

Stoke Fleming Voice

December 2025 and January 2026



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Editorial

I'm delighted to introduce our winter issue of the *Voice*, packed with news, features, and plenty of festive goings-on, in and around the village over the next two months.

As I write, November is quietly settling in — and we approach that curious moment when the world seems to be both winding down and gearing up at once. How is it that December and January can be so close, yet feel so different? For me, this time of year reminds us how important it is to pause and reflect on the months gone by, so we can more gently and intentionally prepare for the year ahead. It's all too easy to get swept up in the endless pursuit of *what's next* — whether that means planning your spring garden and getting bulbs into the ground before the first frosts, or spotting Easter eggs already lining the shelves on Boxing Day (madness!).

So, pick your side: will you be leaning into your own personal winter hibernation, or embracing a calendar full of festive gatherings? Both are equally special ways to spend the season, and as you read on, you'll find plenty of inspiration no matter which camp you're in.

As time slips gracefully through these wintry weeks, I'm reminded of Thomas Hardy's *The Darkling Thrush*: despite the "spectre-grey" frost and the "weakening eye of day" there is — and always will be — much to sing about. So, until we're back with you in February, on behalf of everyone here at the *Voice*, I wish you a very happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.



If you would like to contribute an article, Reader's View or Letter to the Editor, please email stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com. Your contribution can be published anonymously, but our team will need to know who you are. Publication is at our editorial discretion.

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(Cover photograph of Stoke Fleming (circa 1910) from Barry Morris' postcard collection.)

From the Rectory

Recently I found myself struggling to sleep and at 5am thought I may as well get up and get on with my day. I thought I'd go for a walk to wake myself up properly, so I headed down a path near the Rectory and it was pitch black,



literally nothing. I was even struggling to see my feet! One of the perks of rural living is that light pollution at times can be almost non-existent. This walk, in particular, was completely devoid of any light. I made my way slowly and carefully along the track, praying that I wouldn't discover a puddle. Suddenly the sky brightened ever so slightly, like a gentle glow, which struck me as odd. Then, as I came to a clearing, I could see the tiniest of tiny shards of light; it was the dawn. In that moment I made sense of a saying that I had often heard but not given much thought to: "the night is darkest before the dawn", which is attributed to the 17th Century English Historian Thomas Fuller.

This got me thinking about life; how when we find ourselves in trouble or a bad situation we like to try and resolve things before things become "too dark" but often we cannot stop it from happening. But the reality is, there will always be a dawn; there will always be light. Eventually. As we enter this Christmas season, we are reminded that the son of God entered the world in this darkness. Having displaced rumours at home of an illegitimate child, Mary and Joseph found themselves making a very long arduous journey at the worst time of a pregnancy. Then to be met with zero possibilities of gaining lodgings even though Mary was in the start of labour. For Mary and Joseph things could not get darker: would their son be born on the roadside, would Mary cope with a birthing in the street? Things were beyond bleak, it seemed like game over in some respects, then one last chance, one final push and hope coming in the form of a kind innkeeper who could see the severity of the situation and the brokenness of the young couple. He gave the little he had, which provided a safe, slightly quieter, dry space for Mary to step into the next part of God's master plan.

Suddenly the darkness was broken, a slither of light and hope followed by the most beautiful and magnificent gift, a child, and not just any child, the light of the world. At that moment things couldn't have been brighter in that stable. A brightness that has since travelled the world, been told in so many languages and spoken to so many hearts. Plus, the best bit is that Jesus is STILL the light of the world, and He is always willing to shine his love and light in all our situations no matter how bleak or dark they feel, there will always be a dawn. And my prayer this Christmas is that you will discover this for yourself, as you hear the familiar words of the nativity, that God will show Himself and His light to you.

Blessings, Revd Matt

Church website: <https://www.stokeflemingchurch.org>

St Peter's Church Services

Wishing everyone the peace and joy of Christmas.

December

Sun 7th	10.15am Prayer Time. 11am Holy Communion. 6.30pm Choral Evensong.
Sun 14th	5pm Christmas Tree Festival short carol Service.
Sun 21st	6.30pm Candlelit Carol Service.
Wed 24th	Christmas Eve 11.30pm Christmas Night Holy Communion.
Thur 25th	Christmas Day 11am Christmas Family Holy Communion.
Sun 28th	11am United Benefice Holy Communion at St Peter's.

January

Sun 4th	10.15am Prayer Time. 11am Holy Communion. 6.30pm Choral Evensong.
Sun 11th	11am Morning Worship. 4pm THE 4.
Sun 18th	11am Communion by extension.
Sun 25th	11am Morning Worship.



From the Registers

27th October, Joan Mason, funeral followed by cremation.

Little Stars

It is an exciting time of year for Little Stars, with children full of fun, and mums thinking about the Christmas Tree Festival. We have a very supportive band of mums and grandmas around us, and we are very grateful.

We will return in the New Year when the school term begins. We welcome everyone to come and join us in the church on a Monday morning 9.00-10.30am.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, from **Heather, Sue and Peter**.

Stoke Fleming Youth Club

We welcome all young people from year 5 upwards on a Tuesday evening from 5:30-7:30 during term time.

We also hire the hall out to help raise money for the club. We offer a low cost and flexible space, with all the proceeds used to keep the club running for the young people of Stoke Fleming. Please do consider using the hall if you have a group or event.

Any further questions please message our Facebook page or send us an email stokeflemingyouthclub@gmail.com.

The Stoke Fleming Advent Window Calendar

We are delighted to share the news that the Stoke Fleming Advent Window Calendar will be returning once again this year. A heartfelt thank-you goes to all those who have volunteered to create a window display — your imagination and enthusiasm are what make this much-loved tradition so special. Each window brings its own unique charm, and we're eagerly looking forward to discovering the festive scenes you have in store for our community.

From 1st December, printed maps showing the location of each participating window will be available to pick up from the Village Shop. We are inviting a voluntary donation of 50p per copy, the proceeds of which will go to St Peter's Church.

Whether you're taking an evening stroll to admire the displays or following the trail with family and friends, we hope this year's Advent Calendar brings plenty of joy and Christmas spirit to the village.

Emily Bridge

Lest we Forget

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.”

This year Peter Barker gave a beautifully delivered Remembrance Day Service at St Peter's with a poignant, memorable, and personal sermon, and on Armistice Day a short service took place at the War Memorial. (Photos: Linda Morris)



News from the Hort and Sport

A big thank you to all who came along to our coffee morning on 11th October. It was lovely to see so many enjoying a catch up over coffee and cake.

Hort and Sport have a few quiet months ahead but our thoughts are already on the ever popular plant sale on 9th May 2026, a great opportunity to buy locally grown plants and homemade cakes! More information in the next edition of the Stoke Fleming Voice.

Our annual AGM took place in November and, whilst we said a very heartfelt goodbye to our stalwart chair Barry Morris and long-standing committee member Jan Lloyd-Edwards (with over 60 years' service between them!), we welcomed two new members Karen and Alex.

This has been a particularly challenging year for us as a committee and village after the loss of our dear Shirley Ruddlesden and Mike Jordan. The show in August was a huge success and I believe we did them both proud. We look forward to a full and exciting year ahead and wish everyone a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Paula Johnston



Nature Notes

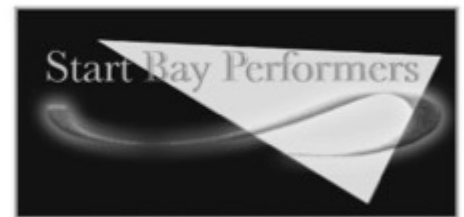
A grey wagtail came back to the Venn Stream near to Venn Wood on 25th October. He was there a couple of years ago on the farm gate off Venn Lane and I put calci worms (beetle larvae) there afterwards. A couple of moorhens came out of Mill Drive to cross the lane to Riversbridge Meadow on 15th November. I put more calci worms on the drive entrance and they ate some of them. Also on that day, I saw a heron flying from Riversbridge Pools to Blackpool at 4.30 pm. There are pipistrelles out as well at 5.15 pm near Bowden House.

There were a couple of herons at the northern end of Slapton Ley (Higher Ley) on their nest area on 13th November. A great white egret, which is more akin to the herons than the little egret, flew towards them. A firecrest tried to find food from the departing leaves in my garden on 12th November and coal-tits were there some days, eating peanuts. There are at least two hedgehogs in my garden at present eating a lot of food. There are also nests from goosander underneath the riverbanks and even buildings.

DW

Start Bay Performers

We are continuing our play readings to source our next production. We are hoping that it will be early in the New Year, once the dust has settled after Christmas. We continue to meet every Monday evening at 7.00pm at Stoke Fleming Village Hall, apart from 22nd and 29th December. Please come along if you would like to be involved.



We are currently reading "The Visitor", a play by Maureen Lee. It features the ex-secretary of a wealthy businessman who seemingly committed suicide. Laura complains that she should have inherited much more than her comfortable cottage and car if a certain Will had not disappeared. The arrival of a strange woman develops the play into a revealing ending. We will continue to review its suitability.

In collaboration with the Village Hall Trustees, we are looking to form a Film Club, showing films in the Village Hall in the New Year. So please watch this space!

All at Start Bay Performers would like to wish our supporters and everyone in the Village a very merry Christmas and a peaceful, happy and healthy New Year.

JB and MR

Stoke Fleming Primary School

It's been another busy and brilliant few weeks at Stoke Fleming Primary! Our Year 6 children attended the *Junior Life Skills* event at Dartmouth Leisure Centre — a fantastic opportunity for them to learn about staying safe in a variety of real-life situations, from road safety and fire awareness to first aid and online safety. In the afternoon, the Leisure Centre also hosted a *swimming gala*, which was great fun to watch. One thing that really struck me was that every single child in Year 6 can swim confidently — a wonderful testament to the swimming lessons they receive as part of our curriculum and the continued support from parents who ensure their children build on those skills outside of school.



Athletes

On the last day before half term, we had a visit from Oli Adams, a Pro Surfer; the children took part in a fun fitness circuit with him. The children were asked to get sponsorship for participating in the fitness circuit, and any funds raised will help purchase new sports equipment. This will also support Great Athletes in inspiring the next generation.

National Education Nature Parks (NENP)

At Stoke Fleming, we are committed to providing our children with a rich variety of opportunities and experiences. Last half term Discovery Class became *Citizen Scientists* for the afternoon as part of the National Education Nature Parks (NENP) project, led by the Natural History Museum in London. The children explored our school grounds to identify the different habitats on site and uploaded their findings to the NENP platform, contributing to national data about how school sites can support spaces for nature.

Christopher Harrison, Headteacher

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News from the Community Kitchen

We had the choice of three delicious soups on Friday 14th November – Chicken and Vegetable, Parmesan and Parsnip and Butternut Squash with Apple. The choice was difficult, but we managed! It was our “Soup as Main Meal” lunch and followed by the usual array of desserts. Compliments were flying and it was lovely seeing some new faces and old friends.



Our next lunch will be a Christmas one on Friday 5th December in Trattoria Spaggia at the invitation of Anita, at 12.30pm. We are deserting the Village Hall for this one as cooking in a commercial oven is very much simpler for the chefs (and sous-chefs).

We really do need to know of your dietary requirements in advance as we are not magicians. Houseonthehill661@gmail.com will find me and we will do what we can to produce an alternative option. There will be a vegetarian option too but, please, we do need to know how

many we are catering for. Bring your own tippie and encourage your friends to come. Tickets are at the remarkable price of £15 and went on sale in the Village Shop on 24th November. And you never know, Father Christmas may have left some gifts in the Trattoria.

Our following lunch will be on Friday 23rd January at 12.30 in the Village Hall. Tickets will be on sale on Tuesday 6th January from the Village Shop.

We have had a great year of lunches, mostly sold-out in advance and we must have fed over 300 people. Our chefs are generous with their time and ingredients which is how we have kept the ticket price to under £15 per lunch. The idea is simple – come along to have a hot meal, a welcome break and to meet others from the village. Meals are for sharing and you don't even have to wash up.

Happy Christmas to all our customers and we look forward to seeing you all again in 2026.

Mary Newman

Dartmouth Caring Memory Café

We'd love you to meet some of our team! Introducing Lucy, Shannon, and Thomas – our fantastic colleagues who jointly lead and facilitate all the activities at our Memory Café (every Tuesday, 10.30 to 12.00). They provide a friendly and understanding space for those with memory problems, with their loved ones, to connect, socialize, and share experiences.



Shannon leads our Carers' Group, a valuable source of support for carers and this takes place once a month alongside the morning's usual activities. We are supported by a wonderful, dedicated team of volunteers every week.

We are delighted to say we can welcome more people to Memory Café at the Health Centre, so please do get in touch with the team to find out more information: Email enquiries@dartmouthcaring.co.uk, tel: 01803 835384.

Breast Cancer Support Group – Dartmouth Caring

Our lovely group met in November, and we welcomed Clare from Breast Cancer Now, who chatted about their services and what help and support they provide as a charity.



In December we look forward to welcoming Natalie, a local yoga teacher who is coming to show us some easy yoga moves to help with the after-effects of surgery and treatment.

We always enjoy a chat over a good cuppa and a special thanks goes to Jill Wallis, who makes sure our cups are always filled! And an equally fab shout out to Rachel Evans for making our scrummy cakes every month!

We will continue in January with an equally warm and informative session and would love to welcome anyone who has been affected by breast cancer to our friendly group. No matter how long ago or recent your diagnosis has been, we all share our experience and support with each other.

Our group is held on the first Wednesday of each month, 5.30pm to 7pm at Dartmouth Caring, Health & Wellbeing Centre, Dartmouth. For any questions, please call Dartmouth Caring on 01803 835384 or Dawn Whiteley on 07710 622896 or email enquiries@dartmouthcaring.co.uk.

Stoke Fleming 100 Club

November's winner, in a draw taking place at an Inner Wheel meeting, was Peter Cole with lucky number 14. Congratulations!

December's draw will be the last draw supporting the Village Hall and will take place at the Community Kitchen Christmas Lunch.

The *Voice* takes on the Stoke Fleming 100 Club

The *Voice* is excited to take on the Stoke Fleming 100 Club. Thanks to Simon Dowden for his careful stewardship over the last year.

Cash prize draws will continue to take place on a monthly basis, with two extra prizes being drawn every quarter (in March, June and September) with a jackpot draw in December. 50% of the value of the memberships is returned as prizes, the remainder going to the continuation of *Stoke Fleming Voice*.

We hope you will join and have fun while supporting the *Voice*. You may have as many memberships as you like and the cost per membership per year is £15.

Join by emailing sfvh100club@gmail.com with your full name and email address, stating that you are over 16 years of age. Then transfer your payment of £15 for each membership to this bank account:


Account name: **Stoke Fleming Voice**

Account number: **19250960**

Sort code: **30-54-66** (Lloyds Bank)

Reference: **100Club & your name** (abbreviated if required)

Please ensure that your payment reaches the *Voice*'s bank account before 5 January 2026 to be included in the first draw.

Thank you and good luck! 

Sandra Ingham

New Promoter of 100 Club and Co-Editor of the *Voice*

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Join by emailing sfvh100club@gmail.com with your full name and email address, stating that you are over 16 years of age and the number of memberships you would like. Then transfer your payment of £15 for each membership to this bank account:

Account name: **Stoke Fleming Voice**
Account number: **19250960**
Sort code: **30-54-66** (Lloyds Bank)
Reference: **100Club & your name**
(abbreviated if required)

Please ensure that your payment reaches our bank account before
5 January 2026 to be included in the first draw.

Thank you and good luck!



Promoter: Sandra Ingham, Stoke Fleming Voice

Beneficiary: Stoke Fleming Voice

Prize Fund: 50% of total proceeds will be returned as prize money

Age restriction: Members must be 16 years or older

Registration: This lottery is registered with South Hams District Council under the Gambling Act 2005

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The Green Dragon

We have a busy December coming up and looking forward to welcoming you all with warm mulled wine and cider, log fires and many festive events.

Here's what's on....

Tuesday 9th Dec - Greedy Table "Festive Feasting" 6-8pm.

Thursday 11th Dec - Jay & Jay's Marvellous Music Quiz from 8.30pm. This is historically a sell-out event so book your table quick!

Saturday 13th Dec - Christmas Market from 2pm.

Christmas Day - Join us for drinks 12-2pm.

New Years Eve Party - from 9pm till late, join us for our "H" House Party with live music from Lost Natives followed by DJ Takeaway Dave seeing us into the New Year. Fancy dress is as always encouraged. This year's theme is "H" so we are looking forward to seeing Harry Potter, horses, Heidi and the odd hippo maybe? Tickets are £10 and are on sale now.

Other important information, our Christmas Opening hours are as follows:

Christmas Eve - 12-2.30 5-11.00pm.

Christmas Day - 12-2pm.

Boxing Day – CLOSED.

27th-30th Dec - Normal opening hours.

New Year's Eve - 12-2.30 and 5-late (evening food service 5.30-8pm).

New Year's Day - 12-2.30 and 5-10pm.

We will be closing as usual late Jan/Feb for a couple of weeks to refresh the pub and ourselves! Look out for dates on our website and Facebook page or on the notice board in the pub.

The Dragon team wishes all our customers a very happy and healthy Christmas!

Georgie and Alan

Village Life – Alan Jones and Georgie Varney at the Green Dragon

In February 2026 it will be eight years since Alan and Georgie signed the tenancy agreement with Heavitree and became the landlords of the Green Dragon. The journey began with Alan and numerous ideas on numerous post-it notes. He was then running the bar at the Start Bay Inn, where Georgie also worked. Georgie was ready for a fresh challenge as her youngest child was now at school. With the help and guidance of Georgie's dad's business experience, the post-it notes became a business plan, then a tenancy.

Alan's journey to Stoke Fleming started when he took leave from his bar manager training in Basingstoke to work at The Cherub in Dartmouth for a few weeks when the landlord, his godson's father, wasn't well. That was 31 years ago! Six years at The Market House followed five years at The Cherub before moving round the headland to the Start Bay Inn.

Georgie has been coming to the area since a baby, visiting her grandparents in Strete. Her working life involved organising on a rather large scale, being Business Events Manager at the Birmingham NEC, Manager of the Royal Agricultural Show in Stoneleigh and arranging international events such as the G5 conference in Birmingham.

Events are a regular activity at the pub. Georgie and Alan feel strongly that the pub should be one of the hubs of the village community and they work hard to fulfil this. This year a charity bingo night raised £3,770 for testicular cancer! Local residents are wonderful at helping as well as attending. There have been wedding receptions, wakes, local bands, birthday parties, pop up dinners with Sigourney and The Greedy Table. The community and family feel continues with those who work there. Peter Crowther who ran the pub for many years is behind the bar at weekend lunchtimes, Poppy, Georgie's eldest daughter has completed her hospitality apprenticeship, her son Will and Alan's son Elliot are part of the team. Village youngsters who joined them in the early days are still there, working in the holidays.

To finish, we can't talk about life at the Green Dragon without talking about Clifford! The lockdown puppy from friends at a farm in Prawle who is the friendliest dog, can be seen resting his front paws on the bar as if checking all is in order, and quite possibly hoping for a biscuit too.....





Christmas Tree Festival 12 -14th December 2025

All entries are now in for the Christmas Tree Festival. Without giving anything away, this year's themes are among the most varied and spectacular yet! Thank you to all the various clubs, businesses, groups and organisations who are sponsoring a tree. In all there will be 29 beautifully decorated trees, each with its own unique look. Of course, this year is no exception, visitors will be invited to scour all the trees in search of that elusive oddity – a decoration that does not quite fit with the theme of the tree. Be sure to enter the competition with the chance to win a special prize.

If you're not decorating a tree, don't panic... we still need volunteers to help with stewarding, lifting and shifting, and serving up delicious treats to eat and drink. So, if you would like to join in the fun, please contact Caroline using the details below.

As always, entry to the event is free to all visitors. All we ask is a donation by cash or card to swell the coffers of this year's worthy cause. The money raised will go towards St. Peter's Church and their ambitious plans to refurbish the kitchen and carry out essential works. So put the dates in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there!

Caroline Martin (07976 836509)
martincm516@gmail.com

Ken Woodman - Woodturner.

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29 real Christmas Trees, individually decorated

St Peter's Church, Stoke Fleming

**Friday 12th and Saturday 13th December – 10am to 5pm
Sunday 14th December from 10am
until short closing service at 5pm**

ALL WELCOME



Free entry but donations welcome. Refreshments available.

Raising Funds for
St Peter's Church, kitchen and WC upgrade project
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The Old Market

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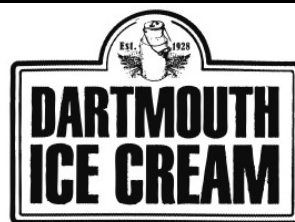
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Supporting Our Community

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We are here to assist when someone you know needs support.

Some of our services are listed alongside.

- General Advice, Support & Advocacy
- Outpatient Transport
- Various clubs:

Lunch Club—Memory Café—Monday Makers—Souper
Thursday—Baby Weigh & Play—Table Top Gaming Group—
Bereavement Group

- Housing & Benefit advice
- Palliative and Oncology Nursing support
- Visually Impaired Reading Club
- Dementia Carers Support
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seaparr01@yahoo.co.uk

The Arts Society Dartmouth and Kingswear (TASDAK)

Our lectures take place in The Flavel Arts Centre and cover a wide range of historical and arts-related topics.

The next TASDAK meeting will take place on Monday 8th December at 2.30pm when **Sarah Deere Jones** will present a musical portrait of a medieval Christmas using illustrations from illuminated manuscripts, readings from literature and contemporary accounts, haunting songs, carols and lively dance music. Sarah brings to life the spirit of Yuletide in a manorial household. Her presentation is entitled: “**Singe we Yule – A Medieval Christmas**”. This one is not to be missed!

Then on Monday 12th January 2026, also at 2.30pm, **Julian Hatsby** will give a presentation called “**White Mantle of Winter – Impressionists – Paintings of Snow**”. The impressionist movement of the 19th and 20th centuries produced some of the finest snow paintings in the history of art. This lecture is rich in wonderful images which combine the paintings of the well-known and lesser-known artists.

Juliet Lambert

Christmas and New Year with Wednesday Ladies

Wednesday Ladies wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. We end the year with a Christmas Lunch at the Sportsman's Arms. Our programme for 2026 begins on 14th January, at 2.30pm in the Village Hall with a talk by **Debbie Lumsden** on the **Dame Hannah Rogers Trust**. New members are always very welcome. If you would like to join us just come to the meeting in January or for more information contact **Jill on 01803 771137**.

Dartmouth & District Flower Club

All meetings are held in Stoke Fleming Village Hall. Subscription for the year is £35, with a small charge of about £3 at each meeting. There is always tea and cake served after the demonstration. Next meeting is on **4th December: Linsay Johns** from Churchstow at 2.15pm with a Christmas demonstration.

Contact: **Geraldine: geraldine22@sky.com**

Friends of Rowcroft

With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year, we would like to thank all our supporters, especially those who were able to attend our November coffee morning at The Stoke Lodge Hotel, an enjoyable event where we succeeded in raising £379.50 for the Hospice.



Rosemary Minshall

Christmas at Stoke Fleming Shop

The shop is all ready for your Christmas needs – we have cards, wrapping, wine, etc. If you want to order meat, vegetables, cheese, etc pop in and have a chat

Last Christmas Posting Dates

International	27th Nov – 2nd Dec
2nd class	Wed 17th Dec
1st class	Sat 20th Dec
Special delivery	Tue 23rd Dec



Christmas and New Year Opening Hours



	Shop	Post Office
Monday 22nd Dec	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Tuesday 23rd Dec	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Christmas Eve	08.00 – 12.00	CLOSED
Christmas Day	CLOSED	CLOSED
Boxing Day	CLOSED	CLOSED
Saturday 27th Dec	08.30 – 13.00	09.00 – 13.00
Sunday 28th Dec	09.00 – 12.00	CLOSED
Monday 29th Dec	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 13.00
Tuesday 30th Dec	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 13.00
New Year's Eve	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 13.00
New Year's Day	09.00 – 12.00	CLOSED
Friday 2nd Jan	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00

Thank you all for your support during the last year.

We wish everyone a joyous Christmas and peace and happiness for the New Year.

With love from Laura, Jason, Noah, Dawn, Fen and Jonah.

Loam Rangers



We have previously boasted how we are a great example of a community composting initiative in action and thriving. Well, the word seems to have spread, and we were delighted to host a visit from the BBC spotlight team in conjunction with Sustainable South Hams, where they were keen to see how we operate and the benefit it brings to the local community. We did ourselves proud – even managing to get a team of riddlers out and in action! We don't have a date for our moment of glory, but I am sure once we do the village jungle drums will bang out the message. Thanks to everyone – especially Gary – who made this possible.



We are fast approaching the end of our normal seasonal weekly opening with the 30th November being the last regular Sunday.

However, as in previous years we will be open once a month through winter – December to February. The dates are 14th December, 11th January and 8th February.

Would you like to get involved with SFLR?

Do you have a head for figures? If you do - we have a great opportunity for you! Our wonderful, and long-standing treasurer, Marie Circuitt, is looking for someone to help in the role of treasurer, in particular the production of accounts and administration around insurance, with a view to moving our accounts from a traditional paper-based system to electronic records, be that a basic system or even spreadsheets. Some accounting experience would therefore be an advantage; however, a positive and enthusiastic nature is the best attribute. You would be joining a great team delivering a wonderful community service that is so well supported by the village. The role would grow over time with a view to take on the full treasurer responsibilities and is on a voluntary basis.

If this has spiked your interest, contact Steve Shakespeare by email or phone – details below.

Steve Shakespeare – sgshakespeare@btinternet.com 07970 137311

Paul Noonan – pnoonan14@gmail.com (Volunteer enquiries)

STOKE FLEMING VILLAGE HALL FUNDRAISER

The Twelve Hampers Of Christmas Raffle

**£1 per
ticket**

***Here's your chance to win one of
12 wonderful seasonal hampers
each themed around a different
aspect of Christmas Day.***



**Draw date: Saturday 13th December 2025
at the Hall's Sing-Along Christmas Carol Concert.
Tickets available from The Village Shop,
The Green Dragon or Jill on 01803 770045**

Dartmouth Banking Hub (opens Monday to Friday, 09.00 – 17.00)

The banking hub provides basic banking services including counter services run for the major banks by the Post Office. You can pop in on any day to access these services. Address: 5-9 Victoria Road.

You can also talk to a community banker from your bank on the day your bank is in the Hub.

Monday	HSBC
Tuesday	NatWest
Wednesday	Lloyds
Thursday	Barclays
Friday	Santander

There is a private space where you can talk face-to-face about more complicated banking enquiries like payments and transfers, managing your account, and how to use online banking. Community bankers usually take their lunch breaks between 12.00 and 13.00.

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01803 712345 www.gardentime.biz

Stoke Fleming Information

Stoke Fleming Library – Tel: 770076

At the Village Hall: Monday 15.00 to 17.00, Tuesday 10.30 to 12.30, Thursday 15:00 to 17.00. *For Christmas Library hours see page 35*

Stoke Fleming Village Shop and Post Office (*Normal opening times*)

For Christmas opening see page 19

	Shop – 771119	Post Office – 770229
Sunday	09.00 – 12.00	Closed all day
Monday	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Tuesday	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Wednesday	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 13.00
Thursday	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Friday	08.00 – 17.00	08.00 – 17.00
Saturday	08.30 – 13.00	09.00 – 13.00

Loam Rangers Community Composting (School Road)

14th December and 11th January -10.00 to 11.30.

Bus – Service 93 (at Endsleigh Hotel)

Stoke Fleming to Dartmouth			Dartmouth to Stoke Fleming	
Mon – Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon – Sat	Sun
08.32	08.30		06.15 (<i>Not Sat</i>)	
09.35	09.35		07.30	
11.00	11.00	11.38	09.30	09.55
12.00	12.00		10.30	
13.00	13.00		11.30	
14.00	14.00		12.30	12.25
15.00	15.00	14.08	13.30	
16.28	16.25	16:38	14.30	14.55
17.15	17.15		15.30	
18.15	18.15		17.15	17.25
19.15	19.15	19.13	18.45	

Service 93 runs from Dartmouth to Kingsbridge

Service 3 Some of the buses continue from Kingsbridge to Plymouth as service 3 on weekdays and Saturdays. Please check before travelling.

December 2025

Mon	1	Advent Windows Calendar starts
Tue	2	
Wed	3	19.00 – Parish Council Meeting – Village Hall 17.30-19.00 – Breast Cancer Support Group – Health Centre
Thur	4	14.15 – Dartmouth & District Flower Club – Village Hall
Fri	5	12.20 – Community Kitchen lunch – Trattoria Spaggia 14.00 – Craft Club – Village Hall
Sat	6	10.00-15.00 – CHSW Christmas Fair – Dartmouth Market
Sun	7	
Mon	8	14.30 – TASDAK - Flavel
Tue	9	
Wed	10	10.20 – Probus – Stoke Lodge
Thur	11	10.00 – u3a – Flavel
Fri	12	10.00-17.00 Christmas Tree Festival – St Peter's Church
Sat	13	10.00-17.00 Christmas Tree Festival – St Peter's Church 17.30 – Christmas Sing-Along – Village Hall, Hamper Raffle draw
Sun	14	10.00-11.30 – Loam Rangers site open 10.00-17.00 Christmas Tree Festival – St Peter's Church 17.00 – Festival closing carols – St Peter's Church
Mon	15	
Tue	16	
Wed	17	
Thur	18	
Fri	19	Last day of term at Primary School
Sat	20	
Sun	21	18.30 – Candlelit Carol service – St Peter's Church
Mon	22	
Tue	23	
Wed	24	CHRISTMAS EVE 23.30 – Christmas Night Holy Communion – St Peter's Church
Thur	25	CHRISTMAS DAY 11.00 – Christmas Family Holy Communion
Fri	26	BOXING DAY
Sat	27	
Sun	28	
Mon	29	
Tue	30	
Wed	31	NEW YEAR'S EVE

January 2026

Thur	1	NEW YEAR'S DAY
Fri	2	14.00 – Craft Club – Village Hall
Sat	3	
Sun	4	Last chance to join the Stoke Fleming 100 Club for 2026
Mon	5	Start of Spring Term at Primary School
Tue	6	Community Kitchen lunch tickets on sale – Stoke Fleming Shop
Wed	7	19.00 – Parish Council Meeting – Village Hall 17.30-19.00 – Breast Cancer Support Group – Health Centre
Thur	8	10.00 – u3a – Flavel
Fri	9	
Sat	10	
Sun	11	10.00-11.30 – Loam Rangers site open
Mon	12	14.30 – TASDAK - Flavel
Tue	13	
Wed	14	14.30 – Wednesday Ladies – Village Hall
Thur	15	
Fri	16	COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY MAGAZINE
Sat	17	
Sun	18	
Mon	19	
Tue	20	
Wed	21	10.30 – Probus – Stoke Lodge
Thur	22	
Fri	23	12.30 – Community Kitchen lunch – Village Hall
Sat	24	
Sun	25	
Mon	26	
Tue	27	10.30 – Dartmouth Caring coffee morning – Village Hall
Wed	28	
Thur	29	
Fri	30	
Sat	31	



Parish Council Minutes Summary – November 2025

A monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on 5th November 2025 in the Ron Harris Room, Stoke Fleming Village Hall at 7.00 pm. Please note: a full version of these minutes is at the library and on the website.

The following Parish Councillors were present at the meeting of the Parish Council: Cllr David Harris (Chair), Cllr John Belli (Vice-Chair), Cllr Tim Moseley, Cllr Phil Elliott, Cllr Jay Floyd, Cllr Belinda Duffy.

Also: County Cllr Julian Brazil, District Cllr Simon Rake, Clerk S A Whelon.

Before the meeting the Council and public conducted a one-minute silence for the sad death of Joan Mason.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Cllr Bella Johnston, Cllr Tilly Crowther, Cllr Jack Handley.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 1st October 2025, AND PLANNING SITE MEETING NOTES were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as true and correct records.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr Harris declared an interest in item 97a and left the meeting for this item, and a family member for 103b/d.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME. Query as to location of proposed car park. Council is at very early stages at this point. Following local consultation, the planning stage will be published.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

- Library – paper coming to cabinet next week. Will be out to open consultation. Council support for libraries is “rock solid”. Opening hours currently are statutory, possibly to be changed. Working in partnership with Libraries Unlimited. Cost per head in Devon is approximately £7.00.
- Meeting for local government re-organisation will be on 14th November. There will be a statutory consultation following this. Elections in May 2027. Unitaries in 2028.
- Slapton Line partnership. Highways were not at the recent meeting which was disappointing – although the meeting was constructive. Interactive map was useful. Meeting with Highways in late November. Any short-term defences planned? Working Groups are addressing this issue and future targeted discussions will take place.
- Road works in the village are progressing, expected to be on schedule.
- Leaves on roads were noted – Cllr Brazil to report to Highways.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

- Final straight of council re-organisation. A consultation is planned.

- Planning - Blackpool Sands saunas – no objections from council. Change of conditions on final commercial parcel at Little Cotton have been approved – extensive condition on what type of retail.
- Hope Wood Project in South Brent. 65 acres planted: broadleaf woodland, community orchard and market garden. Carbon credits and biodiversity credits will earn £1m. One tree planted for everyone in South Hams.
- Local enforcement issue to be investigated by Cllr Rake.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- Proposed new car park. Members with interest to withdraw. Exclusion of press and public for this item.
 - Report from sub-committee.
 - Quote from architect – initially £200 **Approved**. Up to £4,000 was allocated in budget for this stage of project. No additional council reserves will be used.

COMMUNITY

- Phone box Dartmouth Rd – Sub-committee progress:
 - Refurbishment costs list. £609.24 **Outline Approval. Costs of labour to be investigated before commitment.**
 - Funding for community projects (information via Village Hall) may be used for a grant.
- Location of waste boxes on Little Cotton to be confirmed to clerk.

ROADS & TRANSPORT

- Slapton Line Partnership Update. Focus has changed to a process with three meetings a year, invasive pennywort may be a problem.
- Speed camera – solar panel is being researched.
- New coastal footpath route between Redlap Lane and Shady Lane will be opening soon. (Tim Moseley)
- It was noted that South Hams road sweeping team visited the village recently.
- New footpath and replacement foot bridge at Blackpool Sands connecting to council footpaths will re-establish route.

MAINTENANCE

- Toilets – School Road
 - Works update – sensors, and hand driers fitted. Disabled alarm being researched.
- Replacement benches for the playpark – clerk to order 3 benches.
- Village Hall Car park drains – request for Exjet to add the two drains in car park to work schedule when next drains and gullies visit.
- Bidders wall – re-build. Clerk to contact Cllr Brazil re quality of workmanship. Photos requested.

PLANNING: All noted.

APPLICATIONS

a) Application Number: 3003/25/ARC. Location Address: Cornish Post Farm, Blackawton, TQ9 7AW. Proposal: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (Surface Water Drainage System) of planning consent 0874/24/FUL. Status: Under Consideration. Application Type: Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions.

DECISIONS

a) Application Number: 1990/25/LBC. Location Address: St Peters Church, Church Road, Stoke Fleming. Proposal: Listed Building Consent to attach a church noticeboard to the exterior boundary wall next to the gate. Status: Approved. Application Type: Listed Building Consent.

b) Application Number: 2544/25/ARC. Location Address: Glebe Park Farm, Venn Lane, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0QF. Proposal: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 4, (CMP), 9 (Foul Drainage), 10 (Surface Water Drainage) and 11 (Ecological Report) of planning consent 3750/22/FUL. Status: Part Approved / Part Refused. Application Type: Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions.

c) Application Number: 2675/25/NMM. Location Address: Land Off Townstal Road, Sx 858 508, Dartmouth. Proposal: Non-material minor amendment to planning consent 2622/23/VAR for elevational and internal changes working through the full technical drawings. Status: Approved. Application Type: Non Material Minor Amendment.

d) Application Number: 3015/25/ARC. Location Address: Glebe Park Farm, Venn Lane, Stoke Fleming TQ6 0QF. Proposal: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 10 (Surface Water Drainage) to planning consent 3750/22/FUL. Status: Approved. Application Type: Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions.

e) Ash Tree Rescue Centre – report will be available shortly.

WITHDRAWN

a) Application Number: 2788/25/NMM. Location Address: Rosedene Bay, View Close, Stoke Fleming TQ6 0QQ. Proposal: Non-material minor amendment to planning consent 2858/22/HHO for various amendments to window fenestration & finish to front gable. Status: Withdrawn. Application Type: Non Material Minor Amendment. Re-submitted – council to meet on site.

Date of next meetings: 3rd December 2025 and 7th January 2026



Stoke Lodge Hotel

A heartfelt thank you to our local community for sharing your feedback with us on the issue of cash transactions at the hotel. We truly value your input, and after listening carefully, we're pleased to re-introduce cash payments for swim sessions and food & beverage purchases from 1 December. For security reasons, we will accept cash for single transactions up to £100, while accommodation payments will remain cashless. We're grateful for your continued support and understanding.

It's been a busy time at Stoke Lodge Hotel after a wonderful summer season. We've been renovating more of our bedrooms to make them even more comfortable and welcoming for our guests. A few of the updated rooms are nearly ready, and we'll be sharing photos soon. Keep an eye on our website and social channels as the updates start to roll out — we're looking forward to showing you what we've been working on!

<https://stokelodgehotel.co.uk/>

Michael Sutton's Cellar

We are a small, independent Wine Merchant in the heart of the beautiful Blackpool Valley. We have a hand-picked diverse range including English wines from vineyards in nearby Sharpham, Teign Valley and just along the coast in Dorset. There's always something new to discover! Stop by for a chat and some friendly, expert advice.

Want to taste before you buy? Join in with our fun, monthly Open House Tastings! We also host Private Tastings and specialise in Wedding Wine Consultations to make your big day perfect. Our aim is to keep our customers well-hydrated with lovely wines! michaelsuttonscellar.co.uk. 07736 245701.



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Dart Valley u3a

Musical Satire of the 20th century. On Thursday 11th December we will meet to hear Peter Gill's exploration of the evolution of the comedy song in the 20th century, from songs in the trenches of the first world war to the genius of Cole Porter, Noel Coward and Tom Lehrer and on to the hilarity of Monty Python, Billy Connolly and Victoria Wood. The skill of satirical lyricists will be identified and a choice selection of the songs performed.

Reminiscences of a Fast Lady. On Thursday 8th January Dr Chris Coote will give an account of 10 years working on the design, development and flight testing of Concorde, the fastest passenger plane ever. With personal memories of work as an acoustics engineer together with some facts and figures that not many are aware of the fast Lady.

Meetings are at The Flavel Arts Centre. The entrance costs only £2 for members and £3 for guests. Tea and coffee will be available from 10.00 to 10.30am, please bring a reusable cup.

As well as monthly general meetings where we always have interesting and informative speakers, there are about 39 interest groups in our u3a including the following groups which take place in Stoke Fleming: Archery at the Cricket Club, Book Group 1 (hosted) and new Beginners Yoga, iPads for Beginners, and Mahjong at the Village Hall.

Tim Freeman

A Festive Message From Stoke Lodge Hotel

As we approach the festive season, we wanted to take a moment to thank our local community for your support throughout the year. Whether you've joined us for a swim, popped in for a meal, attended one of our events, or simply stopped by to say hello, it truly means a lot to our whole team.

This time of year is all about connection, and we're grateful to be part of such a vibrant community here in South Devon. We look forward to celebrating the season with many of you — and to sharing more exciting plans and updates in the new year.

From all of us at the hotel, we wish you a joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy 2026.

Myles & Alex



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Live Life in Balance

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Designed to suit all abilities, come along and join our sociable group, and enjoy walking in some of the most scenic areas in the country! Walks are graded Level 1 (easy) to Level 3 (more challenging).

Please wear suitable clothing and comfortable supportive footwear. Dogs are welcome, please clear up after them and ensure they are on a lead at all times. Please bring a bottle of water on warm days and medication if required.

For more information on the walks please call **John** on 07570 848446. All walks are subject to change or cancellation at this time of the year.

Date	Time	Walk Level	Location of walk (£=bring money for ferry)	Meeting point
4 Dec	09.22	2	Buckfastleigh to Buckfast Abbey.	09.22 no.92 bus from Dartmouth Pontoon to bus stop just before Totnes Station; then cross the road to Travis Perkins for no.88 bus to Buckfastleigh.
11 Dec	10.30	3	Kingswear Circular. (£)	10.30 Kingswear Railway Station.
18 Dec	10.00 or 10.20	2	Berry Head, Brixham Circular (£). Optional lunch at Shoals.	10.00 no.18 bus from Kingswear Banjo or 10.20 Bank Lane Brixham.
25 Dec to 1 Jan			No walks for some reason!	
8 Jan	10.00 or 10.15	2	Broadsands Beach to Brixham via golf course and The Grove.	10.00 no.120 bus from Kingswear Banjo or 10.15 Broadsands/Churston Library.
15 Jan	10.30 or 11.00	3	Chillington to Torcross.	10.30 no.93 bus from Dartmouth Pontoon or 11.15 at Chillington Village 2nd bus stop.
22 Jan	10.00 or 10.10	3	Churston to Dartmouth via Long Wood and higher ferry. (£)	10.00 no.120 bus from the Banjo Kingswear or 10.10 Churston Bridge by the Steam Train Station.

Date	Time	Walk Level	Location of walk (£=bring money for ferry)	Meeting point
29 Jan	10.30 or 10.45	3	To Dartmouth using South West Coast Path via Redlap, Warren Point and Dartmouth Castle.	10.30 no.93 bus from Dartmouth Pontoon or 10.45 at Village Hall bus stop Stoke Fleming.

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South Hams

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Every Tuesday 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Call us on: **0808 278 7948** southhamscab.org.uk

Let's Keep Our Parish Clean and Beautiful

We all love walking our dogs around our lovely village, but please remember to always carry waste bags and clean up after your pets.

Dog mess left on paths, verges, and play areas **isn't just unpleasant** – it's a health risk, especially for children.

South Hams District Council is asking all dog owners to do their bit by **bagging and binning** their dog's waste responsibly.

Anyone caught not cleaning up after their dog could face a **£100 fine**.

If you notice dog mess or have information that could help identify repeat offenders, please report it on the South Hams District Council website – just search “**report dog fouling**”.

Together, we can keep our parish clean, safe, and a place we can all be proud of.

**Bag it. Bin it.
Keep Our Parish
beautiful!**



South Hams
District Council

www.southhams.gov.uk/report-it



Dartmouth 01803 839530

www.theflavel.org.uk



Events at the Flavel

December

Fashion and Fizz: Charity Fundraiser.	Wed 3 Dec
U3A Classics: The changing faces of Greek myth.	Thu 4 Dec
I SWEAR (film).	From Fri 5 Dec
Riviera dogs (LIVE on stage).	Sat 6 Dec
André Rieu's 2025 Christmas concert: Merry Christmas.	Mon 8 Dec
RBO The Nutcracker.	Wed 10 Dec
The Rest of Our Lives: Jo Fong and George Orange (LIVE on stage).	Fri 12 Dec
Flavel Christmas Fair	Sat 13 Dec
The Concert Band of Britannia Royal Naval College	Sat 13 Dec
Wicked: For Good (film)	From Tue 16 Dec
Dartmouth Rock Choir at Christmas (LIVE on stage).	Thu 18 Dec

January

The Marbles (film).	Wed 7 Jan
RBO La Traviata (event cinema).	Wed 14 Jan
Friday @ The Flavel: Love and Loss in Wartime Dartmouth.	Friday 16 Jan
National Theatre Live: Hamlet (event cinema).	Thu 22 Jan
Shrek The Musical JR. (LIVE on stage)	23/24/25 Jan
Friday @ The Flavel: B..B..B...Beethoven with John Suchet (LIVE on stage)	Fri 30 Jan

Stoke Fleming Library News

We have a good selection of children's books on display, together with a lovely stock of picture books and board books for the younger borrower. Grandparents please note - if you need assistance in keeping those little visitors entertained - you can borrow children's books on your cards. Jigsaws available too! All for free.

The public computer here is available for 2 hours free each day and we can also do A4 photocopying and printing in B&W and colour for you.

Did you know you only need a Library Membership and PIN number to borrow a huge range of e-books and e-audio books from Devon Libraries via Borrowbox App? Also magazines and newspapers - this is all free - and there's a terrific range for you to choose from.

We're also very happy to accept donated books - as long as they are in good condition.

Ample free parking when you visit in person which is a bonus.

The library will be closed over Christmas, but open Monday 29th and Tuesday 30th December. Then closed from Wednesday 31st December and re-opening on Monday 5th January, when we will resume normal opening hours.

Thank you for continuing to support the library and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sue Taylor

Who Cares Club

Are you right now caring for a loved one or friend or had been in the past? I, John Mitchell, together with all our members have been through difficult, sad and lonely times. We would make you very welcome to join us for a monthly lunch at the Sportsman's Arms (at a very special price) and a coffee morning. We will provide you with an aura of understanding and any support you may seek. You would be joining a group who have become friends, so please join us by phoning 01803 835030.



Stoke Fleming Village Hall Update.

The last five weeks has seen many people visit our wonderful hall for a wide range of reasons.

At the end of October, we had the privilege of welcoming Caroline Voaden MP, to present a Lottery Fund Cheque for £20,000 to facilitate the installation of solar panels on the hall's roof. Such an attendance made the front page of the Dartmouth Chronicle, and I would like thank her for taking time from a busy schedule to come to Stoke Fleming. Caroline made a point of spending time with many present, including Barbara Goddard which was very poignant.



(Photos of cheque presentation: Gary Rapps, Dartmouth Chronicle)

The road closure in the village the following week, prompted the Trustees to allow the car park to be used temporarily as a drop off point for the school, Stagecoach turning bay for their bus services and an overnight base for residents' cars while the works were undertaken. **Please note the car park's annual closure over Christmas will be from midday on the 24th until midday on 27th December.**

We then welcomed a host of buyers and sellers to our second tabletop sale of the year which was a tremendous success in raising funds for the hall. Stall holders offered a multitude of bargains whilst the hall team served up some wonderful homemade cakes, sandwiches and refreshments. Special thanks go to Jill Wallis for leading the event, all those that worked to make it happen and Gary for his sold-out Tombola which featured 50 donated prizes.

Our next event is a dual one. The Christmas Carol Sing-Along on 13th December will feature a number of popular Christmas favourites that we can all join in. It will be led by "The Brass Monkeys", an 8-piece ensemble, with songs from the talented Lucy Hingston.

During the evening we will be drawing the winners of our amazing "12 Hampers of Christmas" raffle, which will feature twelve lovely themed hampers each influenced by a different aspect of Christmas Day. Decorations and family games to seasonal cocktails and sweet treats will be up for grabs kindly donated by Tesco, Sainsburys, McCarthy Stone and many more.

Tickets for both fundraisers are now on sale from Jill on 01803 770045 or via the Village Shop so please support us where you can.

Finally, I would like to thank the hard work of our Trustees team who assist in the running of the Hall and for the continued support of our wonderful Parishioners.

I would like to personally wish each one of you a peaceful and very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year. May God Bless You All.

John Belli



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10.45-11.45 Stretch & Stay Mobile. Most of the exercises are seated, with some optional standing ones using the chair to improve balance. Book www.zest-yoga.co.uk / Kirsty: 07534 441715.

12.00-13.00 Beginners Yoga run by Kirsty Bradley for u3a members. Contact Julia Churchley: 07900 321681 / julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk.

14.00-16.30 Short Mat Bowls. Contact Erica: 07807 948020.

19.00-21.00 Table Tennis, new players (over 18) are always welcome. Contact Kim: 07594 223673.

Wednesdays

09.15-10.15 Yoga with Ellie, no experience required. Contact Kirsty, Ellie or Lara: 07778 208080 / 007534 441715*

10.30 Club de Pétanque, Village Hall recreation ground, for all skill levels. Contact John: 07811 102460.

Thursdays

13.00-14.00 Tiny Feet Yoga, a friendly, relaxed, weekly class to enjoy with your baby, helping your body heal and recover after birth and pregnancy.

Fridays

09.15-10.15 Move with Grace Pilates, a mixed level mat work class. Contact Grace: 07757 907025 / www.movewithgrace.co.uk.

10.00-13.00 Mahjong - 1st and 3rd Friday each month. Contact Elaine French: 01803 832304/frenchfamily1@live.co.uk.

Sundays

10.30 Club de Pétanque, Village Hall recreation ground, for all skill levels. Contact John: 07811 102460.

*Please check for any last minute changes.

Please note the Village Hall car park's annual closure over Christmas will be from midday on the 24th until midday on 27th December

Prickles in a Pickle

I cannot believe that I am writing “The Festive Post” – where on earth has this year gone?

No let-up in new admissions, September and October have been our busiest ever. Sadly, so many are very sick and prove more challenging to save. We always give them the very best of attention and care, sometimes around the clock, and sometimes it pays off and sometimes it doesn't.



This year has shown a steady increase in the variety of animals and birds needing help: mice, voles, owls, crows, pigeons, ducklings, and a plethora of other garden birds, all needing help.

As usual at this time of year we like to remind you all to please keep feeding and leaving water. Hedgehogs, especially in the South West, rarely hibernate. They may not visit when the weather is bad, but they will rarely sleep. The main trigger for hibernation is several nights at below 6 degrees. We so very rarely reach this. Feeding will not alter their winter behaviour, but lack of food means they starve. We are only supplementing their natural diet, not replacing it.

Our “Coffee with a Hint of Christmas” event raised just under £1,400, Gardentime are holding a coffee morning for us later on, we have the Christmas Tree Festival to look forward to and “Kingsbridge Does Christmas”.

Our match funding campaign was successful, and we reached the £25,000 target in 5 months, which earned us the same amount from the Fisher Trust.

A few numbers for you, we currently have 58 volunteers, 8 trustees and 30 transport volunteers. We take in up to 200 hedgehogs at a time and over 1,000 a year. To date we have had 87 Duke of Edinburgh Students, plus Veterinary students and college placements. It costs us £70,000 a year to run. The amazing thing is that this money is raised by our amazing supporters.

Last year we gave on average a talk/presentation a month and about half that in school visits.

We are at the survey stage of planning for our new hospital, and we hope to have more news to share with you all in the next magazine.

So, we wish you a very happy Christmas and healthy, happy and joyful New Year. For PIAP it will be work as usual.

Judy and Alan

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Friends of St Peter's



The churchyard path from the war memorial to the east end of the church building has been successfully retarmacked by Dart Surfacing. All we are allowed by South Hams planners to do to the rest of the "Coffin Way" path on and down to the east gate is to lay new gravel. This is expected to be done by the end of November. FoSP will pay for the gravel and the labour is being provided by cadets from the Royal Naval College. As I write, in the middle of November, the decision on the Church's application for a substantial grant towards the Toilet/Servery project is expected any day. We hope that by the time you read this there will be good news enabling the project to forge ahead.



With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Peter Barker (Chair of FoSP)



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The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

As the end of 2025 approaches, the thoughts of Probus members naturally turn to family matters with the festive season and New Year celebrations. We have a final lunch meeting for 2025 scheduled for Wednesday 10th December in Stoke Lodge Hotel, commencing with coffee at 10.30am. Our speaker on this occasion will be distinguished academic commentator John Dobson, who will deliver a talk entitled “**Putin's Russia, Trump and Ukraine**” - an up-to-the-minute analysis and insight into world events. This event will also include the club's Christmas Lunch with a special menu.

The Probus Club will then fall quiet over the festive and New Year celebrations, re-opening on Wednesday 21st January 2026, with a lunch meeting at the Stoke Lodge Hotel, again commencing at 10.30am. Our speaker at this meeting will be David MacVeigh with his talk on “**How Britain became an Island**”. David was due to visit the club with this talk back in October, but had to postpone because of illness, so we are pleased to welcome him for this revised date. The event will also incorporate the club's Annual General Meeting, where programme arrangements for the remainder of 2026 will be finalised.

The Probus movement has branches all over the UK and is a form of social club aimed at retired gentlemen from business or commerce who wish to remain socially active. We are very keen to attract new members, and a warm welcome will be extended to any eligible gentleman wishing to come along and try one of our meetings. If you would like to attend, please call **Peter Hales** (Club Secretary) on 01803 770739 to discuss the club and book a place. Alternatively, simply come along to an event and see for yourself!

Stoke Fleming Bowling Club

Although the outdoor bowling season has well and truly finished now until the Spring, we would just like to thank everyone who has supported the club this year, in particular our sponsors who have been so generous, to those who have come along and given bowling “a go” and, lastly but definitely not least, our President and members who make the club so special. Through the pages of this magazine, we would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and festive season.

Liz Mallyon

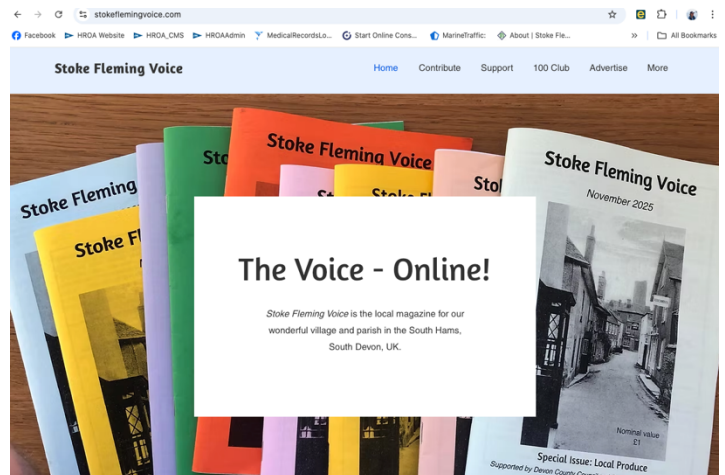
Stoke Fleming Voice online!

The *Voice* now has its own website here: www.stokeflemingvoice.com. We've set this up with help from the County Council's Growing Communities fund to provide online access to pdf copies of the magazine, in addition to our current printed copy distribution. We hope this will go towards solving three different issues:

1. We know some people have been unhappy about second homes not receiving copies of the *Voice*. The editorial team wants to be inclusive, but neither we nor our distributors have complete information on which or how many of these properties there are. We also don't have the funds (even with the support of the 100 Club) to significantly increase our print run. Second-home owners are not necessarily going to be away more than many other residents, but are very unlikely to always be here when magazines are delivered, so we hope that having access to pdf copies will be an acceptable and possibly sometimes an even better alternative to having printed copies delivered.
2. Added to this, we're not totally sure whether all other properties, especially those in the outer parish, are receiving the magazines they should. Indeed, we've come across several examples of overlaps and omissions in the rounds. We plan to do an audit of our entire distribution system, but in the meantime, we hope that having online pdfs available will at least ensure all residents can access copies of the magazine.
3. We have been delivering copies to Little Cotton Farm (LCF) since April, as we had special District Council funding to do this. These funds run out in April 2026, and we hope that residents in the development will use pdf copies to keep informed of parish activities after that point.

There are probably other potential benefits too. For example, pdfs could be accessed by people from outside the parish (residents of nearby villages interested in our news; tourists selecting where to go in Devon; families looking at moving here, etc). Past copies could help too (new residents wanting to read previous features; visitors wanting to check what generally happens in a different month; etc). We might even find that all these people discovering what a wonderful place we live in benefits our businesses and adds (slightly) to the value of our homes.

However, we realise that pdfs won't work for everyone (and please note, other than for LCF, we're not stopping sending printed copies to anyone). So, on the site's homepage, we provide opportunities for people to tell us if they'd like to start receiving the printed magazine – or to cancel their deliveries if they don't read it or would prefer a pdf. We'll do our best to respond to these requests but note that we'll only be able



to do so when organisationally and financially feasible, and only at a timescale which works for our distributors - meaning that we'll probably only make changes a few times each year.

You can also subscribe to receive pdfs by email. And there are other forms on the site which may be helpful, eg to provide us feedback on the magazine.

Scan the QR code to find the Stoke Fleming Voice website



CAMBODIA EXPEDITION 2027 – FUNDRAISING

Hi, we're Lucas and Aiken

We are pupils at Dartmouth Academy and live in Stoke Fleming. In 2027, we'll be joining an amazing expedition to Cambodia to help with community and environmental projects run by Camps International.



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FOR SALE	Bernina 1008 Sewing Machine. Very good condition. Top end mechanical embroidery, designed for heavy duty use. In original carry case with manual, accessories and extras. £300.		Trevor Mason: 01803 770446
FOR SALE	Doro 2820 flip, non-smart phone with large buttons and easy to read display. Brand new. In its original box with all supplied items. No SIM card installed. Offers near to £40 considered.		01803 770446
FOR SALE	Attractive antique bureau very good condition H100cm, D40cm, W75cm. £75.		01803 770478
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WANTED	Fabric, wool, textiles, resources, materials equipment etc for textiles and craft area at the education intervention centre. Email laurabethc@hotmail.co.uk .		07501 086610

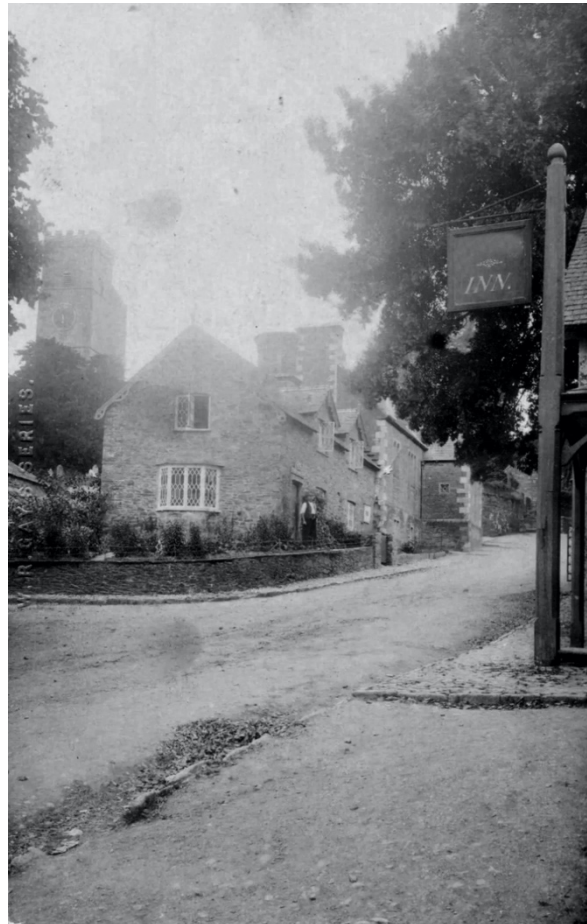
Stoke Fleming Voice does not make a charge for advertising in "Aladdin's Cave" but if your advert is successful we would much appreciate a donation. See inside back cover for our bank details.

Where are we now?

Only Clever Clogs knew we were at the Old Turnpike Cottages in Strete, for last month's picture. So, let's see how you get on with this month's picture going back to 1918.



Now the only question is where are we now?



It doesn't seem possible that 12 months has gone by with the new magazine, the *Voice*, and I hope you will all agree what a great job the new team has made of it and long may it continue.

It is also that time of year again to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Barry Morris (Tel: 01803 770754, email: barry219morris@btinternet.com)



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Useful Contact Details

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District Councillor (South Hams)	Simon Rake, cllr.simon.rake@southhams.gov.uk	861129
MP for South Devon	Caroline Voaden, caroline.voaden.mp@parliament.uk	658461
Medical services	Boots	832742
	Wellbeing Pharmacy, Dartmouth	832474
	Wellbeing Pharmacy, Health Centre	222117
	Dartmouth Medical Practice	832212
	Dart Vale Vets	832422
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	Micky's Taxis	07812 088935
	Prestige Taxis	714336

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Stoke Fleming Voice is run entirely by parish volunteers, for the benefit of parish residents. Our editors work hard to ensure factual accuracy; however, readers may want to check provided information for themselves. Please notify us of any changes to contact details.

*Donations towards the production of this magazine are always welcome. Our Bank details are: Stoke Fleming Voice, **A/c: 19250960. Sort code: 30-54-66** or use the QR Code.*



Stoke Fleming Village Directory 2025/2026

(Area Code: 01803)

Bellringing	John Dietz	770515
Bowling Club	Liz Mallyon	712799
Church – Rector	Rev Matt Gorton, revgorton@hotmail.com	906861
Church Visiting Group	Rosemary Minshall	770300
Churchwarden	John Dietz	770515
Craft Club	Lorraine Forman, Lorraineforman@gmail.com	
Cricket Club	Stacey Gilbert	07931 384017
Dart Valley u3a	Suzie Dodsworth	770134
Friends of St Peter's	Peter Barker	770556
Golf Society	Ashley Hutton	07888 383808
Hort & Sport Show	enquiries.hortandsport@gmail.com	
Little Lanterns	Lisa Callard	770244
Loam Rangers	Steve Shakespeare	07970 137311
Parish Council	Sharon Whelon, clerk@stokefleming.org or see https://www.stokefleming.org/councillors	
Pétanque	John Sparks	07811 102460
Primary School	Christopher Harrison, Head Teacher	770244
Primary School (Friends)	Annabel Harris	770244
Probus Club	Peter Hales	770739
Short Mat Bowls	Erica Travies	07807 948020
Start Bay Performers	Mary Rimell	07909 970510
Table Tennis	Kim Fricker	07594 223673
Village Hall Bookings	Emily Handley, enquiries@stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk	07450 075734
Village Hall Management Committee	John Belli, Chairman of Trustees	07538 156864
Wednesday Ladies	Jill Fell	771137
Youth Club	Rev Matt Gorton, stokeflemingyouthclub@gmail.com	906861