockdown. The difficulty for officials and Ministers, then and now, is unfortunately that decisions can only be taken on the basis of the information available at the time you have to make them and, even if you know much less than you might like, you have to do the best you can with what you do know.

When the BSE crisis had largely abated, a political adviser rang me. Could I produce a note analysing historic structural changes in the meat sector? in the next 48 hours? I explained the problems – patchy data, widely dispersed, for one - and said his questions were more suited to a PhD thesis than a quick briefing note. But why didn't we have all this information to hand, came the response? I pointed out the scale and cost of the resources that would have been required to keep the detail he wanted on tap and up to date and suggested that, had we asked for the money to do it five or ten years earlier, the occupant of the well-known address from which he was calling (and the house next door) would have sent us packing. Lesson? Anyone can *sound* clever after a crisis even if they weren't always wise during it.

So how then, 10 years ago, did we wind up here? Retired, unconstrained by work or children, we wanted a change and could really move anywhere, preferably somewhere quiet but not too far from the trains to London and the adult children. Judith's family are all Worcester (City) born, bred and educated - so we had a look and here we are. We seem to average about two decades per residence so it won't be time to move on for a bit.

A Distinguished Old Teddingtonian William Creese Co-Founder of the YMCA

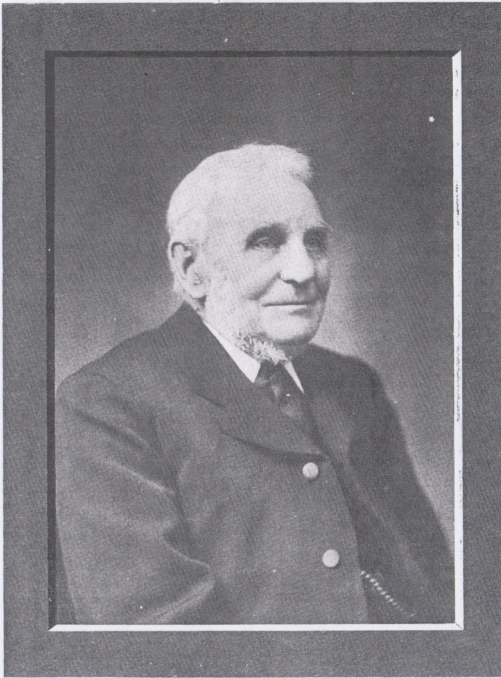


Photo: *The late Mr. WILLIAM CREESE.* [Bennett Clark, Waverhampton.

In St. Nicholas churchyard is the grave of William Creese, one of the 12 founder members of the YMCA in 1844, who was born in Home Farm in 1821 and died there in 1910. His father John managed the large farm. William went to a boarding school in Bishop's Cleeve, probably that held in the room over the porch of the parish church. On leaving school he was apprenticed to the Cheltenham drapery firm of Shirer, Debenham & Co and attended Cheltenham Parish Church where he came under the influence of the evangelic ministry of the Reverend Francis Close, later Dean of Carlisle and founder of Dean Close school. On completing his apprenticeship, he joined the large drapery firm of Hitchcock & Sons in St. Paul's Churchyard, London, and it was in an upper room of this establishment in 1844 that the YMCA was founded by a group of pious young drapers led by George Williams. The group was motivated to provide both religious and practical help and support for young men in similar situations to theirs. As the first annual report put it in 1845 their

object was *"Improvement of the Spiritual Condition of the Young Men engaged in houses of business, by the formation of Bible Classes, Family and Social Prayer Meetings, Mutual Improvement Societies, or any other Scriptural agency... and to lead unconverted young men... to the library of useful knowledge, rather than to cards and billiards, the cigar divan and concert room, the theatre, and the seducing and polluting retreat"*. William Creese was the first Hon Secretary of the association and signed the first Members' Tickets.

In 1846 his father died, and he had to return to Teddington to help his mother Mary manage the large farm. There he remained for the rest of his life, but he brought from London the principles and concerns of the newly formed YMCA and applied them in a more local and rural setting. Home Farm became a centre of Christian influence in the village and wider neighbourhood. He became churchwarden of St. Nicholas and regularly read the lessons; but as services were held only fortnightly, he daily conducted morning and evening prayer for servants, workers, friends, and family in the farm's large kitchen.

Hymns were sung and sermons preached from a pulpit. [See picture] The kitchen congregations often numbered from 40 to 70 and the emphasis was evangelic with William often recalling how he had seen men stripped to the waist fighting in his orchard and how these same men had been reformed and taken bibles into the barn so that they could read a little between their work. He also started a Sunday school for Teddington children, run by his wife, (married 1862), Amelia, and ladies of the family in other



in other rooms of the farm.

William was also Poor Law Guardian and District Councillor and active in the wider neighbourhood on behalf of the YMCA. He became first secretary of the Cheltenham YMCA, founded in 1855, and was honorary president and treasurer of the Tewkesbury branch, formed in 1886. He kept this association with

Tewkesbury to the end of his life and died in Teddington the day after attending Tewkesbury market. A Memorial Committee decided that it would be most fitting to his memory to raise £5000 to provide a larger fully equipped YMCA building in the town and a small Mission Hall in Teddington. These objectives were achieved, and the Mission Hall was used for meetings, services, and other local functions until the late 1930s. In the 1950s it was converted to a dwelling, now called Cotswold Cottage. [See picture]



Bill Kyle

Ashton Cricket Club

Following a Covid-hit 2020 season, Ashton under Hill Cricket Club is hoping to return to a full season of action this summer.

These are exciting times for the club which is planning to invest in the future with a major new initiative. Hopes are high that a new twin-net facility can be installed at the far side of the pavilion, which would provide a massive boost to junior coaching in particular.

Some of the funding for this project is set to come from the highly successful Crowdfunder campaign run last season, along with grant support from Wychavon District Council. However, more fundraising is still needed to make the project a reality...more news to follow.

On the field, Ashton will once again be putting out two Saturday men's teams in Divisions One and Seven of the Cotswold Hills League, along with a full programme of midweek evening 20/20 fixtures. If you would like to find out more about playing for Ashton, contact Mike Banks on 07980 139104 or Sam Cope on 07734 712600.

Ashton will once again have three junior sides competing at U11, U13 and U15 level in the Cotswold Hills League.

The club is also planning to run its popular All Stars Cricket programme again on Friday evenings for children aged 5-8. This fun eight-week course offers a great introduction to cricket. For the first time this year, Ashton CC is also running a Dynamos Cricket course for children aged 8-11. Both courses are set to start on Friday, May 14th.

You can find out more and register your child for All Stars at <https://ecb.clubspark.uk/AllStars/Course/39f44709-bed9-46d7-bf46-65f2c136366e> or Dynamos at <https://ecb.clubspark.uk/Dynamos/Course/5672654b-6592-4f12-92f2-86c6b75fca6d>

If you have a child who might be keen to join Ashton as a junior, please contact junior co-ordinator David Whitehouse on 07771 942464.

David Wood



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Unfortunately, we have had to cancel all our indoor cricket nets as we still cannot meet inside, but **our own outdoor practice nets will be available for members from early April.**

SENIOR Practices:

Please contact Josh Tamcken (1st team Senior Captain) for details - 07966 047700
or Rob Hayden (2nd team Senior Captain) - 07527 340320

JUNIOR Practices:

There will be a full programme of Youth cricket in 2021.

Please contact our Youth Co-ordinator Dave Westmore (07747 092870) for further details.

The Club will be open from Friday 16th April.

It will be great to meet existing members of the club or anyone new to us you are all most welcome!

For general information please contact:

Dave Devereux (Chair)

01684 850329 / 07949 648372



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For more information contact:

Bob Honey 01684 773359 or **Sue Peters** 01684 773414

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In Praise of Birds

I was given a little book for Christmas called 'A Short Philosophy of Birds'. It begins like this: "A blackbird sits perched on a wall, eyes glistening, beak bright yellow. Watch him carefully. Doesn't he look happy to be a blackbird, hopping about on the lawn, hunting for worms, completely fulfilled by his own existence?" But it ends like this: "Anyone who takes even a passing interest in the little flying, singing creatures around us will have noticed that the number of skylarks, swallows and many other birds has fallen sharply in a very short space of time For most birds adapting to an eco-system in permanent upheaval is difficult or impossible. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that twenty-five percent of the Earth's ten thousand bird species is threatened with extinction by the end of the twenty-first century."

I can remember Spring dawn choruses that were so loud that they woke you up. I can remember the song of a nightingale heard from our bedroom window most summer evenings. We would enjoy watching flocks of cheeky sparrows busily dust bathing by the side of the road outside our kitchen window and would listen to the clack clack of thrushes breaking open snail shells, their anvils the stones of our drive. The last time we had swallows nesting in our garage was about five years ago. These last few days (early March) brave blackbirds have been delighting us with their evening songs, and robins are now into their Spring songs. But I think in the past we would have heard more of a chorus rather than just a few soloists.

Coping with climate change and the destruction of species is a complicated affair but I am going to make one request on behalf of our garden birds: they now need undisturbed hedges and trees for nesting. Please trim your hedges before March 1st or after August 31st. The RSPB says: 'There are certain laws regarding hedge cutting which you should be aware of to ensure there is no damage to active birds' nests.' By September we hope that the young birds are robust enough to find their own sanctuaries and that the odd hedge trimmer won't be too much of a disturbance.

So, can I end with a poem by Thomas Hardy called *The Darkling Thrush*:

Philippa Rands

*I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.*

*The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.*

*At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.*

*So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.*



Alice through the year

Easter Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross buns, hot cross buns, one a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns.

These delicious Easter treats are a bit of a labour of love, but well worth it.

These freeze very well so if you can't manage eating a full batch, pop them in the freezer for a rainy day.

Makes 14

INGREDIENTS

The Dough

- 500g strong white flour
- 7g dried fast action yeast
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 egg, beaten
- 50g butter
- 300ml milk
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 70g sultanas
- 70g currants
- 50g chopped mixed peel

The Glaze

- 3 tbsp apricot jam
- 1 tbsp water

The Cross

- 70g plain flour
- 1 tsp oil
- Piping bag with a small nozzle

METHOD

1. Bring the milk to the boil, remove from the heat and add the butter – leave till lukewarm.
2. Place your flour, salt, yeast, sugar and cinnamon in a bowl and make a well in the centre.
3. Pour the milk/butter mix and egg into the well, mix with a wooden spoon to form a sticky dough.
4. Place dough on floured surface and knead for 5 minutes until smooth and elastic (or use the dough hook in a mixer for 3 minutes).
5. Add the fruit and chopped mixed peel to the dough with the lemon zest and knead again until evenly distributed.
6. Cover bowl with cling film and leave to rise for an hour in a warm place, or until doubled in size.
7. Knock back the dough, adding a little flour if it's too sticky. Divide into 14 equal pieces and form into little balls. Place on 2 grease proofed trays. Cover with cling film and leave to rise again for 45-60 minutes.
8. Pre heat the oven to 200 degrees.
9. Make the paste for the cross by adding enough water to make a thick paste then add the oil. Place in a piping bag.
10. Pipe crosses onto the hot cross buns and place in the oven for 20-25 minutes.
11. Make the glaze by heating the apricot and water in a pan and bringing to a rolling bowl. Brush over the buns as soon as they come out of the oven.



Congratulations to Alice and Hamish on the birth of your daughter Freya.

From all your friends at Beckford WI



PARISH DIRECTORY - APRIL 2021

Revd Allison Davies Associate Priest
01386 750203 Pastoral Area of Responsibility: Overbury
 eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com Vicar of Eckington with Defford and Besford

Treasurer Sharon Denson 07727 262798
 E-mail: sharondenson92@gmail.com

Administrative Co-ordinator Alison Khan 07984 748059
Bredon Hill Team acbhteam@gmail.com

Parish Enquiries At the moment there is no-one to take calls for the Beckford Parish Office so if you require information please contact your churchwarden/contact as listed below.

Saint John The Baptist's Church, Beckford

Churchwarden	David Carvill	01386 882002
Secretary	Graham Galer	01386 882200
Treasurer	Pam Grice	01386 882514
Organist	Vacant	
Flowers	Vacant	
Bell ringers	Nick Hopkins	01386 710136

Saint Faith's Church, Overbury

Churchwarden	Vacant	
Secretary & contact for St Faith's	Christine Clark	01386 725405
Treasurer	Joss Muirie	07736 957310
Organist	Anne Brown	01684 292231
Flowers	Stef Lemarechal	01386 725325
Bell ringers	Ros Long	01386 725111

Saint Barbara's Church, Ashton-under-Hill

Contacts for St Barbara's	Alastair Humphrey	01386 881479
Treasurer	David Hunter	01386 882087
Organist	David Hunter	01386 882087
	Anthony Greenwood	01386 881278
	anthony.greenwood@hotmail.com	
Flowers	Judith Hunter	01386 882087
Bell ringers	Nick Hopkins	07790 831787
Choirmaster	Alastair Humphrey	01386 881479
Regular Giving	Alastair Humphrey	01386 881479

Saint Margaret's Church, Alstone & St. Nicholas' Church, Teddington

Churchwardens	Anne Kyle	01242 620351
	Kieran Whelan	01242 620763
Secretary	Nicholas Bentley	01242 620292
Treasurer	Mike Wignall	01242 620031
Flowers:		
Teddington	Jan Mallett	01242 620765
	Sue Poole	01242 620112
Alstone	Jane Rogers	01242 620592

Transport Co-ordinators

Overbury	Faith Hallett	01386 725206
Teddington	Kieran Whelan	01242 620763
Alstone	Anne Kyle	01242 620351
Ashton	Vacant	
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Andrew Barnett	01386 881145
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Disability Awareness Officer

Pat Chambers	01386 750358
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Vacant

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