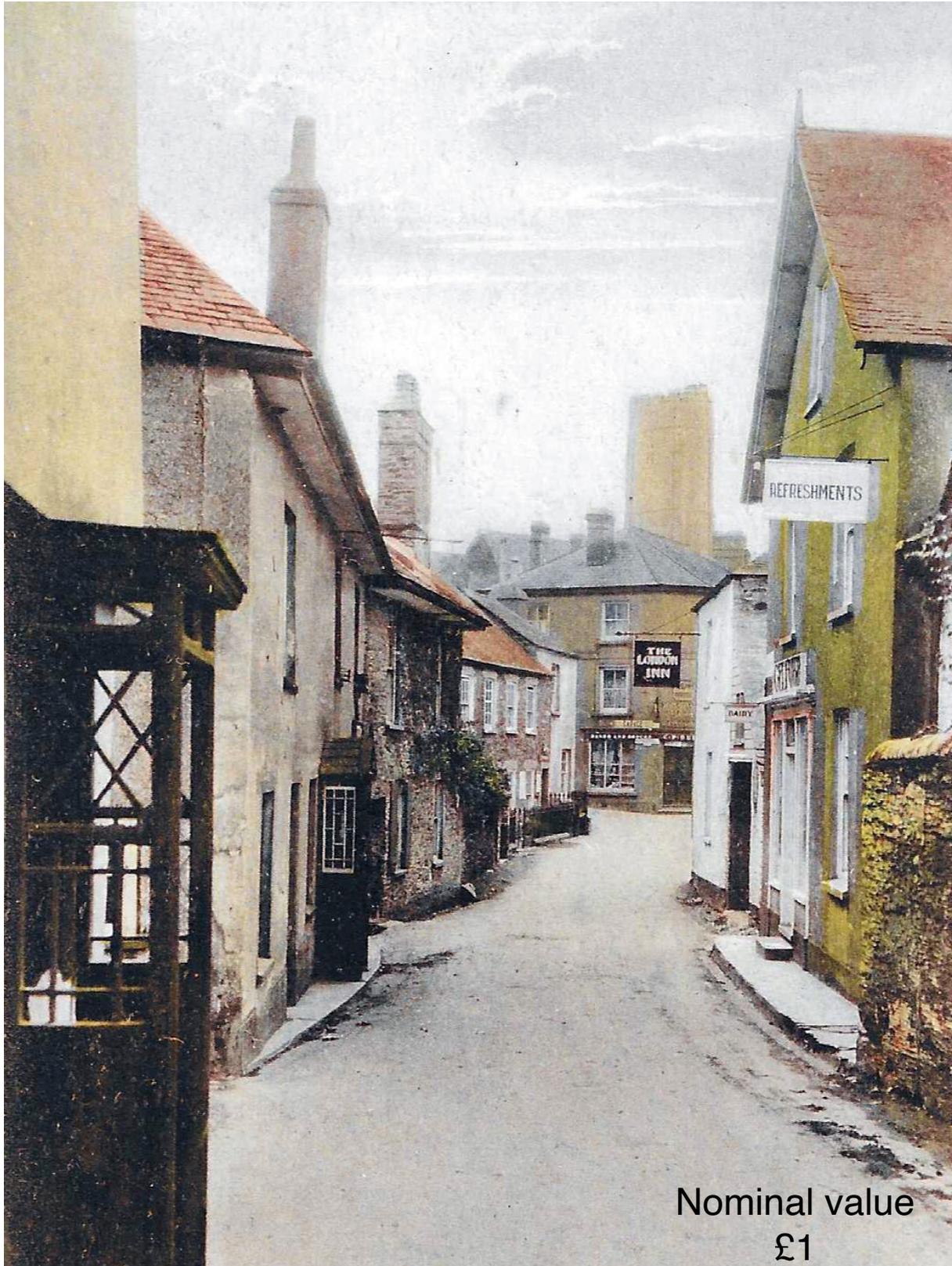


# Stoke Fleming Voice

*February 2026*



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## Editorial

All of us on the *Stoke Fleming Voice* team wish you a Happy New Year! There are a few signs of spring around already: bulbs are coming up, the first snowdrops in flower, even some camellias are flowering, and some early lambs have been seen up near Blackawton! But the recent ice and storms remind us that we're not there yet!

Remarkably, it has been a whole year since we took on the production and distribution of the magazine and we hope we have managed to maintain the standards set by Joan and Trevor Mason, while gradually introducing some new features. We are very grateful for all the compliments and positive feedback we have received, and we're always pleased to have comments and suggestions so that we can continue to meet the needs of Stoke Fleming – either email us at [stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com](mailto:stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com), or complete the feedback form on our website: [www.stokeflemingvoice.com/about#fb](http://www.stokeflemingvoice.com/about#fb). We are holding our first AGM on Thursday 19th February in the Village Hall, starting at 6.00pm. Please do come along and share your views. See page 6 for details.

This month's edition celebrates the Village events leading up to Christmas, and we have reports and photographs of the Christmas Tree Festival, the Advent Calendar windows, the carols outside the Green Dragon, the concert and prize draw at the Village Hall, to mention a few. We are fortunate to live in such an active, sociable and generous village. All these events take a lot of organising, and we thank those who did such sterling work behind the scenes to make them so successful.

Our clubs and societies are now getting back to normal after the Christmas break, and the calendar is, once again, looking full. So, especially if you are new to the Village, please read on to find out about some of the exciting activities that you might wish to join. Next month's magazine will be a special issue on volunteering and, additionally, we are planning a "Meet the Societies" coffee morning (which we're calling **Stoke Fleming Voices Live**) in March, so you can see some of the activities on offer (see page 8) and we hope that all our organisations will take the opportunity to recruit some new blood. If you have some spare time, want to meet people in the Village, and get involved, you know what to do....

With all our best wishes for health, happiness and prosperity in 2026.

**Anne**

If you would like to contribute an article, Reader's View or Letter to the Editor, please email [stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com](mailto:stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com), or see our website [www.stokeflemingvoice.com](http://www.stokeflemingvoice.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 Our Postbag

Do you believe in fairies? Well, some people do, and I wanted to tell you the story of two little fairies who are best friends and who are working very hard and are very, very, tired. They'd like to spend their days dancing in the sunbeams and picking flowers like the other fairies, but they can't, because there just seems to be more and more work for them to do and this makes them very sad.



You see their names are “*Poo Fairy*” and “*Poo Bag Fairy*” and, because so many people believe in them, these two little friends spend all their days picking up dog poo from around the village and removing dog poo bags left fluttering gently in the breeze among the branches of our lovely hedgerows and trees – isn't that sad.

Sometimes these two little friends go to the beach for a rest but, when they get there, it seems they have to work even harder. And so people, the moral of this sad little tale is that if you are someone who believes in fairies, then please be kind to these poor little friends!



**PICK IT UP – BAG IT – BIN IT!!**

**Christina and Angela**

*(Editors' Note: Thank you so much to these lovely people for helping to keep our village clean and tidy. And thanks to everyone else who clears up dog poo and other litter that has been left about.)*

## Dartmouth Chronicle – Village Voice Section

For those who have shared news and events through the Dartmouth Chronicle's Village Voice section, we are sorry to report that the Chronicle has now discontinued this feature.

Lucy, who has proudly served as Stoke Fleming's correspondent for many years, would like to extend her heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed over time. She shares the community's disappointment at losing such a valued space for local stories and parish news.

**Lucy Willetts**

## **Reader's Corner: Christmas is long past – Spring 2026**

Christmas is long past. The turkey bones have been turned first to stock and then to soup. The cards and torn wrapping paper (except the sparkly ones) have been recycled. "The Holly and the Ivy" now "deck" the compost heap. The tree has been chipped and the decorations put back in their boxes till next year. The Christmas jumper is now washed and put away for another year.

In church, our readings are no longer about a baby in a manger or wise men from foreign lands. We have moved on to Jesus making disciples and beginning His work of teaching and healing.

At thousands of carol services from Kings College on the telly to our village carol services, we heard words spoken by the prophet Isaiah 600 years before the birth of Jesus.

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means God with us". \*

There is no time limit here. "God is with us".

As the year changes, eventually moving from winter to spring and then on to summer, "God is with us".

As we face the challenges of life, the continuing ones from last year and the new challenges of this year "God is with us".

Furthermore, since Jesus lived life as a human He understands what human life is like – as part of a family, as a skilled workman, as a friend, as one unjustly persecuted. And "He is with us" in all the mess and complexity of our lives.

So, Christmas is over, but Immanuel God is still with you.

**Jeff Hacon**

*\*Isaiah Chapter 7 verse 14 quoted in Matthew's Gospel chapter 1 verse 23*

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

## **From the Registers**

6th January, Michael Ferris. Funeral followed by burial.

13th January, Gladys Blackler. Funeral followed by burial.

## **St Peter's Church Services in February**

- Sun 1st      10.15am Prayer Time.  
                 11.00am Communion by Extension.  
                 6.30pm Choral Evensong – with the Dartmouth Phoenix Choir.
- Sun 8th      11.00am Morning Worship.  
                 4pm THE 4.
- Sun 15th     11.00am Communion by extension.
- Tue 17th    2.30pm Pancake Afternoon followed by a short service and the  
                 burning of the palm crosses.
- Wed 18th    7.00pm United Benefice Holy Communion with Ashing at  
                 Blackawton.
- Sun 22nd    11.00am Morning Worship.

## **Little Stars**

Welcome back to our Little Stars, mums and grandmas. It is a new year but thankfully our Little Stars are the same wonderful little characters, full of life and energy. It is a privilege to be a small part of their lives. Happy New Year everyone.

**Heather, Sue and Peter.**

## **Shrove Tuesday - Pancake Day**

There will be a Pancake Afternoon in St Peter's church on Tuesday 17th February, starting at 14.30, with pancake races for the children. This will be followed by a very short service and the burning of last year's Palm crosses.



**Shrove Tuesday**

# **PANCAKE DAY**

**Pancake Afternoon  
in St Peter's Church**

**Tuesday 17 February  
starting at 2.30pm**

**Pancake races for the children**

**Followed by a very short service at 5.30pm  
and the burning of last year's Palm crosses**



## Stoke Fleming Voice – AGM 2026

What did you think of the first year of the *Voice*?

We'll be reviewing progress and planning year 2 at our AGM, 6-7pm on Thursday 19th February in the Ron Harris room at the Village Hall.

Come along and meet the team! Sadly, Anna has decided not to stand for re-election this year, so in particular we are looking to recruit an additional Trustee.

We're keen to ensure we're providing the information which groups and residents need, so would love some of you to come and join us, and help ensure we're doing what we should.

See you there!

**Anna, Anne, Jenny, Jon, Pam and Sandra.**

### AGM invitation

The trustees of *Stoke Fleming Voice* invite parishioners to our Annual General Meeting.

This will be held at 6pm on Thursday 19th February 2026 in the Ron Harris room at the Village Hall.

- Reviewing progress and planning forward
- Presenting draft accounts for 2025
- Appointing six to twelve trustees and any additional members
- Seeking feedback, ideas and support.

Come along and find out more.

## Citizens Advice South Hams

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## News from the Hort and Sport

Happy New Year to everyone. Let's hope 2026 has good things in store for all.

A huge thank you to Caroline Martin and her team for another wonderful Christmas Tree Festival, a highlight of our village calendar.



Plans are already afoot for the ever-popular Plant and Cake Sale on Saturday 9th May at the village hall. We rely on donations of both plants and cakes; they can be dropped off at the hall from 9.30 am on the day. Doors open 10.00 to 11.30am, so save the date.

As this edition goes to press our first meeting of the year is due to take place. We welcomed two new members to the committee in November and look forward to working on new ideas, as well as building on the things we all enjoy about the show, which will take place on Monday 31st August. More news and information in upcoming editions of the *Voice*.

**Paula Johnston**

## Nature Notes

A heron went to the New Cotton Pond at 6pm at dusk on 16th November and also on 16th January at 3pm near Ryland Copse, Riversbridge. There was a heron at Slapton Ley near the nesting area on 25th November and a great white egret near the Slapton bridge. On the same day I saw two little egrets and two knot waders from Canada or Greenland at Kingsbridge Estuary.



The Venn Cottagers saw a couple of nuthatches throughout winter, November onwards. A male sparrowhawk flew to my summerhouse on 10th December and a female flew to the back garden on 13th January but I shooed them away. At 4pm at dusk I saw a pipistrelle bat near Venn Cottages on 11th December so I put bat nesting boxes up the next day.

On the night of 4th January at zero degree centigrade in my front garden there were two hedgehogs eating food. I know that there are hedgehog boxes but I took them in to warm them up. One was seen before at 4pm on 28th November "purring" (rattling) when I stroked him, smooth when relaxed.

**DW**

## **Come and discuss Village Activities in 2026**

Stoke Fleming Voice has some additional funding from Devon County Council available, linked to March's special volunteering issue.

We believe it might be useful to use this to provide an opportunity for people to share more of the same sort of information you normally find in the pages of this magazine, but in a live, face-to-face, conversational format.

We've therefore booked an event in the Village Hall to be held from 10.30am to 12.00pm on Saturday 21st March.

This is our first attempt at organising something like this, so have no idea how many village groups, or parishioners, will attend – so don't expect a showy event. But it will provide an opportunity to talk informally with other residents, and perhaps find some new group opportunities you can participate in or contribute to.



You'll find people from some of the same groups you read about here each month, and maybe a few new ones too. So come along for ten minutes, or the full hour and half. There'll be tea, coffee, cake and biscuits too.

We'll reconfirm the event and provide more details in our March magazine. However, if you have any specific questions on the event, please email us at [stokefemingvoice@gmail.com](mailto:stokefemingvoice@gmail.com).

## **Defibrillators**

There are two defibrillators in the village, bought with donations after fundraising around the area. One is in the porch of the Village Hall; the second at the rear entrance to the Green Dragon Pub. They are both owned, maintained and checked weekly by a small group of volunteers; they are not owned by the Hall Management Committee or the Parish Council. To gain access in an emergency – go to the site of the defibrillator – dial 999 – say where you are, and they will give you the code. We hope you won't need to use them.

For more information – contact [barry219morris@btinternet.com](mailto:barry219morris@btinternet.com)



**GET INVOLVED!**



**There's plenty to do in Stoke Fleming**

**Come and see what's on offer**

## **STOKE FLEMING VOICES LIVE**

Saturday 21 March, 10.30-12 noon

John Goddard Room, Village Hall

**Get even more out of living in Stoke Fleming!**

**See you there!**

Refreshments will be provided free of charge.



## Stoke Fleming Primary School

During the lead up to Christmas the Friends of Stoke Fleming School were pleased to be part of Operation Christmas Child's Shoebox Appeal. Pupils collected gift-filled shoeboxes with thoughtful and essential contents such as teddy bears, fidget toys, pens, notebooks, hygiene items, socks, gloves, hats etc along with handwritten notes from the school children.



The Friends of Stoke Fleming School also purchased £1,595 of sports equipment for the children to use in PE, break and lunchtime games.

Some of the children had an amazing German lesson with one of our pupils who comes from Germany; he taught counting to ten and how to write the days of the week. All the children had a great time learning a new language.

In English the Year 6 children have been very busy writing speeches about, for example: Animal cruelty, AI and Migration. Some of the pupils are practising for Youth Speaks, an event run by the Rotary Club in January; this will help them build confidence.

**Christopher Harrison**

## News from the Community Kitchen

Part of the fun at our lunches is discovering what our customers like eating. Do they prefer comfort food? Do they like the old favourites or do they like challenges? Overwhelmingly they said they enjoyed trying different foods and challenges, so for our January Lunch, which was close to Burns Night, we served Haggis with vegetables and a whisky sauce along with the usual array of delicious puds. Other options were available!



Our February lunch will be on Friday 13th February – so no guesses what the theme will be for that lunch – with tickets on sale in the village shop on Tuesday 3rd Feb at 8.00am. The price will remain at £10 a ticket with £2 to pay on the day. If you haven't been successful in buying a ticket, please us at email [houseonthehill661@gmail.com](mailto:houseonthehill661@gmail.com) and we will see what we can do.

Bring your own tipples for lunch. Water will be on the table.

Our lunches are to encourage you to get out, to enjoy the company of others from the village and to have a healthy hot meal with no washing up. We would love to see you there!

“Food tastes better when shared with friends.”

**Mary Newman**

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## Caroline Voaden

MP for South Devon



Contact me if you need help with anything that is the responsibility of a national government department, such as pensions, passports or benefits.

If you are unsure, please email or call and I would be happy to guide you to whoever is best placed to help.

✉ [caroline.voaden.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:caroline.voaden.mp@parliament.uk) ☎ 01803658461

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# Dartmouth Caring COFFEE MORNING



**Stoke Fleming  
Village Hall  
10:30 to 12noon**

**Thursday 26th February**

**We welcome you to join us for a monthly social. Find out about our services and how we can help you and your family. Attended by Dartmouth Caring staff including Dementia Support Worker.**

**Upcoming Coffee Morning dates  
(The last Thursday of each month)  
26<sup>th</sup> March, 30<sup>th</sup> April**



**Dartmouth Caring**  
Supporting Our Community

## **Breast Cancer Support Group – Dartmouth Caring**



January brought our first meet up of the new year, where we chatted and laughed over tea and cake! (thanks Rachel). We also drew experience from each other and talked about some of the things that play on our minds, helping each other to find reassurance.

In December we had the lovely Natalie from Start Bay Studio to visit the group. She gave us some relaxing and useful upper body exercises to help with the after effects of treatment. We also learnt how to “breathe” properly!! And what a difference this can make to your health and recovery. Thanks Natalie, you were amazing!!!!

In February we welcome Kirsten from South Devon Reflexology, who will help us understand this practice more, and how it can benefit cancer patients and those recovering.

We welcome anyone who has been affected by breast cancer to come along and join us – whether you are newly diagnosed, in remission or are a partner or friend of someone who has experienced breast cancer. We are a very welcoming group of all ages and look forward to meeting you.

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](mailto:enquiries@dartmouthcaring.co.uk).

## **CHSW Dartmouth and District Friends Group**

We have had a full year of events for the Children’s Hospice South West, supporting the fundraising for this very special charity. Thank you to everyone within our community who has donated, attended our events and undertaken personal challenges to contribute to the “pot”. This past year we have continued with our usual street collections, Royal Avenue Fêtes, Easter and Christmas Fairs and our popular Dartmouth Art Day. We were pleased that our new venture, the Fashion and Fizz event at The Flavel, showcasing local independent boutiques, sold out in just four days and was a worthwhile and fun evening. We are planning our 2026 events, but in the meantime don’t forget we have local shops in Brixham and Totnes which will always give you a warm welcome!

Our local volunteer group is friendly and informal but highly effective. We raised around **£21,000** last year with the kind support of local people either attending our events, donating or carrying out challenges.

Come and join us, as there is a role and place for everyone and you can offer the time commitment that suits you in an informal and flexible way. For more details contact Sue Tweed (07955 197721).

Happy New Year to all our supporters!

**Ann Green**

## **Stoke Fleming 100 Club**

The winners of the 100 Club Christmas Draw held in Trattoria Spaggia on 5th December were as follows:

4th Prize went to Mrs J. Milsom with No. 12 who won £22;

3rd Prize went to Mrs Minshall with No. 138 who won £33;

2nd Prize went to Struan Coupar with No. 121 who won £55;

and

1st Prize went to Muriel Wakeham with No 59 who won the Jackpot of £99.



This year the 100 Club raised £653 for the Village Hall. On behalf of the Village Hall Committee, I would like to thank all those taking part. I do hope you will all continue to support *Stoke Fleming Voice* with your contributions to the 100 Club long into the future and wish the magazine good luck and best wishes.

**Simon Dowden**

*Simon hands over the reins to Sandra, from the Voice, at the Christmas draw.*



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## The Green Dragon



Happy New Year to all our customers. It was so lovely to welcome you during our festivities.

At the time of writing, we are preparing for our special Burns Night celebration on 24th January with The Greedy Table providing a hearty Scottish-inspired Burns supper. This will be followed on the 25th with the January Drink us Dry sale before closing that night for our annual planned maintenance and break.

However, at the time of reading we will be closed, with doors opening again on Friday 13th February, just in time for Valentine's Day and week two of the Six Nations 2026 competition. That's an interesting

combination! On 14th February Ireland play Italy, Scotland play England and the following day Wales play France.

Keep an eye on our website or Facebook for more information about February. We look forward to welcoming you when we open on Friday 13th February.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2026.

**Georgie, Alan and the Dragon team**

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## Village Life: Casey Knight (#93 bus driver)



No matter how strong their community, all villages depend on infrastructure and services delivered from outside. Reflecting this fact, this month's "Village Life" features Casey Knight, one of 48 bus drivers who sometimes drive the 93 bus through Stoke Fleming.

Casey was born in Plymouth and grew up in various South Hams locations, returning to Plymouth for work in various administrative and managerial positions. He was appointed a Stagecoach trainee bus driver in 2022, training in Exeter before gaining familiarisation with various town and rural routes, including our own 93 route which Casey describes as the most beautiful of all.

Driving a double-decker or a wide single-decker bus along our country lanes is rarely without challenges from tight corners and overhanging vegetation as well as the variety of traffic including big tractors, HGVs and campervans, and drivers who don't know how to reverse. However, Casey personally admires drivers of agricultural vehicles and their ability to reverse with trailers in tow. He also suggests the route maybe looks more difficult as a passenger than it actually is as the corners provide more wiggle room than you might think. In any case, he doesn't let the job stress him – he knows the only things he can control are the bus and how he reacts to situations.

Casey speaks warmly of local people all along the route and says the majority are gracious and welcoming towards him. Most understand that errors in the bus tracker are caused by their GPS signal dropping in and out, and that if the bus is a little late it is not the driver's fault but just the issues he encounters on the day. He does like it when local people say hello to him and compliment him on his driving (some even suggesting he deserves a medal!).

We asked Casey if there was anything he'd like his passengers to know. His polite request was for passengers to remain seated after they have pushed the stop button. He can see people when they are safely seated and will wait until they get off, but on the double-deckers, he can't see people if they're already heading down the stairwell. He'd just like car drivers to remember that buses don't stop or handle as quickly as cars.

Casey hasn't been to Stoke Fleming on foot yet, but he plans to do the 93 route as a passenger one day and intends to get off in the village and at Blackpool Sands. He does know the local towns quite well and enjoys having a quick drink at the FIKA Coffee House in Kingsbridge and the Woodroast Coffee Shop in Dartmouth.



Casey clearly loves his job, and we left him at the Stagecoach Depot bathed in his enthusiasm and excitement – no two days are ever the same and we left Casey with “Control” looking to see what his next assignment was to be that afternoon.

*Note, our “Village Life” feature is about people and community, not bus timetables. However, you may be interested to know that the Voice still intends to investigate the points on bus services which were raised in last year's survey and will share their results with you later in the year.*

## The Christmas Tree Festival

Huge congratulations are in order to everyone who took part in or helped at December's Christmas Tree Festival!

This was the 18th gathering of trees and yet again the sponsors outdid themselves with clever themes, fiendish oddities and beautifully made decorations. I continue to be amazed at the ingenuity of all the different organisations, groups and businesses that come together to make this such a special village event.



I have to admit to being somewhat nervous at even thinking I could do justice to Shirley's memory, but the amazing support and goodwill from every quarter has been very heartwarming.

The event raised **£2,709.33** which will go towards the works needed at St. Peter's Church, and attendance over the three days hit 921 visitors – both record figures! There was also a record number of Spot the Oddity forms completed – but more on that below. The event was publicised on both BBC Radio and Spotlight and even attended by our MP Caroline Voaden.

I have to add my heartfelt thanks to all of the community who made this happen. I am already looking forward to next December when I can confirm the dates will

be **Friday 11th December 2026 to Sunday 13th December 2026**. Make a date in your diary! Don't forget to contact me if you would like to be a part of the Festival in any way. See you there!

**Caroline MARTIN**  
**07976 836509**  
**[martincm516@gmail.com](mailto:martincm516@gmail.com)**

*Some photographs of Stoke Fleming at Christmas appear elsewhere in the magazine*

## **SPOT THE ODDITY**

We had a bumper entry for Spot the Oddity, the competition where visitors have to find the decoration that doesn't fit with each Christmas tree's particular theme. All 169 entries this year successfully spotted the toothbrush on Winkworth's "Land of Hope and Glory" (although if you missed it, you should have gone to Specsavers). The Friends of St Peter's with "Sea Shanties" kept sleuths guessing with their cryptic beach sign, but they eventually netted 104 correct answers. Ash Rescue Centre chimed in with a magnificent display of vintage clocks and watches, hiding a blue ceramic hare that was only spotted by 35 contestants. Fewer still spotted the mustard spoon on the "Shirley Tree".

There was plenty of debate, discussion and confusion as cross-eyed visitors scribbled mouse instead of house – a near miss – but our judges gave players plenty of latitude. The gorilla on Stoke Fleming Primary School's tree was variously recorded as monkey, ape, yeti, Bigfoot, King Kong, silverback, white, grey, snow and plastic gorilla. Our judges were happy to accept all of these as correct answers. However, one entry missed the mark by calling it "Man", and another "The Abominable Snowman". We loved the photos of the village that made up "Views of the Parish" from the Parish Council, even though as many as 52 of you failed to spot that Big Ben is not in fact in Stoke Fleming. We had some interesting contributions and some wild spelling, all of which resulted in a tennis ball hidden in one tree being mistaken for Slough!

Great fun was had by all, and we thank all of our sponsors for their amazing creativity and humour, as well as our valiant competitors for taking part. In the end, we had three entries that ticked all the right boxes: Darcie Lobb and a joint entry from Andy and Reuben Kyte. But first out of the hat was Lorna Clark who took delivery of our Christmas hamper. Thank you to Matt the Vicar for doing the draw which, for the first time, took place at the end of Sunday's closing service. The countdown to next year's competition has begun!

*Did you spot these? 1: Postage stamp 2: Poppy 3: Magnifying glass 4: Harry Potter 5: Hare 6: Boat 7: The Gruffalo 8: Dog 9: Shell 10: Toothbrush 11: Koala 12: Paperclip 13: Mustard spoon 14: House 15: Purple rabbit 16: Big Ben 17: Cotton reel 18: Ball 19: Parrot 20: Beach sign 21: Gorilla 22: Hair scrunchy 23: Lego policeman 24: Elf 25: Sheep 26: Polar bear 27: Fish 28: Sponge 29: Snoopy.*

## **BeWild – Wild Week, half-term events**

**BeWild** again have a collection of events planned for this February half term, from **16th to 20th February**: talks, walks and activities. Hear about local nature conservation and species reintroduction projects – pine martens, water voles – from the people involved. Take away some seeds to sow, come on a nature-spotting stroll with us, or join us for a spot of eco-conscious crabbing! We'll have visiting speakers from the Devon Wildlife Trust, the Habitat Group, Devon Swift Project, Friends of the Dart and Ambios, the nature recovery programme at Sharpham. There'll be lots to see and do, and opportunities to sign up for future workshops and activities too.



Our Wild Week events are based in Dartmouth, at the Coastal Trail café on the South Embankment. All are welcome. From making space for nature in your own gardens, to supporting church tower swift box installations – come and share your own ideas, hear others', take inspiration and spread them far and wide! **And, if there are any particular events or projects you'd like to get involved with, plan or help us plan in Stoke Fleming, please get in touch.**

Details of the week's events will be on our website: <https://bewild.uk/news/>.

BeWild has an on-going project to enhance wildlife at Blackpool Sands. From their website:

“At the back of the east side of this stunning beach is an area of land where beautiful wildflowers grow. BeWild, along with volunteers from the local community, are bolstering this vital vegetation and reintroducing lost species that continue to thrive just along the coast at Slapton Sands.

“Imagine a wildflower-rich coastal habitat, teeming with colour and life. With flowering plants such as vipers bugloss, sea campion and wild carrot it will support a huge range of creatures from bees, butterflies, moths and beetles to the amphibians, birds, bats and other mammals that feed on them. Not only will this biodiversity hotspot be fantastic for educational visits, but it will also present a fantastic opportunity for the local community and the many visitors to the beach to engage and connect with nature.”

# Christmas in Stoke Fleming



# Christmas in Stoke Fleming



# CRAB SHELL



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## Dartmouth Caring

*Bringing people together, improving wellbeing, supporting those in need.*



We have many services to help you and your loved ones, including assistance with benefits and housing, hospital transport, and dementia support. Our regular programme of lunch clubs and social activities are for everyone - we support people of all ages in Dartmouth and the surrounding villages. Please contact us for more information or to join our growing team of volunteers.

[enquiries@dartmouthcaring.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@dartmouthcaring.co.uk)  
[facebook.com/dartmouthcaring](https://facebook.com/dartmouthcaring)  
Tel: 01803 835 384



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[www.SouthHamsHandyman.com](http://www.SouthHamsHandyman.com)

## 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 9th February at 2.30pm when Raymond Warburton will give a lecture highlighting the strong link between art and literature: “**Poems that Inspired Paintings**”. During the lecture several paintings will be considered, and willing and forewarned members of the society will read sections of the poems which inspired the paintings. Symbols, illusions and secret meanings will be explained and a few surprises will be guaranteed.

**Juliet Lambert**

## 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. The next meeting is at 2.15pm on **5th February**: Louise Brown will talk to us about “**Liz Taylor’s Jewellery**”.

Contact: **Geraldine**: [geraldine22@sky.com](mailto:geraldine22@sky.com)

**Friends of Rowcroft** – contact Rosemary Minshall ([rose.minshall@btinternet.com](mailto:rose.minshall@btinternet.com)) for tickets

### Dartmouth Friends of Rowcroft Soup & Dessert Lunch

Thursday 26th February 2026, 12 - 1pm

The Sportsman's Arms, Hemborough Post, TQ9 7DE



rowcroft  
hospice friends

Marquee available for  
drinks & coffee until 3pm

Ticket: £12.00

## Ash Rescue Centre

Ash Rescue Centre began in 2013 after we took on ten elderly rescue horses. At present, we have 35 horses who have come to us from cases of neglect, abuse or abandonment. We work with the bigger charities to help them provide a home for the older horses who would otherwise be put to sleep.

Giving these horses a home for life included the aim of caring for them as naturally as possible. This meant we needed to give them a wide range of habitats and plants to wander through and graze on to keep them all healthy. This has in turn transformed our land into a wildlife haven. We have an abundance of wildlife, including dormice, barn owls and otters to name a few, all enjoying the ponds, hedges, woods and wildflower meadows we created. Having more wildlife on site we soon realised that Devon is severely lacking in wildlife rescue facilities, and this started us on the path of helping to rescue and care for our native wildlife. So far, we have rescued and released over 1,500 seabirds including gulls, gannets, guillemots, razorbills and cormorants. We have also helped a huge number of other birds including swans, owls, kestrels, woodpeckers and swallows.



Planning is underway to build facilities here at Ash that will enable us to expand the wildlife aspect and further include the community, as well as enabling us to safely provide education and research into the important subject of how best to care for our domesticated animals whilst protecting our nature and wildlife. See <https://www.ashrescuecentre.com/> (Photo: Monty. Enjoying the fields at Ash)

Planning is underway to build facilities here at Ash that will enable us to expand the wildlife aspect and further include the community, as well as enabling us to safely provide education and research into the important subject of how best to care for our domesticated animals whilst protecting our nature and wildlife. See <https://www.ashrescuecentre.com/> (Photo: Monty. Enjoying the fields at Ash)

## Short Mat Bowls



The club held its Triples Competition on Tuesday 16th December 2025; 4 teams of 3 were drawn to play each other over 5 ends. It was a lively match played on 2 mats and scored by member Bill. The winners were Christine, Tina and Bunji. We always welcome new members and anyone who wants to try the game. One of our winners Tina has only been playing a couple of months so very well done to her.

(Short Mat Bowls Triples Gang 2025)

**Debbie Morris**

## 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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## 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.

### Stoke Fleming Village Shop and Post Office

	<b>Shop – 771119</b>	<b>Post Office – 770229</b>
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)

8th February 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.

## February 2026

Sun	1	
Mon	2	
Tue	3	08.00 – Tickets on sale for Community Kitchen lunch – Shop
Wed	4	17.30-19.00 – Breast Cancer Support Group – Health Centre 19.00 – Parish Council Meeting – Village Hall
Thur	5	14.15 – Flower Club – Village Hall
Fri	6	14.00 – Craft Club – Village Hall
Sat	7	
Sun	8	10.00-11.30 – Loam Rangers site open
Mon	9	14.30 – TASDAK - Flavel
Tue	10	
Wed	11	10.30 – Probus – Stoke Lodge 14.00 – Wednesday Ladies Valentine’s Lunch – Village Hall
Thur	12	<b>COPY DATE FOR MARCH MAGAZINE</b> 10.00 – u3a - Flavel
Fri	13	12.30 – Community Kitchen lunch – Village Hall Green Dragon re-opens
Sat	14	
Sun	15	
Mon	16	Half term starts
Tue	17	14.30 – Pancake Afternoon – St Peter’s Church
Wed	18	
Thur	19	18.00-19.00 – <i>Stoke Fleming Voice</i> AGM – Village Hall
Fri	20	Half term ends
Sat	21	
Sun	22	Library Consultation closes
Mon	23	
Tue	24	
Wed	25	10.30 – Probus – Stoke Lodge
Thur	26	10.30 – Dartmouth Caring Social – Village Hall 12.00 – Friends of Rowcroft Lunch – Sportsman’s Arms
Fri	27	
Sat	28	

## **Parish Council Minutes Summary – December 2025**

A monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 3rd December 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: Cllr David Harris (Chair), Cllr Tim Moseley, Cllr Phil Elliott, Cllr Belinda Duffy (quorate at 3 councillors).

Also invited: District Cllr Simon Rake, Clerk S A Whelon.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Cllr John Belli, Cllr Jay Floyd, County Cllr Julian Brazil, Cllr Jack Handley, Cllr Bella Johnston, Cllr Tilly Crowther,

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> November 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 one item – proposed new car park.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT.** No report.

### **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

All proposals for local government re-organisation have been sent to government minister.

In process of setting budget – gap of around £3m, now down to £200k. Central government settlement as yet unknown.

Holiday park structures – Cllr Rake is planning a meeting with enforcement.

Venn Lane – sign has been erected “unsuitable for HGV”.

### **COMMUNITY**

- a) Phone box Dartmouth Rd – a meeting is planned for refurbishment work detail in the New Year.
- b) Volunteer edition March issue Voice magazine and possible event Village Hall. Volunteers invited to assist with red box refurbishment and painting suggested. To be updated January pcm.

### **MAINTENANCE**

- a) Toilets – School Road
  - i. Works update – alarm details awaited.
- b) Replacement benches for the playpark have now been delivered, and will be secured to locations in the grounds.
- c) Contracts update – vacancy for village grass cutting contractor. One possibility discussed, applicants to contact clerk.
- d) Bidders wall, clerk has contacted county councillor regarding quality of repair.

- e) Deerpark bench damaged – will be repaired.
- f) Ravensbourne wall repair. Clerk to write to Devon Highways to ask for a list of road closure companies.

**PLANNING:** All noted.

## **APPLICATIONS**

### **a) Reference: 3157/25/VAR**

Proposal: Application for variation of condition 2 (approved plans) and condition 3 (materials) of planning consent 2858/22/HHO.

Site Address: Bay House, Bay View Close, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0QQ.

Site visit has taken place. Separate application was recommended. Partially supported, Cllr Duffy actioned.

### **b) Application Number: 3185/25/CLP**

Location Address: Rowan House Venn Lane Stoke Fleming TQ6 0QF.

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for proposed replacement of two windows to two aluminium framed French doors, replacement of existing French doors with upvc window and removal of a conservatory.

Status: Under Consideration.

Application Type: Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Use.

### **c) Reference: 3249/25/CLE**

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for commencement of works for construction of new garage storage & pool as approved under application ref. 1277/19/HHO. Site Address: Stone Barn Mill Lane Stoke Fleming TQ6 0QZ. Query to be raised.

### **d) Reference: 3408/25/FUL**

Proposal: Retrospective planning application for the retention of agricultural welfare cabin on agricultural land. Site Address: Bay Tree Barn, Ash, TQ6 0LR.

Supported.

## **DECISIONS**

### **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: Refused. Application Type: Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions

**WITHDRAWN.** None.

Clerk is on leave from 18th December 2025 to 5th January 2026.

**Date of next meeting: 14th January 2026, 7pm. Full council budget and precept decision.**

Two council contracts vacant for self-employed:

**Village grass cutting**

Grass cutting and weed spraying around the village.

**Playing Field grass cutting.**

Cutting the playing field grass twice each month April – September to a maximum of 12 cuts and once a month October to March as required. Additional cuts which may be required. The area to be cut is the whole of the playing field enclosed by the children’s play area fence and fence/walls in the north, the playing field side of the hedge in the west and south and the Village Hall in the east.

Further details for these contracts from the parish clerk.

**Email: [clerk@stokefleming.org](mailto:clerk@stokefleming.org)**

**Parish Council Minutes Summary – January 2026**

A monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 14th January 2026 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: Cllr David Harris (Chair), Cllr John Belli (Vice-Chair), Cllr Tim Moseley, Cllr Tilly Crowther, Cllr Phil Elliott, Cllr Belinda Duffy. Also invited: Clerk S A Whelon

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Simon Rake, Cllr Bella Johnston, Cllr Jay Floyd, Cllr Julian Brazil, Cllr Jack Handley.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 3rd December 2025, AND PLANNING SITE MEETING NOTES** were signed by the Chairman of the meeting as true and correct records

**COMMUNITY**

Phone box Dartmouth Rd – Sub-committee progress. A meeting is planned to discuss painting. Volunteers required for painting and refurbishment.

**ROADS & TRANSPORT**

a) Slapton Line – letter from Strete PC – **supported**. Slapton Line meeting tomorrow at Follaton House.

b) South Hams Way – permission for low marker post in the grass verge. Existing marker is hidden in shrubbery. **Permission granted**. Cllr Moseley to return to Ramblers.

Redlap to Shady Lane link will be open soon.

## MAINTENANCE

- a) Toilets – School Road
  - i. Works update – disabled toilet alarms system. Nothing heard back from brewery. Clerk to investigate insurance situation re toilet without an alarm system.
- b) Replacement recycled plastic benches for the playpark have now been fitted.
- c) Contracts update – vacancy still open for village grass cutting contractor. Splitting the job may be a possibility. Village Hall contractor to be contacted for extra work.
- d) Bus shelter repair quote Estimate to repair and re-clad, lower part to 2 sides and rear. **Approved.** Devon CC to pay 50% of invoice.
- e) Swings repair. Planned to be carried out by maintenance team.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) Application Number: 3489/25/AGR  
Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR  
Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed multipurpose agricultural building measuring 27m (L) x 9m (B) x 6.1m height to ridge.  
Status: Under Consideration. Application Type: Agricultural Determination.
- b) Application Number: 3488/25/AGR  
Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR  
Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed agricultural storage building measuring 41m (L) x 9m (B) x 6.1m height to ridge. Status: Under Consideration. Application Type: Agricultural Determination.
- c) Application Number: 3482/25/FUL  
Proposal: Alterations to convert 3no. B& B rooms to 2no. holiday lets, alterations to annex, conversion of conservatory to workshop, and 3no. porch extensions.  
Site Address: Fairholme, Bay View Estate, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0QX.
- d) Application Number: 3471/25/PDM  
Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural barns to 5no. dwellinghouses (class C3) & for associated development (Class Q (a+b))  
Location: Eastdown Farm Blackawton TQ9 7AW.
- e) Application Number: 3586/25/HHO  
Proposal: Householder application for extension to existing dwelling & existing garage  
Site Address: 13 Venn Lane, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0QH.
- f) Application Number: 3311/25/CLP  
Location Address: Ash House Ash TQ6 0LR.

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for proposed single storey rear (east facing) extension.

Status: Under Consideration. Application Type: Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Use.

## **DECISIONS**

a) Application Number: 3157/25/VAR

Location Address: Bay House, Bay View Close, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0QQ

Proposal: Application for variation of condition 2 (approved plans) and condition 3 (materials) of planning consent 2858/22/HHO for various amendments to window fenestration and new proposed finish to front gable.

Status: Approved. Application Type: Variation or Removal of Condition.

b) Application Number: 3185/25/CLP

Location Address: Rowan House Venn Lane Stoke Fleming TQ6 0QF.

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for proposed replacement of two windows to two aluminium framed French doors, replacement of existing French doors with upvc window and removal of a conservatory.

Status: Approved. Application Type: Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Use.

c) Application Number: 3489/25/AGR

Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR.

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed multipurpose agricultural building measuring 27m (L) x 9m (B) x 6.1m height to ridge.

Status: Refused. Application Type: Agricultural Determination.

d) Application Number: 3488/25/AGR

Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR.

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed agricultural storage building measuring 41m (L) x 9m (B) x 6.1m height to ridge.

Status: Refused. Application Type: Agricultural Determination.

**WITHDRAWN – None.**

Additionally,

Ravensbourne wall repair suggested postponement to August 2026 when there will be more time and hopefully less cost for road closure. Cllr Elliott to report back to Highways.

a) Application for grit bin to be placed between Ash Rescue and Bowden house. Clerk has contacted County Cllr Brazil.

**Date of next meeting: 4th February 2026 7pm**

## **VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED!**

If you would like to help paint the Dartmouth Road telephone box, please contact the team via the Parish Clerk.

[Clerk@stokefleming.org](mailto:Clerk@stokefleming.org)

### **Dart Valley u3a**

On Thursday 12th February we will meet at The Flavel Arts Centre to hear Stoke Fleming's Peter Barker speaking about: "**Persia Past and Present Iran**".

The Persian Empire existed as one of the most powerful and complex empires of the ancient world. Peter presents ten topics and "observations" from the founding of the ancient Persian empire by Cyrus the Great, Zoroastrians and Armenians, poetry and gardens, amazing mosques, the role of Shi'ism, government repression and the friendliness of many ordinary people of modern day Iran.

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.

Remember, 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**

### **Who Cares Club**

Are you right now caring for a loved one or friend or have 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 phoning me on 01803 835030.

## Loam Rangers



Well, we have started 2026 with plenty of sunshine but those temperatures were a bit on the low side!

Our thanks to those who helped at the site clean-up day on 25th January. And here are a few reminders for the coming weeks and months:

**8th February** is the next (and final) winter opening.

**1st March** will be the first regular Sunday opening for 2026 – and every Sunday through to November 2026.

Lookout for the email to renew your membership – likely to hit your inbox in early March. Where possible please pay by BACS as instructed in the email. Old fashioned cash will be accepted on site but gives us an issue when banking. We will not be accepting cheques this year.

Volunteers – as ever we rely so heavily on our fantastic volunteers to look after the site each Sunday. Please look out for the call to arms and register your preferred Sundays. It is so important we keep up the volunteer numbers to adequately man the site and spread the workload. If you have not volunteered before – try it, it is only 1.5 hours on a Sunday, and you get to meet quite a few fellow parishioners.

Look out for the date for the AGM – in April. Hopefully, we will have an exact date for the next issue of the *Voice*.

Finally, we are still looking for someone to join the committee to assist with the treasurer duties, 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 wonderful team delivering a great community service that is so well supported by the village. The role would grow over time with a view to taking 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](mailto:sgshakespeare@btinternet.com) 07970 137311

**Paul Noonan** – [pnoonan14@gmail.com](mailto:pnoonan14@gmail.com) (Volunteer enquiries)

## What to Do in the Garden in February

Even though it's still cold, the first hints of spring are here! Snowdrops are flowering, daffodils are peeking through, and the days are getting longer. There's plenty to do both outdoors and indoors this month.



### Pruning & Planting:

- Prune roses: remove spindly, dead or crossing branches; cut remaining stems by half above outward-facing buds
- Prune wisteria: trim last year's shoots to 3–4 buds from the main stems
- Prune evergreen hedges
- Plant new shrubs and trees if the ground isn't frozen; stake and water well



### Tidying Up:

- Tie up loose climbers and check stakes/tree ties
- Pull up any winter weeds
- Clear fallen leaves to prevent slugs and snails hiding spots

### Seeds to Sow Indoors:

- Onions, leeks, celeriac, tomatoes, cucumbers,
- Sow in small pots on a warm, bright windowsill or greenhouse.

## Seed Potatoes:

- From mid-February, start chitting early seed potatoes. Place them in a cool, bright spot with eyes pointing up; shoots will be ready for planting in 4–6 weeks

Even if it's chilly, there's nothing like a bit of gardening to feel like spring is on the way!

Pop into Gardentime this February to see all our fresh stock, seeds, bulbs, and tools to help you get your garden ready for the year ahead.

## Start Bay Performers

I am pleased to report that we have chosen our next production, which is in fact two, one act plays.



The first is a very short one act comedy "When the Cat's Away" by Gwen Pierce. It involves a timid lady

who wants to dismiss her housekeeper but is reluctant to confront her. Her plight is complicated by the appearance of a mouse!

We intend to perform this short play at 7.15pm before supper is served.

The second one act play is a mystery, "Anti-Clockwise" by Muriel and Sidney Box. This will be performed as usual, after supper. The one act begins with the death of an elderly aunt, discovered by one of her nieces. However, another niece suspects foul play. The plot revolves around time and the chimes of the grandfather clock!

The plays will be performed at the Village Hall on the Friday 27th and Saturday 28th March. Doors Open 6.30pm. Performance begins 7.15pm followed by supper at 7.30pm. Please see the poster in the magazine.

We continue to meet every Monday evening at 7.00pm at Stoke Fleming Village Hall. Please come along if you would like to be involved.

We very much look forward to seeing you all at the production in March.

**JB**

# Start Bay Performers Present

*2 plays  
for the price of 1*



## 1. WHEN THE CAT'S AWAY (7.15pm)

A short one act play about a timid lady trying to decide how to pluck up courage to dismiss her housekeeper. The appearance of a mouse complicates things!

## *SUPPER IS SERVED* (7.30pm)

## 2. ANTI-CLOCKWISE (8.00pm)

A one act play following the discovery of a dead aunt by one niece and the accusations of foul play by another. Events are related to the time and chimes of a grandfather clock.



**Fri 27th & Sat 28th  
March, 2026 at  
Stoke Fleming  
Village Hall**

**Tickets at £15, including supper, available from  
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## Dartmouth Walk & Talk

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
5 Feb	10.30	3	Kingswear circular with estuary and river views (£)	10.30 Kingswear railway station.
12 Feb	10.30	2	Blackpool Sands via Venn Lane	Meet outside Sainsbury's (opposite Medical Centre) at 10.30. Return from Blackpool Sands on no. 93 bus or walk back.
19 Feb	10.30 or 11.00	2	Slapton Ley and village circular	10.30 no. 93 bus from Dartmouth pontoon or 11.00 Slapton Turn/War Memorial car park.
26 Feb	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.



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<b>Liza Pulman &amp; Joe Stilgoe: Hooray for Hollywood (LIVE)</b>		Mon 2 Feb
<b>An Evening with Explorer Ann Daniels (LIVE)</b>		Thu 5 Feb
<b>RBO Woolf Works (event Cinema)</b>		Mon 9 Feb
<b>Friday @ The Flavel: Rupert Egerton-Smith (Piano)</b>		Fri 13 Feb
<b>Attention All Shipping: A Celebration of The Shipping Forecast (LIVE)</b>		Sat 14 Feb
<b>Hamnet (12A) (film)</b>	From	Tue 17 Feb
<b>The Zoo that comes to you: Scarlet Oak Theatre (LIVE)</b> Children's Puppet Theatre – Half Term Treat!		Thu 19 Feb 11am & 2pm
<b>The Last Waltz: John Suchet (LIVE)</b>		Fri 20 Feb
<b>Joey The Lips (LIVE) Standing Event</b>		Sat 21 Feb
<b>A Musical Evening with Supper (Flavel Fundraiser)</b>		Thu 26 Feb
<b>NT Live: The Audience (Helen Mirren) (event cinema)</b>		Fri 27 Feb
<b>Moscow Drug Club (LIVE)</b>		Sat 28 Feb
<b>RBO Giselle (event cinema)</b>		Tue 3 Mar
<b>Othello (event cinema) New production</b>		Wed 4 Mar



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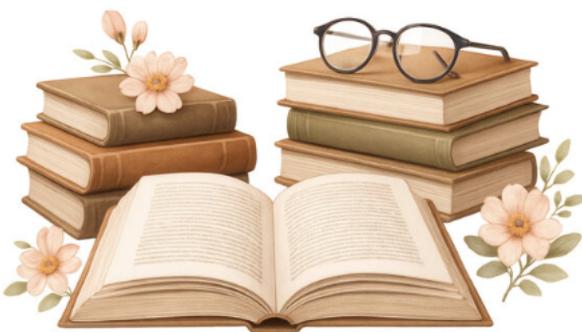
Live Life in Balance

## Stoke Fleming Library News

You may be aware that the future of Devon Libraries is rather uncertain.

There is a suggestion that Stoke Fleming Library's opening hours will be changed from three, two-hour sessions a week on Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays to two, three-hour sessions on Monday and Saturday.

Devon County Council is conducting a consultation (which closes on 22nd February) about the future of the library service in the county. If you are interested in the future of our library service, please do give your view on the proposed changes and/or propose any alternatives. Survey forms are available from the library or online at <https://devonlibraries.commonplace.is/>.



Please continue to support us. Don't forget we have a public computer available for 2 hours free each day and we can do A4 photocopying and printing in B&W and colour for you. 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 –all free – and there's a terrific range for you to choose from. Ample free parking when you visit in person which is a bonus.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

**Sue Taylor**

## Stoke Fleming Village Hall Update.

We continue our extensive programme of upgrading our Village Hall. Since my last article we have been busy adding new bathroom taps to reduce water bills, conducting our annual check of electrics and, thanks to Sue and Annabel, generating a new Health and Safety Manual together with an updated Fire Risk Assessment.

We are currently awaiting permission from the National Grid to install solar panels to our Hall roof and look forward to commencing the installation in the near future.

The Trustees once again agreed to the use of the car park during the recent road closure, for school drop offs, and agreed with Stagecoach to use the Hall as a turning point for their public transport during that time.

The Christmas Sing-Along on 13th December was an overwhelming success and very well supported. The “Brass Monkeys” Band played an array of popular carols, and the audience were guided by the talented Lucy Hingston who led the singing. Thanks to Jill Wallace for helping to organise the event, and to all the supporters from bar staff and ticket sellers to lifters and shifters. Our fundraising raffle, the 12 Hampers Of Christmas, was also drawn at the end of the show and thanks go to all those individuals and organisations that donated prizes, bought and sold tickets and made up the hampers. These fund-raising events are led by Gary Rapps, who is an inspiration to us all with his energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the Village Hall.



The Trustees decided to rename the Main Hall “The John Goddard Room”, in recognition of John and his contribution over the years to the Village Hall. Barbara Goddard came to the Christmas Sing-Along and saw the unveiling of the new sign which now hangs proudly over the door.

2026 marks a very important milestone in the life of the Village Hall, as we reach our 25th birthday in April, so please keep an eye out for some exciting events this year and ways to mark the occasion.

I would like to thank all our Trustees who contribute to the running of the Hall and organise these projects, which are crucial to ensure its survival as a village asset. Thank you also to all our special parishioners who support us in all that we do.

One vital role is that of the Hall Manager. We have been lucky to have had the continued support of Kerry Southern for several years. Sadly, Kerry needs to step back from Hall duties this year and so we are looking for someone to fill his boots. Please see the advert in the magazine for more details and do contact us if you feel you might be suited to the role.

**John Belli**

## **Yoga with Ellie**

Yoga with Ellie at Stoke Fleming Village Hall every Wednesday 09.15-10.15am. Come and join our small, friendly group for mixed ability gentle flow yoga. Classes are crafted each week to suit the seasons and needs of individuals. One-to-one tuition, including pre/post-natal and rehabilitation, also available on request. For more information, please contact **Ellie** on 07778 208080.



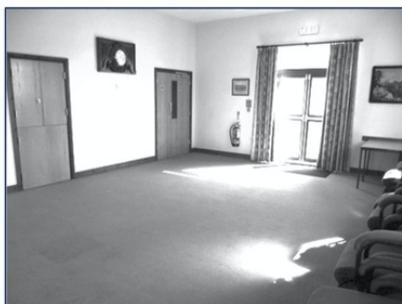
**Stoke Fleming Village Hall needs a**

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**If that's you then please call Gary on 07885 348435 or email us for further info at [enquiries@stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk)**

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## **Sport, Exercise, Activity at the Village Hall**

### **Mondays**

19.00 Start Bay Performers.

### **Tuesdays**

09.30-10.30 Zest Stretch and Reset Yoga. Book [www.zest-yoga.co.uk](http://www.zest-yoga.co.uk) / Kirsty: 07534 441715.

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](http://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](mailto:julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk).

14.00-16.30 Short Mat Bowls. Contact Debbie: 01803 770305.

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 Ellie: 07778 208080. \*

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

### **Fridays**

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

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

*For Tiny Feet Yoga contact Thea: 07429 525294, <https://tinyfeetyoga.co.uk>.*

## Prickles in a Pickle

Here we are in 2026, and we have already had our first strimmed casualty, as well as two dog attacks, a broken foot, lung worm pneumonia and several small juveniles wobbling about trying to find food.



Hedgehogs admitted to Prickles in a Pickle 2025	
By Illness.....	
Netting	7
Strimmed	21
Jaw and teeth	17
Dog attack	15
Drowning, ponds drains	15
Baloon syndrome	4
Pop off	3
Nest disturbance	8
RTA	19
Burns	6
Trapped	12
Sump oil	1
Stuck in tyre	1
Found in inspection pit	1
Hoglets under 200g	83
DOA	20
PTS	16
RIP	220
Parasites	477

The stats for last year are in and nationally show another worrying decline in numbers. There has been another international seminar on the status of our hedgehogs and what we are all trying to do about it.

You may wonder why the hedgehog is such a concern, why it is such an important part of our ecology. Well, they are what we know in layman's terms as a middle species. While omnivore in nature, and like all wildlife, opportunistic, they are primarily insectivores.

World-wide we have been facing an insect Armageddon. Those of us of a certain age will remember having to stop the car and clear the headlights

and windscreens of insect bodies, regularly throughout a journey. When did you last do that? Have you ever done that?

With long dry spells, the ground becomes too hard to dig, and in the monsoon-like prolonged wet spells, everything becomes waterlogged and nests get flooded and the occupants washed away, soaked and cold.

Last year we saw, locally, many more insects, especially butterflies, which we feel was a direct result of a local farmer planting meadows with a mixed diversity of grasses and flowers. This was part of a government initiative sadly now removed. Ash Rescue have done phenomenal work rebuilding hedgerows, regenerating ponds and lakes and planting meadows, amongst many other things.

Let 2026 be the year we all plant for nature and give it a home.

**Judy and Alan**

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## Friends of St Peter's



We are very sad to report that John Harrow died a few days before Christmas. John and Rokie Shiffner were founding members of the group who became the Friends. As Chairman he recruited members and raised funds for the replacement of the weathervane, overhauling the clock and repainting its face, and refurbishing the stained-glass windows. Many social events were organised to fund these projects. John is shown

on the right with the weathervane and cheque. He will be missed by all who knew him.



On a lighter note, FoSP has financed the resurfacing of the path from the war memorial to the Coffin Walk gate. The first part in tarmacadam, the second in shingle. We were permitted to replace like for like. Ali Giradôt with John Dietz organised the first section and John and Rosemary Minshall the second. The shingle was laid by “volunteers” from the Naval College.



The recent Christmas Tree Festival was a wonderful success and a fitting tribute to Shirley Ruddlesden's memory. Caroline was an amazing organiser and constantly cheerful throughout! The event raised nearly £3,000 towards the kitchen project. Our tree was based on Sea Shanties as we shall be putting on an evening late April with that theme. We are continuing to raise funds for the kitchen and disabled toilet project. This is a much-needed improvement to the facilities in the Church and a chance to provide much needed space for a disabled toilet and baby changing facilities. Sandra and Suzie decorated the tree, with the help of Jon.

**Suzie Dodsworth**



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## The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

We are planning a full programme of events for 2026, which kicks off in February with a lunch meeting on Wednesday 11th at the Stoke Lodge Hotel. The meeting will commence at 10.30am, where after coffee our speaker Peter Edwards is going to tell us all about what he calls “**Cataclysmic Italy**”. In other words, all the “ologies” – the violent geology, seismology and vulcanology experienced by that wonderful country.

Then on Wednesday 25th February, again starting at 10.30 at the Stoke Lodge Hotel, there will be a coffee morning meeting. Our speaker this time will be Tim Freeman, who will rather intriguingly tell us a tale about a “**Flood equal to 10 times all the rivers in the world**”.

Probus is a friendly social club aimed at retired gentlemen who wish to remain socially active. We would welcome some new members, so if you would like to come along to either of these meetings and experience the camaraderie for yourself, we would be very pleased to see you. Please call me on 01803 770739 to make an arrangement.

**Peter Hales**

## Stoke Lodge Hotel

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## Wednesday Ladies

Wednesday Ladies will be meeting on the second Wednesday in February (11th February) at 14.00 for their Valentine's Lunch followed by their Annual Meeting in the Ron Harris Room in the Village Hall. We are pleased to announce that the 100 Club Draw will take place after lunch.

# ALADDIN'S CAVE



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WANTED	Fabric, wool, textiles, resources, materials equipment etc for textiles and craft area at the education intervention centre. Email <a href="mailto:laurabethc@hotmail.co.uk">laurabethc@hotmail.co.uk</a> .	07501 086610

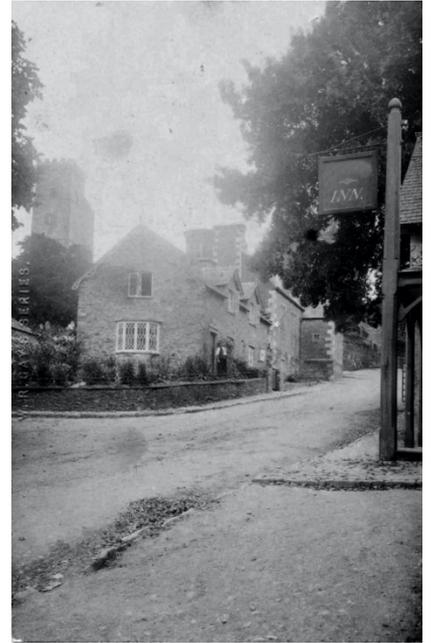
*Stoke Fleming Voice does not make a charge for advertising in "Aladdin's Cave" but if your advert is successful, we would much appreciate a donation. See inside back cover for our bank details.*

## Where are we now?

Only Emily Bridge and Jean Saunders knew we were in Ashsington for the Dec/Jan picture.

Let's see how you get on with this month's picture going back to 1914 - a lot easier - or is it?

Now the only question is where are we now?



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MP for South Devon	Caroline Voaden, <a href="mailto:caroline.voaden.mp@parliament.uk">caroline.voaden.mp@parliament.uk</a>	658461
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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 2026

(Area Code: 01803)

100 Club	Sandra Ingham, <a href="mailto:sfvh100club@gmail.com">sfvh100club@gmail.com</a>	07889 573087
Bellringing	John Dietz	770515
Bowling Club	Liz Mallyon	712799
Church – Rector	Rev Matt Gorton, <a href="mailto:revgorton@hotmail.com">revgorton@hotmail.com</a>	906861
Church Visiting Group	Rosemary Minshall	770300
Churchwarden	John Dietz	770515
Craft Club	Lorraine Forman, <a href="mailto:Lorraineforman@gmail.com">Lorraineforman@gmail.com</a>	
Cricket Club	Stacey Gilbert	07931 384017
Dart Valley u3a	Suzie Dodsworth	770134
Friends of St Peter's	Peter Barker	770556
Hort & Sport Show	<a href="mailto:enquiries.hortandsport@gmail.com">enquiries.hortandsport@gmail.com</a>	
Little Lanterns	Lisa Callard	770244
Loam Rangers	Steve Shakespeare	07970 137311
Parish Council	Sharon Whelon, <a href="mailto:clerk@stokefleming.org">clerk@stokefleming.org</a> or see <a href="https://www.stokefleming.org/councillors">https://www.stokefleming.org/councillors</a>	
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	Debbie Morris	770305
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Village Hall Management Committee	John Belli, Chairman of Trustees	07538 156864
Wednesday Ladies	Jill Fell	771137
Youth Club	Rev Matt Gorton, <a href="mailto:stokeflemingyouthclub@gmail.com">stokeflemingyouthclub@gmail.com</a>	906861