

PYWORTHY POST



Above: early January snow in Pyworthy village

What's in your paper this month?

Bellringing in Devon.

Chinese New Year, St.
Valentine's Day &
Strove Tuesday all this
month.

Information about Curry
& Chilli Night next
month.

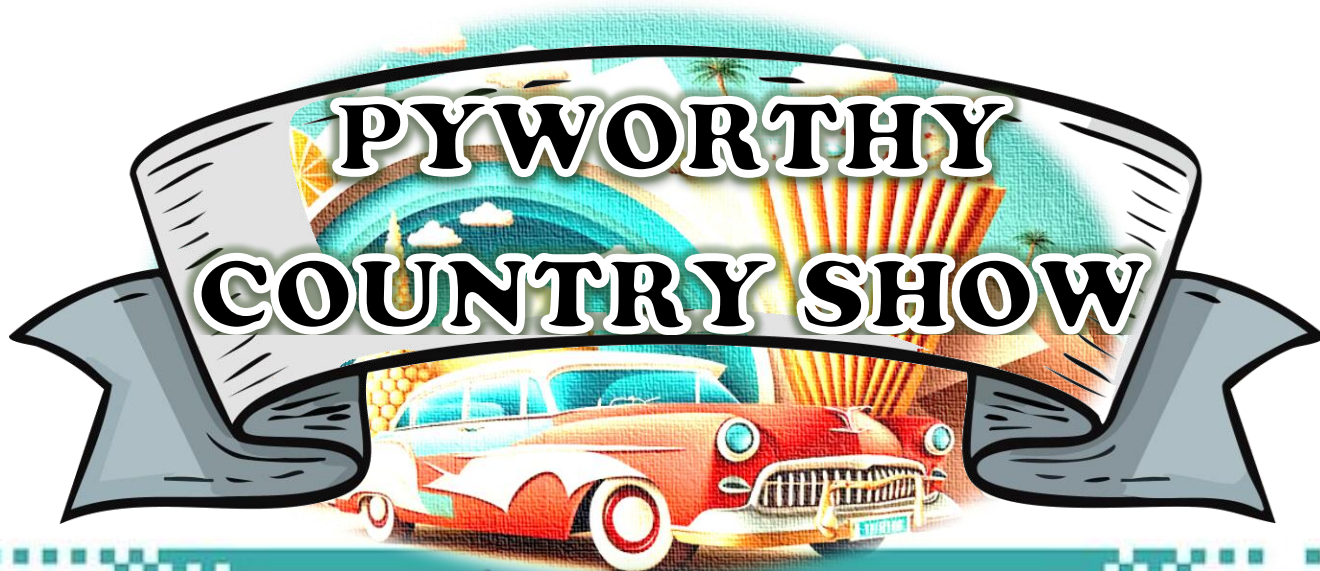
Interesting articles &
Club reports to read,
plus much, much more
.... turn the page and
come inside.



Read online at:

<http://www.bit.ly/postpy> or
<https://pyworthy-parish.co.uk/>
and view the paper in full colour.

February 2026
Issue number 348



“Show with a View”

13th & 14th June 2026

**Derriton Road, Pyworthy
EX22 6JY**

Featuring:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Auto Jumble | ❖ Stationary Engines |
| ❖ Classic Motorbikes | ❖ Tractors |
| ❖ Classic Cars | ❖ Horticultural |
| | ❖ Food & Bar |



**Supporting
Parkinson's Devon**

More information to follow.....

Welcome to the FEBRUARY Edition



By Marion Ravn

It's February – the shortest month of the year. Spring is just around the corner.

Hope you survived the recent snow, storm Goretti and Storm Ingrid, which brought us a lot of rain. Let's hope February will be a quieter month weatherwise.

We have lots going on in the Village Hall this month. Our clubs and interest groups are all up and running once again, and welcome new members. The Village Hall will be hosting three Skittles Cup matches, the bar will be open to all – dates on page 6.

Thank you to all those who have written some interesting articles for us to enjoy reading. We wouldn't have a paper if it wasn't for your input.

Until next month. Keep safe and warm.

Please keep the news & reports coming in.

Email: pyworthy@post.com



**Could you help with delivering the
Pyworthy Post at the end of
February & March?**

2 small rounds – do 1, or both.

**Winscott House area, 4 papers &
from Cob Tree Cottage along the
road to Bridgerule, 8 papers.**

**Please phone Marion on:
01409 478294.**

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By Gill Johns, on behalf of St. Swithun's Church

All the Christmas decorations are down and put away for another year. The chocolate has gradually disappeared, to the detriment of waistlines. New Year has passed with a few Resolutions being made (but how long will they last?) and we head towards spring and life peeping through in the hedgerows. We hope Storm Goretti did not affect too many of our readers as television news keeps reminding us how lucky we are compared to those on the Isles of Scilly or the Channel Islands. We did have some storm damage to our roof a couple of months ago and are thankful that all was put to rights (and paid for by our insurers) well in time for Christmas.

Looking back to Christmas, may we thank all those who so beautifully decorated the church, also the bellringers whose glad sound welcomed us. Every Sunday morning, half an hour before the church service I know I am not yet late getting to church as Ali & Simon remind me what time it is!

The Carol/Crib service had 30 attenders with Mary & Joseph, the baby Jesus and shepherds reaching the manger safely courtesy of several grownups. We were also treated again to Bryn on the piano accompanying us beautifully in Away in a Manger. We also had a first performance on handbells, borrowed

from Bridgerule, by Ali, Heather and Janet – well done girls we thoroughly enjoyed your efforts and very much look forward to future renditions.

Those of us who have pets know they are not just for Christmas; they become family members. We come to our church for the Christmas services BUT forget that Jesus and your church family is also not just for Christmas, but for the rest of the year, for happy as well as sad times.

Thanks, must also go to our band of church cleaners who do a grand job in such a beautiful building. If there are any younger parishioners out there who feel they would like to offer their services and help please do contact me on 01409 253135 or my fancy email address:

mikethemadmajor@hotmail.co.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

I have thoroughly enjoyed some of the older Agatha Christie books on television recently and note that there is a day dedicated to Saint Agatha on 5th February. St Agatha is the Patron Saint of Sicily, breast cancer and nurses. However, I suspect everyone knows when St Valentine's Day is – the 14th just in case you need to put it in your diary.

Finally, a short quote from Charlie Mackesey's second book The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, the Horse and the Storm – "All kinds of things can come from mess, so no matter how chaotic life is – try to be gentle with yourself and don't give up. Your voice is important. You have a song in you no one else can sing." So, if your house or life seems in chaos, sit down, have a cup of tea, relax, then get back to the clearing up!

United Benefice of Holsworthy


Rector: Revd Alison Hardy, Churchwarden: Alison Davies & Liffy Lowes



Benefice Services for February

<http://www.holsworthybenefice.org.uk/services/benefice-calendar/>

Worship and Prayer in the Holsworthy Benefice – FEBRUARY 2026

Date	Bridgerule	Holsworthy	Pyworthy	Hollacombe
Sunday 1 st February	11.00am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Family Service	9.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 8 th February	11.00am Morning Prayer	11.00am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Sung Eucharist	3.00pm Evensong
Sunday 15 th February		11.00am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Sung Eucharist	9.30am Holy Communion
Tuesday 17 th February	Carnival/Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Day			
Wednesday 18 th February Ash Wednesday		7.00pm Service of Ashing		10.00am Service of Ashing
Sunday 22 nd February	11.00am All Age Sung Eucharist	11.00am 	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion
	9.30am – Pancrasweek – All Age Service			

Church Bookings

To book a Wedding, a Christening, or a Funeral, or for anything else, please contact: Revd Alison Hardy, email: reverendalisonhardy@gmail.com

Tel: 07780295752.

Benefice administrator:

Libbi York – email:

Holsworthybenefice@icloud.com

Tel: 07717750198.

The Church is
open daily.



Pyworthy Village Hall News

Martin Brennan, Chairman

Pre-Christmas Social Evening

"It was an absolute joy to welcome the **Joy Machine** and have them play for us at our pre-Christmas celebration. Their music brought warmth, cheer and togetherness, making the evening feel even more magical. Everyone loved singing along and dancing the night away!" Thank you to all who came and supported us and with your support and the generous donations for the raffle we just about broke even on the night!!!! It goes without saying, our thanks to all committee members involved in organizing what turned out to be a fabulous Evening.

Village Hall Pub Nights

Next Pub Night will be on Friday 20th February. Usual times, etc.

However, on Fridays the 6th, 13th and 27th of February the main Hall will be hosting several Skittle Cup Matches with the Bar on each of these evenings open to **All**. So, a note for your Diary, **Bar will be open on all four Friday evenings in February from 7pm – 10.30pm!!**



Potters Fish n Things

Just to let you all know that Olly will be at the Hall on the **Third Tuesday of each month this year**. The first evening of 2026, will be **Tuesday 17th February**.

For further details see page 44.

Curry & Chilli Night/Pub Night

Friday 20th March

We're excited to invite you all to a **Curry Night** here at the Hall. Come along for a warm evening of delicious food and great company. Feel free to bring Friends and Family!!!

Please see page 29 for further details.



Dates for your Diary



Village Hall Meeting

Our next meeting will be the AGM.

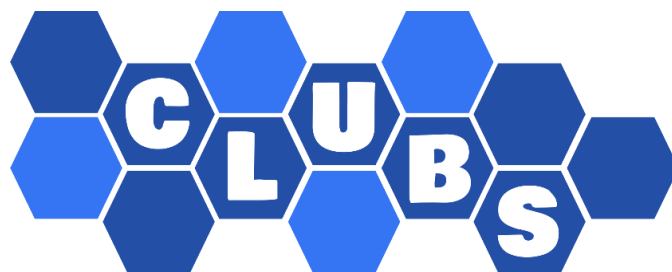
Dates and times to be confirmed in next month's edition.

Please feel welcome to join us.

AGM

Annual General Meeting

Everyone is welcome.
Stay informed and get involved.



What's on at the Pyworthy Village Hall.....

Village Hall Pub Nights!



This month our Social Evenings are:

Friday 20th February also
Skittles Cup matches on
the 6th, 13th & 27th.

Don't forget to come along and join us for Beer or whatever takes your fancy and perhaps have a go at our next '**Play Your Cards Right**' sessions are still on going. Why not come and join us for a friendly chat and a drink. Who Knows It Could Be Your Lucky Night!!

**Doors/Bar Opens
at 7pm until late.**

**Everybody is welcome, come
along and have a good time.**



Mondays: Line Dancing Club:

Complete Beginners:

5.30pm – 6.30pm

Beginners/Improvers,

6.30pm – 7.30pm

Intermediate, 7.30pm -9.30pm.

Tuesdays: Rural Art Group,

2.30pm – 4.30pm.

Tuesdays: Line Dancing Club,

Intermediate, 7.30pm -9.30pm.

Tuesday evenings: Men's Skittles
Team. Playing at home & away.

Wednesdays: Beginners Ballroom
dancing & Latin class, including
Sequence dancing 7.30pm – 9.00pm.

Thursdays: Gill's Golden Gang,
10.00am – 11.00am.

Thursdays: **Coffee Mornings** –
1st & 3rd Thursdays of each month.
Starting at 11.10am. Everybody
welcome!

Thursdays: **Creative Craft Club** –
2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month,
from 2.30pm until 4.30pm.

**See page 30 for easyfundraising.
How you can help our Village Hall,
while you shop online.**

WHO'S CELEBRATING THIS MONTH?



BIRTHDAYS

FEBRUARY

- 1st Mary Cleave, Henry Kirkwood,
Tony Piercey, Heather Arbin
- 3rd Charlotte Parrish, Tallulah Thompson
- 6th Janet Axford, Brian Harris
- 7th Joan Glessing, Harry Meredith
- 10th Gabe Burnard
- 13th Rita Thurston, Simon Davies
- 15th Matilda O'Farrell
- 16th Tilly-Anna Thompson
- 17th Ben McKenzie
- 18th Tobias Richardson
- 19th Marg Martin
- 20th Isla Weekes
- 21st David Glessing
- 22nd Preston Martin
- 25th Emily Jones
- 26th Sarah Burnard
- 27th Angela Martin



Community Birthday list

New Residents
of Pyworthy
Parish, please
feel welcome
to add your
birthdays to
our community
list.

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS AND FAMILY OCCASIONS



Happy 60th
Birthday



Congratulations - Simon Davies

who will be celebrating his

60th birthday on the 13th February.

**'Lots and lots of love Ali and the
Pyworthy Ringers'.**



Join

Gill's Golden Gang

**Strength & Balance Exercise Class
for the over 55's!**

Held at:

Thursdays.

Pyworthy Village Hall

10.00am to 11.00am.

Halwill Baptist Chapel Hall

12.45pm to 1.45pm.

Contact Gill Aston on: 07854677784
for more information.

Coffee Morning



VILLAGE HALL COFFEE MORNING GROUP

**Come along and join us at
11.10am on the 1st & 3rd
Thursdays each month.**

**Meet new friends, enjoy a coffee,
and have a good chat.**

For more information phone:

Brenda on: 01409 253015 or

Marie on: 01409 254924.

Now held in the main Village Hall.



**NEW MEMBERS ARE
VERY WELCOME!**

My Electricity Industry Recollections

Episode 13

More Stories from Kingsnorth the Jinxed Power Station

By Mike Godfrey



One of the first Projects I was tasked with sorting out was to ensure the Power Station could restart on its own in the event of a total loss of Grid supplies, as was to happen in the South East and London during the 1987 storm. It was known as "Black Start capability". Bearing in mind it was a fair while before computers and software programmes were available. I had to design a network of control relays, some with voltage sensing to recognise when the grid was lost and the Station was "Black" and to be able to start the emergency diesel generator. This would then provide enough power to start the first duty gas turbine which could provide up to 22500kw. Once this gas turbine had successfully started the other 3 or whatever was available would sequentially start powering up the 11kV Station electrical system, enabling the boilers to produce steam again for the main turbo generators roll up to 3000 rpm to be ready for when Grid control required us to re-synchronise to the grid again. I had to design it so the process was mainly fully automatic, and the Station was disconnected from the Grid on a number of occasions to check that it all worked. It apparently worked for real in the 1987 storm, but I had moved on to Littlebrook D Station by then and that's another story.

Amongst the many problems we were experiencing was the main generator rotors becoming magnetised, which

which were in turn exerting undue axial force on the devices that kept the hydrogen at 60psi (4 bar) inside the generator casing. This undue force from the magnetism was wearing the white metal bearing surfaces at a very high rate, requiring us to shut down every 3-4 days to replace the seals. The answer "send for Mike" and I was asked can you demagnetise the rotor. I think my jaw dropped as I had no idea how to achieve this on a machine of this size, especially leaving the 18 tonne rotor in place. Out came the textbooks and with some tricky calculations I worked out a way of doing it. Unfortunately to achieve this the demagnetising current that I needed would have to be supplied from a 22500kw Gas Turbine (GT), which involved many technical issues itself, as well as running an 11kV cable all the way from the GT main switch and across the turbine floor and wrap it

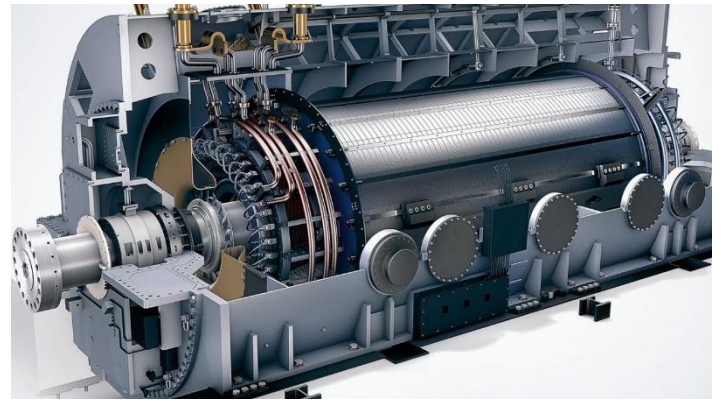


continued on page 11...

More Stories from Kingsnorth the Jinxed Power Station continued....

around the rotor about 10 times after removing the bearing and its pedestal to create enough room for the cable and after separating it from the turbine rotor. H&SE would have had a field day but I didn't tell them. We could only run the GT for 20 minutes at a time because the way we were using it was overheating its own rotor. Initially we had to take it up to very high currents and then over a period of about 7 days gradually reduce the current at each session. To my great relief it worked, which was even more of a surprise, as it had never been tried before on machines of this size and using a high voltage output from GT's. We had to use it 2 or 3 times more on other machines before all the generators were replaced. If I remember rightly the technique was used at several other Stations with similar problems. I have to say operating on the forefront of our capability with potentially very dangerous equipment did test my resolve and my confidence in my electrical knowledge. On the positive side doing it that way saved about £10m each time.

Because the turbo-generators operate at very high temperatures with the main shaft weighing about 180 tonnes and spinning at 3000 rpm it was very important not to allow the main shaft stop completely, otherwise the shaft would hog (bend) and/or sag when stationary, due to the temperature of the metal. Therefore a device called Barring Gear was fitted, which was designed to cut in when the shaft speed had dropped to 40 rpm and keep the rotors turning at that

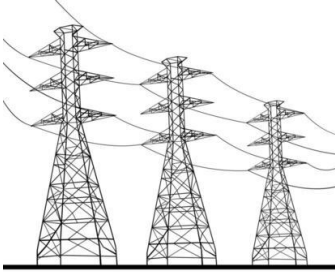


Above: a cut away section of the internal part of a generator

speed until it completely cooled down (a matter of a few weeks) or until it was required to go back up to 3000 rpm again. If this wasn't done the shaft would seize solid and would take weeks to rectify and, on most occasions, result in having to remove all 14 bearing shells, throughout the length of the turbo-generator. Unit 4 was running at full load (3000 rpm), when the Barring Gear decided to engage causing considerable damage to the Barring Gear and the turbine shaft. The machine was tripped and the shaft rapidly run down to become stationary and with no Barring Gear to turn it the shaft seized solid for about 4 weeks. I was asked to investigate the cause of the fault and quickly established that there had been an unreported circuit fault and then a second fault developed that day and in combination with the first fault effectively bypassed the control switches and turned the circuit on. Had the first fault been reported and fixed the serious damage and the costly outage (£1m / day) need not have occurred.

In 1973 the IRA bombing campaign was at its **continued on page 12...**

More Stories from Kingsnorth the Jinxed Power Station continued....



Right: a generator rotor being threatened into the stator with a clearance of 20mm



height and the senior staff at Kingsnorth were called to a meeting with the Station Manager. We were informed that the IRA were planning to bomb Kingsnorth and it was explained what their most likely methods would be and in particular it would be clock based time fuse explosives in a holdall type bag placed in vital part(s) of the plant, particularly cable ways. We were all allocated parts of the plant to be surveyed as frequently as possible. My area was the main cable routes in the basement which were under the main plant and were considered by the police to be a main target area. I spoke to my staff and the electrical contractors working on site and made it clear that they weren't allowed to leave any tool bags and test equipment unattended at any part of the plant, under any circumstances. It was early one Monday morning and I made my way down to the cable tunnel to carry out the first of my frequent inspections during the day.

The cable tunnel was a quarter of a mile long and I could see right down to the other end. I proceeded to walk along it checking the numerous cable racks for anything unexpected. As I got nearer to the other end I became aware of something sitting on the cable rack and as I got closer I could see it was a light brown holdall very similar to those described by the police. I just couldn't believe that it was a bomb, so I walked all around it checking for wires or other booby trap devices but couldn't see anything. The zip on the top of the bag wasn't quite closed, so I thought if I could ease it back 2-3 inches, I could get a better view of the contents. As I tried to open the zip it got caught on something so it made me jerk the bag and its contents. With that something inside started ticking quite fast. I didn't stop to wonder what it was as I made an Olympic speed exit from the tunnel to the nearest phone. I contacted **continued on page 13...**

More Stories from Kingsnorth the Jinxed Power Station continued....

the control centre and told them that we had a suspect bomb under Unit 4. I was advised to make my way to the control centre, whilst they contacted the emergency services. By the time I got to the control centre the police had already arrived and were awaiting the Bomb Disposal from Maidstone and numerous fire engines from around the area. The police suggested that we went back down so that they could familiarise themselves ready for the Army to arrive. As we got nearer to the area, I spotted two men standing by the bag, which they had opened. The men were very familiar to me, and it appeared that the bag belonged to them. When I had jogged the bag, it had caused the two test meter leads

to touch together which in turn set the test meter buzzer off, which sounded like a fast-ticking sound. Apparently, they saw me checking round the bag and then make a rapid exit from the tunnel and wondered what all the fuss was about as they emerged from a side tunnel. It had only been a few weeks beforehand when I warned them not to do what they had just done. They soon learnt the hard way as I banned them from site for a week, so they lost a week's pay. Trying to look on the bright side it did provide an opportunity for our staff and the emergency services to practice the procedure in a very realistic scenario.

Next time more stories from the hell hole which was Kingsnorth and as I prepare to move on to a new Power Station, which was just being built and commissioned.

Evelyn's Walks Update

*By Evelyn Sharman,
Group Organiser*



If you would like further information, you are welcome to contact me.

Evelyn Sharman Tel: 01409 259 848 Email: evelyn.sharman@btinternet.com

Confirming that there wasn't a walk in January so the next one will be the first one of 2026. We will set off at 10am from Devon Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve (Dunsdon Nature Reserve) in Pancrasweek on Monday 9th February. You are very welcome to contact me if you need directions or would like any information about the route. I'll look forward to walking with anyone who would like to join me on any of the walks that I have planned for this year. They are on the second Monday of the month starting at 10am. The meeting points are announced in the Parish magazine each month.

Pyworthy Parish Council Meeting Summary – 22nd January 2026

"The first Pyworthy Parish Council meeting of 2026 was held on Thursday 22 January. The January meeting is usually shorter and quieter than other meetings, but there was still plenty to discuss at this meeting. Once again, potential planning enforcement issues were discussed, relating to frustration at the lack of planning enforcement of ongoing development without planning permission between Derril Cross and Hillsborough Cross. This was TDC Cllr. Kenneally's first PPC meeting and he acknowledged local frustrations with Torridge Planning and undertook to chase up the lack of planning enforcement at this location.

Councillors discussed TDC's Town & Parish Settlement Survey and updated the list of facilities across the parish that TDC were not aware of. A letter had been received warning of potential cuts to library hours and staffing across Devon. Devon Libraries are currently carrying out a consultation on library services, including the inevitable need for making savings. Those that wish to view and take part in the consultation and make comments on potential reductions in service hours can find it at:

<https://devonlibraries.commonplace.is/en-GB/> .

The consultation closes on **22nd February** (more information can be found on page 25).



One planning application was discussed: 1/0003/2026/FUL – Demolition of existing stables and erection of one dwelling at Bounds Cross. Councillors agreed to support this application.

Now that the new Solar Park is now live, Councillors discussed the community funding associated with it and the Clerk undertook to chase up the current status of the funding.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 19 March."

Regards

Simon Davies, Pyworthy Parish Clerk
pyworthy@yahoo.co.uk
mobile: 07989 747416

PYWORTHY PARISH COUNCIL **Here are the contact telephone** **numbers for our Parish Councillors:**

Ros Skinner: Chair

01409 254159 or 07800667842

Andrew Parrish: Vice Chair

01409 254303

Nick Lock:

01288 381529 or 07989595372

Rob Moores: 01409 254192

Angela Skinner: 07794 344117

Martin Brennan: 01409 691096

Andrew Beaven: 01409 253509
(after 7pm).

For general enquires phone:

Simon Davies, Clerk on:
tel. 07989747416.

Email address:

pyworthy@yahoo.co.uk

The date of the next meeting will be
Thursday 19th March at 7.30pm.

Pyworthy MOT Ltd



Typical opening hours depending on school times and holidays.

Monday:	9.00am until 1.00pm
Tuesday:	9.00am until 4.30pm
Wednesday:	7.30am until 4.30pm
Thursday:	7.30am until 4.30pm
Friday:	7.30am until 4.30pm or 7.30am until 1.00pm.

For all your servicing and general repairs, MOTs and MOT work. M.O.T.s can be booked 30 days in advance of expiry, so booking early can catch and give time to repair, unknown faults and problems.

Call Simon - Tel: 01409 254275

Courtesy car available.

JANUARY'S PYWORTHY POSER QUIZ

ANSWERS:

1. Roman God Janus (who had two heads, one looking forward and one looking aft).
2. 50 tons (of which 3,000lbs is confetti).
3. Making 7 wishes whilst jumping 7 waves at the beach.
4. Most are 'forgotten' by February.
5. Door. (presumably open to the New Year).
6. Times long past.
7. 360 million.
8. Romans.
9. Red.
10. To spend less time on the Web!

**How did you do? Why
not try this month's quiz
on page 49.**

**Good luck from your
Pyworthy Pilgrim.**



Rupert Kirkwood

Name: Rupert Kirkwood (aka The Lone Kayaker)

Age: 66

Occupation: Retired after 35 years as a Veterinary Surgeon with Penbode Veterinary Group, working exclusively with farm animals, with a preference for surgery. Retired early due to a series of injuries. Now kayaking, on his 'sit-on-top' kayak, around the seas and inland waters of the Westcountry and beyond, observing, photographing and filming wildlife.

Place Of Birth: Reading. Moved to Holsworthy in 1983.

What is the best thing about Pyworthy and why? The friendly people and the countryside as I am passionate about natural history.

What one thing would you change about Pyworthy and why?

I would like to see a few more lakes to enhance biodiversity.

Describe yourself in 3 words:

Enthusiastic, focused, original.

How do you like to spend your free time?

Family comes first so spending time with my four children: Henry, Tim, Peggy and Tabitha and being absolutely 'peddle to the metal' on my kayak; I am never bored with it. (Rupert has paddled over 35,000 miles in his kayaks over 20 years).

What one thing have you always wanted to do, try or learn?

There isn't really anything although I would like to do more mountain walking. I do like learning about the sea.

If you could meet anyone living or dead, who would it be?

Sir David Attenborough. I admire him because what he does isn't about him; he's the real deal. Also, Captain Sensible, founder member of the punk rock band the Damned, because he's completely original; he signed my trainspotting logbook.

Continued on page 17

Community
Focus



Thanks go to Bryony
Rylett for your research.



Rupert Kirkwood



If you won a million pounds what would you do with the money?

Help my children buy houses, go off somewhere; perhaps a nice holiday in South Africa and donate to marine conservation charities.

If granted three wishes what would they be (extra wishes excluded)?

1. To see a Fin Whale from my kayak.
2. To go on a family holiday with a wildlife focus.
3. To see more wildlife friendly buildings with swift boxes and places for swallows to nest.

If you had to flee your home at very short notice what three items would you grab?

1. Family photographs
2. Camera and binoculars
3. My notebooks with wildlife observations (begun at age three) and my veterinary diaries.



Don't Forget it's Valentine's Day on the 14th February!

The history of Valentine's Day

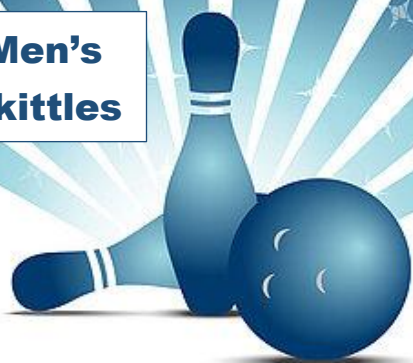


We all know that Valentine's Day is a celebration of romance and love. However, the origins of this day are not quite so loving! It is widely believed that the name comes from a Roman priest in the third century AD. Emperor Claudius II had outlawed marriage as he believed single men without a wife or family were better soldiers. The priest, Valentine, thought this was unfair and so performed marriages in secret and was imprisoned for his actions.

In this popular story it is said that Valentine fell in love with the daughter of his jailer and he signed a letter to her 'from your Valentine' as a farewell before he was executed. He was a martyr who was put to death for his Christian faith on the 14th February, probably around the year 270. This day has been celebrated in more recent days by the giving of cards and gifts to a special person in one's life.



Men's Skittles



Men's Skittles!

Pyworthy has a Men's Skittles Team, which meet on Tuesday evenings. If you would be interested in joining them, please contact:

Andrew on 07531186466 or 01409 253509.

Training will be given!

Holsworthy History Society

The next meeting in 2026 is Thursday March 12th when the speaker will be Mr Mark Shepherd, a local retired vet talking about practises over the years.

All most welcome.

For more information about the History Society contact:

holsworthyhistorysociety@gmail.com

Margaret Stacey

Please keep saving your used stamps for the B.H.P.S! See page 47 for info.



Glebe House Cottages, Bridgerule
www.glebehouscottages.co.uk
Telephone: 01288 381272

Accommodation

6 luxury self-catering cottages all recently refurbished to a high standard.

Beautiful 5 acre site with a huge amount of facilities for all ages including:

- ❖ Heated outdoor swimming pool
- ❖ Tennis court
- ❖ Stunning formal gardens
- ❖ Cellar bar & games room
- ❖ Children's play area,
- ❖ Woodland walk
- ❖ Hammock area
- ❖ Croquet
- ❖ Firepit
- ❖ BBQ's plus plenty more.

10% discount for friends & families of local residents.



Party Venue

Why not host your next party at Glebe House Cottage?

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- ❖ Celebrations in our secret cellar bar
- ❖ Fun tailor-made children's parties!
- ❖ "Have a splash with a pool party!"
- ❖ "Birthday, Anniversaries, Christening or any celebrations!"



GARDENING MATTERS from CRINACOTT

By Mike Godfrey, keen garden



Looking back at 2025 weatherwise it seemed to be a better year than the previous two or three years but for a number of reasons it certainly wasn't a good gardening year for me. I had more crop failures than I have ever experienced before, in fact it was quite disheartening. The reasons for some of the failures are probably understandable or explainable but there are quite a few that are baffling me. I am loathed to blame so called global warming for some of my failures, but the changing weather must be confusing many plants with warm weather when it should be cold and wet and cold weather when it should be warm and drier. There is certainly more unpredictably with the weather, and we need to perhaps give more thought and attention to accommodating this with our growing environments and the techniques we use. The heavy rains we seem to experience for days on end is really bad news for the heavy clay soils that we have round here.

This week I had to dig a deep hole about 5ft deep to bury something, (it's alright it's not the wife but one of our pets which died of old age). What I found was the top 6-9 inches was absolutely saturated with water and was effectively just like a sludge with no structure and of no use for growing anything. Below that, the soil was pretty dry, indicating that the water is not percolating downward. If it stays like that, when the summer and drier weather comes along the moisture will quickly disappear from the top 6

inches and there will be no deeper reserves to draw upon. Hence, I will be focusing a bit more in areas where I intend to grow things, other than grass, and try and improve the drainage whilst at the same time improving the moisture retention with thick mulches. I am lucky to have several polytunnels on site where the soil is protected from the rain and where I grow Wilja potatoes, Tender and True parsnips as well as various varieties of carrots. This year for the first time I have grown red cabbage and Brussels in one of the polytunnels and they are doing okay and it is much more pleasurable harvesting in a warmer and drier environment which is free of thick mud. I do get some pleasure in digging these up through the winter, particularly if it is raining. The sound of the raindrops on the poly roof is very soporific and relaxing, almost like meditation.

As I have said before my main enemy in the garden is time and as I get older things take a bit longer to do and I find myself sitting on strategically positioned seats more frequently than I used to do. Things haven't improved too much regard work commitments in the coming year, but I really need to make better progress on developing my wildlife areas and ponds. So, I have decided to recruit some help to work on some of the major tasks, advise on the best approach to get these projects off the ground and get them established. Beyond our nearby stuff I would like to expand and enhance wildlife areas around the farm to help provide a suitable habitat for the wildlife which has been deposited from the glass covered fields nearby.

continued on page 20

GARDENING MATTERS from CRINACOTT
continued from page 19.....

This time of the year is particularly hard for the wild bird population, so they will appreciate anything that you can do to provide food and some shelter for them. Growing shrubs can help tremendously and here are some suggestions. Holly (make sure it is a female, as that is the one with the berries); Hawthorn; Mahonia; Floribunda, Gelder or climbing roses or even winter Honeysuckle and Daphnes. The latter two provide excellent floral displays in the depths of winter but also have a very pleasant and strong fragrance, which can be smelt from many yards away. All these plants, in combination, can provide an abundance of berries as well as shelter for the birds and some nice flowers to brighten up the dull winter days. In addition to the above I have refrained from trimming the Ivy back too much in many areas to ensure that there are plenty of winter berries for the birds. If you feed the birds, you should perhaps plant some Ivy nearby to create some shelter and extra feed from the berries, which are one of the most nutritious berries for birds.

Jobs for this month, unless you are like me and don't really want to think about it this month:-

- Look after the wildlife where you can, especially birds and hedgehogs
- Clean pots and trays
- Clean greenhouses, polytunnels and cold frames
- Ventilate greenhouses, polytunnels and cold frames on warm days to prevent botrytis

Jobs for this month continued:

- Dead head winter flowering plants such as pansies, cyclamen violas
- Cut back climbing roses, shortening flowered side shoots by two-thirds of their length. Cut out old branches to encourage new growth, which should be tied in as they grow.
- Start to cut out dead and diseased wood from fruit trees and also begin to prune them to create a bowl-shaped tree. Remove 10-20% of the canopy
- It is a good time to prune Blackcurrants, Gooseberries and Redcurrants, shorten any long and straggly wood, remove any crossing or inward facing wood to create a bowl-shaped bush
- Ensure cacti are kept frost free and don't water them until the spring unless they show signs of dehydration.
- Select and buy your seeds
- Plant onion sets
- Buy early seed potatoes ready for chitting
- Sow Sweet Peas indoors
- Clean gutters and drainage gully's
- Sort out your garden shed
- Clean pathways and patios of moss and other debris, as these can become very slippery and quite dangerous, particularly if wooden decking is involved.

See a coloured photo of Mike's Daphne bush, in flower, on page 28.

If anyone needs to contact me on 01409 253401 or 07798 647041 or by e-mail at mikecrinacott1@gmail.com.



**Come
& join
us!**

BELLRINGING IN DEVON

In Devon, church bells are part of the landscape. Bells don't just belong to the church building; they are part of the village. Long before watches, radios, or mobile phones, bells were how people knew the time, marked important moments, and felt connected to one another.

For centuries, bells have marked the rhythm of daily life. They ring for services, weddings, funerals, feast days, harvests, royal events, and times of crisis.

Devon has a unique history of call change ringing. Call changes are spoken by a conductor, and the focus is on listening, rhythm and even striking, rather than learning written patterns. Each ringer is responsible for their own bell, but the ringing only works as teamwork.

But maintaining a team of ringers has its challenges. During the First World War, many towers fell quiet as ringers went to war. Memorials in Devon churches list names of men who once rang the bells and never returned. During the Second World War, ringing was restricted, but on VE Day bells rang freely again. More recently, COVID-19 stopped ringing from taking place, as it did many other activities, and many towers' ringers did not start back up again.

Ringing remains a traditional pastime but has many benefits. It is a physical activity that, like learning to ride a bike,

opens up a world of possibilities once learned. It is a wonderful aerobic activity. It helps tone muscle, concentrate the brain and gets you out and about to other churches, meeting new people. You don't need to be able read music, be strong, or have any prior experience. You just need a willingness to learn and to be part of a team.

Just as importantly, it is good for the mind. Ringing requires focus, listening, and being present. For many people it offers a welcome break from daily worries and the rush of daily life.

For individuals, it is also an accessible activity to try. There is no charge to learn or to take part in regular practices. Ringing for weddings and special occasions also brings in funds that help support the wider life of the church and tower.

If you have ever enjoyed hearing the bells, wondered how it all works, or thought you might like to give it a try, we would love to hear from you. New ringers are always welcome, and training is provided at a gentle, supportive pace. There is no pressure and no obligation — just an open invitation.

If you would like to have a go or even just to come and watch, please do get in touch.

Alison Davies, Church Warden
Alicrane.27@icloud.com
Tel: 07888840634

Clawton Community History Project as School Celebrates 150 years!

Clawton Primary School is preparing to celebrate a remarkable milestone as it approaches its 150th anniversary in 2026. To mark this special occasion, among other festivities the school's PTA and teaching staff are working together to create a commemorative book charting the history of Clawton Primary School and local communities like Clawton and Tetcott from 1876 through to the present day. The book will



The book will capture the memories, stories and images that reflect the community and school's rich heritage and the many lives it has touched over the years.

Former pupils, past and present members of staff and the wider community are warmly invited to contribute. The team is seeking photographs of memorable moments, as well as written recollections and anecdotes that can be included in the publication. Whether it is a fond memory of school days, a photograph of a school play or sports event, or a story that highlights village life, all contributions will help bring the school's history in the community to life. The committee is also keen to get in touch with history enthusiasts who would like to contribute by researching and writing about the history of rural education in England and village life. It will be a credit to the book if local stories and events can be related to these changes in society events in history, as you will understand that 150 years starts in the Victorian age where 'Empire Day' was still celebrated and the roads were often made of dirt, and schooling was not common and scarlet fever or whooping cough outbreaks were regular events. Some decennia later the school logbooks make note of donations to the soldiers at the front in WW1, followed by the welcoming of evacuee children at the school in WW2 to the present day with all its technological advancements.

An open invitation has been extended for people to bring along any materials on **Monday 9th February when all are welcome to visit the school from 3:45-5pm. They can then learn more about the project in a relaxed setting with tea and coffee provided. This will be an opportunity to meet those involved, share stories, and find out how contributions will be used in the anniversary book. For anyone unable to attend on the day, contributions are still very welcome. Please contact the PTA at Clawtonpta@gmail.com or speak directly with **Wendy Ward** for further information.**

Email address: pyworthy@post.com Telephone number: 01409 478294 Page 22

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WHAT'S ON AT HOLSWORTHY LIBRARY – FEBRUARY 2026



Library News!

- **Bounce & Rhyme**, Thursday 5th, 12th & 26th – 2:15pm-2:45pm (term time only). Songs and stories for children 0-4 years old.
- Monday 9th – 2pm-4pm. Speak to a **Healthwatch Devon Champion** for support and guidance on local health and social care and to share your experiences with them.
- Half Term: **Children's Book Sale** all week.
Family History for Families! Monday 16th – 2:30-4:30. Booking required.
Lego Challenge, Wednesday 18th – 11am-4pm. Drop in session.
Board Games & Biscuits, Thursday 19th – 11am-4pm. Drop in session.
- **Liz Shakespeare**, author talk (The Ordeal of Miss Lucy Jones) Saturday 28th – 2:30pm. Book via Ticketsource, or with library staff. Free for library members, £2 for non-members.
- Lloyds Bank Community Banking, every other Monday 2-4.
By appointment only – call 02077143681 to book direct with Lloyds.
- **Self Service Baby Weigh**. Every Thursday 1pm-4pm.
- **Lego and games** for children. Every Saturday – 10am-12pm

See page 25 – have your say about the future of Devon Libraries.



Holsworthy Library - There are lots of exciting things happening at your local library. In addition to a great range of books you can use your library membership to access free eBooks and audiobooks via the Borrowbox app. We also have free public computers and Wi-Fi as well as printing, copying and scanning facilities. It is free to join the library, and we are a friendly, welcoming space open to all. Free hot drinks are available, and people are encouraged to use the library as a place to relax, work and socialise as well as to find their next great read!

Opening Hours:
Monday 2pm-5pm
Tuesday Closed
Wednesday 10am-6pm
Thursday 10am-5pm
Friday Closed
Saturday 10am-1pm - Sundays Closed.

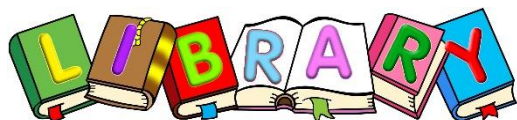


Devon Libraries Service Wants to Hear from YOU!

As you may have heard, Devon County Council have just launched a 12-week public consultation into the future of Devon's libraries.

Financial pressures, alongside the way people use Council services, are driving this consultation. Libraries Unlimited are commissioned to run the libraries by the council. We have been using our charitable reserves over the last few years to plug funding gaps, but we can no longer continue to do this. This consultation will help Devon County Council understand how people use library services and how they'd like to see things develop in future years. The consultation documents are online, and the survey can be completed by visiting:

<https://devon.cc/your-libraries>



The consultation is open until **22nd February 2026**. Please help us spread the word so we can make sure everyone has their say.



PANCAKE DAY 2026

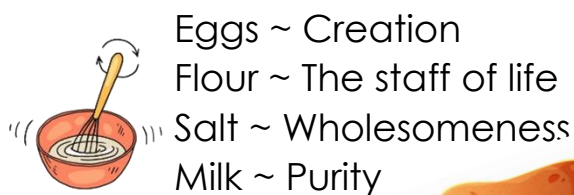
This year, it falls on **Tuesday 17th February**. It's an important part of the Christian calendar, but why do we eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday?

Shrove Tuesday is traditionally the day before the start of Lent (Ash Wednesday), this meant it was the last opportunity to use up eggs and fats before the Lenten feast, so pancakes were the perfect dish!

Anglo-Saxon Christians went to confession and were "shriven" (absolved from their sins). A bell would be rung to call people to confession. This came to be called the "Pancake Bell" and is still rung today.

A pancake is a thin, flat cake, made of batter and fried in a frying pan. A traditional English pancake is very thin and is served immediately. Golden syrup or lemon juice and caster sugar are the usual toppings for pancakes. The pancake has a very long history and features in cookery books as far back as 1439. The tradition of tossing or flipping pancakes is an old tradition, some towns still hold pancake races today.

The ingredients for pancakes can be seen to symbolise four points of significance at this time of year:



How will you eat your
Pancakes on
Pancake Day?





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Tuesdays, 9.00am till 6.00pm.
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www.trigonfarm.co.uk

Call Al on Tel: 07988484069

Line Dancing!



New dancers always welcome!

For more information call Brenda
on: 01409 253015

Line Dancing Classes

Our Line dancing classes are held
on: **Mondays** in

Pyworthy Village Hall.

Complete Beginners:

5.30pm – 6.30pm.

Beginners/Improvers:

6.30pm – 7.30pm &

Intermediate level:

7.30pm – 9.30pm.

Tuesdays: Intermediate level,
7.30pm – 9.30pm.

All classes cost just £5.

Come and join us!



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Forthcoming Events in 2026

Sunday evenings 7.30pm – 10.00pm.

Jake Leg Jug Band – 1st February

Two Counties Jazz Band –

15th February

Jeremy Huggett's Legacy Band –

1st March

Members £10, Visitors £14

Annual membership only £20



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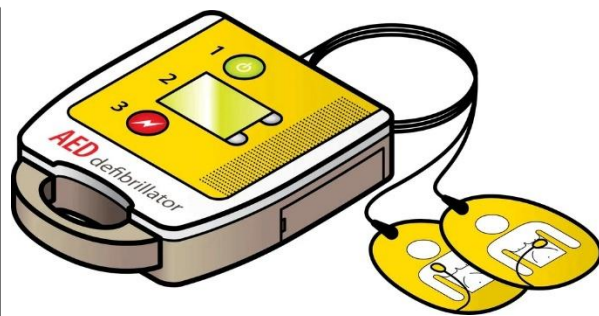


Holsworthy Amateur Theatrical Society
presents

ROBIN HOOD

Mon 2nd - Sat 14th
February 2026

Book tickets from: HATS
www.ticketsource.co.uk/holsworthytheatre
HATS box office is open 9.00am -
2.00pm Tel: 01409 253826.



Defibrillator Training

I have recently done a sponsored abseil for the Devon Air Ambulance and subsequently received their Newsletter, along with a certificate.

They're running free training sessions for residents, to practice CPR and how to operate our 2 local Defibrillators.

Some residents may have attended a training session in 2025, but some may have missed it.

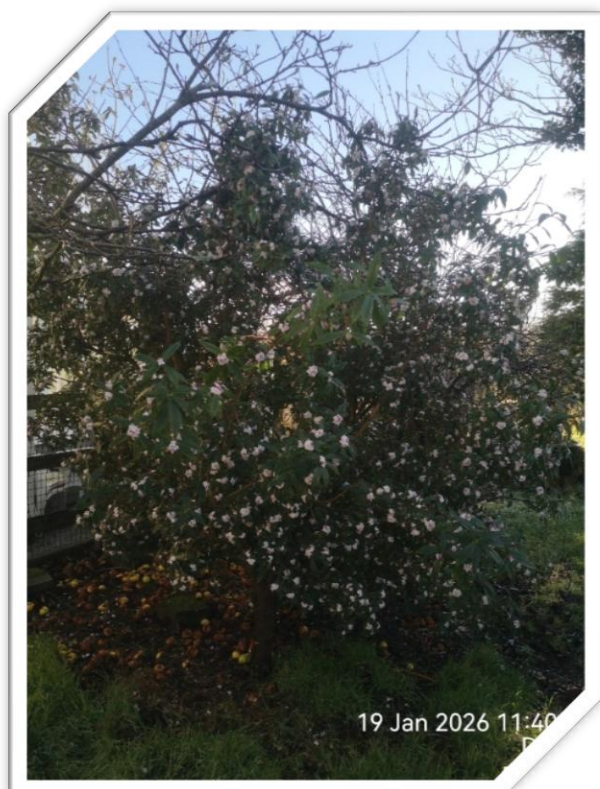
I've previously worked in the NHS for over 30 years, and my skills definitely need continued practice, it's not just a once only skill.

If anyone's interested, could they please let me know by email at:

mary711devon@hotmail.co.uk

Do you have a preference for a day or time of day?

Mary Laxton



Left:
Mike
Godfrey's
Daphne
bush, in
flower.
See this
month's
gardening
report on
pages 19
& 20.



Curry Night

There will be a Curry & Chilli Night at the Village Hall on Friday the 20th March!

Menu

Chicken curry and rice

Beef chilli and rice

Vegetable chilli and rice

All served with a choice of condiments.

£8 per portion.

Food available from 7.30pm to 9.00pm,

Licensed bar will be open from 7.00pm.

Orders should be placed by

Friday 13th of March, thank you.

Phone Marie NOW on 01409 254924 to place your order.

Registered charity number 290013.

Sign up today & help raise funds for our Village Hall – while shopping!



Help us raise **FREE** donations

every time you **shop online**

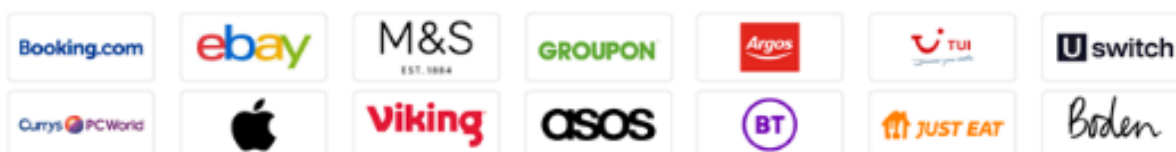
How to sign up

1. Visit easyfundraising.org.uk
2. Search for Pyworthy Village Hall and support our cause
3. Raise **FREE** donations for us when shopping



Scan me

4,500 online sites will give us a free donation
when you shop with them - at no extra cost to you!



£ Over £34 million raised

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👤 1.9 million users

Message Sent By

Devon & Cornwall Community Messaging Team



Cold Callers, Devon & Cornwall

We have been made aware of cold callers offering guttering and roofing services in Devon & Cornwall recently.

If you want work doing in your home or garden, please consider the following advice:

- **Don't** agree to work offered by unsolicited doorstep callers.
- **Don't** rely on posts or recommendations on social media sites without doing your own research.
- **Don't** be swayed by glossy flyers or impressive websites as they may not show the trader's own work.
- **Don't** pay cash or agree to be taken to the bank or immediately transfer money before any work is started.
- **Don't** be rushed into making a decision.

Do:

- Get three written quotes from reputable businesses.
- Research the companies you're looking to use e.g. ask for references and look online.
- Ask friends and family to recommend local traders or search via [Buy with confidence](#)

Does continued:

- Ask friends and family to recommend local traders or search via [Buy with confidence](#)
 - **Decide** who to use in your own time and make sure you have confidence in their skills and abilities.
 - **Ask** to see professional qualifications, public liability insurance and if applicable waste carriers licence.
 - **Make** sure you have full contact details for a tradesperson not just a mobile phone number.
 - **Check** if you're entitled to your 14-day cooling-off period
- If someone knocks on your door and you are not sure, don't open the door. If you are concerned someone is at risk, always call the police. If you are concerned rogue traders are operating in your area, always report it. If a company claims to be working with a local council, contact the local council yourself to check this is true. If you have concerns, or have any information please contact Trading Standards or police by phoning 101, if possible, please make a note of any descriptions and vehicle registrations seen.

Please phone 999 if immediate/or a crime is taking place.

Please ensure your black bags,
recycling and garden waste bins
are presented by

6:00AM

For more information and
collection dates visit
www.torridge.gov.uk

Update from *"what do you get if you cross a giraffe with a hedgehog: A 12ft toothbrush!"* our local hedgehog family

Harry & Henrietta are both
looking forward to the
"Spring"! It may still be chilly, but
we have a really thick layer of fat
to keep us warm on our nightly
forages (no! not that political
individual) but our "support
system" for your young plants
and the detested slugs, etc. The
hoglets are really growing - but
please! - do check under the
edges of any bonfires before
setting alight because it's our
temporary overnight
lodgings! As a race, we really
do not enjoy BBQ's. A sincere
Thank You! to all humans who
have donated your used stamps
to the cause. Keep them
coming throughout the year
please!
Harry & Henrietta.

Pyworthy Bin Collections



**FEBRUARY 2026 - Pyworthy Village,
other villages may have a different
collection schedule.**

Black bag collection days are:

**Friday 9th February
Friday 23rd February**

**Recycling- Every Monday
Boxes/Bags & Food Caddy**

Weekly collection of 2 x boxes & 2 x
bags. Weekly collection of food
waste in caddy.

Garden Waste Collection dates:

**Monday 6th February
Monday 20th February**

**For more information go to:
www.torridge.gov.uk
Or phone:
01237 428700**

Read online at:

<http://www.bit.ly/postpy>
and view the paper in full colour.
(don't use a search engine)

Worried about ID Cards and Governmental control?

By Brian Meadows of Nofix-Nofee

Many people are concerned about the proposed introduction of ID cards and the possibility of intrusion into a person's privacy and I am equally concerned. But I drew up a rough list of the different online services which monitor a person's activity and also harvests their data at the same time.

Government Controlled Data

NI number
NHS Number
Driving Licence
Passport
Royal Mail

Personal Data Abuse

Computer IP address & Internet services
Email Address and service providers
Facebook/all social media platforms
WhatsApp/ all chatrooms
Apple iPhone/all Apple accounts
Google services and Android Phones
Microsoft
BT (EE). Open Reach
All mobile phone providers
All Broadband Providers & VPN Services
Amazon/eBay/PayPal
X (twitter)/TikTok/YouTube
All Media Streaming Services
All online Grocery and selling services
All discount/customer store cards
All Smart Speakers

The list of Governmental controlled activities is finite; however, the list of unsupervised or uncontrolled privacy intrusions and data harvesting is infinite.



Yet not many people are not aware, or seem to care, on how personal information is harvested and sold, or who it is sold to and, for what nefarious purpose their personal data is used – let alone the possibility of being scammed out of personal savings etc. Now I am not an advocate of ID cards as they will do nothing to stop immigration or illegal workers, as the current NI numbers if used correctly would do that. What concerns me more is the lack of government control on harvesting data, especially of the under aged!

Smart kids can easily access pornography or for that matter become involved in chat sites, which they should not be accessing. But the lack of controls can allow them to do so, even as they walk to school, or play in the street! Mobile phones work quite well without a sim card and an old phone connected to an internet signal becomes invisible to many parents! The issue is, service providers don't need to do it, but your data is a valuable commodity worth a considerable amount of money, all at your eventual cost!

For computer help and advice, Tel:
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01288 381061. Nofix-Nofee Computer
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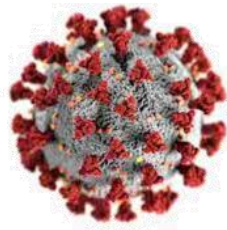
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Episode 5

My COVID Diaries

By Mark Marriott



Above: Weston General Hospital

Last month we learned how NHS England tried to take charge, and in this instalment their “grip” of the situation results in the closure of the hospital

The hospital was now set in red, amber and green zones: red for positive COVID patients; amber for undiagnosed and green for those with a negative test result, but it was still taking over 5 days to get results back from the lab and tests were still throat and nasal swabs; so patients without a test result would arrive in A&E, then be tested and placed in the amber zone. As a precaution all patients attending with a respiratory condition were placed in isolation in the red zone which was about 50% of all patients at the time, so we started to adapt outpatient clinic rooms into A&E red zone isolation rooms to try to stop high risk patients being exposed. I'd given my project manager the pleasure of monitoring the effectiveness of our

COVID measures and she reported daily on how patients, staff and infrastructure were coping with the ever-changing rules and systems. It soon came to light that patients in the amber zone were being tested, admitted, treated and discharged all in the amber zone and two days after getting home we would receive a positive test result, that meant that despite social distancing measures everyone who they had come into contact with was at risk of catching COVID. It meant tracking and tracing every patient and staff member who had been in proximity to the positive patient and re-testing them. Because Weston Hospital was so small we were the first hospital in the country to identify this problem and immediately informed region of the risk of infection in the amber zone, other hospitals had the space to run a new amber zone for each day of admission keeping all the patients for that day in one contained space but we simply didn't have the room. We would have instances when all four patients in an amber Bay would test positive and have no idea if they arrived undiagnosed or had acquired the infection in hospital, known as a nosocomial infection or more commonly a hospital acquired infection.

The incubation period for COVID at that time was thought to be 14 days and the definition of an outbreak is 2 or more infections related by time or place within two incubation periods, so any likely nosocomial infection acquired on a ward within 28 days is officially an outbreak. Looking back, every single hospital in the UK had two

continued on page 36

My COVID Diaries continued from page 35.....

or more infections on a ward within 28 days of each other, but Weston was to be used as a special case and I still think to this day the NHS used us to practise on. On 19th of May 2020 we declared an outbreak, we now had 69 patients with COVID and no idea if they had arrived with the disease or acquired it in hospital. As you can imagine the gold command meeting swung into action and we were now holding 3 executive meetings a day to plan how we could contain the outbreak and, since COVID was a notifiable disease, we informed the NHS and Public Health England, we were now under the microscope and "grip mode" was very much in force. Before the NHS and Public Health England got involved we had isolated all 69 cases on to 3 wards, we had turned all our side rooms and isolation rooms into the amber pathway so no patient would come into contact with another until the test results were known. All staff on the amber and red pathways were tested and sent home awaiting results, those who came back negative came back to work and those who were positive stayed at home. Then the national calls began. I would be on a call at 5PM every day supported by my Medical Director, Chief Executive Officer and Infection Control Lead and face questions from over 60 national "experts", it was relentless and would often run until 8 or 9PM.

Every day the assembled expertise would pass judgement on Weston Hospital without ever having stepped foot in the place, most of them were

miles away from the frontline and I think it was the biggest assembly of First World War generals since Armistice Day! At one point a woman on the call who I didn't know declared she knew why Weston had an outbreak and said "it's because they have never followed our PPE guidance and have allowed patients to be at risk from staff", I erupted on the call when I heard this and responded by saying "I don't know who you are but you have no idea about the situation at Weston" immediately the regional director of the NHS who was chairing the meeting stepped in and asked me to calm down and explained we were only on the call to help me, I just lost it and declared that they could give me "as much help as they wanted on the ground at Weston but I would not accept it from their bedroom in Reading". The call went very quiet and I don't remember what the chairman said but she brought the meeting back on track and nothing more was said of my outburst; it turns out that I just reprimanded Yvonne Doyle, Medical Director and Director for Health Protection Public Health England, the person in overall operational control of the COVID response and as far as I was now concerned First World War Commandant General number one. That was Friday the 21st of May 2020 and one of the few days I was spending at home, I'd taken the call on the front lawn to make sure I didn't lose reception and Carol was hiding behind the door listening to the whole episode and couldn't believe how the rest of the country was treating a hospital that was in need of help but just getting

continued on page 37

My COVID Diaries continued from page 36.....

unjustified criticism. Later on in the same call we agreed that the hospital would close if any more infections were discovered, I was satisfied that we were now in control of the situation and had stopped the spread of the infection by preventing every single potential avenue that it could spread, so closure wasn't a risk. On the call the following day, 5PM on Saturday, we reported no further spread of the disease in patients or staff, but for some reason there was a growing consensus of "shouldn't we just shut Weston anyway". The CEO and I argued that the conditions for closure hadn't been met and we should remain open so the 60 noteworthy members on the call agreed to discuss it again tomorrow. At 5PM on Sunday 23rd May we started the whole "why don't we just shut Weston anyway" conversation again, and we reported again that there were no further infections and again that the conditions for closure had not been met and again that we were now in control of the outbreak. Despite the evidence that we had gained control of the situation and after four hours of debate at 9PM the decision was made to shut the hospital at 8 am Monday morning against the advice of the medical director, the CEO and me; after the decision was made the call just carried on posturing how the outbreak could have happened in the first place and I asked to be excused from the call, many of the experts on the line wanted me to stay so they could question how many of their directives the hospital had followed

and how they'd been implemented, but I calmly explained to them that I had to shut a hospital in 11 hours and if any of them knew how to do that then perhaps they could help me, but if not I would be leaving the call to work with my team on how to become the first NHS hospital ever to fully shut.

Next time, part 2 of the outbreak



Holsworthy Food Bank

You can donate tinned food, packets or boxes of food. Unfortunately, fresh produce cannot be accepted.

Donations can be left in the box at the back of St. Swithun's Church, Pyworthy, which is open every day. Thank you.



The Food Bank would like to thank you for your donations please keep the donations coming.

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Pyworthy Post

Deadline

The PRINT deadline
for the next
Pyworthy Post is:
**Wednesday 25th
February** at 9am.
Please email your
news as early as
possible.
Thank you.

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NEW SERIES

Pothole Monthly!

By Dr. Reg Godwin

Sadly, Reg has been
away but will return with
another pothole
adventure next month.



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St Swithun's Pyworthy – Heritage Consultation Slip

Help shape the future of St Swithun's as a community heritage space

St Swithun's Church is applying for heritage funding to help care for and share the building, its traditions, and its churchyard as part of village life. Your views will help us show why these matter to local people.

Please take a moment to answer the questions below. (You do not need to give your name.)

1. Have you attended or taken part in any of the following at St Swithun's?

- ☐ Church services
- ☐ Bell ringing
- ☐ Craft fair or exhibition
- ☐ Flower festival
- ☐ History or heritage event
- ☐ Other: _____

2. What do you value most about St Swithun's as part of the village?

- ☐ Historic building
- ☐ Sense of community
- ☐ Traditions (e.g. bells, festivals)
- ☐ Peaceful space / churchyard
- ☐ Activities and events
- ☐ Other: _____

3. What would you like to see protected or developed in the future?

4. Any further comments?

Thank you for your time and support.

Completed forms can be handed in today or left in the church.



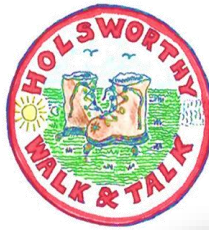
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Holsworthy Walk & Talk Group

By Gill Aston



Why not scan
our QR code?
This will take you
to our website.



At this time of the year, we are grateful to have a choice of forestry tracks and well-maintained paths such as Tamar Lake and Roadford Lake as many of the walks which involve fields tend to be very wet and muddy. However, having checked out Holsworthy Woods and Witherdon Woods we found that forestry works are being carried out at both locations. Our Level 2 group did walk a section of Holsworthy Woods which was not being cleared although the main track was quite muddy caused by large machinery. We will need to change some of the scheduled walks due to these works so, if in doubt, please check our website for up-to-date changes or contact the designated Walk Leader for a particular day.

Early January saw our level 3 group at Milton Damerel, which we usually reserve for the drier summer months when there is less mud about. Despite the forecast of heavy showers we were blessed with sunshine and had an enjoyable walk across cattle free fields and tracks around the Parish with a brief history talk about Milton Mill and a look inside the old church, which boasts a fine plaster royal coat of arms from the time of Charles the Second (1664). Speaking of mud, quite a lot of it was found at Highampton during the recce ahead of the walk. We therefore let everyone know that wellies would be the required



Above: Our walkers in Holsworthy woods where a lot of work has been taking place.

footwear for the day. A total of 23 suitably clad walkers were rewarded with a beautiful sunny morning. The first scheduled Walk in the Park of the year was cancelled due to icy conditions, so it was really good to get together again once ground conditions improved. The Youth Centre and Devon Mind were very welcoming as always and we had a good turnout despite the rain. Amongst the jollity of Christmas some can find it a difficult time of year so the opportunity for socialising, fresh air and exercise can be very important for overall well-being.



Holsworthy Walk & Talk group report continued from page 40....

If you would like to join us on any of our walks to visit local places, meet new people and enjoy the benefits of walking our current programme of walks is available. Walks start at 10.30 and are **FREE**. Membership forms are available from our Volunteer Walk Leaders prior to the start of the walk.

Our FEBRUARY Programme of walks:



Level 2 & 3 walks are every Friday at 10.30am. All these walks aim to be completed in about 90 minutes.

FEBRUARY Walks: Walk starting points as indicated below:

Friday 6th February – Level 2: Meeth Quarry – starting at the main car park. Leaders: Mike & Richard. EX20 3ER.

Level 3: Meeth Quarry – starting at the main car park. Leaders: Paul & Sue. EX20 3ER.

Friday 13th February - Witherdon Woods – starting at Inside main car park. Leaders: Paul & Cheryl. EX21 5TU.

Level 3: Bude/Efford Down – starting at Bude TIC car park. Leaders Michael & Jacqui. EX23 8LE.

Friday 20th February - Level 2: Annual Group Lunch at Bradworthy. Meet in The Square. EX22 7TD.

Level 3: - Level 2: Annual Group Lunch at Bradworthy. Meet in The Square. EX22 7TD.

Friday 27th February - Level 2: Lower Tamar Lake. Starting at Lower Tamar car park. Leaders: Eric & Michael EX22 7LB.

Friday 27th February - Level 3: Clawton

– starting at Parish Hall car park.

Leaders: Barbara & Gill. EX22 6PS.



Above: an enjoyable walk was had in the Highampton area on a beautiful January morning.

Holsworthy Walk & Talk Group contact details:

Our website has lots of up-to-date information, together with our current programme of walks, details below:

holsworthywalkandtalk@gmail.com
<http://holsworthywalkandtalk.co.uk>

Phone numbers:

Gillian Aston 07854677784 or
Mike Jackson 01409 261196 or
Paul Davies 07731 626594.

Domestic Abuse Helpline



Phone:



0808 2000247 for free & confidential advice.

More information available online.

If in danger phone: 999

CHINESE NEW YEAR

2026 = THE YEAR OF THE HORSE



Chinese New Year, also known as Lunar New Year or Spring Festival, is **the most important festival in China** and a major event in some other East Asian countries.

Chinese New Year is the festival that **celebrates the beginning of a new year** on the traditional Chinese lunisolar calendar. Chinese New Year 2026 will fall on **Tuesday, February 17th**. The date changes every year but is always somewhere in the period from January 21st to February 20th.

It was traditionally a time to honour deities and ancestors, and it has also become **a time to feast and visit family members**.

Chinese people traditionally believe that the year's start affects the whole year, so China's Spring Festival is a season of superstitions. Here are a few examples:

There are many things you cannot do on the first two days of the festival:

- ❖ Don't sweep up on New Year's Day, otherwise you'll 'sweep all your luck away'.
- ❖ Don't eat porridge for breakfast, otherwise you'll 'become poor in the upcoming year'.



- ❖ People do not wash clothes on the first and second day of the new year, because these two days are celebrated as the birthday of the water god. To wash clothes is regarded as disrespect to the god of water. The ancients believed that water symbolizes wealth. It is believed that pouring away water after washing clothes invokes a pouring away of wealth.
- ❖ Don't give an odd amount of money in a red envelope. Chinese people like even numbers, with the traditional belief that good things always come in doubles. But also avoid unlucky numbers such as 4 and 40, as 4 sounds like death in Chinese.



You can find more information about Chinese Taboos and Superstitions online; it's an interesting subject.

John Sanders Park Trust

Lottery 2026

Lottery tickets for the Park Trust lottery 2026 are now on sale. If you would like to buy a lottery number, please **contact Jane Oliver on 07500 834620** and make a BACS payment of £10 to the Park Trust bank account adding your name as the reference. Our trustees will also be selling numbers as usual. The first draw will hopefully take place in April. There are ten draws throughout the year each with prizes of £30, £20 and £10, so lots of chances to win. All profits go towards the upkeep and costs of Pyworthy Park.

HOW TO BUY A £10 LOTTERY TICKET:

BACS Information:

If you wish to buy a draw ticket and wish to pay by BACS please do so, our Bank account details are below:

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Creative Craft Club

The afternoon craft club takes place in Pyworthy Village Hall on the

2nd & 4th Thursday of each month, at 2.30pm until 4.30pm.

A donation of just £2 towards the hall is all it costs!

Come along and join us, just bring your own craft project to do, & see what others are doing. Plenty of help available, if you have a problem with your craft project.

**Phone Marie on:
01409 254924**

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**Coming to the Village Hall on
TUESDAY 17th FEBRUARY!**

REMINDER - Potters Fish 'n' Things

By popular request, Potters have agreed to set up shop in the Village Hall Car Park, 4.30pm-7.00pm every 3rd TUESDAY of each month, for the foreseeable future.

To pre order, head to their website:

www.pottersfishnthings.co.uk

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Estate Agents Kivells 01409 253888
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Funeral Directors Arthur W. Bryant Funeral Service 01409 253000
Funeral ServicesDenise Wellington Funeral Services 01288 359277
Foot Care Kate Lord: 07557379099 Email: katescompletefeet1@gmail.com
Fencing/Garden structures..... WWW.RUBY-GROUP.CO.UK
General Builder James Mansell - General Builder 07896945889
Gun ClubWest Devon Air Gun Club, Nigel Palmer, 01409 254133
Grass cutting & garden maintenance Antony Jarvis, 07990016467
Heating Engineer Greg 01409 478198
British Hedgehog Preservation Society.....Bob Gelder, 01409-253791
Herbalist Diana Lee, Registered Medical Herbalist 01409 254450
Holiday Accommodation ... 01288 381272 email: jay@glebehousecottages.co.uk
Holsworthy NHS Dental Care 01409 255525
Holsworthy Golf Club.....01409 253177
Holsworthy Library 01409 253514
Holsworthy Medical Centre 01409 253692 **District nurses** 01409 255134
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Holsworthy Rural Community Transport team ... 01409 259001
Holsworthy Walk & Talk Group ...Gill Aston 07854677784
John Sanders Park Trust Martin Brennan 01409 691096
Line Dancing Group Brenda Martin 01409 253015
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Oil Fired boilers & tanks/service & installations Greg 01409 478198
Police Non-urgent phone calls 101/email devon-cornwall.police.uk
Pyworthy Village Hall Bookings: Marie Heard 01409 254924
Organic Farm, Trigon Farm selling fruit & veg etc phone Al on 07988484069
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Tel: 01288 381061.

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Pyworthy Poser Quiz for FEBRUARY 2026..

1. The world's oldest chocolate bar brand is?
2. The 5 least healthy "Candy" options are?
3. The least-liked chocolate is?
4. The most hated by dentists?
5. Cosmetic Dentists (reluctantly!) recommend?
6. The favourite time of the year for hedgehogs?
7. The most comfortable pigs are?
8. The gestation period for a sow is?
9. Which is the cleaner, a pig or a dog?
10. Are pigs intelligent?
11. Which creature on the planet is considered to have the highest I.Q.?
12. Name the 3 smartest/most intelligent dog breeds?



Pyworthy Pilgrim.

By The Pyworthy Pilgrim

Pyworthy Rural Art Group Pyworthy ART



Well, it's February already, Christmas seems ages ago but the weather has definitely been wintery. I hope you all survived the high winds we had. We have started back with some nice painting and drawing and have a good programme ahead of us. So why not come and join us. We meet in the Pyworthy Village Hall on a Tuesday afternoon 2.30pm until 4.30pm.

All abilities welcome.

The programme for February:

Tuesday 3rd February – waterfall painting in Pastel on black paper

Tuesday 10th February – flowers and insects in Pastel on dark paper

Tuesday 17th February – a painting in the mist, in watercolours

Tuesday 24th February – colour mixing – green, and painting in a landscape.

For further information contact Janet Grant

Tel: 01409 259356

**FEBRUARY
2026**



Nature Notes

By Bryony Rylett

Last month the combined Wildlife Trusts were due to host the inaugural **Wilding Gardens Conference** at the University of Manchester with the aim of bringing together experts in horticulture, environmental science and rewilding to discuss ways to boost gardening for wildlife.

In advance of the conference the Trusts outlined their hope that the outcome of the two-day conference would be fresh ideas to halt an "alarming decline in biodiversity".

Since the 1970s, when organizations such as the RSPB started gathering data, 2,890 plants and animals have been placed in the priority group of species that are declining at an alarming rate with a staggering one-in-four British mammals now at risk of extinction.

If this seems like hyperbole then ask yourself when, if at all, was the last time you saw a Hedgehog, Fox, Badger, Brown Hare, Hazel Dormouse, Barn Owl, Great Crested Newt, Adder or Pipistrelle Bat, to name but a few?

During the past 12 months Nature Notes has featured a variety of species but it is clear from observing plants and

and animals in the parish and surrounding countryside that some wildlife once common is now rare.



Above: Lesser Celandines - heralds the Spring

Why does it matter if 1,500 UK native species of plants and animals are threatened with extinction?

The Royal Society explains:

"Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on Earth, including humans. Without a wide range of animals, plants and microorganisms, we cannot have the healthy ecosystems that we rely on to provide us with the air we breathe and the food we eat".

The Wildlife Trusts acknowledge that 'nature-friendly gardening' has caught on in recent years but are now calling for action by gardeners to be even bolder.

"Ecologists believe creating larger areas of habitat and linking existing wild gardens together is key to

continued on page 51

Nature Note – FEBRUARY continued from page 50.....

boosting nature's chances of revival. They believe this can only be done if communities work together to help make this happen across housing estates, back yards, private gardens and even balconies."

Some 8,700 people have responded, so far, to the Wildlife Trusts' on-line **Wildlife Gardening Survey***; on-going after four years.

The survey has revealed that 88% of respondents plant nectar-rich flowers to attract pollinators, 81% provide food for birds, while 80% avoid using slug pellets and pesticides however only 16% of people collaborate with their neighbours over connectivity between gardens that allow wildlife a greater space to roam.

Hedgehogs, for example, can travel up to three kilometres every night and flourish in communities where neighbours have cooperated to improve greater access to safe feeding spaces by creating garden corridors or 'Hedgehog Highways'. There is an example of such a highway in Bridgerule.

Providing a clear route between gardens and adjoining land by making a 13cm x 13cm 'hole' at the bottom of a fence allows Hedgehogs to safely and easily pass between gardens and reduces the risk of injury or death on roads.

Speaking before the Wildlife Trusts' event, Craig Bennett, the chief executive of The Wildlife Trusts, who was due to give the keynote speech, said:

"It's music to our ears that the British public have such a deep commitment to wildlife gardening.

But now it'd be great to see people thinking wilder and looking beyond their garden fences and their front doors. The wildlife gardening buzz words for 2026 need to be **connectivity** and **community**."

Isabella Tree, best-selling author and conservationist of the pioneering Knepp Estate, said, before the conference:

"There are 23 million private gardens in the UK covering an area four and a half times larger than the land designated to National Nature Reserves. Imagine if every one of those gardeners (over 80% of whom live in urban areas) thought differently – if they put away the pesticides and weedkillers and began to think of themselves as the keystone species at the heart of an ecosystem. As gardeners with a shared love of the



**Above: Summer sentinels - Foxgloves in
a Pyworthy hedge bank**

Nature Note – FEBRUARY continued from page 51.....

natural world, we can bring about a new era of recovery for wildlife across the UK."

In 1966 zoologist Charles Elton dismissed the value of gardens for wildlife, describing them as "ecological deserts"; however, a unique, long-term study of a Leicester garden, by its owner, Jennifer Owen, disproved this theory.

Over 30 years Owen recorded an astonishing 2,673 species living in and visiting her garden, 20 of which were new to the UK and six new to science. In an RHS (Royal Horticultural Society) article from October 2024 Urban Ecologist Dr Mark Goddard said: "The scope for nature connectedness through urban gardens is massive."

There are many myths around wildlife friendly gardening.

In his book: **Gardening for Wildlife** - New Edition (Bloomsbury 2017), endorsed by the RSPB, author Adrian Thomas busts these myths and gives common sense advice on how to garden for nature.

"To garden for wildlife successfully, clearly you need a little knowledge - and acquiring that can itself be very rewarding. You need to know which creatures you want to help, if they are likely to visit your garden, what their ecological needs are and how to fulfil those needs."

Urban Ecologist Dr Mark Goddard, in a 2024 article for the Royal Horticultural Society, said: "The scope for nature connectedness through urban gardens is massive." and adds: "Installing a pond is probably the best way people can increase biodiversity by a single action."

Email address: pyworthy@post.com Telephone number: 01409 478294 Page 52

In **The Wildlife Pond Book - Create Your Own Pond Paradise For Wildlife**, (Bloomsbury 2019) endorsed by the Wildlife Trusts, author Jules Howard says freshwater scientists define a pond as a water body covering an area between one metre square and up to two hectares however both authors agree that if creating a pond in its true sense isn't possible or practical then a reclaimed ceramic sink, a half barrel or even a bucket will still attract wildlife to a garden.

So what can the gardeners and landowners of Pyworthy do, together, to encourage wildlife to visit and stay in the parish and to "think wilder and look beyond their garden fences and their front doors" and to fulfil the Wildlife Trusts desire for **connectivity** and **community**?

An easy starting point would be to complete the on-line Wildlife Trusts' wildlife gardening survey; it takes less than five minutes but provides valuable data for the Trusts.

To see how well your gardening is already supporting biodiversity and to put your wildlife garden on the map go to wildlifetrusts.org and search for the Wildlife Gardening Survey.

At the end of the survey there are free downloads with wildlife gardening ideas.



The answer to January's Notes
Question:

The lyrics "Walking 'round the room
singing stormy weather," are from
the song **The Weather with you by
Crowded House.**

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

25th Anniversary 19 February 2001 – the first case of foot-and-mouth disease in the 2001 UK outbreak was detected at an abattoir in Essex. On 21st February the European Commission banned all British milk, meat and livestock exports.

25th Anniversary 12th February 2001 - NASA's NEAR Shoemaker spacecraft landed on Eros, becoming the first spacecraft to land on an asteroid. It continued to transmit data for 16 days.

30th Anniversary 27 Feb 1996 - the *Pokémon* media franchise was launched by Japanese video game designer Satoshi Tajiri.

60th Anniversary 3rd February 1966 – the Soviet Union's space probe *Luna 9* became the first craft to achieve a soft landing on the Moon. (The USA's *Surveyor 1* achieved the same feat four months later, on 2nd June.)

70th Anniversary 16th February 1956 - McMurdo Station, a U.S. Antarctic research station, was established on Ross Island. It is now the largest community in Antarctica and can support up to 1,258 residents.

75th Anniversary 1st February 1951 – the first live television broadcast of an atomic explosion. KTLA in Los Angeles, California, USA broadcast an atomic test at Frenchman Flats in Nevada, filming it from a mountain 250 miles away.



FROM
HOLLACOMBE
CHURCH

The Christmas Carol Service at St Petroc Church held as usual after Christmas Day had a full congregation, the first reading as tradition with us was read by Holsworthy Pretty Maid, Miss Paige Chidley who was well supported by her family & has connections with the church having grandparents buried in the churchyard. Thank You to all the readers, those who came, the choir & the band of caterers serving seasonal refreshments afterwards.

Margaret Stacy



Print deadline for the next edition of Pyworthy Post is: Wednesday 25th February at 9am prompt!

Diary dates this month:

(Dates & events were correct at the time of printing)

Holsworthy Walk & Talk group enjoy a walk every Friday, see their programme on pages 40 & 41. Also, members take a short walk in Stanhope Park on Mondays.

Friday 6th – Sunday 22nd February – Winter Olympic Games in Milano Cortina, Italy.

Friday 6th February – Skittles Cup Match in the Village Hall, bar open to all.

Monday 9th February – Evelyn's Walking Group will be setting off from the Devon Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve (Dunsdon) Pancrasweek, at 10.00am. Everybody welcome.

Monday 9th February – Clawton Primary School project, learn more between 3.45pm – 5.00pm. See page 22 for information.

Friday 13th February – Skittles Cup Match in the Village Hall, bar open to all.

Saturday 14th February – Valentine's Day

Tuesday 17th February – Strove Tuesday (Pancake Day) & Chinese New Year, **PLUS** Potter's Fish 'n' Things food van will be at the Village Hall.

Friday 20th February – Village Hall Pub Night from 7.00pm

Friday 27th February – Skittles Cup Match in the Village Hall, bar open to all.

Forthcoming Events in 2026:

Thursday 19th March – Pyworthy Parish Council meeting in Village Hall, 7.30pm

Friday 1st May - CRAZY MAMA will be entertaining at the Village Hall.

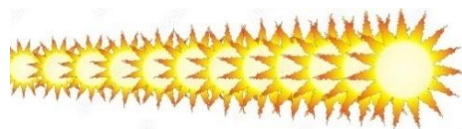
13th and 14th June – Pyworthy country Show, more details to follow

Sunday 5th July - An afternoon with ALL@C UKULELE BAND in the Village Hall

Saturday 17th October – a fun CASINO NIGHT in the Village Hall

Saturday 5th December - NOT THE COWBOYS, will be entertaining in the Hall

Sunrise, Sunset Times for the coming month:



1st February 2026 (UK, Exeter)

☀ Sunrise time: 07.46am GMT

🌅 Sunset time: 17.09pm GMT

🕒 Length of day: 9 hrs 16 mins.

28th February 2026 (UK, Exeter)

☀ Sunrise time: 07.00am GMT

🌅 Sunset time: 17.53pm GMT

🕒 Length of day: 10 hrs 53 mins

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