

May 2026

60p

FREE by email (details below)

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on **FACEBOOK**

The Hilltop Newsletter



Eastcombe & Bussage

NGS OPEN GARDENS

Sun 3rd May & Mon 4th May Time: 1:00 - 5:30
Entry £10.00 per adult - children free
Tickets and maps from Eastcombe Village Hall
Redwood, Bussage GL68AZ, Hawkley Cottage, Bismore
Homemade refreshments at Eastcombe Village Hall

A NEW THOMAS KEBLE SCHOOL

As the Thomas Keble School re-build nears completion, we talk to headteacher Mr Steven Shaw about the difference it is already making to pupils and the community.



The project has given our community and the five valleys an incredible new building for its young people, a complex, ambitious and high quality school which has risen before our eyes. It will serve current and future generations of students - and the wider community. The new school is now fully occupied, with final landscaping completing in June.



Building a new school involves many different players, from central government to contractors, and Mr Shaw credits everyone with working together to manage the transition with no interruption to teaching and learning.

Before the old school was demolished, former staff and pupils were invited to visit and share their memories. They came from all over the world, showing how fondly the school is remembered. A timeline will be displayed in the new school, its heritage proudly on display.

The school has high sustainability credentials: better heating, ventilation and insulation, and no gas used. Pupils love the space; they say that the care and support that the school is known for remains, but the facilities are so much better. The corridors are wider and it is easier and calmer to move around. Mr Shaw notes how students are taking pride in the new building and respecting it.

With the special needs agenda in the news, the new Thomas Keble is well set up to meet pupil needs: an inclusive and supportive place for all. It is over-subscribed, with its facilities in great demand by families, businesses and the community. To book the space, please visit the school [website](#).

Mr Shaw said, 'I would like to thank governors, parents, students, staff and the wider community for their part in creating our new school and for the patience shown by everyone affected by the disruption.'

Sophie Carabine

NEWSLETTER CHANGE!

As the newsletter enters its 6th year(!), it is expanding to cover more of the hilltop.



Since the loss of *The Herald*, only Bisley, Oakridge & Chalford Valley respectively have their own village newsletters. So, from May 2026, *The Hilltop Newsletter* will officially cover Eastcombe, Bussage, Brownshill, Chalford Hill & France Lynch (and beyond, subject to space!).



The newsletter already regularly includes contributions from across the hilltop, but more are very welcome. So, if you run an event, group or business, get in touch!

Contact details may change, but for now, please continue to send all contributions to eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com.

Articles should be 300 words or less, and received before the 17th of the month. Sending early is advised to make ensure that there is space for your contribution.

Thank you for your support!

CSSC and *Perasops* present

ARIAS IN THE AFTERNOON

Sunday 31 May 2026
Tickets: £10
3-5pm

To receive a FREE digital copy of the newsletter every month, please contact eastcombebandnews@gmail.com. Printed copies, 60p each, are available from Eastcombe Stores & Post Office, Frith Community Café & Chalford Sports & Social Club. Please send items for the June newsletter to eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com by **NOON on 17th May**.

BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS: EASTCOMBE WARD

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

Lack of mobile signal: we are still awaiting Atlas Towers confirmation of the signal coverage to Eastcombe. Our questionnaire together with the background for a mobile mast is ready, awaiting the data from Atlas. We will issue the questionnaire as soon as we can.

There have been a few instances of **anti-social behaviour** in and around the smaller football field. We have removed many overhanging trees and cleared shrubbery and investigated ways to overcome the nuisance caused by a small number of young people. We will continue to monitor this concern.

Condition of road network: This is now clearly a national concern. Our local roads have had potholes filled but on researching the efficacy of these repairs from a national perspective, they just do not last. There is an alternative medium being utilised which on the face of it, in several councils around the UK appear to work. We will investigate further to recommend to Highways and GCC a response to this alternative.

There have been an increased number of concerns raised about the speed of vehicles in and around the village. We anticipate a formal reduction next year as part of the GCC initiative to reduce the speed limit to 20mph – but it still requires drivers to be fully aware of their speed and road conditions and drive accordingly - PLEASE! There is significant wear on Eastcombe green caused by vehicles on the edges and across corners. We have suggested a solution to Highways and are undertaking some solutions ourselves.

PC meetings take place 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of each month at Bisley Village Hall. **Public representations are usually heard within the first half hour of the meetings and you do not have to stay for the whole meeting.** All are welcome.

Colin Clifton, Chair, Eastcombe Ward: colin.clifton@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

The future of the hall is looking extremely bright. The newly installed wi-fi provides mobile phone signal in and around the hall and also allows hall users with card readers to accept card payment. Gerry has progressed to allow hall users to install and use apps - Gerry can advise. Alongside the very popular Hilltop Film Club, we are investigating adopting National Theatre Live. One key focus will be offering educational programmes to our local school through the Eastcombe Village Group, who intend to utilise any profit to support suitable community projects.

Users of the hall will notice the new double doors into the main hall, a new notice board in the lobby and relocated coat hangers. Thanks go to Christine for the fund raising and Gerry for the selection and installation of the doors and overseeing the other revisions. We are still working to install a new notice board in the car park along with other subtle improvements.

For anyone unsure what is available at the hall, Teresa issues a regular weekly/monthly events schedule, now on the notice board. We have new users, and if you have fancy dancing, I understand a beginner's class is now being held on a Friday.

We are seeking an individual to take on the roles of hall support and Secretary (we hold 3 formal meetings a year). If this opportunity inspires you, please contact Colin Clifton: 07958 761507.

Colin Clifton - Chair Eastcombe Village Hall

EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

See right just some of the spring and Easter crafts made at wrap-around care club last term! We offer a variety of activities including themed crafts, cooking, outside fun, traditional play-ground games, board games, colouring, film nights and much more. Children love coming to both the breakfast and wrap-around care club. Please book through the school office.



A huge thank you to our families for supporting our Sponsored Read. Your encouragement at home made this event a fantastic success. Not only did we raise an incredible £796, valuable funds for the school, but we have also promoted a love of reading in our children, the main aim of the event. As a school, we read an amazing 5,875 minutes – a brilliant achievement! Thank you – and well done to all of our wonderful readers!

Keeping children safe online: the NSPCC have published useful information and resources to help us understand online safety and talk about it with children and young people. Follow the link above for details.

We look forward to welcoming you back after our Easter break and to a busy summer term ahead.

INTERESTED IN LOCAL HISTORY?

Join the **Eastcombe & Bismore Local History Group** on Facebook.



MORE WAYS TO PAY...



GOOD NEWS!



It is now possible to pay for your printed newsletter(s) with a card or phone etc at Eastcombe Stores & Post Office, as part of your shopping (the £2 minimum spend rule applies).

Thank you for your continued support!

RECYCLING FOR GOOD: THE END OF AN ERA...

After many years of collecting, the **Chalford Hill Primary School PTA** recycling centre is now closed. A huge thankyou to all who brought recycling in, helped to sort it and did the admin behind the scenes over the last 15 years. Thousands of pounds were raised for two amazing village facilities & for **Stroud Valleys Project**, with tonnes of plastic saved from being incinerated & the message instilled in a generation of children that rubbish is a vital ingredient for making new things, not just a problem to be burnt. Thank you in particular to Tricia Watson for all her time and effort in making this happen!

ALL IS NOT LOST! Pringles tubes & lids, biscuit wrappers, Ferrero Rocher packaging, bread bags and makeup/hand cream tubes (ONLY) can still be taken to Chalford Parish Centre, in Gerald's Way, Bussage. **These are now the only items through which money can be raised.**

Chalford Parish Office is also now a collection point for **blister packs** (from tablets etc).

KERBSIDE RECYCLING UPDATE:



All households are now eligible to subscribe to the fortnightly **Garden Waste Collection service** (February-November), even residents in narrow lanes, who will be issued with bags. To subscribe, visit www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/bins-rubbish-and-recycling/garden-waste-collection-service/

Unwanted **plastic plant pots** (not black) and toothpaste tubes can now be put out in your green bag/bin, along with bottles, tins and plastic.

Recycle clothing and shoes in the clothing bank in the car park at the Lamb Inn, Eastcombe.



all things seem possible in *May!*



Don't bin your used vape.

Recycle it instead.

A graphic showing a recycling bin with a checkmark icon and a cigarette, next to a recycling bin with a 'no bin' symbol.

DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

More Kerbside Recycling: You can now recycle **toothpaste tubes** and **non-black plastic plant pots** in your recycling bins or bags.

This means you can now recycle from home: plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, toothpaste tubes, non-black plastic plant pots, glass bottles and jars, tins and milk-type cartons.

You can not yet recycle at kerbside: flexible plastic, including cling film (many supermarkets accept these), polystyrene or bubble wrap, blister packs, black plant pots and polystyrene. Soft plastics will be collected from next spring, or sooner if the logistics can be sorted out.

Stroud Lido: The council is focussed on whether and how the pool can open this season, alongside action to maintain it for future seasons. Work is underway to identify exactly what's needed to address the most pressing safety concerns, and a new condition survey has been carried out. By the time you read this, the answer may be known and a decision made. It's been valuable to have local experts - including those in the Save Stroud Lido campaign group - in the process. The council is mindful of the need for a secure long-term future for the pool, which may involve a transition to community ownership, as with many outdoor pools around the country.

Voter Registration for Young People: Over the coming weeks, the council's elections team will visit secondary schools across the district and Stroud College to run voter registration stands, talk to students about why voting matters, and help young people register to vote from age 16. Young people can register to vote from age 16, even though voting itself starts at 18. Registering early means they will not miss out on taking part in their first election after they have turned 18. Young people can find useful resources from the Electoral Commission at <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/learning>

Please contact me about any council-related issues:
Martin Brown 01452 770878 cllr.martin.brown@stroud.gov.uk

EXHIBITION CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF STROUD GENERAL HOSPITAL



MUSEUM IN THE PARK STROUD

SATURDAY 23RD MAY-SUNDAY 31ST MAY

OPEN 10AM -4.30PM
(11AM TO 4.30PM SAT/SUN/BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY)

EXHIBITION CURATED BY STROUD HOSPITALS
LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

BISLEY MARKET

10TH MAY
10.30am to 1.30pm

22 stalls - 7 *New local businesses
Refreshments & Breakfast rolls

Craft Stalls - Gifts - Preserves - cakes - savouries
Plants - Raffle & Stroud Cat Protection stall
Chance to win a voucher to spend at the market



FREE ENTRY

DOGS ON LEAD WELCOME - PET STALL
BISLEY VILLAGE HALL GL6 7AX
<https://www.facebook.com/BisleyMarket>

theW
INSPIRING WOMEN

Eastcombe WI Meeting
Tuesday 19 May 2026
From 7.15pm—9.00pm
Eastcombe Village Hall

OPALS!



Speaker: Helen Plumb
Visitors always welcome

For further information contact
Jean Buxton 07817 441363 email jeanabuxton@hotmail.co.uk
or
Jackie Harris 07840 244803 email jaquieboyd@hotmail.com

Sunday 10th May
St Mary of the Angels, Brownshill
3pm

PHILLIPPA LAY, SOPRANO

An afternoon of beautiful opera arias, sacred works, film favourites, and classical crossover songs.

Suggested donation:
£10 on the door,
or whatever you can afford

SAVE THE DATE

CHALFORD HILL SUMMER FAYRE

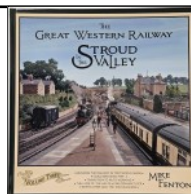
Saturday 6th June | 11am - 3pm
Chalford Hill Primary School

BBQ & BAR
BOUNCY CASTLE · RAFFLE
CAKE & TEA TENT · LIVE MUSIC
STALLS · FACE PAINTING · TOMBOLA
PLANTS · CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

FREE ENTRY

LOCAL RAILWAY TALK & BOOK LAUNCH

Mike Fenton will launch volume 3 of his magisterial history of the Great Western Railway in the Stroud Valley, at Christ Church, Chalford, on 8th May, at 7.30pm.



Mike will give an illustrated talk, and copies of the book will be available at a discounted price of £40 (it will cost £45 in the shops).

Some of you may have seen the two previous volumes, which are lavishly illustrated (lots of old photos of Chalford!) and full of fascinating detail about every aspect of the railway line, its construction, everyday running and its staff. The third volume covers the period 1914-1947, including both world wars, and the fire at Chalford engine shed in 1916.

Tea, coffee and cake will be available.

More information about the book can be found here: Lightmoor Press Books - The Great Western Railway in the Stroud Valley Volume 3

Camilla Boon

KEEP IT LOCAL!

ROOFING DIRECT
HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Specialists In All Aspects Of Roofing & Flat Roofing

- New Roof / Roof Repair
- New Flat Roof / Flat Roof Repair
- UPVC Fascia, Soffits, Guttering
- Uni Dry Verge Cappings & Uni Dry Ridge Systems
- Re-pointing Ridge Tiles & Chimneys
- Roof Cleaning / De Mossing
- Bird Stoppers • Eve Support Trays



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roofingdirect97@gmail.com

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CHALFORD MARKET

CSSC
Chalford Sports & Social Club

CRAFTY & DELICIOUS @ CHALFORD

Sunday 3rd May

Indoor market - refreshments in lounge bar
Raffle in aid of CSSC

10am-1pm

I'm Letting it
Grow
for Nature

NO MOW MAY
Plantlife

Join the #NoMowMay movement

Eastcombe Baptist Chapel

A service is held at 10.30am on Sundays at the chapel in Dr Crouch's Road, Eastcombe.

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE GROUP (EVG)

Wine Walk: The Wine Walk will take place on Sunday 26 July, 4pm to 8pm, offering a variety of wines from 5 different wine regions. Tickets will be £20 each and details of how you can purchase tickets will be notified in the coming weeks. Tickets will be on sale in June.

Photographic Competition: Please contact Colin Clifton for an entry form. We are hoping for interesting images of the wonderful and attractive aspects our village.

Other events: Plans for other events in 2026 will be advised through the EVG mailing list. To join this list, please contact Chris Sissons—contact details below.

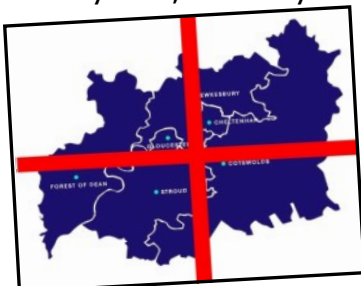
Peter Scott: peterhscott@btinternet.com

To join the EVG mailing list, contact csissons52@gmail.com

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

TIME MAKES FOOLS OF US ALL...

For anyone wondering what St George *would* do about the proposed government reorganisation, sorry to say that his suggestion of how to divide the county was, as many of you guessed, an April fool...



KEEP IT LOCAL!



TECH SUPPORT...
ODD JOBS...
GARDEN CARE...
AND MORE!



My name is James & I am an 18 year old looking to earn money before starting university.

I am reliable & have experience across a range of different jobs, including those listed above. References available.

If you have any jobs that need doing, please get in touch: jamescalverley0@gmail.com

Would you like a free shout out for YOUR business?
Contact eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com

St Michael's & All Angels, Bussage

Services this month are:

- Sunday 10th May - Holy Communion at 9.30am
- Sunday 17th May - Morning Prayer at 9.30am
- Sunday 17th May - Cafe Church at Eastcombe Village Hall at 2.30pm (see poster)
- Sunday 24th May - Holy Communion at 9.30am

Note: Our Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM) will be held on Monday 11th May at 6pm, in St. Michael's and All Angels.

On other Sundays are services in different parts of the Benefice. For full details please visit

facebook.com/BisleyBeneficeandFriends/ or join our mailing list by contacting pewslipsbisley@hotmail.com.

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

COOKERY CORNER

Glen Beswitherick shares his recipe for

MARMITE TWIRLS

Great for parties & picnics

INGREDIENTS:

- 85g/3oz butter
- 85g/3oz grated Cheddar
- 115g/4oz plain flour
- Marmite (squeezy bottles are easier)



METHOD:

1. Rub butter, flour and cheese together to form a crumbly mixture. Bring together and knead briefly into a smooth ball.
2. Shape into a rectangular block and roll out on a floured surface to roughly 20 x 30 cm, keeping the edges neat.
3. Squeeze Marmite over the surface in a loose spiral — no need to cover it completely.
4. Roll up tightly from the long edge to form a Swiss-roll style log (about 3 cm thick).
5. Wrap firmly in cling film and chill for at least 45 minutes.
6. Heat oven to 180°C.
7. Slice the chilled log into 6mm rounds.
8. Lay on a lined baking sheet, keeping the rounds circular.
9. Bake for about 10 minutes until lightly golden. Cool on a rack.

MOST BUMBLEBEE QUEENS NEST
JUST BELOW THE GROUND OR
UNDER PILES OF BRUSH IN WINTER



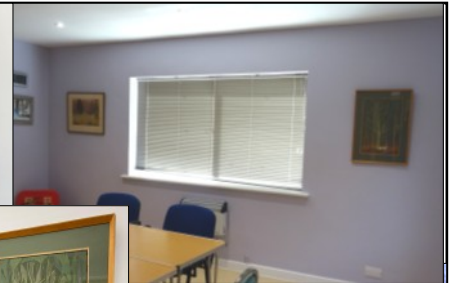
LEAVE THE LEAVES. BAN THE LEAF BLOWER.
IN THE SPRING, AVOID RAKING, TILLING AND
MOWING UNTIL THE QUEENS EMERGE FROM THEIR
WINTER NESTS IN MAY.

A GIFT OF EASTCOMBE ART...

You may have noticed some new additions to the annexe at Eastcombe Village Hall. The two larger paintings now hanging there were donated recently by Malcolm Lambert, who lived with his wife Joyce in The Street for many years.



Malcolm & Joyce Lambert



They were friendly with Christina Granville Sharpe, who lived at the White House in The Street and painted from a studio there with wonderful views over the Toadsmoor Valley. When Christina died her daughter sold a certain number of her paintings from an exhibition in her home. These two were of particular interest to Malcolm and Joyce as their summerhouse enjoyed a similar view over the valley and they loved cats.



Christina Granville Sharpe

Sadly, Joyce died in 2019 and today, Malcolm, now 96, lives in a care home in Worthing. He keeps in close touch with people and happenings in Eastcombe and was keen that these two paintings should return to the village where he and Joyce had lived so happily, so that others are able to appreciate them in the same way.

Pam Perry

MAY MUSIC (MAYBE)



Weather permitting, the Hilltop Village Band will play on Eastcombe green on Monday May 4th, 11-12, to celebrate May.



EASTCOMBE & BISMORE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



It was great to see so many people at the Eastcombe & Bismore Local History Group *People & Places—Revisited* afternoon on April 11th.

Families reconnected, interesting stories were told and useful new links made over refreshments.

Thank you for coming!

PLEASE don't trim
(unless essential)

Untrimmed verges create 'green corridors,' encouraging wildlife & promoting biodiversity.

Let the flowers bloom-& seed!

Supported by Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council Verges Policy

THANK YOU!

Supported by BisCAN (Bisley, Eastcombe & Oxbridge Climate Action Network)



WHO'S WHO on the HILLTOP? We asked Andrew Morris-Wyatt, who has recently been elected Chair of Chalford Parish Council...



I have been a parish councillor since 2021 and previously Chaired Finance & Management and Plans Assessment Committees. Chalford Parish Council is a strong and committed team who care deeply about our area.

I grew up in Brimscombe and the Bourne and attended Brimscombe Primary School, where I am now a governor, and Marling School. My family roots trace back several centuries in the Chalford Valley.

My career, which started at the Nat West in Cirencester, was in banking and wealth management until 2013 and my final role was as a Managing Director of a private bank. Since then I have been a self-employed consultant, now part-time, advising wealthy families and as a trustee including of a charitable foundation which primarily supports education and social mobility.

Having spent many years living and working in London my family and I, along with our dogs, returned to live in Chalford in 2013.

In my spare time I try to keep fit, including running in our glorious countryside, and taking advantage of the many individual social and leisure opportunities that make Stroud so special.

We live in a beautiful and friendly area with tremendous character and spirit and I am so pleased to be part of the community.

HILLTOP GARDENING CLUB www.hilltopgardeningclub.org.uk



The Hilltop Gardening Club meeting on 7th April welcomed Harriet Rycroft to talk about 'A Friendly Greeting - Pots by Your Door'.

What do the pots by your door say about you? The 700 + containers commanding attention at Harriet Rycroft's front door are used to welcome, guide, funnel, repel, attract and protect. A former gardener at Whichford Pottery, Harriet plants colossal pots on a daunting scale with a right pot in the right place mantra. Harriet gently guided listeners towards repeated colour-schemes, judicious use of rare-plants, grouping, texture, scent and seasonal planting. Harriet was generous towards others insisting 'your pots are your pots'. Do what you like with them (even if her own have been likened to works of art). She often uses playful props in her pots: children's toys, fairy-lights, found-objects, granting amnesty to the garden gnome. Her excellent images were testament to considerable horticultural skills and wide-knowledge of plants from exotics to ferns, sedums, bulbs, trees, bedding plants, the over-looked and very familiar all potted up with panache. Harriet's 'more is more' philosophy is soundly rooted in understanding the needs of potted plants which take priority over domestic demands.

The evening culminated in a performance-piece masquerading as practical instructions for planting up a pot and sourcing botanical companions to ensure the plants' well-being.

Entertainment and education together granted members and visitors permission (if needed) to follow their own tastes and create beautiful, welcoming spaces. Finally, many questions were answered with aplomb and gardening wisdom.

Next meeting: 5th May, Eastcombe Village Hall 7-15-9pm. Speaker: Kevin Alviti: 'Our Homestead & How We Got Here'.

Pam Meecham

GARDEN JOBS FOR MAY

- Prune spring flowering shrubs such as Forsythia, Flowering Blackcurrant, Japanese Quince and Viburnum tinus. **Check there are no nesting birds inside before you start!**
- There's still time to apply a mulch around your plants if the ground is still moist – this will save on watering when the weather gets hot.
- Cut back early flowering clematis such as *Montana* to reduce size and remove old/diseased wood.
- Plant out dahlias and summer bedding.
- Plant out veg plants such as beans, squash, pumpkins and courgettes - or sow direct into the ground.
- Keep an eye out for slugs and protect vulnerable seedlings and new shoots.
- Visit the Eastcombe and Bussage open gardens on 3rd & 4th May for lots of inspiration!



The Eastcombe Gardener

HILLTOP FILM CLUB HAMNET Saturday 16th May 7.30pm at Eastcombe Village Hall

The film chronicles the family life of William Shakespeare and his wife Anne Hathaway as they come to terms with the death of their 11 year-old son, Hamnet.



GUESTS: £5
MEMBERS: COMPLIMENTARY
ICES: £3

ALL WELCOME!

HELP the HEDGEHOGS!
(and other wildlife, too)

Want to **#GoWildForHedgehogs**?

Step 1: Choose your patch.

Step 2: Leave it to grow wild & undisturbed.

It's that simple! This spring, we're going WILD & welcoming nature into our gardens.

Go wild today!

For more information, visit

www.hedgehogstreet.org/go-wild-for-hedgehogs/

Find more hedgehog-friendly gardening tips at

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



Hedgehog AWARENESS WEEK
03-09 May 2026

BHPs
THE HEDGEHOG CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Donate to the 2026 #HEDGEHOGWEEK appeal:
justgiving.com/campaign/HAW26

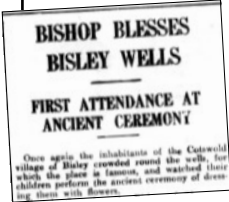
The British Hedgehog Preservation Society, Hedgering House, Chiddingfold, Surrey GU20 3PL
Tel: 01504 88800 | Email: info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk | www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk
@thehedgehogconservation @hedgehogconservation @britishhedgehogpreservation

VILLAGE HISTORIES: ASCENSION DAY!

The annual well dressing ceremony at Bisley is well-known. But did you know that it once also involved Eastcombers? Until 1965, Eastcombe was part of the parish of Bisley, with St Augustine a daughter 'chapel of ease' to the main church at Bisley.



The ceremony of blessing water can be traced back to pagan times. The seven water chutes below All Saints Church were restored in 1863 under the first Thomas Keble, vicar of Bisley, with the stone façade designed by Rev W.H Lowder (who also designed St Augustine's Church, Eastcombe) and built by Wall and Hook of Eastcombe at a cost of £95. This was paid through public subscription and the formal opening took place on Ascension Day 1863, along with a celebration of the recent marriage of the then Prince of Wales. This is why the Prince's plume and "A.E.A." is carved into the stone facade.



Each May, the wells in Bisley are re-blessed, with children playing the main roles. The Gloucester Citizen reported how, at the 1937 ceremony, the Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. A. C. Headlam, was present, processing with the children of the village, and the clergy and choir, to the church. Here, a short service was conducted by the vicar, the Rev. G. A. Piper, with other clergy present including the Rev. S. G. Johnson, Minister of Eastcombe Baptist Chapel. After the service, the Brimscombe and Thrupp British Legion Band led the procession to the wells where a large crowd watched the children adorn the stonework with painstakingly created garlands, including floral letters and numbers spelling "A.D. 1937". The Bishop blessed the water and the ceremony concluded with the National Anthem.

In 1963, the centenary of the restoration of the wells, the Gloucester Citizen reported how a new generation of Bisley schoolchildren placed flowers in thanks for the gift of water. The wells were blessed by the Vicar of Bisley, Rev AB Allen, the children reciting a litany together before they and the children of 'the daughter village of Eastcombe' were entertained to tea.

Phyllis Gaston's memoir, *Oil, Lamp and Candle* about Eastcombe in the 1930s and 40s, recalls how 'On Ascension Day those of us who were church Sunday School were given the afternoon off school,' with Will Andrews of Sheephouse Farm and his employee, Mr Freebury, ferrying the children to Bisley on two decorated carts. After the ceremony came the 'bun fight', then sports at the recreation ground, after which Mr Andrews and Mr Freebury would take them home.



In 1999, the tradition of Eastcombe children joining the celebration was revived, with children from Eastcombe Primary School walking over to Bisley to join in the festivities (right).



For more local history, visit www.eastcombearchive.org.uk or join the [Eastcombe & Bismore Local History Group](#) on Facebook.

NEW Dance Class

Absolute beginners
Latin & Ballroom
12 week course

Commencing
Friday
10th April
6.30 - 7.30 pm

Eastcombe
Village
Hall GL6 7DS

(on the door) ONLY £13.00 per couple, per class.
Steve Holmes School of Dance 07881 907 602

HILLTOP CAFE CHURCH

Christian worship for those of
all faiths and none.

Sunday 17th May
2.30pm
EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

BROUGHT TO YOU FROM
THE PARISH OF BUSSAGE & EASTCOMBE

SLOW

Hedgehogs

Please Drive Carefully
Thank You

WHAT'S ON in MAY?

3 & 4 May: Eastcombe & Bussage NGS Open Gardens, 1-5.30pm
3-9 May: Hedgehog Awareness Week
4 May: Hilltop Band, Eastcombe Green, 11-12
5 May: Hilltop Gardening Club meeting, Eastcombe Village Hall, 7.30pm
8 May: GWR book launch, Christ Church, Chalford, 7.30pm
10 May: Music at St Mary of the Angels, Brownshill, 3pm/Bisley Market, Bisley WI Village Hall, 10am-1pm
16 May: Hilltop Film Club, Eastcombe Village Hall, 7.30pm
17 May: Hilltop Café Church, Eastcombe Village Hall, 2.30pm
17th MAY: NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
19 May: Eastcombe WI Meeting, 7.15pm, Eastcombe Village Hall
23-31 May: 150 years of Stroud Hospitals, Museum in the Park (see poster on page 3)
31 May: *Arias in the Afternoon*, Chalford Sports & Social Club, 3-5pm

NAME THAT VIEW!

How well do YOU know our area?

April's photo was of Eastcombe Baptist Chapel, in Dr Crouch's Road.

Can you identify the location of May's photo?

The answer will be revealed in the June issue.