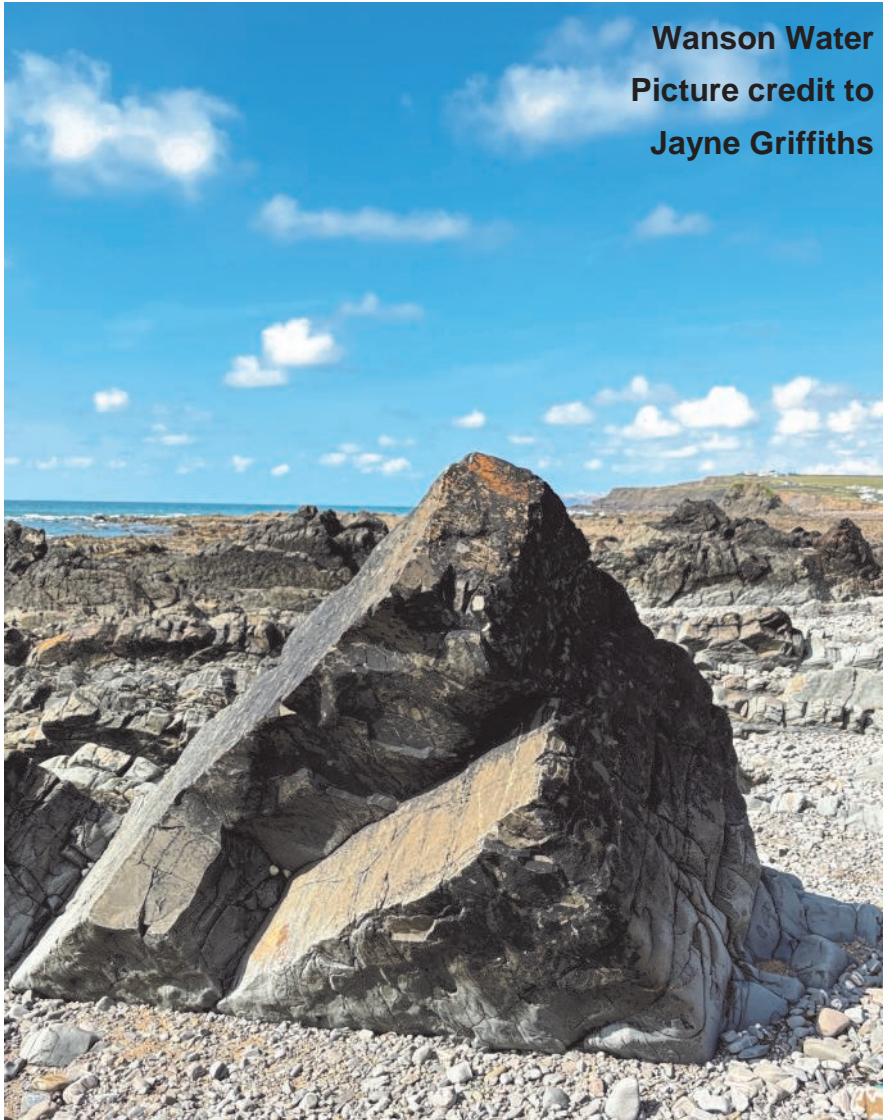


No. 137 - February / March 2026



THE POUNDSTOCK PACKET

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Bledhen Nowydh Da! (Happy New Year). By the time you read this, January will be nearly over, and the days will be starting to get longer. We have already had two major storms, including Storm Goretti, which caused huge damage throughout Cornwall. Thankfully we weren't too badly hit in Poundstock and Bude, but I have never experienced such an eerie calm followed by the most intense winds coming from nowhere.

On March 5th we will celebrate St Piran's Day (Gool Piran). St Piran is the patron saint of tin miners, and traditionally the day was a holiday for tin mines. The week leading up to the day itself is known as Perrantide, and apparently is a time of great drinking and eating! In Bude there is usually a St Piran's day walk, often ending with shanties and pasties at a local hostelry. If you attend a St Piran's Day event this year, we would love your photos for our next edition.

Dhe waryow (farewell for now). Jayne and Tania

CONTRIBUTIONS

We always welcome input from our readers. If you want to send us an article, photographs or local information, contact us at poundstockpacket@gmail.com. **The deadline for our next edition is 15th March 2026.**

We do not necessarily endorse the views expressed by individual contributors and while we do our best to make sure all information is accurate, we can't accept any responsibility for errors. We reserve the right to edit items submitted and decide on what is suitable for publication. If you wish to copy or reuse any of our content, please contact the editor.

ADVERTISING AND DISTRIBUTION

Advertising in the Packet currently costs from £35 a year (six issues) depending on the size of ad you choose. This includes delivery direct to all the homes in the parish – currently over 550. For more information please contact Julie Pawley via advertpoundstockpacket@gmail.com. We do our best to deliver to everyone in the parish, but if you know of anyone who has been missed please let us know. For those who live elsewhere, copies are available at the Beach House and Wainhouse Country Stores, and current and archive PDFs are on our website (www.poundstockpacket.co.uk)

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CANN ORCHARD ART

Last year I joined an art group run by Sue Proudfoot from a studio on her farm at Cann Orchard in Marhamchurch. Sue is an accomplished artist herself, and wanted to share her experience and her studio space with other budding painters. It is a fun and supportive group, and we enjoy learning and being inspired by each other. Sometimes I am quite pleased with my work, other times it goes straight in the bin...but I always learn some new things. Each week Sue invites us to try a new theme or art medium, sometimes inviting other artists to share their ideas and wisdom with the group.



We have tried diverse subjects including portraits; people; buildings and still life. In November we all created Christmas cards which we had printed and sent to friends and family. We have tried exciting new mediums such as acrylic art pouring (very messy) as well as charcoal and oil paints. To beat the January blues we all worked on paintings inspired by Australian aboriginal art – a subject very dear to my heart having lived and travelled in Australia.

Sue scared us all a little by saying she had agreed for us to exhibit a selection of our works at The Castle in Bude. Nothing like the pressure of a deadline and public scrutiny to get us motivated! The theme of the exhibition is “anyone can paint”, and I like to think that our imperfect art works will encourage anyone who is interested to pick up a paint brush and have a go. If you are interested in seeing our work, the exhibition will run at The Castle from 7th to 26th February. If you would like to find out more about the art groups, contact Sue Proudfoot on 07881 465985.

Written by Jayne Griffiths



CHURCHES AND SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY & MARCH

CHURCH SERVICES

Please read the monthly “Voices Together” which has all the up to date details.

Poundstock - 2nd and 4th Sunday

Marhamchurch – 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday

Budehaven – 1st, 2nd and 4th Sunday

Week St Mary – 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday

Whitstone - 2nd and 4th Sunday

Every Wednesday there is a Zoom Morning Prayer at 8.30am

Holy Communion is held on alternate Wednesdays at Budehaven and Widemouth Bay.

**** When there is a 5th Sunday, a Benefice Service is held for everyone at a different church each time.**

Poundstock invite you to coffee at the Gildhouse after their service. Bude, Marhamchurch and Week St Mary also have refreshments after the service.

METHODIST

Week St Mary 10.30am and 6.30pm

Bude Central at 10.30am and streamed on YouTube

Marhamchurch at 10.30am

Whitstone at 11.00am

ST PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC

Services every Saturday at 5.00pm and Wednesday 10.00am

FAMILY CHURCH

Meetings at Jacobstow Village Hall – 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday at 10.00am

ADDITIONAL NOTICES

Shrove Tuesday 17th February

Ash Wednesday/Lent Starts 18th February

Good Friday 3rd April

Easter 5th April

FROM THE RECTORY

"African Wisdom" by Ellen K. Kuzwayo

A Foot Has No Nose.

Of the many interactions I had with my mother those many years ago, one stands out with clarity.

I remember the occasion when mother sent me to the main road, about twenty yards away from the homestead, to invite a passing group of seasonal work-seekers home for a meal. She instructed me to take a container along and collect dry cow dung for making a fire. I was then to prepare the meal for the group of work-seekers.

The thought of making an open fire outside at midday, cooking in a large three-legged pot in that intense heat, was sufficient to upset even an angel. I did not manage to conceal my feelings from my mother and, after serving the group, she called me to the veranda where she usually sat to attend to her sewing and knitting.

Looking straight into my eyes, she said "Tsholofelo, why did you sulk when I requested you to prepare a meal for those poor destitute people?" Despite my attempt to deny her allegation, and using the heat of the fire and the sun as an excuse for my alleged behaviour, mother, giving me a firm look, said "'Lonao ga lo na nko" - "A foot has no nose". It means: you cannot detect what trouble may lie ahead of you.

Had I denied this group of people a meal, it may have happened that, in my travels some time in the future, I found myself at the mercy of those very individuals. As if that was not enough to shame me, mother continued: "Motho ke motho ka motho yo mongwe". The literal meaning: "A person is a person because of another person".

As we approach Lent, a time for giving things up, why not try giving up something different from chocolate this year? Why not give up selfishness. Jesus said, 'Do to others, what you would want them to do to you.' Luke, chapter 6, verse 31. Instead of thinking of the inconvenience you might have to endure to help someone, try remembering that, a person is a person because of another person.

This Lent, will you, like the lady in the story, treat people with the dignity that they deserve, whoever they are?

Reverend David Saunders



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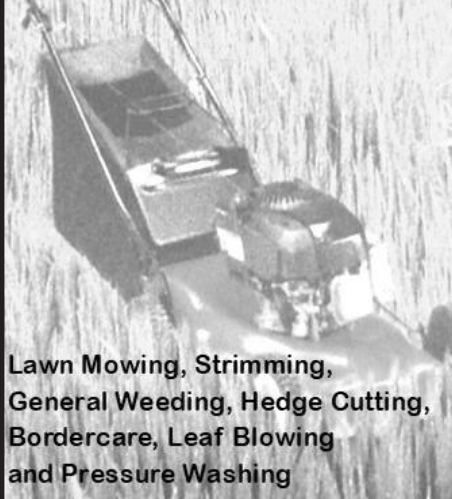
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CUP CLUB BUDE - POWERED BY COMMUNITY

Next time you grab a takeaway coffee in Bude, consider borrowing a Cup Club Bude cup! You may already know the name, but the story behind it is a great example of local people coming together to make a difference.

Cup Club Bude is a borrow-and-return reusable cup scheme, designed to cut down the number of single-use takeaway cups thrown away every day. Instead of a disposable cup, customers can borrow a reusable one for a small £1 deposit, enjoy their drink, and return it to any café in the scheme to get the deposit back. The cups are washed and reused again and again, helping keep Bude cleaner, helping cafes reduce costs and reduce waste.

The scheme is run by The Circular Mindset CIC, a Bude-based not-for-profit organisation working on practical circular economy projects. Cup Club Bude was launched through a local crowd funder, supported by residents and businesses who wanted to see a positive alternative to single-use cups. That community backing helped fund the first cups, signage and set-up, turning an idea into action.

Cup Club Bude is running as a 12-month pilot, with the aim of testing whether a town-wide reusable cup scheme can truly work in everyday life. The pilot is about learning what works, what needs improving, and whether enough people are willing to take part to make reuse stick.

So far, six cafés across Bude have joined the pilot, including independent businesses and council-run venues. Together, they have already helped divert hundreds of single-use cups from waste, showing that small changes can add up when a community gets behind them. But the team behind The Circular Mindset CIC - Lauren and Millie are not stopping there - "we want every takeaway served in a Cup Club Bude cup, and we want every cafe on the scheme".

How you can help

- Choose a Cup Club cup when ordering a takeaway drink
- Return the cup to any café in the scheme
- Spread the word to friends, family and visitors.

Run a café or business? Get in touch to find out about joining the club!

Website: <https://thecircularmindset.co.uk/cup-club/>

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GREEN CLEAN



With the new year here, we thought you might want to go more eco-friendly with your cleaning choices. Bicarbonate of soda or bicarb (also known as baking soda) is a versatile and eco-friendly cleaning agent that can tackle a variety of household cleaning tasks.



General cleaning uses:

- **Deodorising:** Sprinkle in bins, carpets or shoes to absorb odours. You can also place an open box in the fridge to neutralise food smells
- **Stain removal.** For tough stains on ceramic mugs or teaspoons, make a paste, apply to the stain and scrub gently. To make the paste use 2 tablespoons of bicarb with a little water. The paste is gentle yet effective on a wide range of surfaces
- **Cleaning drains:** To clear clogged drains, pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of bicarb followed by $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of white vinegar down the drain. Cover and let it sit for approx. 30 minutes before flushing with hot water
- **Bathroom cleaning.** Use bicarb paste to scrub bathroom tiles and fixtures. It effectively removes mildew and soap scum. Spray on white vinegar for a more potent cleaning solution.

Mixing bicarb and vinegar is largely ineffective as an all-purpose cleaner because they chemically neutralise each other. While the resulting fizzing reaction is visually impressive, it is often described as a "visual placebo" by experts.

Why Bicarb and Vinegar Contradict

- **Neutralisation:** Bicarb is a base (alkali) and vinegar is an acid. When mixed in roughly equal parts, they cancel out each other's beneficial properties, leaving behind water, carbon dioxide gas, and sodium acetate (a type of salt).
- **Loss of specialised power:** Vinegar is effective for dissolving mineral deposits like limescale, and bicarb is effective for cutting through grease or acting as a mild abrasive. Once mixed, neither retains these concentrated strengths

Effective Uses

There are scenarios where the mechanical action of the bubbling reactions work:

- **Dislodging minor clogs:** The pressure from rapidly released gas can help manually move small blockages or "gunk" in sink drains.
- **Surface agitation:** If applied directly to a surface while still bubbling, the fizzing can help loosen surface-level grime, making it easier to scrub away.

Cont overleaf

GREEN CLEAN - CONT.

●Oven Cleaning: For the best results, they should be used in sequence rather than mixed together. Apply a paste of bicarb and water to greasy surfaces and let sit for a few hours or ideally overnight, then spray with vinegar afterward to help lift the softened residue.

Summary of Best Practices

Task	Most Effective Method
Mineral/limescale	Use pure white vinegar
Grease	Use a paste of bicarb and water
Odours	Sprinkle bicarb
Tough scrubbing	Apply bicarb paste then spritz vinegar while scrubbing
Laundry	Use bicarb in wash cycle (200g with usual detergent and vinegar in rinse cycle).



Safety Note: Never mix vinegar with bleach, as this creates toxic chlorine gas!

Other ways to use bicarb

- Stained and smelly plastic food containers. Soak stained containers in a solution and warm water to freshen them up. Pop in a paper towel and shake with lid on! Ideally use the ratio 4 tablespoons bicarb to 1l warm water, so for a small container 250ml and 1 tablespoon bicarb
- Deodorise dishwasher. Sprinkle a few tablespoons in base of dishwasher. Leave for 15 minutes then run an empty cycle
- Musty upholstery or smelly pet beds. Sprinkle bicarb. Wait 15-30 minutes then vacuum
- Grout. Apply bicarb paste with toothbrush to grout, leave for 15-20 minutes then spray with white vinegar. Leave until bubbling stops then scrub and rinse
- Mildew. Use bicarb paste on tiles, baths and shower curtains
- Dirty plastic patio furniture. Use bicarb and water to wipe down patio table and chairs. Store cushions with ban open pot of bicarb nearby to stop musty smells. Rubbish bin. After washing the bin, before using a new bin bag, sprinkle with bicarb to prevent bad smells forming.
- Trainers. Sprinkle bicarb inside shoes. Leave to absorb sweat and odours overnight. Shake out next morning before wearing.



Next edition – cleaning using white vinegar.

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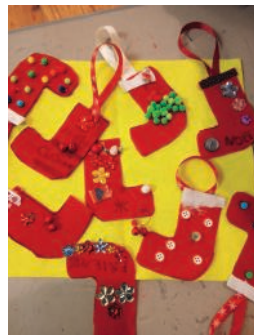
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JACOBSTOW GUIDING NEWS



After a busy Summer and Autumn, the Jacobstow Rainbows, Brownies and Guides had a fantastic Christmas season. We all made decorations for the Launceston Christmas Tree Festival. Every decoration made by every child was hung on the tree, and hundreds of people admired their work - it was a fabulous celebration of community. All the sections collected items for Operation Christmas child and we filled nine shoe boxes to be sent to children in areas of need - an important lesson in thinking of others, part of our Guiding promise.



The annual Christingle Service at Jacobstow Parish Church and the Crib Service at St Gennys were well attended, with girls taking part in both the services with readings and carols. Guides are focusing on the County ECO Challenge - with different recycling projects - did anyone spot the recycled Christmas decorations at the Hall this year?

With support from one of our parents, we now have a Facebook page - find us at Girlguiding Jacobstow -and keep up with all our doings! In February we are celebrating 100 years of thinking day - look out for our activities!

BUDE BANKING HUB

Bude Banking Hub has now opened in its permanent home at 1 The Depot, Lansdown Road, Bude, EX23 8BN. Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. The hub offers a counter service operated by the Post Office, where customers of all major banks can carry out regular cash transactions, whenever it's open.



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CORNISH SPRING AFTER THE STORM

Cornwall in spring, verges full of primroses, pheasants scrapping in the lanes, a view of the sea from the road or windy cliff top; pink bergenias in banks, native daffodils posing in the hedges - they give our county an atmosphere of botanical jauntness.

Early spring coincides with the roadside flowers of alexanders, an angelica-like plant that the Romans used like celery; and there's that joyful reminder of the coming season: the cowslips are uncurling their welcome flowerheads in the meadow. Complementing these wild treasures, Cornwall's family estates have a long history of forward-thinking, serious horticulture. Plant collectors from William Lobb to Frank Kingdon-Ward and George Forrest are all represented here in our world-famous gardens. The great Cornish showpieces featuring magnolias, camellias and rhododendrons should be beginning their spring crescendo as the gardens spring into life.



Trewithen with its 120-yard broad green lawn in the front of the house and its famous 65ft tall pink magnolia; Tregothnan, the largest private botanic garden in Britain where inspired ideas include a maze of pink *Camellia x williamsii* 'Laura Boscawen'; or Caerhays whose grey castle walls are beautifully softened by a haze of ice cream-pink magnolias in the hillside terraces behind; and where the courtyard shelters the original *williamsii* Camellias, a welcome sight as we wait patiently in the queue for our tea and cakes.

January's vicious storm Goretti has knocked back priceless tree and shrub collections managed over many years. Head gardener, Darren Little, said almost 100 of the trees at St Michael's Mount, near Penzance, had been felled by winds recorded by its weather station to have been 111mph at one point. And Gary Long, head of Trewithen near Grampound Road, said a quarter of the large mature trees, some of which were 250 years old, had been felled in the storm. Tremenheere Sculpture Garden barely has a large tree left standing. Fox Rosehill Gardens has suffered extensive damage.

Every large Cornish garden is reporting significant losses of trees, with very few reporting that they haven't lost high value species. Big old trees are at the core of a Cornish garden; they are also its weakness because nature does not like big old trees. Tall trees are more susceptible to damage by wind because their height puts their canopies into higher wind speeds; if wind is measured at 100mph at ground level it will be quite a bit faster the further up you go. When big old trees catch very strong winds the winds will, sooner or later, win - particularly if the tree is unhealthy or in decline due to age.

Cont on page 24



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(Hours vary according to staff availability. Please phone before attending.)	
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Stratton	01288 352133
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National Grid (power cuts)	0800 678 3105
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Marhamchurch WI: Shirley Youldon	01288 354672
Juliotter Garden Club	01566 781559
or 01840 261237	
Rebel Cinema	01288 361442

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

LIBRARIES—Bude Library is currently open 10.00–5.00 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10.00–1.00 Saturdays. Reserve books by phone (0300 1234 1111) or online at www.budelibrary.co.uk Poundstock's two pop-up libraries, in St Winwaloe's and Our Lady and St Anne's, are available when the churches are open (all day, every day). A wide choice of books can be borrowed or bought, with all proceeds going to charity.

POUNDSTOCK POST OFFICE—Based in the old shop at Cornish Coasts Caravan and Camping Park on the A39. Open Mondays and Thursdays, 9.00–1.00 (ask at the main shop).

THE FOLLOWING ARE ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, BUT CHECK BEFORE YOU GO (CONTACT DETAILS BELOW).

SCOUTS AND GUIDES

Cubs: Monday 6.30–8.00 pm (01288 352786)

Scouts: Tuesday 6.30–8.00 pm (07842 084971)

Beavers: Wednesday 5.30–6.30 pm (07855 001284)

Rainbows (Tuesday 17.45) and Guides (Monday 19.00): ring Mary on 01840 230006. Brownies (Monday 17.45): ring Louise on 07817 985661.

MARHAMCHURCH WI—Marhamchurch Methodist Hall, 2.30 pm, second Tuesday of the month

JULIOTTER GARDEN CLUB—Otterham and St Juliot Hall, 7.30 pm, fourth Tuesday of the month.

BUDE JAZZ CLUB—Live music and dancing Sundays 8.00pm Falcon Hotel. www.budejazzclub.co.uk 01288 361491.

BUDE BRIDGE CLUB—Tuesday and Friday evenings, Wednesday afternoons, in the Parkhouse Centre. Details from www.bridgewebs.com/Bude

POUNDSTOCK GILDHOUSE—You can hire the Gildhouse for events from meetings to parties and wedding. Call 07768 753699 or visit www.poundstockgildhouse.co.uk.

REGULAR EVENTS

WI Week St Mary 2.30pm 2nd Tuesday Monthly

Camelford Garden Club 2.30pm-4.30pm 1st Wednesday Monthly Library

DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY

- 1st The Jake Leg Jug Band, Falcon Hotel 7.30pm
- 6th Johnny Cowling - Atlantic Bar, Bude Golf Club, 7.00pm
- 6th Strode Theatre - Macbeth Alone - Parkhouse, 8.00pm
- 14th St Valentine's Day
- 14th Phil Beer - Falcon, 8.00pm
- 15th Two Counties Jazz Band Falcon Hotel 7.30pm
- 20th My Girl, the River and Serious Child - Folk pop, 7.30pm
- 27th Paul Jones & Dave Kelly - Blues - Falcon, 8.00pm
- 28th North Coast Comedy Club - Falcon, 8.00pm

MARCH

- 1st The Jazz and Boogie Band - Falcon Hotel 7.30pm
- 2nd St David's Day
- 5th St Pirans Day
- 5th St Pirran's Day Pasty Lunch at Jacobstow Hall on Thursday March 5th at 12 noon, all proceeds to Jacobstow Church. **Order your pasty from Pat before 27th February on 01840 230743**
- 13th Production Garden - Parody of the Rings - Parkhouse, 8.00pm
- 14th Devon's hidden witchcraft with Tracey Norman – Bude Castle 2.00pm
- 15th Steve Knightley - Bude Methodist Church, 4.00pm
- 15th Divertimento Concerts – Minstrels, Canworthy, 3.00pm
- 17th St Patrick's Day
- 27th Paul Foot - comedy - Falcon Hotel, 8.00pm
- 28th Pagan & Spiritual Fair, Parkhouse Centre 11.00am – 4.00pm
- 28th Paul Foot - comedy - Falcon Hotel, 8.00pm
- 28th Barrett's Privateers Shanty Night Launceston Town Hall, 7.30pm
- 29th The Wriggle Valley Jazz Band - Falcon Hotel 7.30pm
- 29th Clocks go forward 1 hour!

APRIL

- 3rd Good Friday
- 3rd & 4th Antiques Fair - Wadebridge Show Ground
- 5th Easter Sunday

POUNDSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

www.poundstock-pc.gov.uk

Chair Stephen Blake - stephen.blake@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Vice-chair Michelle Carter - michelle.carter@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. Eric Harris - eric.harris@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. Pamela Idelson - pamela.idelson@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. Tom O'Sullivan - tom.osullivan@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. Graeme Swatton - graeme.swatton@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. Liz White - liz.white@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Cllr. John Worth - john.worth@poundstock-pc.gov.uk
Parish Clerk Lynn Pluess - clerk@poundstock-pc.gov.uk

Contact 07768 100560 Website: www.poundstock-pc.gov.uk

For details of how to apply to be co-opted to the Parish Council, please see the website or contact the Clerk

The parish council website carries agendas, full minutes and other documents, as well as information about the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the parish cemetery. At present, council meetings take place at 7 pm on first and third Wednesday of each month at The Beach House, Widemouth.



Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee

Chairman Matthew Blows Contact: 07801 966945

Members: Sara Beckett, Rachael Roberts, Lyn Smith, Phyllis Ward
Cllrs. Stephen Blake and Michelle Carter.

Email: ndp-sg@poundstock-pc.gov.uk

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CORNISH SPRING AFTER THE STORM CONT.

It's worth remembering that this is not the first time centuries-old gardens have suffered damage. The Abbey Gardens, a sub-tropical paradise on the island of Tresco, has suffered extensive damage verging on the catastrophic. However many of the plants that have been damaged or destroyed by falling trees were planted after a deadly fortnight of cold weather killed enormous numbers of tender plants in 1987. Many of these had in turn been planted in the aftermath of a destructive storm in 1929.

Tresco's world famous Abbey Gardens are the very embodiment of a garden rising from the ashes. Gardeners don't like being beaten. After the sadness at the destruction has passed a sense of defiance kicks in. New plants will be acquired and planted, and gardens will move forward. There is always hope, and it will be interesting to see how the great gardens of Cornwall not only bounce back but develop for the future.

Pat Thorne

CORNWALL MAMMAL GROUP

Did you know that your local district council has a responsibility under the Biodiversity Action Plan of 2019 to help their local hedgehog population? Our local council have supported core funding for our charity. You could contact them to see what they are doing about this particular issue too? They could, for example, give grants for local signs in your town or village.



Between 100 & 300,000 hedgehogs are killed on our roads every year, so how can we mitigate those risks in Cornwall and across the U.K.?



Be aware of your speed coming in or out of a town or village



Be alert whilst driving, particularly in the dark, think hedgehog



Open up access between you and your neighbours gardens with a 13cm square hole in your fences, this reduces the need for hedgehog road crossing



Sign up to Hedgehog Street online and record hedgehog sightings (living and dead) Check out www.BIGHedgehogMap.org



If you notice that there are local building developments proposed near you, please enquire what the builders are doing to support wildlife access, tell them the Hedgehog is listed as a Species of Principal Importance in England under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 s 41.



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PEA SOUP RECIPE

Ingredients:

1 cup water (atomised)

100,000 particles soot

100,00 particles Sulphur dioxide

Method:

Reduce temperature to 4° C

Mix using natural draughts until colour becomes greenish yellow.

Serving:

Inhale and die from pneumonia.



This was the fog they had in London in the mid nineteenth century - a 'real pea souper'. London has cleaned up its air, so pea soupers are no more, but the memory persists.

I have a French friend who doesn't want to come to England. When I asked 'why', he said 'I don't want to come to England because it is always foggy.'. I looked at the figures for Cornwall, and it seems we have about 10 foggy mornings. Usually the fog has cleared by 11am, so I'm sorry Serge. He needs to go to Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland. There the cold Labrador current meets the warm Gulf Stream. The result? 200 days of fog per year.

Fog is the subject this month, but first a quick explanation of the word super-cooled. If you freeze water, it solidifies at 0° Centigrade. At least it usually does....if water is to freeze solid, every tiny drop needs a grain of dust or a big molecule of some compound or some miniscule piece of dirt or a bit of pollution to attach itself to: then, and only then can it crystallise into ice. If it is utterly pure, it can't crystallise and remains liquid well below 0°. It is supercooled.

Back to fog now. Fog is just a cloud which forms near the ground. It is made up of tiny droplets of water. It can lower visibility on the roads down to 20 feet. But that is not the only danger in winter. Some of the droplets can be super-cooled and fall on to very cold roads. The super-cooled water solidifies on the road and forms a thin invisible layer of ice: black ice.

Black ice can form on any road and does not necessarily need supercooled water. Normal rain on freezing roads is called Black Ice because you can't see it on the Tarmac. If you are driving and find yourself sliding on Black ice, do not brake - let the car come to a standstill of its own accord.

Fun fact: 2 pints of water can make an Olympic swimming pool size of fog.

By Christopher Asbury



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BEN MAGUIRE MP

Happy New Year, Poundstock! I hope you've all had a restful and enjoyable break.

As we begin 2026, I'm incredibly pleased to share some major local news, as this week I formally launched the 'North Cornwall Dental Action Group', a new initiative in light of the severe lack of NHS dentists here in our constituency. The group will bring together dentists, health partners, and local community groups to help tackle the NHS dentistry crisis affecting families across North Cornwall. It's something I've worked on closely with residents, my team of caseworkers, and stakeholders since day one, and this is a huge and positive step forward.

One of the initial partnerships we're exploring is with The Goods Shed down in Wadebridge, which could host a dedicated clinical space for community dental care, complete with x-ray facilities and treatment chairs. This kind of local delivery model could reduce the need for people to travel long distances or go private just to access essential care. Cornwall is currently one of the worst-served areas in England for NHS dental provision, with just 38 NHS dentists per 100,000 people. That's why this new group will also be looking at pragmatic solutions like supervised student clinics, community outreach, and can hopefully be replicated in other areas right across the Duchy. I want to thank everyone who has helped get us to this point, especially the trustees at The Goods Shed and the residents who've shared so many shocking dentistry stories.

I have a packed parliamentary schedule, including debates, question sessions, and meetings on everything from rural investment to housing, water quality and public services. Alongside that, I'll be continuing my regular work here in the constituency too, with local visits to businesses, schools, holding surgeries with constituents, and spending lots of time on constituent casework with my team.

On that front, it was a pleasure to meet recently with former North Cornwall MP, Paul Tyler, in Launceston. It was great to reflect on the progress we've made and the challenges that still lie ahead, and I appreciated his insight and kind support.

I also recently took the opportunity in Parliament to raise an issue that I deal with all too often: domestic abuse. Many of my constituents are domestic abuse survivors, including a large number of victims of economic abuse who find themselves unable to access legal aid because of the current means test rules. On behalf of these constituents, I stood up in the House and asked the Solicitor General to consider removing this test in such cases, and was glad to receive a commitment that the matter would be raised with ministers and followed up in writing. I'll be sure to keep the pressure on.

Finally, as we look back on 2025, it's clear it was a year of hard-fought wins. Most recently, we saw a Government U-turn on the Family Farm Tax, a policy hundreds of local farmers and I campaigned hard to stop. It was a proud moment, and one of many I'll carry forward into 2026.

Ben Maguire MP | ben.maguire.mp@parliament.uk

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NEW PACKET COMMITTEE

Who's behind the scenes of the Poundstock Packet?

The Packet Committee met in January. We needed to find a new treasurer as Alan Green decided to step down after many years of service. Karen Probets (previously Chair) has stepped forward to take on the Treasurer role, and Jayne Griffiths has agreed to take over the Chair role. Victoria Giaver-Enger has recently fully located in the parish, and has agreed to take on the Secretary role and also help with writing/editing articles.

Other members of the committee include Tania Clegg, our joint-editor; Julie Pawley our Advertising co-ordinator; Sue Burrows who supports the editorial team with content and Phyllis Ward and Lea Manders who co-ordinate the distribution – getting the Packet out within days (sometimes hours) of it being delivered by the Printer. Jen Spettigue is also a valued committee member, having previously chaired the committee and being a huge part of running and supporting the Gildhouse.

It may sound formal, but we keep it friendly and only need to meet a couple of times a year to check everything is running smoothly. We work as a team to keep the Packet thriving, providing the content you enjoy and ensuring advertisers get great value from their ongoing support.

We are always looking for new people to help and join the team, so please email poundstockpacket@gmail.com if you are interested in meeting us!



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MANWISE

This is a message for any fella having a tricky time. These dark months are sometimes a challenge to navigate, especially where mental health stuff is concerned. Please know you're not alone. Help is available, and it may make a difference in how you get through these cold, grey days.

We are MANWISE. We run weekly group meetings at Otterham & St Juliot Village Hall near Marshgate, just off the A39. We run regular breakfast socials at Highway 39 in Otterham. We do this to help local blokes have a place to talk through their life stuff and perhaps find some guidance in ways forward.

We're a men's group for men. We've been through some of life's storms and we know what it's like. If you're having troubles with life - isolation, depression, feeling low, etc - please consider coming along to a meeting and see if we're a fit for you. Our meetings are free, confidential, non-judgemental, and have no religious or political connections. You don't need a referral, you don't need to book - just turn up when you're ready and we'll have the kettle on for a cuppa & a chat. For more info, please visit manwise.org or contact Pete Cooper on pete@manwise.org in confidence.

Note from Editor - If you run a help group for women or children, please let us know and we may be able to offer you a similar article in a future edition. Tania

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EXCERPTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Poundstock Parish Council – Summary of Minutes November & December

Ordinary Meeting 5 November 2025

Planning Matters

Lower Quinceborough, Widemouth – extensions and internal alteration. No objection.

New Hall for Poundstock

An interim report was provided from the company sourcing funding for the new community hall, regarding charitable status and National Lottery funding. Further funding opportunities to be explored with Cornwall Council.

Marine Drive Widemouth the PC will submit an Expression of Interest to Cornwall Council for a Highway Improvement Scheme to include speed restriction measures including pinch points.

Future Meeting Dates

The PC will meet on the last Wednesday of each month, starting 28/01/2026

Ordinary Meeting 19 November 2025

Planning Matters

Bangors Organic, Poundstock. Erection of a modular contemporary dwelling. No objections

Poundstock Packet. As in previous years, it was resolved to award a grant to the Parish magazine. ***Editors note:** The Packet Committee thank the Parish Council for its ongoing support.*

Dimma Methodist Church Graveyard. The PC deferred making a decision on a grant application, pending clarification on ongoing maintenance and responsibility for the graveyard.

Highways Improvements. Cllr Chopak confirmed she will support the EOI for road safety improvements along Marine Drive. She also noted requests for a “No Through Road” sign at Treskinnick Cross and will request speed monitoring.

Ordinary Meeting 3 December 2025

Planning Matters

Demolition of existing Parish Hall and erection of a detached dwelling.

This is pre-application advice and the PC agreed that should a formal application be submitted in line with the information presented, no objection would be raised.

28 Coombe Lane – Public Right of Way – confirmed that Cornwall Council has requested the removal of unauthorised gates by mid January 2026.

Poundstock Gildhouse – noted that Cllrs Harris and O’Sullivan attended a meeting of the Gildhouse Management Committee to continue to strengthen communication and co-operation.

For the full Parish Council minutes and future agendas, visit poundstock-pc.gov.uk

FROM THE OLD COMPOSTER

As my nom de plume suggests I'm very keen on garden compost. I once saw a poster with the 'pin-up' gardener of the day (perhaps it was Alan Titmarsh or, showing my age, Percy Thrower) saying "you can't call yourself a gardener if you don't have a compost heap".

Composting is essential for nutrient cycling, reducing waste, and feeding soil life, improving soil structure and nurturing plants naturally making it a fundamental element of true garden stewardship, not just an optional extra.

Whilst I wholeheartedly agree with that, my knees and back are beginning to object. Traditional composting involves a three-bin compost system. The first bin contains all the 'rough' ingredients which come straight from the garden or kitchen waste into the bin which should contain a good mix of nitrogen (greens) and carbon (browns). This then has to be aerated by turning the material from the first bin into the second bin. Turning the compost into the next bin not only boosts oxygen levels but also moves the cooler outer layers to the centre. This introduces fresher material into the most active zone, accelerating the decomposition process. In due course this material is turned into the third bin for the final decomposing where it quickly turns into "garden gold". This is then used as fertiliser in the garden, which involves more turning from the heap into a wheel barrow for use on the garden.

By now you can see why my back and knees are moaning. So this year my wife and I are adopting a new method; I say "new" but I remember my dad doing something similar on his allotment in the 1950s. This is referred to as "trench composting"

Trench composting is a simple, low maintenance method of burying kitchen scraps and garden waste directly in the soil in a trench, letting it decompose underground to enrich the earth with nutrients for future planting, reducing the need for a separate compost bin and minimising smell or pests by keeping waste covered. It's ideal for improving soil structure and moisture retention, creating fertile spots for hungry crops like

beans and pumpkins by placing compost where it's needed, and can be done year-round, though waiting a few months before planting is best if starting from scratch to avoid nitrogen depletion. OK materials include vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds, tea leaves, grass, leaves, small twigs, newspaper, cardboard, plant residues etc. Avoid using meat, dairy, oily foods and large woody branches (these should go on your 'dead hedge') and avoid whole potatoes – they'll just grow!



Cont overleaf

FROM THE OLD COMPOSTER CONT.

Compared to the compost bin method this requires minimal effort. It's possible to compost this way in a relatively shallow trench, although some advice suggests digging down to 60cm (2ft). If you take a shallower approach, consider covering your trench in a tarpaulin and pinning it down to prevent being dug up by the hungry creatures. Another benefit of trench composting is that you don't need to worry whether you've achieved the right proportion of greens and browns. Even the most cared for compost heap can become a stagnant, smelly heap as it can be tricky to get that balance right, but trench composting is more forgiving. It is best to incorporate a mixture of green (nitrogen-rich) material and brown (carbon-rich) material as you would in a traditional composting setup, but you can be looser with the ratios in this system.

February Garden Jobs

Pruning: Finish winter pruning of fruit trees and deciduous hedges before nesting season. Prune winter-flowering shrubs, such as mahonia, winter jasmine and heathers once they've finished flowering

Sowing (Indoors): Start seeds for tomatoes, peppers, leeks, and summer cabbages in trays.

Sowing (Outdoors): Sow hardy veg like broad beans, carrots, and radishes under protection (cloches, cold frames) or directly if soil isn't frozen.

Planting: Plant bare-root fruit bushes, trees, and roses.
Plant rhubarb crowns.

Preparation: Chit potatoes. Prepare seedbeds by weeding and adding compost. Clean pots and set up water butts.

Wildlife: Keep bird feeders full and water available. If the weather is mild, start putting out hedgehog food



March Garden Jobs

Soil & Feeding Improve soil with compost/manure; feed fruit trees and acid-loving plants (rhododendrons, camellias).

Sowing & Planting: Sow peas, summer cabbages, and more veg outdoors as soil warms. Plant summer-flowering bulbs.

Pruning: Prune roses early in the month. Cut back dogwoods and willows.

Maintenance: Start lawn care. Clear pond edges and tidy borders.

Greenhouse: Ventilate greenhouses and cold frames as temperatures rise.

Wildlife: Provide essential food and water, create or maintain shelter and nesting materials, and adopt wildlife-friendly gardening practices like avoiding pesticides and leaving some areas untidy and don't cut or trim hedges until October.

Happy gardening from *The Old Composter*

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FREE ADVERTISING FOR LOCAL EVENTS

The Packet will always advertise local community and charity events free of charge. But we don't 'just know' what's happening – you have to tell us! Our absolute deadline for the next edition is 15th March 2026—contact Tania or Jayne at poundstockpacket@gmail.com

DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE PARISH

Black Rock Cafe: on the side of the car park hut as you drive through into the car park.

Widemouth Bay: next to the Summerhouse (by the church, Leverlake Road); near the top of Long Park Drive by the entrance to Pencarra and Bellair, just below the junction with Edith Walk; at the back of the public toilets just above Widemouth beach. The RNLI lifeguards also have a defibrillator, available at their hut above the beach when they are on duty.

Treskinnick Cross: just off the A39, in the old phone box.

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