

July & August 2025

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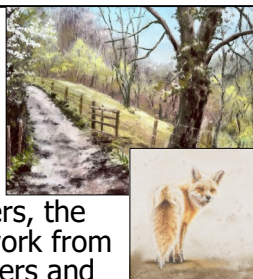
Eastcombe, Bussage & Brownshill Newsletter

ART IN BROWNSHILL IS BACK!

**12th-20th July, 10.30am-5pm,
St Mary of the Angels Church, Brownshill**

This month, another fantastic art exhibition is taking place at St Mary of the Angels Church, Brownshill, featuring 14 local artists, photographers and printmakers, the majority of whom live in the village. There will also be work from authors, furniture makers, wood carvers, mosaic designers and ceramicists. Professionals, including wildlife artist Penel Kirk and printmaker Beth Jenkins, will exhibit alongside gifted amateurs. Entrance is free.

St Mary of the Angels Church is in a spectacular setting, overlooking the Golden Valley. The unusual Arts and Crafts style deconsecrated church is a hub for the community, hosting pop-up bars, parties and music events. It is the ideal venue for an art exhibition in this vibrant little community.



There will also be special one-off events during the week. On Monday 14th July, two local authors, Rachel Joyce and Sarah Edghill, will talk about their writing, their journey to publication and their favourite books. Tickets £10 to include a free glass of wine (all proceeds to [The Big Space Cancer Appeal](#) and [Friends of Friendless Churches](#)). To book, call 07778 793993.

For more details, visit Facebook & Instagram: [Art in Brownshill 2025](#)

Please note: *there is no disabled access at the church, and no nearby parking. Please park at the top of the village, near Bussage Park, and walk.*

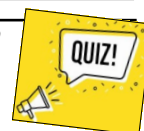
AUGUST NEWSLETTER



There will be no newsletter in August, to give the volunteer newsletter team a holiday.

**Have a great summer &
SEE YOU IN
SEPTEMBER!**

EYES DOWN at THE LAMB INN!



Every first Tuesday of the month, we hold a quiz night at The Lamb Inn: only £2 per person and it starts at 7pm.

**We would love to see
more people supporting
the quiz. So, gather
friends or neighbours &**

**JOIN US FOR THE
NEXT QUIZ ON
TUESDAY 1ST JULY.**



SWIFT PROGRESS for EASTCOMBE SWIFTS!

An update on Eastcombe's growing Swift colony...

The first sighting of Swifts in Eastcombe was a party of 5 over the Green on 1st May, prompting regular visual checks on the nest boxes erected by BisCAN last year. It was pleasing to note that 2 pairs had taken up residence in the nest boxes on the Baptist Chapel, while the traditional breeding site in a hole in the rear wall of Eastcombe Primary School is occupied again this year! Rod Rhys Jones tells us that this site has been used by successive generations of Swifts for at least 50 years—and even when Swifts have returned to find 'squatting' House Sparrows or Starlings in residence, the Swifts have always managed to evict the intruders.

Some of the nest box hosts in the village have been playing Swift calls to attract prospecting Swift pairs to investigate nest boxes. Please be tolerant of the slight noise intrusion, which is as nothing to that of large parties of screaming Swifts just a few decades ago, fondly remembered by a good number of long-time Eastcombe residents.

By mid-June, 7 active nests had been noted in Eastcombe - a modest increase on last years total of 5 definite sites and 1 probable. Several times this June, a group of around 12 Swifts were seen screaming over the centre of the village—encouraging, especially as the weather, so far, is more conducive to breeding than last year.

Let's hope the fortunes of our small and precious Swift colony are on the up!



To receive a FREE digital copy of the newsletter every month, please contact
eastcombebandednews@gmail.com. Printed copies, 60p each, are available from
Eastcombe Stores, Frith Community Café & Chalford Parish Centre.

Please send items for the **SEPTEMBER** newsletter to eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com
by NOON on 17th August.

BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/

Contact the Clerk: admin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

I have recently taken on the role of Chair for Eastcombe Ward. Mike Eccott remains Chair of Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council. In this, my first report, I am delighted to announce that the **final piece of play equipment** for the recreation area – a 'wobble bridge' - has been installed. Huge thanks to the Eastcombe Village Group et al for contributing to its purchase and installation.

We intend holding a **'Meet the Eastcombe Parish Councillors' event** in September, where we will 'show and tell' about several potential projects within the village. I will confirm dates and details in due course.

Following suggestions from parishioners to facilitate **access to the village green** for wheelchair users, folk with mobility issues and prams, we commissioned a disability access audit. We will be investigating the best solutions with costing and present them at the 'show and tell' in September.

Speed limits within the village remain a concern. Our new County Councillor, Gary Luff, attended a recent PC meeting, where he confirmed the intention of the new administration to implement 20mph limits in all rural villages. We also have a potential solution to calm traffic along Dr Crouch's Road, by the primary school. Again, we will provide details at the 'show and tell' in September.

Highways issues: We hold frequent meetings with Highways where we present our concerns, including potholes, damaged roads and lack of surface water management. The mantra from Highways is always to refer via 'Fix my Street'. I have raised several concerns this way and **we ask that all parishioners report any road, footpath or signage concerns via the Fix My Street website**. Simply follow the directions.

The **Eastcombe allotment** wardens recently identified that part of the north wall was being damaged by folk climbing over to gain access to the scout hut. The wall was rapidly repaired, with a gate made and installed in an extremely short time - thank you to all involved.

Finally, **please contact the Clerk or me if you have anything you wish to raise or discuss**.

Alternatively come along to the monthly Parish Council meetings on the first Wednesday of each month.

Colin Clifton: colin.clifton@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

ChalCAN

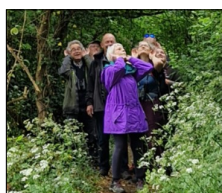
ChalCAN

GCC are offering a **£15 discount on compost bins and wormeries**. For more info, click [HERE](#)

Insulation Surveys - Podcast: The ChalCAN Energy Group have used AI to create a really useful podcast. This is a 9 minute listen and full of useful information. Click [HERE](#) to listen.

Plastic Free July is an annual event that encourages people to refuse single-use plastic products and packaging. Check out some [plastic-free July ideas](#) to get you started.

COMMUNITY BIODIVERSITY: We had some fantastic feedback from our **Late Spring Bird Walk**: *"It was really interesting and not just about birds. We saw toads, insects, wild ponies and Megan showed us how to listen to the bird song more effectively – highly recommended"*.



Discover Stroud District Trails app: [Stroud District Council](#) has added 3 new Cotswold Way walks to its **FREE** walking trails app, so people can discover the Stroud district's hidden gems. There are scavenger hunts and quizzes, and a Stratford Park hunt exploring nature in the park. Coming soon is a foodie scavenger hunt to try the tastiest local products. Download **Discover Stroud District Trails** app from your app store.

Stroud Valleys Dipper Project – Volunteers Needed:

The [Stroud Valleys Dipper Project](#) is looking into declining dipper bird populations and aims to provide a valuable insight into the health of the River Frome. Volunteers are needed to take part in the survey and add any dipper sightings [to a map](#).

ChalCAN WALK OF THE MONTH: France Lynch and Avenis Green: A lovely walk of about 2½ miles, with some slopes and two stiles, and possibly some mud! Fields, woods and views to enjoy. Click [HERE](#) for the map and directions. More routes available on the [ChalCAN website](#).

KEEP IT LOCAL!

LOOKING FOR FRIENDLY, RELIABLE SUPPORT IN THE COTSWOLDS?

Whether living independently or in a care setting, Complete Care Check are here to help make daily life for the elderly feel easier, more organised, and more supported.



GET IN TOUCH

Fully Insured | DBS Checked | Based in Stroud Area

completecarecheck@gmail.com

07538 306737

www.completecarecheck.co.uk

FREE 45MIN DISCOVERY SESSION

Then followed that beautiful season...Summer...Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Guideposts

CHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Chalford Parish Centre, 50 Gerald's Way, Chalford, GL6 8FJ; 01453 887204

info@chalford-glos.gov.uk www.chalford-glos.gov.uk [Facebook](#)



Footpaths – what we do has changed: The Footpath Volunteers' first task, back in May 2017, was clearing brambles and other vegetation obstructing the popular path from Coppice Hill into Dimmel's Dale. Since then, we've developed the theme of making Parish Public Rights of Way easier to use. As well as more cutting back, this has been done by putting many tonnes of type 1 stone on muddy paths, replacing stiles with gates, widening openings for mobility scooters, and painting barriers on playing fields yellow so they can be seen more easily by the visually impaired. We've also repaired safety barriers, created a new, safer exit from Frith Wood car park onto The Frith, developed and used some of the skills of dry-stone walling and published a book of local walks written by a parishioner. Interestingly, over the years we've switched from short one- or two week tasks to longer ones taking as long as five or six Thursday mornings. Where to next?

Fighting Speed in the Parish: The Parish Council in conjunction with the Community Speed-watch Group volunteers are adopting a three-pronged approach to reduce speeding in the parish in an effort to make our roads safer for everybody. We have a Vehicle Activated Sign which we can move to six different locations throughout the parish. In addition we have a fixed Auto Speedwatch camera in place by one of our local schools. Last but certainly not least, the Speedwatch Community Group get together once a week to record speeds in various locations. New volunteers are welcomed to join the Group. We are still hoping to get a Traffic Regulation Order in place to reduce speed limits at Fourways junction, so please can you advise us on 01453 887204 of any incidents at this junction.



Save Our Verges: Please can we ask all parishioners who receive deliveries or have tradespeople at their houses, to kindly ask the company or person to not park on the grass verges. This does irreparable damage.

FRITHWOOD PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWS

Would you be able to help save a relative, friend or neighbour by performing CPR? Would you know how to use a defibrillator in an emergency? If your answer is no, or you feel that you would like to gain more confidence, then sign up to our next CPR and Defibrillator Training Evening, at 7pm on Tuesday 15th July at Frithwood Surgery. It will be led by Sophie, who earlier this year brilliantly delivered our First Aid for Children evening. You can book your free place by emailing frithwoodppg@gmail.com.

Lots of people have been enjoying our weekly health walks and making new friendships. The walks are 1.5 miles long and at a gentle pace, so ideal for anyone recovering from surgery or illness, who wants to start exercising or anyone who just wants some friendly chat while having a walk. We meet at Frithwood Surgery at 10am every Wednesday morning. No need to book, just turn up if you fancy a walk. Afterwards we enjoy a cup of tea or coffee at Chalford Parish Centre.

The PPG has recently purchased some specific ceiling mounted lighting for the surgery to support the practice's ongoing minor surgery, vasectomy and women's health clinics. The existing lights in clinical rooms are mainly old and difficult to manoeuvre, but the new lighting will provide a much brighter light source which can be easily repositioned to suit the procedure. The lighting cost £2,900 and the PPG committee would like to say a massive thank you to those of you who are members of the 100 Club or who have given donations. We could not provide important equipment like this for our patient community without your valuable support – it makes such a difference!

FRITH YOUTH CENTRE NEWS

Youth sessions: we have temporarily moved our Friday session to a Wednesday. Please see our noticeboard, Facebook or Instagram for info.

Staff: we have some new faces in the building! We are so grateful to be working together with Minchinhampton Youth Club and Family Action for the next few weeks.

Thank you: A recent appeal for ingredients saw every item donated. Our 13-year-old volunteer, Louis, couldn't believe his eyes when seeing that his appeal poster had worked! Our young volunteers and slightly older volunteer, Sue, then made the most enormous pile of cakes for the Chalford & France Lynch Garden Trail, where FYC was a beneficiary this year. Sue, Emma and Lucy from the Friday Lunch Club also contributed home-made cakes on our behalf. We are truly grateful for the community support.



Help: we will soon be appealing for volunteers to join our management committee and/or assist in youth sessions. We also have an ongoing need for funding, equipment and consumables (particularly cheese!). You could also consider hiring our space for events.

Thank you - our local young people will thrive with the support of this community.

For more info, take a look at our brand new website: www.frithyouthcentre.org.uk

EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

A huge 'thank you' to the Eastcombe School's Association (ESA) for organising and managing the annual Gnome Hunt! Bigger and better than ever this year, the funds raised will go to developing our playgrounds. There are so many people to thank, not least our sponsors, without whom we would not be able to run an event anywhere near the scale we do. Also, a big thank you to Eastcombe Village for allowing those pesky gnomes to descend once again for the whole weekend; it means a lot that the Eastcombe community embrace our Gnome Hunt extravaganza! **Have a great summer and see you in September!**



DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Chloe Turner (Minchinhampton, Green) has been elected the **new Leader of the Council**, replacing Catherine Braun, who will be Deputy Leader. Chloe is also County Councillor for Minchinhampton and Chalford, and a short story writer and novelist – her novel *Blue Hawk*, about 17th century weavers, is set in the Chalford valley (available from Stroud Bookshop).

SDC's nationally-recognised **natural flood management** scheme is carrying out a project at Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's Trillis Banks nature reserve, below Oakridge to reduce flooding and help restore this part of the Holy Brook stream.

Battery and Vape Recycling: Batteries up to the size of a D cell, and vapes/e-cigarettes, can now be recycled with (not *in*) food waste. Place up to 10 batteries in a clear plastic bag on the lid of your food waste bin on your collection day. Other items? Visit the Waste Wizard on SDC website to find out where you can recycle it. **Remember the waste hierarchy: Reduce, Reuse, Rehome, Recycle, Bin (as a last resort).** *Never put batteries in general waste or recycling bins—they can cause fires in a vehicle.*

The Council has been awarded funding for a third year through the Government's **Rural England Prosperity Fund**. Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council received £7000 from this scheme for the new play area in Eastcombe.

SDC's **Cultural Strategy** was launched in April with 'Culture Shock', a day-long event at Stroud Valleys Artspace at the Goods Shed (the Brunel building by Stroud train station). We are planning similar events around the district, with the aim of promoting the arts in parts of the district that are less well-served, including the interests and needs of young people.

Please contact me about any district council matters:
Martin Brown, cllr.martin.brown@stroud.gov.uk, 01452 770878

GARDENING FOR BUTTERFLIES

Gardens are increasingly important for butterflies, which have hugely declined in recent years. Gardeners can attract and sustain butterflies - and even help them breed.

Nectar provides energy for long migrations, to find a mate and build reserves to get through hibernation. Plant a range of good nectar producing plants, aiming to provide flowers from March to November. Keep plants well-watered for maximum nectar production and keep deadheading to encourage more flowers over the season. Good nectar plants include:

- *Buddleia* (*butterfly bush*) – easy to grow and quick to establish. A range of colours and sizes, even dwarf for small gardens. Cut back hard in March and deadhead regularly.
- *Lavender* – Also easy to grow in a sunny, well-drained spot. Plant in April/May and trim to shape in August/September.
- *Erysimum* (*perennial wallflower*) - try the classic 'Bowles Mauve' for flowers from April to September.
- *Marjoram/Oregano* – an aromatic herb with spikes of purple flowers from June to September.
- *Sedums* – these flower for a long period over the summer.
- *Michaelmas daisies/Asters* – useful for late season nectar

Gardeners can also help butterflies by providing breeding habitats and food plants for their caterpillars, as well as a water source such as a shallow mud puddle.

Many plants that butterflies need to breed grow in wilder areas of the garden e.g. nettles, docks, thistles, grasses, holly and ivy. So, if you have the space, boost butterfly numbers by just sitting back and letting your garden do its own thing!

The Eastcombe Gardener



Looking for something to do with the family during the school holidays?

Why not try the:

HOLIDAY TREASURE TRAIL



Look for clues around Bussage.

Find out more about where you live.

- Route guide & question sheets £5.
- Available Monday 21st July to Thursday 28th August from Chalford Parish Office (open Monday to Thursday, 10am-3pm) or Frith Community Café, open Wednesday mornings, 10am-12pm.
- Follow the trail in your own time and bring the completed sheet back.
- Small reward for every participant & a larger prize for the team whose sheet is drawn from all the completed entries.

Raising funds for the Frith Community Café to improve the acoustics for the hard of hearing.

What is WHAT3WORDS?



If your location is hard to find—maybe it's tucked down a narrow lane—the What3Words app can help.

What3Words divides the world into 3m squares, each with a unique 3 word address. Emergency services worldwide—including UK AA patrols—are trained to locate using the 3 word codes.

In Devon, a man trapped in a flooded car credits the What3Words app with saving his life, after the 3 word address he gave helped emergency services find him quickly. When lives are on the line, every second counts—and 3 simple words can save time, resources... even a life.

So, download the free app from your app store and ensure you are easy to find.

MOZART

VIVALDI

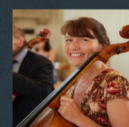
Max Richter

Friday 11th July 7.30

Members of the internationally acclaimed **Medici String Quartet** and London Soloists will perform a special one off concert at **All Saints Church, Bisley**. They will be joined by the soprano soloist **Philippa Lay**.



Cathy Thompson



Caroline Dale

Tickets £16 (£5 for under 16s)

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bisley-benefice>
Or call Fiona 07771 513382

Eastcombe Baptist Chapel

A service is held on Sunday mornings, at 10:30am at the chapel in Dr Crouch's Road, Eastcombe.

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE GROUP (EVG)

Wine Walk: Sunday 3 August: 4pm to 8pm:

The tickets for this popular village event will go on sale at Eastcombe Stores on **Monday 7th July**, priced at £20 per person. **The shop asks that tickets are paid for in cash.**



As in previous years, the Wine Walk will have 5 different venues, each representing a wine region. Wines from France, Spain, Portugal, South Africa and Australia/New Zealand will be on offer, accompanied with light bites. Ticket holders will be able to exchange each of their 5 vouchers for a glass of wine, and it will be possible to purchase additional glasses of wine for cash at each venue, £5 each. Thanks to the hosts and to all those who are helping this year.

Young Children's Play Area, Eastcombe Recreation Ground:

The Eastcombe Village Group has passed the funds raised at the 'Glorious Gloucestershire' evening to the Parish Council. These have been used to contribute to the cost of a new play 'wobble bridge', which has now been installed. The sum has been supplemented by funds from the Hilltop Singers, an Eastcombe-based choir which ceased at the time of Covid, with the Parish Council paying the rest of the money needed.

The remainder of the funds from the Hilltop Singers will be used to plant more crocuses on Eastcombe village green. Thank you to Beryl Freebury and the choir for agreeing that their funds should be used in this way.

Peter Scott: peterhscott@btinternet.com

Contact csissons52@gmail.com to join the mailing list.

Follow [Eastcombe Village Group](#) on Facebook.

St Michael's & All Angels, Bussage

Services this month are:

- Sunday 13 July: Holy Communion, 9.30am
- Sunday 20 July: Morning Prayer, 9.30am
- Sunday 20 July: Cafe Church, 2.30pm, Eastcombe Village Hall (see poster on Page 8)
- Sunday 10 August: Holy Communion, 9.30am
- Sunday 17 August: Morning Prayer, 9.30am
- Sunday 31 August: Holy Communion, 10am

Please note: There will be no Cafe Church in August (summer break)

On the other Sundays there are services in different parts of the Benefice.

See www.bisleybenefice.org.uk or join our mailing list: pewslipsbisley@hotmail.com.

For weddings, funerals & baptisms, contact Revd. Sue Murray: vicar@bisleybenefice.org.uk

HAVE YOU HAD A FALL IN THE LAST YEAR?



Frithwood Surgery now offers a Falls Assessment Service.

This involves a 20-minute appointment with a practice nurse to identify risk factors and help prevent future incidents.

So, if you've experienced "a series of events leading you to become unintentionally horizontal," you or a relative (with consent) can self-refer today.

Phone the surgery on 01453 882868 to make an appointment.



THOMAS KEBLE SCHOOL NEWS

Thomas Keble School is seeking a new Chair of the Board of Trustees to lead its governance and strategic oversight.

The school is well-positioned with strong finances, a five-year strategic plan, experienced staff and secure core funding. If you have a passion for improving the lives of the students through excellent educational & pastoral initiatives, you could be perfect for this role.

Our new Chair will be an independent and strategic thinker, experienced in leading and motivating others through periods of change. With a collaborative approach, you will bring an excellent understanding of good governance, sound judgement, and be comfortable in a complex environment.

The Chair will be an excellent communicator and ambassador for Thomas Keble School, building relationships and advocating for us and our work.

If you would like to be considered for this rewarding role, please write a letter of interest, in the first instance, outlining your reasons for wanting to apply and how you would match the requirements.

Please send to the Clerk:

aoxberry@thomaskeble.gloucs.sch.uk or via post to Ms A Oxberry, Thomas Keble School, Eastcombe, Stroud GL6 7DY.

For full details and comprehensive information on both roles, visit

www.eteach.com/job/chair-of-trustees-1489574

&

www.eteach.com/job/trustee-1489568

Thomas Keble School is seeking new Trustees to join the Board.

The school is well-positioned with strong finances, a five-year strategic plan, experienced staff and secure core funding. If you have a passion for improving the lives of the students through excellent educational & pastoral initiatives, you could be perfect for this role.

The ideal candidate will have an understanding of governance, finance, and strategy. Excellent communication skills and a commitment to inclusivity and the values of Thomas Keble School are essential. Experience in areas such as Law, HR, Finances and general education, would be desirable.

If you would like to be considered for this rewarding role, please write a letter of interest, in the first instance, outlining your reasons for wanting to apply and how you would match the requirements.

Please send to the Clerk:

aoxberry@thomaskeble.gloucs.sch.uk or via post to Ms A Oxberry, Thomas Keble School, Eastcombe, Stroud GL6 7DY.

CAROL'S COOKERY CORNER:

IT'S A WRAP!

Easy to assemble, delicious and a good lunch recipe. It's also an opportunity to use up food in the fridge, but be careful to check use by dates. Makes two portions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tortilla wholemeal wraps
- 2 tablespoons houmous
- 3 tablespoons coleslaw
- 6 small tomatoes, sliced
- 6 spring onions, sliced
- A good sprinkling of grated cheddar cheese.



METHOD:

1. Lay the wraps flat (you can microwave them first for 20 seconds per wrap to soften them, if you wish).
2. Spread the houmous in a line across the centre of each wrap - this helps the ingredients to stay in place.
3. Arrange the ingredients evenly on the houmous line, covering 1/3 of the wrap.
4. Sprinkle the ingredients with the grated cheese.
5. Roll up tightly, then cut diagonally across the centre of the wraps (see photo).
6. Enjoy!

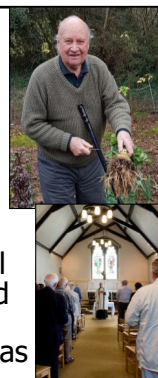
REVEREND DAVID BICK

Rev. David Bick died peacefully at The Coombs Nursing Home, Coleford, on Monday 19th May, aged 91 years.

David was born and brought up in Hartpury. He became a Christian as a teenager at a Lee Abbey youth camp. Following national service in the Royal Artillery, he trained for ordination, and served his curacy in Gloucester and Coleford, marrying Gill in 1960. He was vicar of Flaxley and Blaisdon, in the Forest of Dean, from 1963, and later Coaley (near Dursley). The monks of Prinknash Abbey, in support of his ministry, offered him a rented house, where he and Gill lived from 1982.

David spent over 30 years as a Christian counsellor and trainer alongside Gill, preaching and taking services, mostly at Eastcombe, where they received a warm welcome and felt very much part of the Church community. His ministry touched many lives. He was also a keen gardener and environmentalist.

Rev Bick's Funeral & Thanksgiving Service took place at St Mary the Virgin Church, Hartpury, on Saturday 21st June. For more details, please visit. <https://revdavidbick.muchloved.com/>



WHO'S WHO on the COUNCIL? We asked County Councillor Gary Luff...

I moved to Gloucestershire in 2007 with my wife and our first daughter. Our second daughter came along in 2009. Our eldest daughter has now just finished her A-levels at school in Stroud and the youngest has just finished her GCSEs.

Prior to retiring in 2021 I was a head of personal injury and technical claims for Ageas Insurance, based in Brockworth. Since retiring I have run a small community interest company which helps people to live financially sustainable lives and have been studying environmental management with the Open University.

I was elected as District Councillor for Painswick and Upton in May 2023 and re-elected in 2024. In May 2025 I was elected County Councillor for Bisley and Painswick, which includes Eastcombe, Bussage and Brownhill. I am also the chair of housing at Stroud District Council and the chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Gloucestershire County Council.

I am keen to support residents, in particular, to help communities be safer, to support those affected by the cost-of-living crisis, improve rural transport and highways and to protect the precious place that we live in.

When not being a councillor and a dad I can be found cycling, running and walking in our beautiful countryside or with my head inside a book.

I can be contacted on 07773 778050 or at gary.luff@gloucestershire.gov.uk



HILLTOP FILM CLUB

The Hilltop Film Club has proved to be very popular since its formation 6 months ago. We now have nearly 60 members with a fun community atmosphere on film nights. New members are always welcome.

We have been able to screen films chosen by members, with recent films including Paddington in Peru, The Grand Budapest Hotel and A Complete Unknown, featuring the life of Bob Dylan. We are now in the process of canvassing members on film choices for the autumn series of screenings.

In the interim, we have a fun night planned for Saturday 26th July, starting at the slightly earlier time of 7pm. In partnership with The Lamb, we will be showing Mamma Mia, which is sure to encourage us all to sing and jiggle to the music. Apart from supporting the Film Club, attending this event will be a show of support for The Lamb, a pub at the heart of our community.

HILLTOP FILM CLUB

MAMMA MIA

**Saturday 26th July
7pm**

at The Lamb Inn, Eastcombe

GUESTS: £5

MEMBERS: COMPLIMENTARY

ICES: £3

**Food available to buy
Come along & dance!**

ALL WELCOME!



WHO'S WHO (& WHAT'S WHAT!) ON THE HILLTOP?

We spoke to creative learning specialist Deborah Wetherall about what inspired her to set up the first Little Free Art Gallery in Gloucestershire, here in Bussage.

What is it? The Little Free Art Gallery (LFAG) is simply a free permanent gallery where anyone in the community can 'Take a piece of art, Leave a piece of art, or just Take a look around!' Our mission is simple; to celebrate creativity and spread joy on the hilltop!

How did the gallery come about? From the moment we arrived in Bussage we realised what a friendly place it was! We were always chatting to dog walkers and passers by at the bottom of our garden. A year ago I saw a Facebook post about a LFAG in the USA and I felt a pull to set one up here. As a family we really value creativity – we love making, drawing and painting and as soon as I shared the idea with my husband and children they were all for it! We all worked on the design and my husband and son constructed the gallery using recycled materials. My daughter loves working in miniature, so she took the lead on setting up tiny easels and creating the first artworks; then we gathered our neighbours for a grand opening!

What sort of response have you had? An amazing response! Every week new art arrives and goes to new homes! The big surprise has been the variety of beautiful creative contributions! As well as tiny drawings and paintings, visitors have left textile pieces, painted rocks, crochet, photography and even poetry!

What have been the highlights? I feel grateful that we get to pass the gallery every day and spot a new arrival – always so heartwarming! The connections and conversations with individuals and families we've met. And being featured in The Week Junior magazine and podcast last September was a brilliant surprise!

And the challenges? The biggest challenge was making the gallery weatherproof; the roof blew off last year in a storm and it needed emergency repair!

What next? We'd like to make more links with community organisations and explore collaborations. We are excited about going on tour to the Art in Brownhill exhibition this month and are open to more tours! We will celebrate LFAGs 1st birthday at the end of August so watch out on social media for news on that!

Where can people find out more? Come and visit and chat to us! The gallery is on The Avenue GL6 8AT what3words:///dates.barn.hawks. We also post updates and photos of current art and seasonal displays on the local Facebook groups or you can follow our adventure on Instagram @courageouslycreativefamilies.



TREMENDOUS TWINNING TRIP!

Over the last (extended) weekend of May, the Bisley-with-Lypiatt Twinning Association mustered a group (including 4 new members) and headed across the English Channel to spend a fun-filled weekend with our French counterparts in rural Brittany. Stops en route for breakfast at Sainte Mère Eglise, the first French town to be liberated by The Allies at the end of WW2, lunch in the stunningly beautiful town of Dinan and the compulsory stop at a French supermarket to top up on those alcoholic essentials, meant that we arrived at our destination of Plessala late afternoon on the Friday.

The weekend was filled with the usual warm welcome, copious quantities of food and drink and many new friendships established. Our luxury 53-seater coach (courtesy of the excellent Grindles Coaches of Cinderford) took us, along with a sizeable group of our French hosts, on a trip to La Poète Ferrailleur, an outdoor 'eco museum/art gallery' crammed with offbeat and ingenious animated sculptures made from scrap wood, metal, glass and other odds and ends. A fascinating, whimsical and surreal 20 year-long project by artist and filmmaker Robert Coudray, which conjured up thoughts of Willie Wonka's World of Imagination. We had a lovely picnic by the lake, serenaded by a chorus of large green frogs, returning for a very late night of laughter, eating and drinking at home with our French hosts.

Sunday saw individual trips out with our respective hosts to various local towns along the north coast. We were treated to a display of Breton dancing and a BBQ in the evening (some of us even joined in!)

All in all, a most successful and enjoyable weekend and we are looking forward to making plans for their return visit here in 2026.

Our website www.bisleytwinning.org.uk shows details of past visits and will soon include photos of this year's trip.

If you would like to know more about our twinning association, please contact either:

John Hughes (mail@jmhughes.plus.com or 07810 123511)
Paul Hunt (paulhunt284@gmail.com or 07814 621700)

COULD YOUR GARDEN BE THE NEXT HIDDEN GEM?



You don't need a sweeping estate, a babbling rill or lawns fit for royalty to join the National Garden Scheme (NGS) — just a love of gardening and a willingness to share your patch of paradise with others.

We're looking for a few more keen amateur gardeners to join our local NGS group, especially in Eastcombe, Old Bussage or Brownhill. Whether it's a charming courtyard, a veggie haven, or a riot of colour in a back garden border - if you love your garden, the chances are that others will too!

Opening your garden for the NGS is a brilliant way to celebrate your hard work, connect with fellow plant lovers and raise money for vital nursing charities and local good causes.

Curious? Fancy a chat about how it works? Please contact Natalie nat.beswetherick@btinternet.com.

We'd love to hear from you — and your garden!

VILLAGE HISTORIES... Summer is the perfect time to be outside—especially for children. Phyllis Gaston, in her memoir of Eastcombe life in the 1930s and 40s, recalls **SUMMERS WITH THE GUIDES.**

The Eastcombe Guides were started by Miss Masters, the children's nurse at St Elizabeth's Orphanage. We met in the large playroom there and the girls at the Home were Guides too. In fact the first six were all Home girls. You started in the Robin Patrol and transferred to one of the other three when you were older. The meetings were always interesting and fun.



The First Six, with Miss Masters. Theo Wrenn is on the right.

We went tracking and to the field between Hawkley and Cricketty Mill, complete with billy cans for a picnic. We lit our fires and brewed up tea. The water came from the stream; it would be frowned upon now, especially after we had been paddling in it. Then we did our cooking; our 'dampers' (bread) were something else. When you are young, you have strong stomachs, thank goodness.

On fine meeting nights in the summer we played cricket or rounders, either in the field belonging to the Home or in the Rec. Miss Isla Woodcock would invite us to their home, Lypiatt Manor, on occasion, very proudly showing us round that beautiful mansion, regaling us with wonderful stories. She specially showed us the small room where Guy Fawkes hatched his infamous plot and we read the commemorative caption on the wall. She then plied us with a scrumptious tea before we returned to Eastcombe.

Each year the Guides went away to camp for a week. The worst one was Borth, not because of the place, but the weather. It rained and rained. Everything got wet in spite of our efforts to keep things off the ground. We had to dig trenches round the tents to take the water. No sleeping bags then, just palliasses—two hessian sacks cut open and joined together, leaving the top open. You filled them with straw to make a mattress which was then placed on a groundsheet. We had bell tents and whilst lying in bed you could watch a batch of earwigs crawling round the top of the tent pole. The latrines were a bit primitive too!

The best camp was at Lee Abbey, near Lynton. It was up on the edge of Exmoor with brilliant sunshine every day. Scouts were camped in a clearing in the woods below and we shared one another's campfires. A visit to Lynmouth via the mountain railway intrigued us and a trip to the Doone Valley was quite significant to me as I had just read *Lorna Doone*. On the last night, each tent had to do a party piece and we decided to do 'Clementine' with actions. I borrowed trousers and a hat from the farmer—apart from being too big, you can guess what they looked like after he had been wearing them for weeks. Nancy Lindsay sprawled in a piece of boggy ground scooping up muddy water in a tin mug and doing the 'blowing bubbles' bit will stay with me forever! I had to scrabble the clothes back to the farmer so that he had them for next morning's milking!

To read more of Phyllis' reminiscences, visit www.eastcombearchive.org.uk.

Watch Out - there's a BALSAM about!



Tall, bright green leaves arranged in 3s, green fleshy stem. Uproots easily—if not, it's probably not Himalayan Balsam!

The three 'R's of balsam control

REMOVE by the roots
Himalayan Balsam uproots very easily.

RECOVER to a dry place
Crush stems & leave to dry out.

REVISIT every few weeks.

Check for stragglers & new seedlings...



HILLTOP CAFE CHURCH

Christian Worship for those of all faiths and none.

Sunday 20th July

2.30pm

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

BROUGHT TO YOU FROM
THE PARISH OF BUSSAGE & EASTCOMBE

Outdoor cafe vector created by uelabok - www.freepik.com



CHALFORD MARKET

CRAFTY & DELICIOUS @ CHALFORD

10am-1pm

Sunday 6th July

NAME THAT STILE!



June's photo showed the chimneys of The Triangle, Eastcombe.

This month's photo is once again taken locally. Can you identify it?

The answer will be revealed in the September issue.

WHAT'S ON in JULY & AUGUST?

1 July: The Lamb Inn Quiz Night, 7pm

6 July: Chalford Market, 10am-1pm, CSSC

7 July: Eastcombe Wine Walk tickets on sale

11 July: Concert, All Saints Church, Bisley, 7.30pm

12-20 July: Art in Brownhill exhibition, 10.30am-5pm, St Mary of the Angels Church, Brownhill

20 July: Hilltop Café Church, 2.30pm, Eastcombe Village Hall

21 July-28 August: Holiday Treasure Trail, Bussage

26 July: Hilltop Film Club: Movie Night at The Lamb Inn, Eastcombe, 7pm

3 August: Eastcombe Wine Walk, 4-8pm

17th AUGUST: DEADLINE for SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER