

May 2025

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Eastcombe, Bussage & Brownshill Newsletter

A MARATHON ACHIEVEMENT for EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL!

On Sunday 6th April, a very warm spring day, Mr King and Mrs Fowles ran a marathon to raise money for Eastcombe Primary School.

10am saw the school was dressed in festive bunting and the playground full of well-wishers to set them off. They ran past the school to cheering supporters every 15-20 mins, and finally, after 18 laps of Eastcombe, 26.2 miles, just over 4 and a quarter hours and over £2300 raised, they completed their run. Not all heroes wear capes, sometimes it's running shorts! We are incredibly proud of this Teacher and Teaching Assistant who gave up hours of their time training, planning and preparing for this amazing achievement. Congratulations Mrs Fowles and Mr King and thank you.

Thanks to everyone who donated and to the supporters—your cheers, running alongside and inspiring banners made a real difference.

Money raised will go towards playground development, enabling all children at the school, present and future, to benefit from additional outdoor play opportunities, ensuring their physical and mental health.

Mrs Claire Jones, Headteacher



EASTCOMBE GNOME HUNT 2025
Sat 17th & Sun 18th May 2025
1pm-4pm

ONLY £3 PER MAP - RECEIVE A GNOME PRIZE AT THE END.

START YOUR GNOME ADVENTURE AT EASTCOMBE
PRIMARY SCHOOL,
GL67EA

GNOMES AT THE MOVIES

Enjoy refreshments, cake, ice cream. There will be a raffle with great prizes. Fun filled activities for all the family.

PETER JOY Check out our social media page for more info. A special thank you goes to our main sponsor Peter Joy.

ESA

Bussage & Eastcombe NGS Group

OPEN GARDENS

Sun 4th May & Mon 5th May Time: 1:00 - 5:30
Entry £8.50 per adult - children free

Tickets and maps from Eastcombe Village Hall
Redwood, Bussage GL68AZ, Hawkley Cottage, Bismore
Homemade refreshments at Eastcombe Village Hall



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CHELSEA ON YOUR DOORSTEP!

A group of 15 beautiful hilltop gardens will once again be opening for the National Garden Scheme on Sunday 4th May and Monday 5th May (the May Day Bank Holiday).

Located throughout Eastcombe and Bussage - with new gardens added every year - there is something for everyone, from small cottage gardens to larger designer creations, in a range of styles from formal to more relaxed, naturalistic plots, designed to attract wildlife.

Last year the NGS raised £3.5 million, which was donated to charities including Marie Curie and Hospice UK - each of which received £450,000. Of this, the Bussage and Eastcombe open gardens in 2024 made over £5k for the NGS and over £2k for local charities (Stroud and District Food Bank and Allsorts) via refreshments and plant sales. This year's local charities will be Brimscombe's Help a Hedgehog Hospital, Stroud and District Food Bank and the Stroud Swift Group - you might even see swifts using their nesting boxes as you wander around the gardens!

Teas and scrumptious home-made cakes will be served at Eastcombe Village Hall, with ice creams at Hawkley Cottage. Feeling inspired? Buy a plant or two from the village hall or from some of the participating gardens.

Gardens open 1pm-5.30pm. Entry £8.50 per adult, children free. Tickets from Eastcombe Village Hall, Redwood, Bussage or Hawkley Cottage, Fidges Lane, Eastcombe. For further information see ngs.org.uk.



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

Please send items for the June newsletter to eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com
by NOON on 17th May.

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

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

RTA Middle Hill: Unfortunately there has been a fairly serious road accident on Middle Hill adjacent to the allotments, where a young motorcycle rider was thrown off his bike after hitting potholes. We understand that the person involved sustained a broken leg and thankfully the ambulance service turned up quickly such that he was treated immediately. No other vehicle was involved. GCC Highways have subsequently filled in the offending potholes but it is a great shame that this unfortunate incident occurred due to a very poor road surface which had been reported to the authorities on several occasions. If you see any potholes of any significance, then please report them to GCC using the 'fix my street' application on the GCC website.

Annual Parish Meeting: This will be held at **7.30pm on 14th May at Bisley Village Hall**. An open public session where the Parish Council will give a short summary of the activities we have been involved in over the last 12 months, it is also an opportunity for members of the public to raise any topic relating to the parish or parish council. Local organisations including those which have received grants from the PC over the last year will be invited to attend. More details are given on the Agenda which is published on the Parish Notice boards and the website. At the end of the session members of the public will be invited to join the councillors for some light refreshments.

Village Green Access: Following further discussions with GCC Highways, the ward councillors are considering access directly from the road to the lower bench on the green rather than the installation of steps. By creating a path way directly to the bench this alleviates the awkward issues that were identified with steps whilst providing easier access to the green. We will now be gathering quotes for this work prior to proceeding. Please contact anyone of the Eastcombe Councillors if you have any thoughts on this matter.

Next Meeting: Bisley Village Hall on **Wednesday May 7th, at 7.30pm**. All are welcome to attend.

ChalCAN

Discussion Evening: 'Supporting our children in a time of climate change': 20th May: 7-9pm, Bussage School: For all who would like to understand how to raise resilient children equipped to deal with the challenges they face. Hosted by **Jo McAndrews**, parenting coach and educator with a background in psychotherapy with children and young people. **Free, but places limited. Book [HERE](#).**

Late Spring Bird Walk, Saturday 24th May 9:30am (meet 9.25am): Led by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, find out more about our local bird life. Children over 10 welcome accompanied by an adult. No dogs.

Distance & Time: 1.5 miles. 1.5-2 hours

Start & Finish: Bus shelter opposite Victoria Works on A419.

Accessibility: mainly easy walking but one short steep section.

FREE, but booking essential, click [HERE](#).

ChalCOMP Community Composting Scheme: Do you have a piece of land that could be used by the local composting group? The Parish Council are looking for an alternative site after it was decided that the Middle Hill Allotment site wasn't a viable location. **Contact the [Parish Council](#).**

A Car Club for Chalford? Stroud Valleys have an established scheme. If there is enough interest in Chalford, we might be able to get one too! Club membership provides flexible access to cars when needed, without the costs and hassle of car ownership. Go to [SVCCC](#) for more info. **[If you'd be interested let us know.](#)**

ChalCAN



DRONE NO NO...

Were you tempted by the pet technology on offer in the April newsletter?

Sadly, drone dog walkers and cat flaps with paw recognition are not yet available—it was an April fool...



EASTCOMBE WI

Members were welcomed by Jean B, standing in for our president. The Treasurer's report told us that we had 28 members this year and dates for various activities were announced. We are hoping to have a table top sale on June 14th, and a celebration for the WI's 110th birthday celebration at our July Meeting.

Our speaker was fundraising coordinator for the National Star College, Monica Farthing.

Started in the 1960's as the Star Centre, a charity to help people with physical or mental disabilities such as cerebral palsy or the consequences of thalidomide, the college was the brainchild of a Cheltenham woman. It began with 10 students in Cheltenham, before moving to Ullenwood. Today it takes students with complex disabilities from 18 years old. The curriculum includes art, computing and technology to help with mobility and speech, as well as learning how to sign or signal the words 'yes' and 'no', giving students control over their own decisions. Learning to cook has led to the Star Bistro, which is open to the public. Eastcombe WI will be visiting.

Monica's enthusiasm earned rousing applause and she was thanked by Glenys.



HELP the HEDGEHOGS!

For more wildlife-friendly gardening tips, visit

www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/gardening-with-hedgehogs/



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](#)



Bussage Pleasure Ground Complete: We are delighted to report that on the 19th April the new play area was officially opened at Bussage Pleasure Ground. We hope that this brings joy to all our young residents throughout the summer and beyond.

A new vehicle for the Groundsmen! You may have noticed that "Vera", the much loved parish groundsmen's land rover, has been retired. She served our parish well, but we have known we need (and been saving up for) a replacement for some time. We are thrilled to welcome our new vehicle! Smaller, more economical and very practical, our groundsmen are already running her through her paces. We are still thinking of a suitable name – any ideas welcome!

Safety work on Rack Hill: The photo shows the progress your Footpath Volunteers had made in five weeks of Thursday mornings on a safety fence on Rack Hill. The full job involved installing 21 fence posts and 20 3.6m rails. Carrying these, plus bags of cement and a post-hole borer down a donkey track to the site was a challenge well met, with thanks due to the Parish Groundsmen for taking them as far as the track would allow their vehicles to go, and to all the Volunteers for their hard work.



ANNUAL MEETING of the PARISH 2025

Thursday 8th May, 6.30pm
at CHALFORD SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

CHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL INVITE YOU TO THEIR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To include a talk from Chalford Band, Who are celebrating their 140 year anniversary, presentation of grant awards, and an update from the Chair of the Parish Council.

Refreshments available to purchase from the Club Bar.

The Annual Parish meeting is free and will be followed by the VE Day celebrations. If you wish to stay, you need to purchase a ticket. Tickets are £10 and provide access to the VE Day event plus food.

VE Day Celebrations

Thursday 8th May, 7.30pm
Chalford Sports & Social Club
(in main hall)



Chalford & Bussage Schools performing songs
Wartime stories
Chalford Band
Lighting of Beacon of Peace
Phillippa Lay- Soprano

Doors open 7.30pm - please be prompt

Tickets £10 to include ploughman's supper

Tickets in advance from
CSSC & Chalford Parish Council



Working together with



Thanks also to Kate, the owner of Sunnybank (the gate leads down to the house), who provided cups of tea and delicious cakes each week – we were tempted to make the job last another week or two! Kate also let us access her water supply for making our concrete, without which we would have struggled.

VE Celebrations – Update: Since our article last month the organisers have decided to add a tasty Ploughmans to the VE Day celebration event, which follows after the (free to attend) Annual Meeting of the Parish at Chalford Sports & Social Club on 8 May. Tickets for the VE celebrations are now £10 and are available in advance from CSSC and the Parish Centre.

EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

To all our friends and families of Eastcombe School, we hope you have had a lovely Easter break and we look forward to the start of a new term. Here's just some of the activities our children and staff took part in last month.

A big shout out to Mr King and Mrs Fowles for completing their Eastcombe Marathon – 18 laps, 26.2 miles and raising over £2000. They are truly superstars as it was a hot sunny day, so challenging for our runners. A huge thank you to everyone who donated and came out to support them – running alongside (!) – which really helped to keep them going and complete the challenge.

Hedgehog Class Art lesson were looking at still life, using charcoal and chalk. With help and guidance from Steph (Sienna's mum), they produced some lovely pieces.

Squirrel Class took part in a very important water safety talk from Chloe and her duck called Puddle! Chloe taught us how to stay safe around water including in the home and garden: canals, ponds, swimming pools and at the seaside. We learnt about lifeguards and the coastguard and practised the star shape you should make if you are in difficulty in the water and what the coloured flags mean on the beach. Such important life skills!

Our children love their cross-country running club. They run whatever the weather through our beautiful local countryside.

Congratulations to the wonderful wildlife quiz team who stormed through the first round against Croft School, winning 40-27. Great knowledge shown by all.

Our Wrap Around Care Club took advantage of the lovely sunshine last month and did some tree rubbings on the village green. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves – for more information about Eastcombe Primary School's offer please see poster (right) or contact the school office.



EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

WRAP AROUND CARE

£5 PER HOUR

BREAKFAST & AFTER SCHOOL CLUB AVAILABLE

7.45-8.45AM 3.15-5.15PM

DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Cultural Symposium: The council launched its Cultural Strategy with a daylong symposium hosted by Stroud Valleys Arts at the historic Brunel Goods Shed, with a line-up of speakers from Stroud and around the world. ***The Strategy aims to support the district to harness the creativity of its diverse communities and generate more opportunities for people to connect, create and communicate, and unlock ways for creativity to contribute to a greener, healthier and more prosperous district for generations to come.*** The symposium will be followed by events around the district, seeking to involve a wide range of residents, not only those who already create and attend arts activities.

Equality Policy: A revised equality, diversity and inclusion policy was adopted at Council in March, following an extensive public consultation. See the policy on the SDC website www.stroud.gov.uk.

Recite Me: The SDC website now includes a range of tools to support those with disabilities, visual impairments, and who speak English as a second language. The software allows users to customise the website's content to suit their needs, offering options such as text-to-speech, translation into over 100 languages, and adjustable font sizes and colours. Simply click on "Accessibility Tools" near the top of the council website homepage to select the Recite Me options.

Home Energy Efficiency Advice: Gloucestershire councils have partnered with **Furnbow**, specialists in home energy efficiency, to provide a **One-Stop Shop for home energy improvements:** see <https://furnbow.com>. Those on low incomes or benefits may be eligible for free or subsidised help - check www.fairerwarmth.com to see if you qualify.

County Council Election: Don't forget, if voting in person on May 1st, to take photo ID

Martin Brown: Cllr.martin.brown@stroud.gov.uk 01452 770878

HILLTOP GARDENING CLUB

www.hilltopgardening.club.org.uk

At the April meeting Hilltop Gardening Club members were treated to an excellent talk entitled 'A Year Long Walk in Woodchester Park' by Robert Bryant, the Club president.

Illustrated by some stunning photographs, Robert's presentation took us on a gentle stroll through the seasons, highlighting the unique flora and flora of the landscape, which he clearly knows well. His account included fascinating details of the unfinished Victorian mansion at the heart of the estate.

Our second guest speaker, James Walmsley, spoke briefly about the new National Trust property Tinkley Gate, on the edge of Woodchester Park, where he is a volunteer gardener. Tinkley Gate is an entrance point to the Park, and boasts a café, a second-hand bookshop and more obscure attractions, such as a stone circle - not as ancient as it looks!



Hilltop Gardening Club events in May

TUESDAY 6TH MAY

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL, 7:15PM

'DIGGING A CAREER IN GARDENING'

With PROFESSIONAL GARDENER, CLARE SAVAGE

Members and non-members are welcome – we ask non-members to contribute £3 on the door. This event could be of interest to young people considering a career in horticulture: anyone to whom this applies will be admitted for free.

SUNDAY 11TH MAY

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL 2-4PM

SALE OF PLANTS & 'PRE-LOVED' TOOLS

(& tea & cake!)

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Why?
Eastcombe WI Meeting
Tuesday 20 May 2025
From 7.15pm—9.00pm
Eastcombe Village Hall

What?

Where?
For a brain teasing quiz evening

How?

Who?
Visitors always welcome

For further information contact
Jean Buxton 07817 441363 email jeanbuxton@hotmail.co.uk
or
Jackie Harris 07840 244063 email jagieboy@hotmail.com

CHALFORD CAR BOOT SALE

Chalford Sports & Social Club

Sunday May 25th, 9am - 12pm

Sellers from 8am, £5 per car, £10 van/business

£1 buyers entry, U16s go free

Refreshments available to purchase

In aid of Chalford AFC

For more details or to book your pitch, contact Kelly:

chalfordafc@gmail.com

or 07403 108237

**GROW TOGETHER
IN BROWNSHILL**

**JOIN THE BROWNSHILL
COMMUNITY
ALLOTMENT GROUP!**

Love being outdoors? Want to meet new people and learn something new?

Come and join our friendly gardening group!

- No experience needed
- Men and women of all ages welcome
- Learn new skills
- Make new friends

Share the joy of growing your own fruit and veg

Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just curious to give it a try – we'd love to have you on board!

**APPLY TO CHRIS OR SCOTT SISSONS
FOR DETAILS TEL: 07547 485926**



Eastcombe & Bismore Local History Group
present a

Social SUMMER Slideshow

Saturday 28th June

2pm, Eastcombe Village Hall

ALL WELCOME!

Photos, stories & social time, celebrating
the history of Eastcombe, Bismore & surrounds

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)

All are invited to join events to commemorate 80 years since VE Day 1945, when victory in Europe was celebrated and peace declared:

- **'The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace', Saturday 3 May, 7.15pm, Eastcombe Village Hall.** See below.
- **Thursday 8 May at 8.30pm:** We will be joining the nationwide 'Candles for Peace' event, meeting by the Millennium Wheel on Eastcombe Green to light candles and have a quiet moment of reflection to remember those who died in WWII, to thank all those who contributed to the victory in Europe and to pray for peace throughout the world. Similar events are being held in many places throughout the country.

St George's Dinner on 23 April: Many thanks to Sarah and staff at The Lamb Inn and to Colin Clifton for organising a memorable evening, which was much enjoyed by all who came.

Wine Walk – Sunday 3 August 4-8pm: We have four hosts and are looking for another host. Please contact me if you would be willing to host our fifth venue. Help and helpers are available if needed.

Next Meeting – Monday 23 June at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Annex: All are welcome to share their ideas and views, and to discuss future events.

Peter Scott: peterhscott@btinternet.com

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

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



'The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace' Saturday 3rd May 7pm for 7.15pm

Eastcombe Village Hall, GL6 7EB

A 2018 Berlin performance of this moving work, with the World Orchestra for Peace and the 2000 strong World Choir for Peace, and conducted by composer Sir Karl Jenkins. A specially commissioned war archive film backdrop reinforces the narrative of the work.

Tea & coffee available after the performance

Entrance free. Donations are invited for 2 charities: *Combat Stress*, providing mental health services for veterans and *Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders*, which gives medical care to civilians in war-torn areas.

**To reserve a seat, contact Chris Stockwell:
07717 491587 or 01453 882275.
Alternatively, just come along on the night.**

SAVE THE DATE—& BOOK IN ADVANCE

Table Top Sale: Saturday 14th June, 10am-1pm

Scout & Guide HQ, Eastcombe

Book your table by 31st May, £7.50 each

Contact: jeanabuxton@hotmail.co.uk/07817 441363

or jaquieboyd@hotmail.com/07840 244803

St Michael's & All Angels, Bussage

Visitors are always welcome. Services this month are:

- **Sunday May 11th: Holy Communion at 9.30am**
- **Sunday May 18th: Morning Prayer at 9.30am**
- **Sunday May 25th: Rogation Sunday at 12pm in Eastcombe Village Hall***

Please Note: The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will be held at Eastcombe Village Hall on Tuesday 13th May, at 7.30pm.

*This will be the termination of the Rogation walks from across the benefice. Rogation is an ancient practice of the church where we pray for the crops to grow, with God's blessings upon the communities serviced by the parish churches. There will be walks starting at 11am from all our parish churches this year, ending at Eastcombe Village Hall where there will be a short act of worship followed by an eat-your-own-picnic (drinks will be provided) at around 12 noon. Please join us in the celebration!

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

DISCOVER CHALFORD MARKET!



Located at Chalford Sports & Social Club, Chalford Market transforms the first Sunday of every month into a vibrant celebration of local talent and community spirit between 10am and 1pm. Established six years ago, this artisan market features an impressive variety of stalls, offering food, crafts, plants and unique gifts.

Discover the superb craftsmanship of woodwork, glasswork, pottery, hand-made children's clothing, and hand-sewn gifts. Treat yourself to the flavours of Greek olive oils, delicious cakes, preserves and health and beauty products. Local pictures and cards bring charm to the market, while charity stalls make a difference, such as supporting Alzheimer's UK through the club's "Make It" craft stall.

Refreshments are available to enjoy in the lounge or outside in the fresh air, making the experience even more enjoyable.

Market days offer a chance to win a £25 market voucher in the raffle, with funds supporting the upkeep of Chalford Sports & Social Club. This market is more than just a shopping spot—it's a beloved hub where community ties are strengthened and local creativity is celebrated.

Cherished by regulars, there are still many locals who have yet to discover this hidden gem. Spread the word and make Chalford Market a regular part of your Sundays. It's more than a market—it's a true community experience - and its free entry. We look forward to seeing you at the next markets on 4th May and 1st June.

PRAWN & CHORIZO TAGLIATELLE

INGREDIENTS:

- 200g tagliatelle
- 100g sliced chorizo
- 150g raw king prawns
- 4 cloves of garlic, chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 10g parsley, chopped
- 60g grated parmesan cheese
- 200ml yoghurt or crème fraîche



1. Drop the tagliatelle into boiling water and cook as per the packet instructions. Put to one side.
2. Heat a little cooking oil in a deep frying pan and cook the chorizo for a few minutes until crispy.
3. Add the prawns and garlic and cook for a few minutes, stirring occasionally - the prawns should turn pink.
4. Add the yogurt, lemon juice, parsley and parmesan cheese, reserving a little for garnishing. Stir together.
5. Add the cooked tagliatelle and toss to coat.
6. Add seasoning - a little salt and a more generous amount of pepper.
7. Dish up, garnishing each portion with parmesan cheese and a sprinkle of lemon juice. Eat immediately!

Growing something beautiful or tasty from a tiny seed is one of the most satisfying things you can do at this time of year, connecting us with the soil and the seasons. May is the perfect time for sowing seeds directly into the ground—the soil is warm and they will germinate and grow surprisingly quickly.



Growing annual flowers for cutting later in the summer is rewarding and you don't need masses of space. Simply weed and prepare the soil in a redundant, sunny patch of the garden or plant into bare patches in your existing borders to fill the gaps and add some summer colour. Make sure the soil is free of large stones and raked to a fine tilth then prepare a series of shallow rows (this will help you to identify the flower seedlings from the weeds as they germinate). Water your rows before sowing and cover with a thin layer of soil or compost. Make sure they don't dry out if the weather gets warm. They may need thinning out if lots germinate and keep an eye out for slugs! Easy varieties include *Calendula* (Pot Marigolds), *Cornflowers*, *Nigella* (Love-in-the-mist), *Cosmos* and *Linaria* (Toadflax) – all great for cutting.

If edibles are more your cup of tea, you can grow a succession of wonderful salad leaves over the summer months in only a small patch of ground or even a pot. Beetroot, chard, peas and beans are also easy to grow and some varieties are beautifully coloured so they wouldn't look out of place in your flower borders either!



So go on, pick up a few packets of seed and enjoy the fruits of your labours.

NATURE NOTES...



I regularly get beautiful Bullfinches in my rear garden but I was surprised to see a new bird in mid-March.

Looking through my monocular I could see it was a finch, but slightly bigger with a larger beak. Checking with a birder friend, it was thought to be a Hawfinch, and, sure enough, it was a female Hawfinch, less colourful than the male but still with the striking wing marks of black, brown and white and a buff body and brown cap. I was absolutely thrilled.

I understand this secretive bird has also been seen in Cirencester Park and at Westonbirt Arboretum.

Margaret Headen, Bussage

The PPG recently purchased an electric 3 section bariatric couch for the surgery, replacing an old couch which staff and patients found difficult to use because the height could not be adjusted. The new couch is much more comfortable for patients and staff to use. It is also wider than an average couch and suitable for accommodating patients with higher body weights or additional movement needs.



Such a large piece of equipment is expensive (£2,650) and we could not afford it without donations and members of the Frithwood PPG 100 Club – a huge thank you for your continuing support. The first draw in 2025 for £300 took place at the end of March and the next will be drawn at the end of June. Find out more about the 100 Club and the PPG by emailing frithwoodppg@email.com.

The PPG Health Walks now take place every Wednesday morning and the group has been enjoying walking and chatting in the spring sunshine. We follow different routes, depending on the weather and how everyone feels. The walks are ideal for people recovering from illness or surgery, anyone wanting to start exercising or have a friendly chat while they walk. No need to book, just turn up at the surgery at 10am – everyone is welcome. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided afterwards at the Chalford Parish Centre.

Saturday 24th May
7.30pm

Eastcombe Village Hall

GUESTS: £5
MEMBERS: COMPLIMENTARY
ICES: £3

ALL WELCOME!

COTSWOLD CANALS TRUST LAUNCHES WALKING & BOAT TRIPS SEASON

Running from May to September, these volunteer-led experiences offer a unique way to explore the history, wildlife, and restoration of the Cotswold Canals, with all proceeds supporting ongoing conservation efforts.

Guided Walking Tours take place on Saturdays at 10:30am, featuring insights into canal heritage, restoration, and local wildlife.

- **Walk 1: Our Industrial Heritage** (Wallbridge to Ebley) – Explore Stroud's last operational mill, the Dudbridge hydro-electricity scheme, and historic barge stories.
- **Walk 2: The Challenge of Restoration** (Stonehouse to Westfield Bridge) – Learn about Ocean railway bridge, Bonds Mill embankment, and Eastington locks.
- **Walk 3: Nature and Environmental Preservation** (Fromebridge to Saul Junction) – Discover Fromebridge wetland reserve, the River Frome, and the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal.
- **Walk 4: Mills and Locks** (Wallbridge to Stroud Brewery) – Walk past restored locks, former mill sites, and finish with a visit to Stroud Brewery.

Volunteer-led Boat Trips run from April to September, offering a scenic way to enjoy the canals.

- **Adventure (Saul Junction):** Wednesdays in June & July, 2-hour trips at 2pm. Private charters available.
- **Perseverance (Wallbridge Lock):** Saturdays, multiple departures. Walk-ins welcome.
- **Inglesham (Lechlade – Private Charters):** May-September, £60/hour, max 12 passengers.
- **Endeavour (Ebley – Private Charters):** May-October, £60/hour (2-hour min.), max 10 passengers.

For booking and details, visit www.cotswoldcanals.org or email trip.boats@cotswoldcanals.org.

Explore the canals, connect with nature, and support their restoration!



A CELEBRATION FOR THE LIFE OF ANN COOPER

After the sad passing of Ann Cooper at the end of March, the family would like to invite anyone who knew her to a celebration of her life at her cottage in Eastcombe between 2pm and 5pm on Sunday 4th May. Please pop in for as long as you wish, bring photos if you have any, or just memories.

Light refreshments will be available.

For more details, please get in touch.

Sarah (Daughter)

Sacooper789@googlemail.com

**Community
Coffee Morning**
Fridays 10am-12 noon

Delicious cakes & refreshments
Everyone welcome
- pop in!

CSSC
Chalford Sports & Social Club

Each Friday we have a different theme. If you have spare = share ☺

The Lunch Club

Everyone is welcome at TLC, with a special invitation to those affected by dementia. Join us for a friendly and welcoming lunch at Chalford Sports & Social Club. The first Tuesday of the month. **12 noon for lunch served at 12.30** **2 course homemade lunch, just £7** Refreshments available from the bar. Secure your booking contact Ali Brady 07595 882948 or infochalfordssc@gmail.com

May 6th
June 3rd

CSSC



BisCAN: Eastcombe's Swift Box Project – An Update

Our first wave of Swifts should be with us early in May, returning from overwintering in Africa, a journey of around 4,000 miles. These early birds are the established pairs that use the same nest sites each year, plus those that paired and found a nest site last summer and this year will be nesting for the first time. We hope that birds which exhibited interest in the new nest boxes at the Baptist Chapel in 2024 will

establish residency as breeding pairs this year. We will monitor their activity with great anticipation!

The UK Swift population has declined by over 60% since 1995, partly due to the loss of the nesting sites; this is why nest boxes may help. But probably the main reason is the drastic fall in the number of insects, Swifts' food, due to chemical insecticides, herbicides and fertilisers in agriculture, public spaces and gardens. The best thing we can do, in addition to putting up boxes, is to avoid use of pesticides and choose organic food as much as possible.

The approximate location of the Eastcombe nest boxes can be found on the fascinating RSPB sponsored app 'SwiftMapper'; known occupied nests from previous years are shown, together with records of 'screaming parties'. It would be great to add some more data for this year - if you have any relevant sightings, please contact tonyperry770@yahoo.co.uk or bisleyeastcombeoakridgecan@gmail.com

Thanks to those who generously donated to our nest box initiative, including Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council, Gloucestershire Naturalists Society and the Build Back Better Fund.

BISCAN: bisleyeastcombeoakridgecan@gmail.com



Events in June...

SAVE THE DATE **ChalCAN Butterfly & Bee Walk, Blackness Bank GWT Reserve, Saturday 21st June, 10.30am.** Free, but booking essential, click [HERE](#)

Eastcombe Village Group Meeting: Monday 23 June, 7.30pm, Eastcombe Village Hall Annex

VILLAGE HISTORIES... VE DAY on the Hilltop...

As the 80th anniversary of VE Day approaches, how the hilltop marked the arrival of peace after more than 5 years of war...

Victory in Europe was declared officially on 8th May 1945. The night before, the log book entry of Bussage School recorded the historic moment: *'Complete defeat of Germany announced on 9 o'clock news by BBC. Tomorrow, Tuesday and Wednesday to be public holidays.'*

Margaret Mills, of Chalford, recalled: *'We were all got out of bed and...marched down the street blowing these little blower things. To be honest, we weren't that impressed and didn't want to be dragged out of bed!'*

On 8th May, the headmistress of Bussage School noted: *'I came into school at 9am to send a collection of food to the starving Dutch. Then I closed the school by hanging a 24 foot Union Jack across the whole front.'*

There was music and dancing in Stroud, while, on the hilltop, bonfires were lit, including on the recreation ground at Oakridge, along with fireworks supplied by the MP for Stroud, Robert Perkins, who lived in Waterlane. A huge bonfire was also lit at Bisley, where there was a special children's service and a VE dance to the music of the Eastcombe Forces Fund Dance Band, organised by the WI.

Once the children returned to school, more thanksgiving services were held, the Eastcombe School log book entry reading: *'The VE day school celebration took place this morning, conducted by the head teacher Miss W Smith attended by her assistant teacher, Miss E Rogers. The Chairman of the Managers gave a VE address suitable to the occasion, supported by managers and the official correspondent.'*

Ascension Day in May 1945 fell just after VE Day, and the well dressing at Bisley followed a tradition begun in 1919, with the wells decorated with a 'V' in red, white and blue flowers. Special services were held, attended by members of the Home Guard and Civil Defence, in uniform, while Eastcombe villagers gathered on the green for a united thanksgiving service, led by the Baptist and Anglican clergy of Bisley and Eastcombe.

VJ Day, 3 months later in August 1945, saw 2 more days of celebration. Eastcombe held a fancy dress parade and a concert *'attended by practically the whole village'*, along with a children's talent contest *'which caused great amusement'*. The Eastcombe Forces Fund Dance Band – *'one of the finest combinations in the district'* – again provided the music for dancing, with the event regarded proudly as *'among the finest village functions arranged'*.

With thanks to Chalford Parish Local History Group



In 1995, Eastcombe marked the 50th anniversary of VE Day



Bisley wells in 1919

NATIONAL FESTIVAL CIRCUS
TRADITIONAL FAMILY FUN

Sunday 11th May
Bussage Primary School Field
Performances at 1pm, 2.30pm, 4pm
Tickets available online
Child £7 and Adult £8

 

Bussage Primary School PTA
Registered Charity no: 1123266

You are invited to join
the Eastcombe

VE Day
Commemoration

at
Eastcombe Village Green
on
Thursday 8th May
at
8.30pm

We will mark 80 years since the
end of World War II,
remember all those affected by
war,
and light candles for peace
throughout the world.

 **CHALFORD MARKET**
CRAFTY & DELICIOUS @ CHALFORD
10am-1pm

Sunday 4th May
Sunday 1st June

WHAT'S ON in MAY?

4th: Celebrating the life of Ann Cooper, 2-5pm, Eastcombe/Chalford Market, CSSC, 10-1pm
4th/5th: NGS Open Gardens, Eastcombe & Bussage, 1pm-5.30pm
4th-10th: Hedgehog Awareness Week
6th: CSSC Lunch Club (see Page 7)/Hilltop Gardening Club talk (see Page 4)
7th: Bisley-with-Lypiatt PC meeting, Bisley Village Hall, 7.30pm
8th: VE Day commemorations (various)/Chalford Parish Meeting, 6.30pm, CSSC
11th: National Festival Circus, Bussage School Field/Hilltop Gardening Club Sale (see Page 4)
14th: Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Meeting, Bisley Village Hall, 7.30pm
17th/18th: Eastcombe Gnome Hunt, 1-4pm
17 MAY: DEADLINE for JUNE NEWSLETTER
20th: Eastcombe WI Meeting, 7.15pm, Eastcombe Village Hall/ChalCAN Discussion Evening (see Page 2)
24th: Hilltop Film Club, Eastcombe Village Hall, 7.30pm/ChalCAN Spring Bird Walk (see Page 2)
25th: Chalford Car Boot Sale, 9am-12pm, CSSC

NAME THAT VIEW!



Now expanded to the wider local area...

April's photo showed the tree-lined track in the Copsegrove fields, near Bisley.

May's photo is again taken somewhere in the local area.

Can you identify its location?

The answer will be revealed in the June issue.