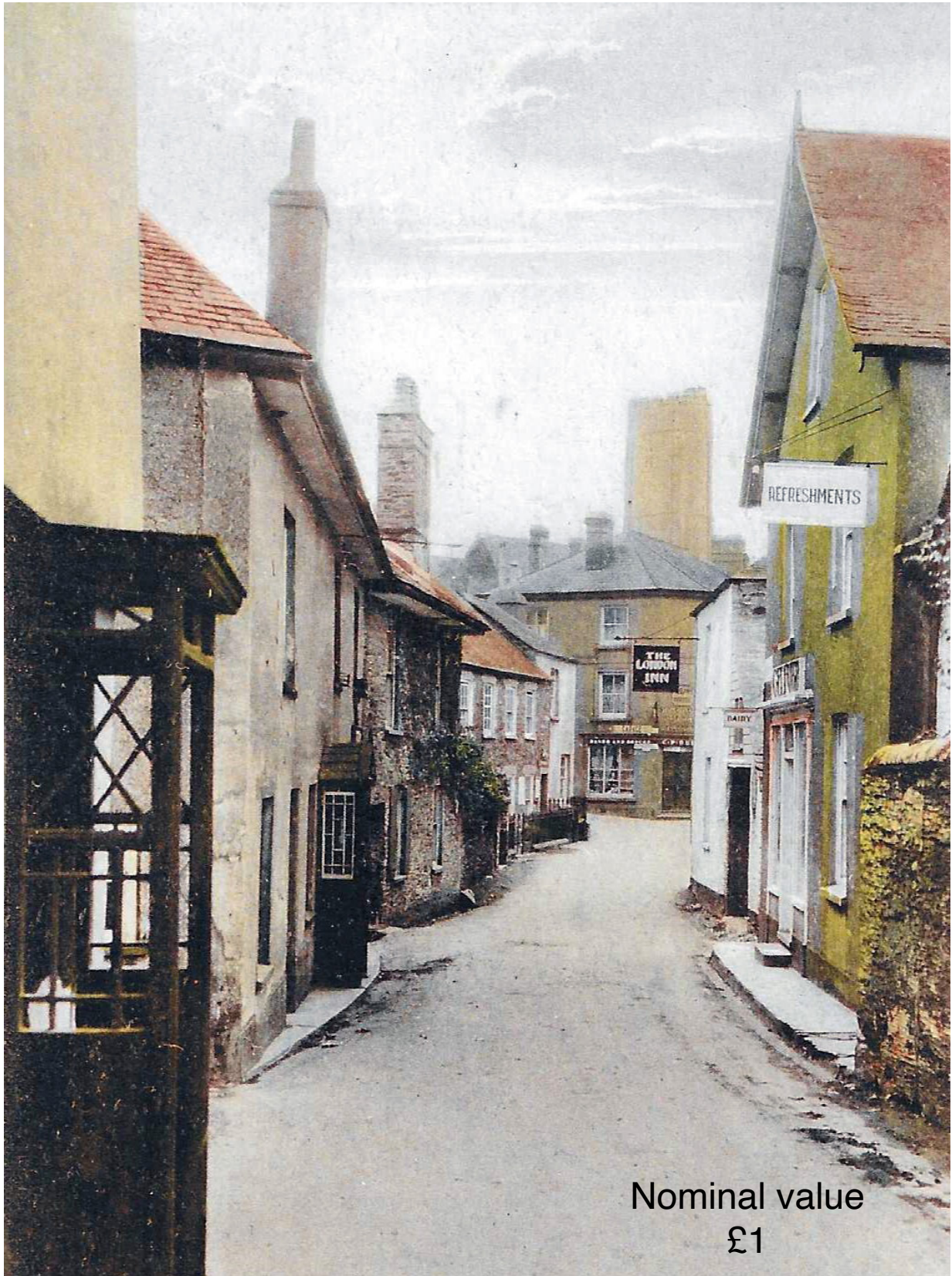


Stoke Fleming Voice

September 2026



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Editorial



As I write this on one of the hottest days of the year, sheltering from the sun behind closed curtains, I reflect that we – as residents of rural and coastal Stoke Fleming – have been reasonably fortunate during this exceptional Summer. Whilst we watch our gardens wilting and our lawns turning brown, we must spare a thought for others living further east or in city high-rise flats, or holidaying in Europe, who have had much higher temperatures and wildfires to contend with. But we also think of our farmers whose livestock still need to be fed and whose crops are not flourishing – a very difficult time for them.

By the time this magazine arrives on your doormat Dartmouth Regatta will be over and the Hort and Sport Show will be happening. Despite everyone's desperate need for rain, we do hope for fine weather for both these events. But after that, thoughts inevitably turn to autumn, and even Christmas and the Christmas Tree Festival – they will all arrive alarmingly quickly! So, time to get those plans started during September.

This magazine contains news of the usual fare of varied events for September, including a showing of the film “**People's Emergency Briefing**” in the Village Hall, and a talk about the magnificent Pinwill carvings in St Peter's Church – we have a couple of fine examples of these and there are others in various churches in the area.

There is also a piece on the new Local Authority arrangements for Devon (see page 8). There are links to websites giving further details and an opportunity to support Caroline Voaden's petition.

Anne Bailey

If you would like to contribute an article, Reader's View or Letter to the Editor, please email stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com, or see our website 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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An article or advertisement in this magazine does not mean that the Magazine Team endorses any of the views expressed, or the goods or services offered.

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

SFV Noticeboard

New Member of the editorial team

We warmly welcome Chris Donlan who joined the Stoke Fleming Voice editorial team in August. He has written a brief introduction which is on page 19. We look forward to working together.



Posters for Village Events

We are happy to receive posters advertising village events for publication. However, owing to the cost of printing we have to make a small charge. Full page posters are charged at £20 unless covered by a donation.

Stagecoach Buses

The 93 bus route between Dartmouth and Kingsbridge is being amalgamated with the number 3 route between Kingsbridge and Plymouth, creating a through route. The timetable between Dartmouth and Stoke Fleming has changed slightly; details are on page 26. The local bus service between Dartmouth and Slapton will continue for the time being, beyond the end of August.

Letters to the Editor

Publication of articles in *Stoke Fleming Voice* does not mean that the magazine team endorses the opinions expressed. We welcome contributions from readers; these can include a Reader's View (an "Op Ed") or a Letter to the Editor. Publication of all content is at the Editors' discretion.

Bob's 109-Mile Challenge

Our former local postman, Bob Shearwood, is taking on an incredible challenge between 28th and 31st August — **walking 109 miles in just 4 days** to raise money for Alzheimer's UK. It's a fantastic challenge for a very worthy cause. If you'd like to support Bob and help him reach his fundraising target, you can donate using this link: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/robert-shearwood-6>.

Volunteers Needed

The cut grass in the wildflower area of St Peter's churchyard will need raking again on 2nd or 3rd September, after its autumn strim. See page 21 for details. We hope you can help.

Personal Announcements

If you would like a Personal Announcement (moving into the Village, a birth, a wedding, graduation, etc) to feature on our Noticeboard page please send details to stokeflemingvoice@gmail.com.

Reader's Corner

September's now misleading (Latin septem = seven) name derives from the earliest Roman calendar in which March (named in honour of Mars the god of war) was the first month, before the addition of January and February. September's message also seems a little confused. For most of my life it has marked the start of a new academic year. Thus it is associated with the excitement and aspiration of new beginnings and challenges. That's September in Stoke Fleming: the visitors have (mostly) gone and "normal" life gears up again.

But September is also the beginning of meteorological autumn, "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness", a time perhaps for some refreshing rain (as well as the equinoctial gales). Autumn offers its own beauty for our appreciation, an opportunity for gratitude for so much, and a challenge to ensure that our own lives too are fruitful in their harvest time. But autumn also brings with it an inescapable note of decline and decay, of diminishing daylight and the ineluctable march of time. Not least for those of us in the autumn of our years, the season is a warning to spare a serious thought for the really big questions of life and death.

Most experts will tell you that Tennyson wrote his poem *Crossing the Bar* on the Isle of Wight, referencing the tidal sluice through the Needles Channel. But we know he visited Salcombe, and the infamous bar across the Salcombe estuary has to me long seemed a more precise and evocative inspiration for the poem. Rather than autumn, it is the evening falling tide which Tennyson uses as a picture for the "ebb" of human life and the inevitable, final journey which one day will take us each across the "bar" of death.

*Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.*

*But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
boundless deep
Turns again home.*

*Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;*

*For tho' from out our bourne of Time and
Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.*

Tennyson's language may not be explicit, but for me the Christian message is very clear. The waters may be "dark", but Jesus Christ is the "Pilot" who knows the way, the "Pilot" for now unseen but ever present, in whom I have put my trust, the "Pilot" whom after death I shall know "face to face".

Wishing you a fruitful, and a thoughtful September, and the joy of having your Pilot on board,

Peter Barker.

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

St Peter's Church Services

September

Sun 6th	10.15am Prayer Time. 11.00am Holy Communion. 6.30pm Choral Evensong.
Sun 13th	11.00am Morning Worship.
Sun 20th	11.00am Communion by extension.
Sun 27th	11.00am Morning Worship.

Little Stars

Little Stars will open our church doors on 14th September for the usual time of 9.00 to 9.30am.

We hope you have all had a wonderful summer and lots of adventures to share. We have missed you all and look forward to seeing all our Little Stars. Everyone is welcome to join us, so come along and have a tea or coffee amongst friends.

Heather, Sue and Peter

From the Registers

18th July: Wedding – Phoebe Eynon-Lewis and Daniel Chivers.

14th August: Leon James Hayward, Funeral followed by cremation.

Harvest Festival



Dartmouth and District Foodbank will be collecting food donations for the Harvest Festival in early October. This is usually done in conjunction with the village school. Further information will be available when arrangements have been made with the school. Information will be available on their website at dartmouthanddistrictfoodbank.org.uk

and their Facebook page "Dartmouth Friday Hub inc. Dartmouth Food Bank".

Village Life: Suzie Dodsworth

Suzie and her husband Mike, along with Teddy their five-year-old cockerpoo from Crufts championship parentage, live close to St Peter's church and the Green Dragon. They upsize to Stoke Fleming after spending ten years visiting Frogmore, staying in their second home and fully participating in local life, and so they have known the area for 25 years and just love it.

Their present home ticks all the boxes:

close to a pub, the bus stop, shop and church. Mike plays the organ at St Peter's in a voluntary capacity which enables him to practise at his leisure and to play at church services. Suzie is a family centred mother and grandmother who speaks with loving pride of their four children and three grandchildren. She believes all families should share at least one meal a day, when they can have quality time to discuss what happened in the day and to listen to each other without tech.

A retired IT Director, Suzie has run an iPad training programme in the Village Hall for the past 12 years. To begin with the course was very basic but people have become more knowledgeable over the years and more recently she has concentrated on settings, emailing, surfing the web safely, camera use etc. While tackling security issues she has shown: how to be secure online, how to spot a scam and what to do in an emergency. The underlying security message is "Do Not Use an Email Link, Go Back to the Associated Website If Unsure" or do not expect an email from that sender.



Suzie is a prolific artist and her paintings adorn every wall in her home. She started with a beginner's online water colour course and has progressed from there. Ten years ago when Gail Donnington, from Hockey Fields, started an art course in the Village Hall, Suzie joined and expanded her skill base into oils and acrylic while exploring charcoal and pencil drawings on a personal level.

Since that time Suzie has taken courses in how to use water soluble oils and gouache. Suzie then joined the u3a art group which meets at Townstal Hall and there she has learnt how to use pastel and mixed media. Suzie also appreciated the total immersion of painting holidays in Alicante and the Lake District as a wonderful way to concentrate, removed from the hustle and bustle of life.

Look out for Suzie's wildflower prints on one of the walls of the dining room at the Stoke Lodge Hotel. These are for sale, fully framed, with all proceeds raised for the benefit of the Friends of St Peter's (FoSP's) accessible toilet fundraising initiative. You will also find packs of six wildflower or shell cards with envelopes on sale at FoSP events for £5 a pack, again all proceeds to the accessible toilet project. Look for these at the next event on 11th September at St Peter's Church, explaining the origins of the intricate carvings on the pulpit and alter, which the teenage Pinwill girls are reputed to have created.

Suzie is now Treasurer of FoSP which has settled under the diplomatic chairmanship of Peter Barker and is focussing on a target of three fundraising events a year to raise money for an accessible toilet. Living with a slight physical disability, this cause is dear to Suzie's heart especially as our church should be a place that welcomes all people, without barriers.

In passing, Suzie mentioned the difficulty she experiences trying to walk from the Village Hall car park onto the recreation field pathway, from the five-bar gate end, encouraging those in positions of power to consider investing in a flatter surface from the car park to encourage more people with infirmities to spend time enjoying this wonderful amenity we have in the village.

Suzie enjoys Fish 'n Fizz events as well as monthly dining at Stoke Lodge Hotel. She remembers how during COVID the close community spirit kept everyone together, with residents delivering cooked food, shopping and prescriptions to the very vulnerable. "Over the past fifteen years", she says, "Stoke Fleming has become busier with more housing, but the community spirit remains unchanged".

News from the Hort and Sport

Not much news this month as copy date coincides with the final preparations for the SHOW on 31st August. Closing date for the RHS bursary is Sunday 6th September. See the August edition of *Stoke Fleming Voice* (page 10) for details. If you want to work in horticulture or just improve your knowledge, email a little about yourself to enquiries.hortandsport@gmail.com.



Stoke Fleming Horticultural
& Sports Society

Founded in 1875

The October issue of the *Voice* will be full of news from the show, along with a full list of the worthy trophy winners.

We are already planning our final fundraiser of the year, the ever-popular coffee morning. More details to follow in the next edition. Here's to a successful 2026 show.

Paula Johnston

Nature Notes

Off Ash Lane on 12th August, I saw a red deer and calf. Although I couldn't see a stag, it was probably nearby. It was the first confirmed sighting in Stoke Fleming and was about the size of a slender cow.

I found a large number of bar-tailed godwit wader feathers on the mowed field corner near Cotton Development. It is probably a juvenile because there is no orange underside which appear when ready for breeding. Possibly a fox attacked it in early August and took the body elsewhere. The wader probably flew from the Arctic coasts of Russia or Scandinavia or Iceland.

On 3rd August I found a long-eared bat dead, probably juvenile, at the end of Deer Park Road near the main road. It was most likely killed by a car or van when it was eating a moth. I have seen them before eating the moths attracted to streetlamps on the A379. An adder at the scrublands next to the sea near Stoke Fleming border was seen shedding its skin in early July.

From 19th to at least 23rd July there were a dozen willow warblers and two dozen whitethroats at the fields next to the NT Little Dartmouth track and also the sea-side scrubland. There were about 50 linnets, goldfinches, stonechats, yellowhammers and skylarks. At 4pm a female sparrowhawk came to my garden, but I was there and it fled. A juvenile jackdaw fell down the chimney on 1st August but flew out when I opened the window. Glow-worms were seen on the broad verge off Venn Lane and Wheatland Track on 8th August.

DW

Rowcroft Hospice

Rowcroft is having a soup and dessert lunch at the Sportman's Arms on Thursday 15th October; there will be Christmas cards available. More information will be in the October *Voice* but please keep the date in mind.

Rosemary Minshall

Local Government Reorganisation in Devon

The government has announced that four councils are going to be created, replacing the current two-tier system of 11 county and district councils.

New councils are expected to be elected in May 2027 and take on their full responsibilities from April 2028, when Devon's new local government arrangements are due to come into effect. Each council will be responsible for all services within their region.

The councils will be:

Exeter Council,
Torbay and South Devon Council,
Greater Plymouth,
Devon Council.

Stoke Fleming, Dartmouth and Totnes will be in the Devon Council region. Kingswear will be part of Torbay and South Devon Council. Bridgetown is being split between two authorities and, in response, Totnes Town Council have called for an amendment to the proposed boundary requesting that the area remains within a single authority area.

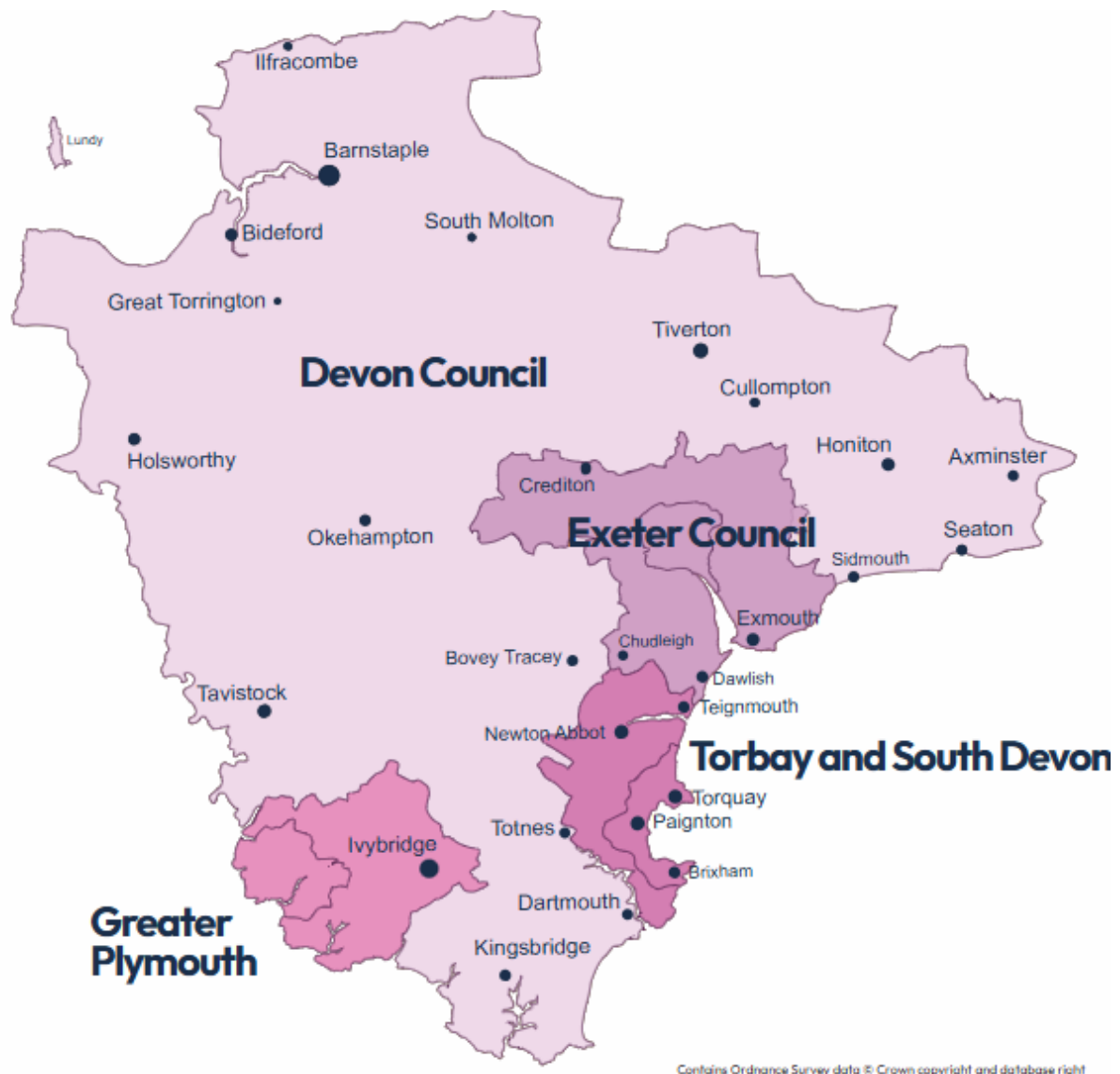
As with any major change, there will be a wide range of views and many questions. To follow developments, go to <https://www.futuredevon.org.uk>. For those who are uncomfortable with this new structure, there is a petition started by our MP, Caroline Voaden, on <https://www.southhamslibdems.org.uk/lgr>. Depending on your political/non-political persuasion you may not agree with the opening text of the link. However, moving politics to one side and focusing on the local issue, this is an opportunity to register your protest if you have concerns about how our area will fare when it is one of many towns and villages within the new authority.

The Four New Unitary Authorities

- **Exeter Council:** Expanded to take in neighbouring coastal towns and surrounding parishes, including Exmouth, Dawlish, and parts of Mid Devon and Teignbridge.
- **Greater Plymouth Council:** Enlarged to absorb surrounding southern communities like Ivybridge and parts of the South Hams.
- **Torbay and South Devon Council:** Extended north and south to incorporate nearby areas such as Newton Abbot and Teignmouth.

- **Devon Council:** A rural authority covering the remainder of the county from Holsworthy in the west to Seaton in the east.

The map below shows the area of each authority.



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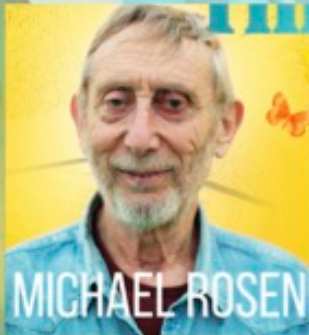
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Tel: 07720 764037

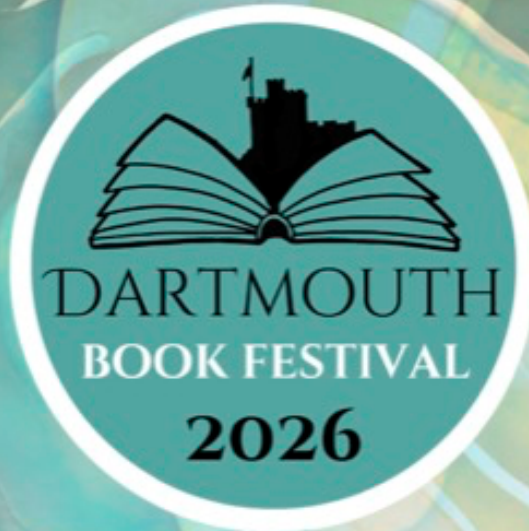
18 - 20 SEPTEMBER



JEREMY HUNT



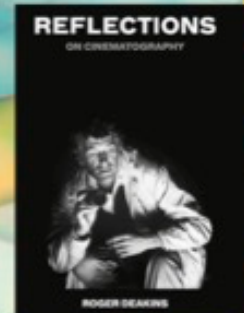
MICHAEL ROSEN



PICK UP A PROGRAMME FROM
The Flavel Arts Centre, Dartmouth



JULIAN GARNELL



ROGER DEAKINS



Stoke Fleming Library

At the Village Hall: Monday 3:00pm – 5:00pm, Tuesday 10:30am – 12:30pm and Thursday 3:00pm – 5:00pm. Tel: 770076.

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 some assistance in keeping those little visitors entertained – you can borrow children's books on your cards. Jigsaws available too. All free!

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

And if you're looking for a good home for those books you've finished with, please think of donating them to your local library – if they are in good condition.

This year's Summer Book Quest is still running. The theme is transport. Our main characters Liba, Pip and Zena, plus a new character Pixie the Pigeon, go on a mission to help a famous explorer fix her plane. A certificate and medal to be awarded at the end.

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 the Borrowbox app. Also, magazines and newspapers – they are 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.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Sue Taylor

News from the Community Kitchen



We hope you have all had an enjoyable summer and are preparing for six months of rain to fill all the reservoirs, lakes and water butts! We can't complain after all the sunshine (and heat) of the last 8 weeks but perhaps it is time to get back "to normal" – whatever that entails.

The chefs, sous-chefs and helpers will be back in September for our lunch on Friday 25th September, with tickets in the village shop at 8.30am on Tuesday 15th. Please make a note in your diary.



We would love some extra pairs of hands – not every month – but a rota of people we could approach if our regulars are away. Please email houseonthehill661@gmail.com and we will be in touch.

Our menu is discussed about ten days before the lunch so it is essential to have any dietary requirements when you buy your tickets so we can plan the meal. Please bear that in mind. As we have said before – we are not magicians, but we do try to accommodate everyone!

Sadly, I have no salads left in my garden, so it will be a case of looking around for fresh vegetables. Having read about the criteria the supermarkets have to adhere to, I will try to source fruit and vegetables from independent suppliers. Who minds wonky cucumbers? And smaller cauliflowers?

Remember to eat colourful meals and share meals with friends. That is proven to do us good.

We hope to see you in September.

Mary Newman



BeWild

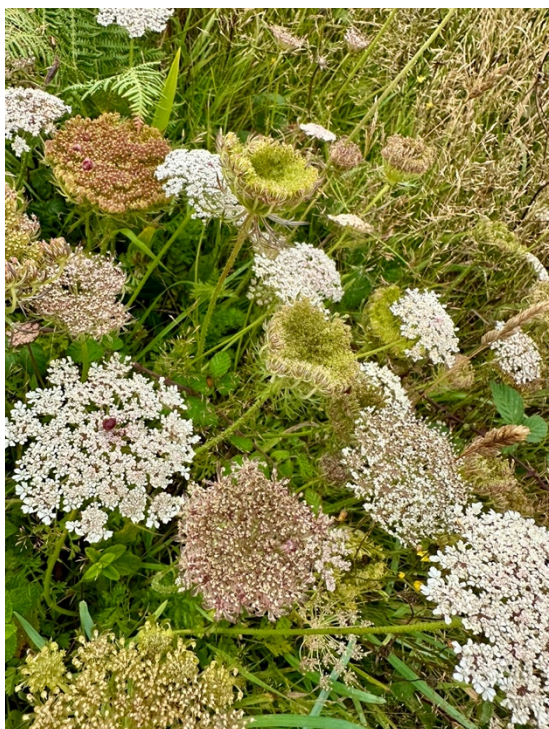
Grow for the dry days

This summer has given us a glimpse of what our gardens may need to cope with more often: long periods of sunshine, very little rain and increasingly dry soil. Rather than reaching for the hose, perhaps it's time to look at the plants that are already perfectly adapted to our landscape.



Native wildflowers have evolved alongside our local wildlife and are often remarkably resilient. Many are adapted to poor, dry soils and need far less watering once established. Just as importantly, they provide food and habitat for a much wider range of insects than many highly cultivated garden plants.

Take **yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)**. This familiar native wildflower thrives in dry, gravelly and chalky soils and can survive prolonged drought. Its flat heads of tiny flowers provide nectar and pollen, while the plant supports more than 100 species of insect, including beetles, flies, bugs, butterflies and moths.



Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) is another beautiful choice for a sunny, dry spot. Its delicate white flowerheads rise above feathery foliage, and its deep tap root helps it cope with well-drained soils. It's a wonderful addition to a wildlife garden or wildflower patch.

Other native plants worth trying to include **bird's-foot trefoil, field scabious, common knapweed, oxeye daisy, selfheal and viper's bugloss**. These plants can cope with tougher conditions while providing nectar, pollen, seeds and food for the insects that form the foundation of our garden ecosystems.

And remember drought-tolerant doesn't mean drought-proof. New plants need watering while they establish their roots, but choosing the right plant for the right place means less intervention later.

So, as we adapt our gardens to a changing climate, why not let a little more of Stoke Fleming's wild character grow? Sometimes the most beautiful, resilient garden is the one that works with the natural world, rather than against it.

Victoria Benns
victoria@bewild.uk

Dart Valley u3a

After our August summer break, we welcome you back to our September talk presented by Sally Smith and entitled, "**The Women Who Went Around the World**". This will take place at the Flavel on Thursday 10th September at 10.30am.

Sally Smith will present the story of the women who were the very first to achieve a full circumnavigation by sea, land, and finally, air. Starting with the incredible story of Jeanne Baret who faced real drama when, dressed as a man, she discovered the Bougainvillea plant in Brazil in 1767. Sally gives a fascinating glimpse into these journeys and an insight into society at different times in history with a range of astonishing tales.

Entrance only £2 for members and £4 for guests. Tea and coffee will be available from 10.00 to 10.30am, please bring a reusable cup.

Tim Freeman

Stoke Fleming Golf Society



On the afternoon of Friday 12th June, sixteen brave souls from the Stoke Fleming Golf Society headed across the River Dart to Churston Golf Club. Their mission? To conquer the course and return home with bragging rights for an evening of food and refreshment at our wonderful Green Dragon.

Churston is a stunning 18-hole parkland and clifftop course overlooking Torbay. Visibility on the day was exceptional, rewarding players with spectacular views across Lyme Bay and beyond. Originally designed in 1890 by legendary architect Harry Colt, the tricky par-70 layout threw up some challenging blind tee shots. This was especially true on the par-5 14th hole, which hosted the "Longest Drive" competition. It was a real "hit and hope" hole requiring serious distance and a smidge of luck to stay on the narrow fairway. Paul Noonan was hopeful his shot would finally take the crown from Ashley Hutton only for Alistair Rennie — playing in the final group — to clinch the win.

Huge congratulations went to Team A, led by Matt Grainger, who clinched the overall victory with a fantastic 64 points. Alongside teammates Alan Jones and Will Varney, the group witnessed some exceptional stroke play from young Fin Rennie (the other half of the talented father-and-son duo playing on the day). We all wish Fin the very best of luck as he heads to the USA soon to pursue a professional golfing career!

Final mentions must go to Steve (Ackie) Atkins, who landed his ball beautifully on the 17th green to claim "Nearest the Pin", and to Steve Roylance for organising a seamless event. Steve also provided winners' medals — and since Will and Alan were in that victorious quartet, you will no doubt see their hardware proudly displayed at the Green Dragon bar!

Steve Roylance

GREASE THEMED BINGO NIGHT

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IN CONJUNCTION WITH BREAST CANCER NOW® AND DARTMOUTH CARING



Stoke Fleming Village Hall

Big news this month on a number of fronts relating to the Village Hall.



Firstly, I'm pleased to announce that the installation of solar panels on the Hall roof will now be carried out by Mole Energy between the 9th and 11th September. Scaffolding will need to be erected, and some works carried out prior to this date with hopefully little disruption to current users. Special thanks go to Phil Elliott and David Bone for their contribution towards this important project.

Secondly, we are moving forwards with a refreshed website presence, which will include updated imagery, usage information and much cleaner navigation around the site, and will hopefully encourage new hall hirers.

These improvements, supported with the help and generosity of Seb Longrigg, will run in parallel with another key digital project, namely the introduction of an online Hall booking system to replace the current paper-based approach.

Liz Griffiths, our Hall Secretary, along with Emily Handley and Sarah Dudley, have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to test this new service which will go live on the site in September. We'll give you more details in the next edition of this magazine, but it marks a major step forward for the Hall and will certainly help streamline the whole booking and invoicing process.

Other actions, since our last feature, include the replacement of the thermostatic tap in the disabled toilet, the repair of our scissor mop kindly undertaken free of charge by John Skelley, a new instructions folder in the kitchen and the rehangings of the clock in the RH Room with pictures to follow. Unfortunately, additional cleaning was required after one recent hiring so please ensure you do leave the Hall as you find it, otherwise you may incur extra charges.

In other events.... several Trustees recently benefitted from a comprehensive session of free safeguarding training kindly organised by Su Gorrie. Our local MP, Caroline Voaden, visited the Hall as part of her regional surgery initiative and we are due to show a free screening of the People's Emergency Briefing film on 18th September at 6.30pm. See advert on page 43 for details.

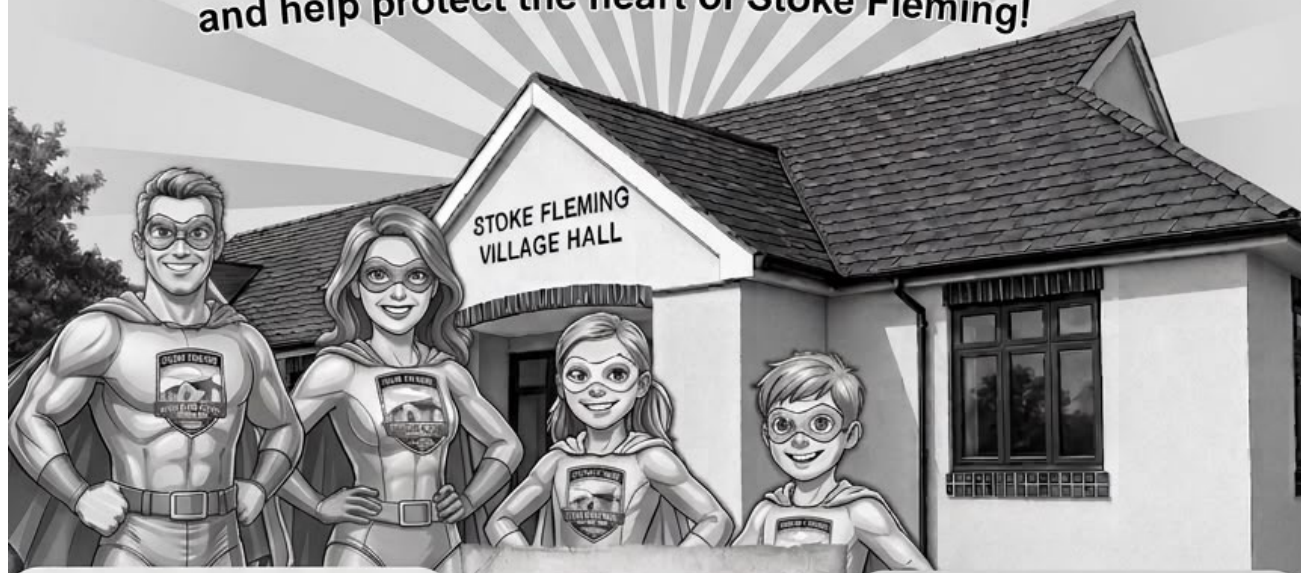
Finally, I would like to thank all those supporters who have already joined our Village Hall Heroes (VHH) initiative following the leaflet insert in last month's magazine. The response has been fantastic with over 50 new members already but with an overall target of 250 we still need you to sign up. Please take a minute to review our advert, scan the QR on local posters or visit our website (www.stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk) to find out more. We'll also be at the Hort & Sport show in case you read this article before the end of August. See you there.

John Belli



★ EVERY VILLAGE NEEDS HEROES ★

Join the Village Hall Heroes for just £2.50 a month...
and help protect the heart of Stoke Fleming!



YOUR MONTHLY GIFT ACHIEVES

-  Support community events & activities
-  Maintain & improve our village hall
-  A place for everyone to meet & celebrate
-  Provide space for clubs & local groups
-  Keep the hall thriving for future generations

★ MISSION 250 ★

Our goal is to recruit

250

VILLAGE HALL HEROES

— Can you help? —

JOIN TODAY

Become a Village Hall Hero
for just £2.50 per month.



Scan here to find out more
or visit our website

www.stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk

★ *Small Monthly Gift. Big Community Impact.* ★

Wednesday Ladies

Come along to the Wednesday Ladies at 2.30pm on Wednesday 9th September in the Ron Harris Room at the Village Hall. We are starting the Autumn season with a presentation by Ruth Stewart on “**Living in Jersey during the Second World War**”.

New members are always welcome. If you would like to join do just come along to one of our meetings or, for more information contact Jill on 01803 771137.

Barbara Goddard



The banner for Nelly Konrad's Cakes features a circular logo on the left with a stylized 'K' and a whisk. The text 'Nelly Konrad's Cakes' is written in a cursive font, with 'ARTISAN BAKERY' and 'CAKE SHED • FRESH BAKES DAILY' below it. To the right, the headline reads 'Beautiful cakes. Made for life's SWEETEST MOMENTS'. Below this, it says 'HANDCRAFTED • BESPOKE • MEMORABLE' and 'Specialising in stunning 3D cakes for any occasion, including wedding cakes.' A row of icons represents 'WEDDINGS', '3D CAKES A SPECIALITY', 'BIRTHDAYS', 'ANNIVERSARIES', 'CELEBRATIONS', 'BESPOKE DESIGNS', and 'MADE WITH LOVE'. On the right side of the banner is a photograph of a wooden door decorated with flowers and a sign that says 'CAKE SHED' and 'OPEN'. A small sign on the door also mentions 'CCTV'. At the bottom, there is a black bar with contact information: 'www.konradcakes.co.uk', '07817 570831', 'KONRADI CAKES', and '@konradcakes'. The tagline 'Bespoke cakes. Unforgettable moments.' is written in a cursive font at the bottom right.

The Arts Society Dartmouth and Kingswear (TASDAK)

Our new season kicks off on Monday 12th October with a lecture by Carol Wildhide Justin: “**Japanese Wood Cuts**” – the influence of Japan on the western art from the late 18th Century.

Our lectures take place monthly between October and June, on the second Monday afternoon starting at 2.30 pm at The Flavel. The lectures are given by experienced and highly qualified Arts Society accredited lecturers who are experts in their chosen field.

New members are welcome. Non-members can attend a lecture as a visitor, up to three times per season, for £14.00.

Juliet Lambert

Dartmouth and Kingswear Society

There will be no meeting in September, however we meet again on Tuesday 13th October at 5.00 pm in the Flavel for a talk on **Start Point Lighthouse** by Lady Mary Newman. Please put this date in your diaries. All welcome.

Lindsay Charlesworth
lindsay@jpcharlesworth.plus.com

Citizens Advice South Hams

Free, confidential and impartial advice

We give **up-to-date** advice on: benefits, work, domestic energy use, debt and money, immigration, consumer rights, housing, family issues, law and courts, problems with healthcare, and more.

Every Tuesday, 1pm to 4pm

Health and Wellbeing Centre, Wessex Way, Dartmouth, TQ6 0JL



0808 278 7948
southhamscab.org.uk

Welcome to the *Stoke Fleming Voice* Editorial Team – Chris Donlan



My wife Jane Hyde-Walsh and I moved to Stoke Fleming, from a village in the heart of the Cotswolds at the end of March this year and along with our new home, we feel as though we have really lucked out. We are both enjoying life here, surrounded by genuinely friendly, happy people, many of whom we have quickly come to know, and it feels like we've been here for years, we're that settled. We love the vibe and the relaxed pace of life down here and the village has some fabulous facilities and places to enjoy and use. Jane has her own

vocational training company, and I am still working full time remotely, with a software house based in Bury St Edmunds. In my spare time, I am also a self-published author; you can find my work on Amazon and I'm very proud of the reviews I've had for my novels. I'm currently working on the final part of the Visionaries trilogy, and you can learn more about them by visiting www.visionariesthenovel.com

Chris Donlan

Christmas Tree Festival



As the dust settles on the Hort & Sport trophies and thoughts turn autumnal, this is just a quick reminder about the Christmas Tree Festival. I will be contacting the Tree Sponsors this month to invite them to participate once again. This will be the 19th Festival and we hope to have a full complement of 30 trees filling St Peter's. So please pop the dates **Friday 11th December to Sunday 13th December 2026** in your diaries and, if you can help in any way, with lifting, shifting or stewarding, please get in touch.

Caroline Martin – martincm516@gmail.com

BOOK REVIEW: Julian Carnell, “Becoming the Ocean”

Dartmouth Book Festival is at the Flavel from 18th to 20th September and, along with national figures like Jeremy Hunt and Michael Rosen, one of the local authors who will be speaking will be Julian Carnell, Director of Sharpham Trust which runs mindfulness retreats at the rewilded former vineyard.

I thought I'd take a look at Carnell's new book, “Becoming the Ocean”, which follows the progress of the Dart from the sources of both

West and East rivers across Dartmoor, through wooded and farmed valley, to the estuary and harbour. The book describes the local geology and history; plants, animals and habitats; and buildings and human activities which can be found along the way. A few nearby places get a mention too, including Blackpool Sands and the Green Dragon!

Carnell also describes a lot of damage done to the river and along its banks dating back to the 14th century with tin and copper mining and continuing today with sewage discharge and agricultural runoff, accentuated by climate change. There are some signs of recovery in the local ecosystem, including by rewetting peat bogs; organic farming; and work led by Friends of the Dart – yet progress is hindered by fragmented ownership of adjoining land (including by offshore companies and new money elites). Carnell is trying to address this problem by bringing a broad range of stakeholders together through the River Dart Catchment Partnership.

The section of the book I was most engaged by was on white water kayaking as I've recently begun learning how, or perhaps how not, to do this. However, I was also very interested in Carnell's walks over Dartmoor (also listed in an appendix). Although I moved to South Devon thinking I'd often go walking there, I've found the costal path so beautiful that I've seldom gone inland. I'm now remotivated to make the time to do this and will take this book with me as a prompt for additional things to see and do when I go.

I was less convinced by the book's metaphor of a pilgrimage for the river's journey and less interested in Carnell's own Asian pilgrimages. I agree that we need to see ourselves as part of the natural world and should connect better with our main local river / estuary, but I've no desire to hug trees whilst listening to a singing bowl. I preferred the suggestion in Robert Macfarlane's recent book “Is a River Alive?” that it is, or at least that it's useful to treat it as if it is (Carnell



Becoming The Ocean: Julian Carnell

refers to the River Dart Charter based on similar ideas in the book's Afterword). Macfarlane's book is also a particularly beautiful read whereas I'd suggest this one probably needed a good editor. However, the local focus meant I found "Becoming the Ocean" a more compelling read overall.

Julian Carnell speaks at the Dartmouth book festival at 2pm on Saturday 19th September. His book is available at Sharpham Trust, Browser Bookshop in Dartmouth and in the festival bookshop in the top floor studio of the Flavel during the festival. Tickets for the talk are also available from the Flavel.

Jon Ingham

Stoke Fleming Living Churchyard

Pat Tucker will be cutting the grass back on 24th August. As in previous years we will leave the cut grass for about a week to allow time for any seeds to drop to the ground, hopefully seeding themselves for next year. The grass will be raked up and bagged the following week. If you would like to spend an hour or two to help with this on 2nd or 3rd September, please get in touch. The more rakers we have the shorter the time it will take. There is a village wedding on Saturday of that week and we want to ensure we are looking our best.



Stoke Fleming
LIVING CHURCHYARD

Gavin Whitely will be cutting back the shrubs along the coffin walk and this may have been done by the time you read this. Thank you Gav!

In October we will be scattering poppy seeds around the area and more information on this will be in the October magazine and on the village Facebook site.

In November we will be planting daffodil bulbs across the Living Churchyard area and a request for help with planting will be in the October magazine.

A thank you, as always, to Kevin Sumner for mowing the paths through the grass, which is not an easy thing during this hot weather.

And finally. We need some help with the bench placed a year ago by the coffin walk path. We put metal holders into the ground to protect the chair legs from the damp grass, but we have not managed to put the chair in the holders! We need a few strong people to attempt to position the chair so it can be lowered into the leg holders, or to take the holders out of the ground so we can try something else.

If you can help with any of the above, please do call, message or email me.

Jenny Hailstone

07770 373981 or jennyhaley029@gmail.com

The Green Dragon

What an amazing summer it's been at **The Green Dragon, Stoke Fleming!**



We've been so lucky with the wonderful weather, and it's been fantastic to see the village buzzing with visitors and holidaymakers enjoying everything our beautiful corner of Devon has to offer. It's been a busy one and we've loved welcoming so many familiar faces and new customers through our doors.

There's plenty more to look forward to this September!

The Greedy Table – Tuesday 15th September. Our regular guest chefs, **The Greedy Table**, are taking over the kitchen once again, bringing another delicious evening of food. Booking is recommended, so don't miss out!

Pig Racing – Friday 18th September from 7.30pm. Get ready for a night of fun, laughter and competitive pig racing with **Ady Byng!** Entry is **FREE**, there'll be **cash prizes** to be won, and most importantly, we'll be raising money for the wonderful **Prickles in a Pickle**. It will be a brilliant night and definitely one not to be missed!

Breakfast, Brunch & Bakes. Our well-loved food service continues **Thursday to Saturday**, with tasty breakfasts, homemade breads, Devon pasties, sweet treats and plenty of delicious goodies — all available throughout the day until **3pm**.

Evenings at The Dragon. Our full evening menu is also available, along with our delicious **homemade stone-baked pizzas**, perfect for a relaxed meal with family and friends.

Whether you're local, visiting Stoke Fleming or simply fancy a great meal and a warm welcome, we'd love to see you.

Booking is recommended!

We hope to see you at **The Green Dragon soon!**

Georgie, Alan and the Dragon team

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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
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Soirée at St Peter's Church



Pinwill Carvings Story
by Dr Helen Wilson

6.30pm for 7.00pm start

Friday 11th September

Friends of St Peters are delighted to welcome

A leading expert on the carvings of the

Pinwill family

in St Peter's Church, Stoke Fleming

Tickets: £10 (16 & under free)

@

Village shop

Or on the door

Wine, soft drinks, nibbles donations bar

(Fund raising for accessible toilet & new servery)



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. **Lloyds Banking Group has agreed to restore cheque deposit services at Post Offices and Banking Hubs**

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Stoke Fleming Information

Stoke Fleming Village Shop and Post Office

	Shop – 771119	Post Office – 770229
Sunday and BH	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

Bus – Service 3 (at Shady Lane) – updated on 30th August 2026

Stoke Fleming to Dartmouth			Dartmouth to Stoke Fleming	
Mon – Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon – Sat	Sun
08.31	08.29		06.15 (<i>Not Sat</i>)	
09.37	09.36		07.30	
11.07	11.07	11.39	09.30	09.55
12.07	12.07		10.30	
13.07	13.07		11.30	
14.07	14.07		12.30	12.25
15.07	15.07	14.09	13.30	
16.26	16.26	16.44	14.30	14.55
17.26	17.16		15.30	
18.24	18.16		17.15	17.30
19.23	19.15	19.14	18.45	

Note on Bus Times

With effect from 30th August route 93 between Dartmouth and Kingsbridge is being absorbed into route 3 between Kingsbridge and Plymouth. It will still divert from Strete to the A379 but will be a continuous route between Dartmouth and Plymouth. This timetable will be available on the Stagecoach website from 30th August – see <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables>.

We have been informed that the bus service from Slapton to Dartmouth is to be extended for the foreseeable future. Country Bus and Tally Ho will jointly operate the service Monday to Saturday, with half-hour journey times.

Dartmouth Pontoon (to Slapton village) at 10am, 12pm, 2pm, and 4:30pm.

Slapton village (to Dartmouth Pontoon) will run at 9:30am, 11am, 1pm, and 2:30pm.

September 2026

Tue	1	
Wed	2	19.00 – Parish Council Meeting – Village Hall
Thur	3	Schools INSET Day 14.15 – Flower Club – Village Hall
Fri	4	Schools INSET Day 14.00 – Craft Club – Village Hall
Sat	5	08.00-17.30 – Tribal Clash – Blackpool Sands
Sun	6	08.00-17.30 – Tribal Clash – Blackpool Sands 11.00-15.00 – Start Point Lighthouse open for visitors Closing date for RHS bursary applications Last chance to join 100 Club for 2026
Mon	7	Pupils start School Autumn Term
Tue	8	
Wed	9	10.30 – Probus – Stoke Lodge Hotel 14.30 – Wednesday Ladies – Village Hall
Thur	10	10.30 – u3a - Flavel
Fri	11	18.30 – Fundraiser for FoSP – St Peter’s Church – The Pinwill Carvings
Sat	12	
Sun	13	
Mon	14	09.00 – Little Stars resumes – St Peter’s Church
Tue	15	08.30 – Community Kitchen lunch tickets on sale – Village Shop
Wed	16	COPY DATE FOR OCTOBER MAGAZINE
Thur	17	
Fri	18	19.30 – Pig Racing Night – Green Dragon Dartmouth Book Festival 18.30 – People’s Emergency Briefing film – Village Hall
Sat	19	Dartmouth Book Festival
Sun	20	Dartmouth Book Festival
Mon	21	
Tue	22	10.00-16.00 – Fundraiser for CHSW – Royal Avenue Gardens
Wed	23	10.30 – Probus – Stoke Lodge Hotel
Thur	24	10.30-12.00 – Dartmouth Caring Coffee Morning – Village Hall
Fri	25	12.30 – Community Kitchen lunch – Village Hall
Sat	26	
Sun	27	
Mon	28	
Tue	29	
Wed	30	

Parish Council Minutes Summary – August 2026

A monthly meeting of the Parish Council was held on Wednesday 5th August 2026 in the Ron Harris Room, Stoke Fleming Village Hall at 7pm. 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 Jay Floyd. Also invited: County Cllr Julian Brazil, District Cllr Simon Rake, Clerk S A Whelon.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Cllr Belinda Duffy, County Cllr Julian Brazil, Cllr Tilly Crowther, Cllr Bella Johnston.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 1st July 2026, AND PLANNING SITE MEETING NOTES were signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Received by email re devolution: "We've submitted a number of FOI requests about how government arrived at their decision. We will be issuing a pre-application letter (before JR) at the end of this week. Cabinet meeting in September when we formally launch the JR unless we have movement from government".

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

16th July government announcement re devolution plans and map, which DC thinks is "nutty". All 11 councils involved now working at pace. There will be 103 councillors overall. Elections will take place next May for councils on non-operational form; 4 unitary authorities will become operational in 2028. South Hams and Devon are focussed on carrying out services in the meantime. What will happen to services such as Devon Highways? These will be broken up and split between constituent councils. New Devon authority for this parish should be solvent.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Proposed new car park. Report from sub-committee. Enquiry to land agent of BT land in the village on Mill Lane has taken place. Clerk to enquire whether S106 monies can be used for improvement of an existing car park.

COMMUNITY

- a) Donation request – 5-year lease Devon Libraries at the Village Hall. Cllr Rake may be a last resort for funds. Cllr Belli to return with more detail.
- b) BT callbox update - Decoration complete, glass replacements fitted and shelves scheduled, signs ordered. Council thanked Cllr Duffy.

ROADS & TRANSPORT

- a) Slapton Line, support for reinstatement of A379 at Torcross – letter to Devon County Council – **Approved**.
- b) Speed sign now fitted and has been adjusted to pick up traffic accurately. Council thanked the team.
- c) Request for double yellow lines on Dartmouth Road into village – Highways advised a formal request by the parish council. **Approved**.

MAINTENANCE

- a) Annual Assets inspections were allocated to be carried out in August.
- b) Pavilion users have volunteered to re-paint pavilion. Receipts for paint to be sent to clerk for payment.
- c) Pavilion toilets will be cleaned before Hort & Sport event.
- d) Memorial tree purchase delayed until weather improves.

COUNCIL AND ACTIONS REGISTER

Council vacancies: two co-options approved.

PLANNING: All noted.

APPLICATIONS

- a) Application Number:1889/26/COM. Location Address: Near to Gull Cliff Overseas Estate Stoke Fleming TQ6 0PJ. Proposal: Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising one light wooden pole at 9 metres high (ref: WH4P455H). Status: Under Consideration. Application Type: 28 (one month) Communication PD Application.
- b) Reference: 2001/26/TPO. Proposal: TPO 641; T1: Oak – fell, 3-4m crack up main trunk starting at 5m from ground level on N side. Site Address: Wadstray House Blackawton TQ9 7DE.
- c) Reference: 2014/26/TCA. Proposal: T1: Holm Oak – reduce to 5-6m monolith, Ganoderma fungus present, significant bark loss. T2: Holly – fell, limited canopy, extensive deadwood. Site Address: Stoke House Gardens Stoke Fleming TQ6 0PE.

DECISIONS

- a) Application Number: 0920/26/FUL. Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR. Proposal: Erection of agricultural building to roof over yard. Status: Approved. Application Type: Full Planning Application.
- b) Application Number: 0919/26/FUL. Location Address: Lower Ash Farm Ash TQ6 0LR. Proposal: Erection of agricultural building to roof over yard. Status: Approved. Application Type: Full Planning Application.

c) Application: 1488/26/TPO Proposal: TPO 145; T76: Sycamore - reduce height by 2-3m due to whole tree failure, extensive basal cavity on W side. T72: Sycamore - pollard to 5m from ground level due to decay in column from ground level to 1.6m on S side, cubicle white rot and large cavities present. T73: Lime - reduce height by 3m, suppression from neighbouring trees. T71: Sycamore - crown height reduction of up to 3m, due to proximity to buildings. T78: Horse Chestnut - reduce lowest limb on E side at 9m from ground level by 3-4m to improve form, reduce risk of limb failure due to lean from neighbouring suppression. T77: Sweet Chestnut - pollard to main union at 7m from ground level, fracture on lower co-dominate stem at 8m from ground level, secondary delamination causing twisting and stem droop. T81: Sycamore – crown height reduction of up to 3m, due to large decay, risk of failure into parking area. T79: Lucombe Oak - reduce by 1-2m, thin by 20%, growing beside historic wall and suppressing ornamental trees/shrubs. T68: Golden Monterey Cypress - fell, neighbouring property 3m to East side, crown damage, poor vitality. T80: Sycamore - reduce by 2-3m, extensive basal decay, suspected honey fungus. T67: Sycamore -coppice, basal cavity on W side and slime flux bacterial infection at main bifurcated union. Location: Sanders, Old Road, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0PY. Decision: Part Approved / Part Refused.

d) Application Number: 1429/26/NMM. Location Address: Land at SX 855 508 Violet Drive Dartmouth. Proposal: Omission of the number of hotel rooms in the description of development Updated Proposed Site and Ground Floor Plan. Status: Approved. Application Type: Non Material Minor Amendment.

e) 1912/26/TEX Tree Exemption Application. Site Address: Channel View, New Road, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0PH. Decision: Lesser Tree Works Allowed. Description: T1: Cypress - fell, split limb, fallen on garage.

f) Application Number: 1313/26/FUL. Location Address: Land at SX 865 487, Redlap Lane, Stoke Fleming. Proposal: New hedgehog rescue and wildlife sanctuary (Sui Generis Use). Status: Approved. Application Type: Full Planning Application.

g) Application Number: 1889/26/COM. Location Address: Near to Gull Cliff Overseas Estate Stoke Fleming TQ6 0PJ. Proposal: Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising one light wooden pole at 9 metres high (ref: WH4P455H). Status: Decision Made. Application Type: 28 (one month) Communication PD Application. Additionally: Anonymous letter - clerk to forward to SHDC planning. Clerk's note: members of the public are never named in council meetings or published without their permission.

Date of next meeting: 2nd September 2026

Supporting Ukrainian Action

Ukraine needs Patriot missiles to intercept Russian barrages, and ideally F16s to secure its airspace. However, there's not much most of us can do to influence this supply. What we can do is contribute humanitarian aid.

Ukrainian Action Team Devon in Stoke Gabriel runs regular convoys of vehicles packed with aid which are delivered to Ukrainians in Poland from where they're driven over the border and taken to the war's front line.



In early September, I'll be joining Team Devon's 18th mission taking out an ambulance, an old Bob the Bus donated from Totnes, and several other bought and donated vehicles. I've been helping to get these ready and will be filling them with donated generators, tools, crutches, ECG pads and other required supplies.

Another mission is planned for October, and I've been helping to raise funds for more aid and more vehicles

at this page: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/jon-ingham>.

Ukrainian Action and I, and obviously the recipients of the aid, will appreciate any monetary donations you are able to make, however small. Please note that the charity is staffed solely by volunteers and drivers pay all their own expenses, meaning that all contributions go to people who need the aid on the front line. If you're a UK taxpayer, you can also top up your support by claiming gift aid (and please feel free to ignore the "opportunity" to "tip" the JustGiving system).

Jon Ingham

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Dartmouth Caring COFFEE MORNING



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

Thursday 24th September

Then on 29th October

Everyone is welcome to join us on the last Thursday of each month. Enjoy an opportunity to meet and chat with others and have free refreshments and homemade cake.

Find out more about our services and how we can help you and your loved ones.



Dartmouth Caring
Supporting Our Community

Stoke Fleming Voice 100 Club!

The August draw took place at the Friends of St Peter's committee meeting. The winning ticket was **number 14, Peter Cole**. Congratulations Peter!

We encourage both individuals and clubs to take out memberships and doing this by 6th September will be your last chance to join this year. For just £7.50 you will participate in the September monthly and quarterly draws plus subsequent monthly draws and the Christmas jackpot draw (with your chance of winning in proportion to your shorter membership and smaller payment).

To join....Simply confirm you are over 16 years old and transfer your payment of £7.50 for each membership number to Stoke Fleming Voice's bank account putting 100 Club and your full name or group as the reference (truncate if necessary):

Stoke Fleming Voice Account number: 19250960; Sort code: 30-54-66 (Lloyds Bank).

Craft Club

The Craft Club is a monthly social club, open to anyone who has an interest in crafts such as, to name a few, embroidery, cross stitch, knitting, crocheting, quilting. We warmly welcome anyone who likes making things.



We meet at 2.00pm on the first Friday of each month, for tea, cake, chat and time to work on our projects. Our next meeting is on Friday 4th September at 2.00pm in the Village Hall.

Lorraine Forman

lorraineforman@gmail.com

Dartmouth and District Flower Club

Our next meeting will be at the Village Hall on Thursday 3rd September at 2.15pm. Our Demonstrator will be Amy Thomas with the topic "**Gathering in the Harvest**". We welcome guests at any meeting at a fee of £8 to include tea/coffee and cakes. There will be a raffle with lucky prize winners taking home one of the floral arrangements.

Rosie Cooke

rose@akcooke.co.uk

FEATURE – 2016 Renovation of St Peter's Church Tower

Ten years ago this month (September 2016) the bells of St Peter's rang out again for the first time after a 6-month renovation of the church tower. The 83-foot tower is almost all original 13th Century. Prior to the 1930s the 6 bells, dating from 1777, were housed in a wooden frame, but this became unsafe because of death-watch beetle damage and a new, metal frame was fitted. This was held in place by fixing the ends of the supporting girders into the masonry, but the walls can be very damp. Routine maintenance of the bell-frame in 2014 uncovered severe corrosion in the frame and the roof-girders, and these needed to be replaced with some urgency.

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry (sadly no longer in existence) proposed a scheme for a new frame to support 8-bells to replace the existing 6-bell frame. This required removal of the bells and the old frame; they all had to be lowered down the centre of the tower. To enable this the clock (1878), situated on the floor below the bells, had to be removed and access hatches cut through the floors below. The clock was taken away for complete refurbishment and conversion to electric winding; this enabled the weights to be removed to make space for the additional two bells.

The bells were then lowered through the hatches to the ground floor; the old frame was dismantled and removed by the same route. A local builder then renewed all the rotten old timber flooring and installed a reinforced concrete ring beam around the walls of the belfry. The new frame would sit on this beam so that the ends were no longer susceptible to corrosion from the moisture in the walls. At the same time new roof girders were installed.



Meanwhile, in the bell foundry, a new frame was made, the old bells were re-tuned, and two new bells were cast. FTSE listed metallurgist company Johnson Matthey, whose founder Percival Norton Johnson lived in Stoke Fleming, and who were celebrating their bi-centenary in 2016, were willing to provide funds for these two additional bells.

Then, when all was ready, the new frame and the bells were delivered and the process of hauling all the pieces up the tower and assembling them began.

New ropes were added and by the end of September the bells were ringing again. The work took approximately 6 months and cost just over £140K, raised from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Pennon Community Fund, a number of smaller charities and generous local donations.

Friends of St Peter's paid for the refurbishment and electric winding for the clock.



The tower clock can be heard chiming the quarters and striking the hours; the Stoke Fleming Bellringers practise their traditional skill on Thursday evenings and ring on Sunday mornings for church services, as well as for weddings and other celebrations. Contact John Dietz (01803 770515) if you'd like to join the bellringers.

If you are interested in a tour of the church tower to see the bells, clock and renovations, as well as the fine view over Stoke Fleming from the tower roof, please contact me. A donation to church maintenance funds would be welcome.

For more information about the Tower Renovation see the Stoke Fleming Church website at <https://www.stokeflemingchurch.org/tower-renovation/>.

Peter Bailey (tarmangie@btinternet.com).



The following item was submitted by Stephen Williams earlier in the year after he and his family undertook a tower tour when they visited for the 2025 Christmas Tree Festival.

Climbing the Church Tower

Well, the first thing to say is what a glorious afternoon it was on the Friday of this year's Christmas Tree event. As we walked down the hill towards St Peter's the failing sun was shining on the tower which gave us an idea. Why should we not, while some of the party attempted the Christmas Tree quiz, tackle an ascent of the church tower?

By good chance, the churchwarden John Dietz was in the church, and he agreed to lead a party up the 100 or so spiral steps to the roof of the tower. The climb is carried out in four phases – none of them arduous – with stops *en route* to

view firstly, the ringing chamber, then the Victorian clock, further up the bell chamber itself, and finally the tower roof.

John outlined some history concerning the bells and then a few technical issues about their manufacture. How, for instance, do you tune a church bell? What do they weigh? How are they installed? All these questions sprang to mind as we gingerly crept around the chamber. John, of course, was able to inform us. The heaviest bell, for example, weighs in at nearly thirteen hundredweight (650kg).

On the roof the views did not disappoint. The sun was about to set and shone brightly from the south-west. The lighthouse at Start Point stood out like a tiny candle across Start Bay. John pointed out several houses in the village including the one where he was born all those years ago (he didn't specify how many). To the north the outline of Dartmoor was visible and out east the Mewstone could be seen. What a joyful and unexpected pleasure on that afternoon. If you get a chance, we recommend you also make the effort and climb that tower. Thanks to John Dietz from five happy climbers.

Stephen Williams



Start Point Lighthouse



We have opened the Lighthouse on the first Sunday each month during the summer and Sunday 6th September will be the next one.

We have several tour guides in the lighthouse so we can have tours starting every 30 mins which usually avoids a long wait. The cost is £8.50 per adult, £6 for a child and £20 for a family ticket. Many visitors are amazed at the technology inside the lighthouse and how relevant it still is to shipping.

Come and visit it! Open from 11.00 to 15.00 on 6th September.



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To raise funds, we are offering to do odd jobs around the neighbourhood!

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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.

Children's Hospice South West (CHSW) – Autumn Fair

Join us for our next fundraiser for Children's Hospice South West (CHSW) which is in the Royal Avenue Gardens, Dartmouth on Tuesday 22nd September between 10am – 4pm. Browse the stalls of toys and children's books, try your luck on the tombola and enjoy homemade refreshments from the tea hut.

The Dartmouth and District Friends Group raise money for CHSW which has three hospices within the south west for children with life limiting conditions, and also provides care and support for their family and carers. There is a recognition that siblings may struggle too and so there are activities and services aimed just at them.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank Stephen Levy, a staunch supporter, for once more running a successful raffle through Freeborn Estate Agents and raising £1,000. Thank you to everyone who bought tickets to support us.

We run events throughout the year and extend a warm welcome to new volunteers. Drop in for an informal chat at the Avenue Gardens event or contact Sue Tweed ([email:tweed833@btinternet.com](mailto:tweed833@btinternet.com).)

See you there!

Ann Green

Prickles in a Pickle



The prolonged heat and lack of rain have caused huge problems for our wildlife, from the insects to the larger mammals and birds. If you don't do anything else, please leave dishes of water out; everything needs to drink. The only creatures seemingly not so badly affected are rats. These highly intelligent and prolific creatures are all around us and usually seen when there is a food source. I understand France has had a massive problem, so much so that they are advising people to stop culling so many foxes. Rats are good food for the fox. We feed our left-over food to our local ones and we did have two visiting families; sadly all have now been shot or worse and guess what we are seeing more of: Mr Rat.

Farmers used to take the view that as long as something wasn't causing them any issue, they wouldn't cause issue with it. I think that the general attitude now amongst some of the farming community and in particular the shoot community is, let's get rid in case it does damage. My family used to be free range poultry farmers in the '60s and '70s; we rarely lost anything but if we did, Dad used to take the view that he hadn't secured the birds properly and that was his duty of care. Alan is being called out to shoot rats most days,

The amount of hoglets coming in this year has been far higher than ever before. The nursing mothers are struggling to find enough food and water to sustain themselves let alone a dependent family. We have had sparrows, greenfinches, jackdaws, owls, mice of varying flavours, rabbits and all sorts in the mix in greater number this year. Alan's barn has been overflowing, and our foster carers have been kept busy.

A massive thank you to all who supported our planning application for the new hospital, especially the Parish Council. We are in the process of getting quotes. It will be a quick build, and we have a curfew on external building works so that we are not causing disturbance in the evenings and weekends. Our aim has always been to enhance habitat to encourage wildlife to make a home. Our releases are always back to the area they come from. There will be extra hedgerows and trees and the double gates where everyone likes to admire the view, including us, will continue to have the same vista. This project will preserve the charity and its purposes for years to come. Vehicle movement will be the same as we have had here for the last few years.

The land already has a covenant and uplift on it, preventing any further development.

Watch this space.

Judy, Alan and the Team www.pricklesinapickle.co.uk

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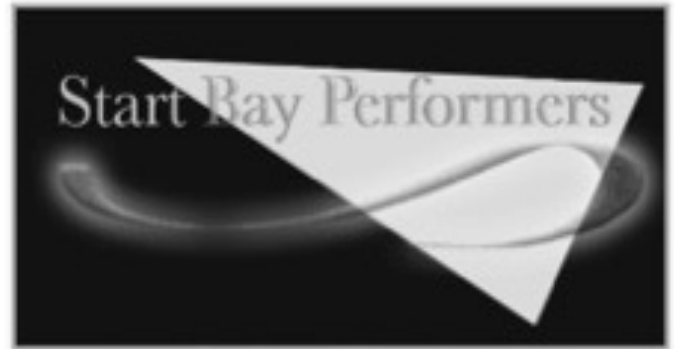
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Start Bay Performers

We are continuing to rehearse our next production

“The Farndale Avenue Housing Estates Townswomen’s Guild Society’s A Christmas Carol” by David McGillivray and Walter Zerlin Junior.



Dates are confirmed as 27th and 28th of November – in the run up to Christmas.

The format of the evening will be:

Doors open and Bar open at 6.30pm.

Supper at 7.15pm, followed by the performance.

The cast continue to work hard learning lines and we have specifically been choreographing certain scenes. The complex lighting and audio requirements are being worked on by the tireless – or should I say tyreless – John Darby, and the cast are now assembling their costumes as well as props. We are still looking for help backstage on the nights in question. So, if you think you may be able to help just for those two evenings please give me a call.

Now on to films. There will be a showing at Stoke Fleming Village Hall of the **“People’s Emergency Briefing”**, distributed by the UK Green Film Network on Friday 18th September at 6.00pm. Entry is Free. Further details are on the next page.

The original Film Night, in collaboration with the Trustees of the Village Hall, showing **“The Graduate”** starring Anne Bancroft and Dustin Hoffman, is now scheduled for 16th October at 6.30pm. Bar and snacks will be available. Entry £5.

We are continuing to meet every Monday evening at 7.00pm at Stoke Fleming Village Hall and welcome anyone who would like to see what we do, think they might like to be involved in future productions or who just enjoy play readings.

We are very pleased to welcome Helen Williams to our ranks. Helen has agreed to become our Stage Manager for the next Production. Her experience both on and backstage is very welcome, and it is refreshing to see a younger member in our midst.

John Belli 07538 156864



People's Emergency Briefing

If you care about:

- **local flooding**
- **air pollution**
- **the cost of living**
- **food prices**

You might want to come to this.

Film Screening

at Stoke Fleming Village Hall,

Friday 18th September 6.30pm.

No charge, but donations for the Village Hall welcome. Over 16s only.

The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

Following a break in our activities for the whole of August and enjoyment of what appears to be climate change, we now start the second half of 2026 with two meetings in September and guest speakers whose subjects are as follows:

On Wednesday 9th September we welcome Mick Harrison, The Cyber Protect Officer from Devon and Cornwall Police, with a talk not surprisingly entitled “**Cyber Crime Awareness**”, a subject of interest to all of us. After the talk, which will take place as usual at Stoke Lodge Hotel, we look forward to lunch at the Hotel.

On Wednesday 23rd September David Ramsden MBE will bring us up to date with his talk “Climate – **What to Expect and What to do About it**”. This is sure to be the subject of the moment.

Please note that non-members are welcome to the talks at our meetings, which begin at 10.30am.

John Hosea Speaker Secretary
07598 560896

Cricket Club

As we rush headlong to the end of the season, playing on parched grounds hasn't dampened the enthusiasm. As someone who can vaguely remember 1976, I can't remember playing on pitches so browned and hard as concrete.

However extra suncream, slightly reduced match lengths and extra hydration breaks (for advertising purposes) have kept the enjoyment levels high. We will fire up the newly acquired pizza oven (thank you to Deano), this Sunday for the final home game of the year, and doff the cap to another brilliant season at the Home of Cricket!

Stacey Gilbert
Gallopingchef@icloud.com, 07931 384017

Short Mat Bowls

Short Mat Bowls members enjoyed an end of season lunch at the Sportsman's Arms after our last session. Bowls restarts on Tuesday 8th September, 2.00pm to 5.00pm. We always welcome new members come and have a go the first 2 sessions are free.

Debbie

Date	Time	Walk Level	Location (F = Bring money for ferry)	Meeting Point
3rd Sep	10.30	3	Dittisham & the Dart Valley Trail.	Sandquay Wood car park – Old Mill Lane, Townstal.
10th Sep	10.30	3	Stoke Fleming to Dartmouth via Redlap, Little Dartmouth and Dartmouth Castle.	#93 bus from Dartmouth pontoon or Stoke Fleming Village Hall bus stop at 10:45. **
17th Sep	10.37	3	Dartington walk to Cider Press and on to Week and Huxhams Cross.	#7 bus from Dartmouth or Totnes railway station (Plymouth side) at 10:37.
24th Sep	10.30	2	Kingswear to Noss Marina via Waterhead Creek and Hoodown. (F)	Kingswear railway station.

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).

There is no charge for attending these walks, all we ask is that you bring enough money to join us for refreshments at the end if you would like to; and for the ferry where indicated in the “Location” column with (F).

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. Bring a bottle of water on warm days and medication if required. For more information on the walks please call **David** on 07309 090958. All walks are subject to change or cancellation.



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Mondays

19.00-21.00 Start Bay Performers. Contact John Belli: 07538 156864.

Tuesdays

09.30-10.30 Zest Stretch and Reset Yoga. All levels welcome. Book 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 / 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 for more details.

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 Sarah Cooper: sarahcooperreiki@yahoo.co.uk / 07799 311797.

Wednesdays

09.15-10.15 Yoga with Ellie, no experience required. Contact Ellie on 07778 208080.

10.30 Club de Pétanque, Village Hall recreation ground, for all skill levels. New members are welcome. Contact John: 07811 102460 or Valerie: 07368 402112.

19.00-20.00 Line dance class (from 9th September). Contact Su Gorrie on Facebook.

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. New members are welcome. Contact John: 07811 102460 or Valerie: 07368 402112.

Please check with instructors for any last-minute changes.

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

Loam Rangers



Well, the sun has continued to shine, and with the recent hose pipe ban and hardly any rain forecast for the next few weeks, the gardens of Stoke Fleming are looking sorry for themselves and a little parched!

That doesn't seem to have stopped the steady stream of member visits to site, and until just a week ago we had an enormous pile of garden waste awaiting shredding. That has now been cleared and our bays rotated with a healthy stock of "organic material", on its cycle to becoming our wonderful compost. Our stock of bagged compost remains good, and this is down to our wonderful team of riddlers.



In the heat of the past three months the guys have turned out and put in a "few good shifts", and believe me it's a good work out! All the fully fermented waste is hand-shovelled into our infamous riddling machine which separates the "fine

compost” from the “mulch” (larger twigs etc). The compost is then hand-shovelled into the bags, carried over to the storage area ready for you to take away.

The mulch is stored in large dumpy bags and used at the school’s forest park area or again bagged for you to take away.

In the last three months the team have produced over 600 bags of compost – what an incredible effort – well done guys!

A quick tip from one of our committee: At the moment wildlife is a concern and struggling in the heat and water shortage, so here is something we can do as well as keeping water bowls and trays clean and topped up – it's **Compost!** In addition to nourishing our soil, minute creatures in our compost can be a great food source for the birds and other wildlife, emptying a sack or three of our very own moist “black gold” across the ground is a real treat for them as they hop amongst and flick through it in delight, picking at minute nothings (and making a mess!). Give it a try.....

A reminder that our Wednesday evening opening: 17:30 – 18:00 **only runs through to the end of August.**

Steve Shakespeare – sgshakespeare@btinternet.com 07970137311

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

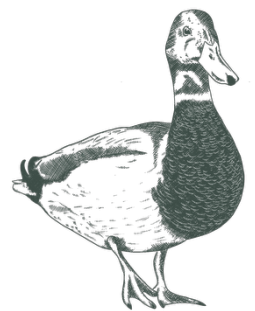
Stoke Lodge Hotel

A Little Update on the Pond

Many of you will have noticed that our pond is now drained and is being left to dry out. This is the first stage of what we hope will be an exciting project to restore and improve this much-loved feature of the hotel grounds.

In early September, we will begin cautiously excavating the pond, working alongside Phil Elliott and Kim Tucker. The work will allow us to better understand what lies beneath the accumulated silt and vegetation, while taking care to protect the surrounding area and any wildlife that may be present.

We'll keep you updated as the project progresses — and we're looking forward to seeing the pond take shape again over the coming months.



Myles & Alex

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Where are we Now?

Last month we were in Sands Road, Slapton – Emily Handley, Clever Clogs and Penny Atkins were on the ball with the correct answer.



Let's see how you get on with this month's picture going back to the 1960s - a lot easier - or is it?

Now the only question is where are we now?



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
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	Wellbeing Pharmacy, Health Centre	222117
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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.***

Stoke Fleming Village Directory 2026

(Area Code: 01803)

100 Club	Sandra Ingham, sfvh100club@gmail.com	07889 573087
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, gallopingchef@icloud.com	07931 384017
Dart Valley u3a	Tim Freeman	832663
Friends of St Peter's	Peter Barker	770556
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 or Valerie Ward	07368 402112
Primary School	Christopher Harrison, Head Teacher	770244
Primary School (Friends)	Lisa Callard	770244
Probus	John Hosea	07598 560896
Short Mat Bowls	Debbie Morris	770305
Start Bay Performers	Mary Rimell	07909 970510
Table Tennis	Sarah Cooper, sarahcooperreiki@yahoo.co.uk	07799 311797
Village Hall Bookings	Emily Handley, enquiries@stokeflemingvillagehall.org.uk	07450 075734
Village Hall Management Committee	John Belli, Chairman of Trustees	07538 156864
Walk and Talk	David Myall	07309 090958
Wednesday Ladies	Jill Fell	771137
Youth Club	Rev Matt Gorton, stokeflemingyouthclub@gmail.com	906861