

FECKENHAM NEWS

April 2024



Published by Feckenham Church for the village.
Editor Gilly Cooper - feckenhamnews@gmail.com
(Copy Date 14th)

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Bromsgrove / Droitwich

Feckenham News April

Dates for your Diary

April

3rd	S&B Gardening Club
9th	Lunch Club /Mapping and Poetry
11th	Parish Council Meeting
14th	Desert Island Flicks
15th	WI
17th	Readers group
19th	FeckenOdeon 2
20th	Quiz and Chips
27th	FeckenOdeon Matinee FeckenOdeon Evening

May

2nd	Annual Parochial Church Meeting
18th	Harp and a Monkey

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Regular Sessions

Wednesdays Playgroup
Thursdays Bridge; Hatha Yoga; Pilates
Fridays Meditation Class
Second Monday of the month: Mobile Library
First Tuesday of the month:
Lunch Club, Feckenham Sessions
First and Third Wednesday: Community Choir
Third Monday of the month: WI
2nd and 4th Fridays : Erstwhile Morris dancers

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Front Cover

Picture by the editor.
Charlie Norris at the
Litter Pick

Magazine online at
www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

Many articles in
Feckenham News are
contributed by
members of the public.
They remain the
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production team nor
the publishers can be
held responsible for
the views and
assertions contained
therein.

Editor's Note

You'll receive this edition of the magazine around Easter and I hope by then there will be some better weather and you are having a good time over the break whatever you are doing. That week I'll be very busy as my partner, Martin, and I are getting married on the following Saturday. It will be very much a village affair. Following a registry office ceremony we shall return to the village for meal and a bit of a party in the village hall. I doubt that, at our age, we'll be making too much noise though we do like having some fun with our friends and families, so if we are a bit raucous, I apologise advance.



Meantime, I was pleased to join Charlie's litter pick last week. See page 5. I managed to collect good sized black bag of rubbish and was grateful for the support of the council - specifically Jane Bull who made sure we were safe, gave us pickers, hand sanitiser, gloves and a pep talk before we went off. There were no real surprises in my finds - the usual cans, bottles and food wrappers - but I still find it puzzling why people can't take their rubbish home rather than throw it out of their car windows.



Lately I have been frequenting a small cafe in Flyford Flavell called #nom. It is just near the village

school where the shop used to be. They are a coffee shop and bakery who sell on-line and at food festivals. I love to go there as a stop on my bike rides. I can highly recommend the beans on toast though it may not always be on the menu. Not like you'd expect. There's high quality bread and homemade beans in a chipotle sauce - delish! Other tasty savoury dishes and sweet treats are available.

Does anyone else have a favourite pub, cafe or restaurant they would like to recommend? If so, please send me some details and we can start a food and drink section of the magazine if there's enough interest.

Finally, look out for the return of a favourite show on Swansbrook Radio.

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Casque Marque Award for quality beers

Tuesday, 5th April
in the Bar from 8pm - Free

Traditional Music

Thursday, 25th April

NORTH AMERICAN MENU

www.roseandcrownfeckenham.co.uk

Local Elections

On 2nd May there are elections for Redditch Borough Council and West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

If you want a postal vote in these elections you need to apply by 5pm on Wednesday 17th April.

If you vote in person you need to show voter ID at polling stations. There's information available on which forms of ID is acceptable.

For more information please follow this link: <https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/elections/voter-id.aspx>

Village Notices

WAKE UPDATE

Plans are progressing well for this year's Wake on 22nd June.

With a big variety of attractions already booked it should be a memorable day.

Of course visitors to the event need somewhere to park, and with hundreds arriving within the space of a couple of hours we need an efficient team to manage that. This year the team will again be managed by Jonathan Ratcliffe but he needs some helpers.

We have an opportunity for 3 or 4 people to be rewarded for assisting us with the parking. Perhaps you or a family member are raising money for charity or for a school trip? We can contribute to that if you can help us from 12.30 to 3.30pm on the day. If interested please email julianbull.777@gmail.com or call me on 892522.



ANNUAL PLANT SALE – SATURDAY 11th June 2024

Stock and Bradley Gardening Club will be holding their Annual Plant Sale at Bradley Green Village Hall, Church Road, Bradley Green on Saturday 11th June 2024 from 10.00am to 12 noon.

This event has become more and more popular and successful over the years and is an ideal opportunity to buy plants at very competitive prices, all grown by the Club members. In addition there will be two local nurseries and a stall selling plant supports.

Make a note in your diary now !

Litter Pick

I recently organised a litter pick around our village with my mum and the parish. I've been asking for a while so I was pleased my mum finally got round to organising a date!

We've been learning about the environment at school. I've been seeing lots of litter on my way to school, which is dangerous for the wildlife and also makes our village look scruffy.

I had a great morning and we collected lots of rubbish, I even got lucky and found £1!

I would love to do this again and hopefully some new people will join us.

Charlie Norris. Age 8.

CHURCH SERVICES



PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Vicar: Fr Glenn Reading 01527 894436
vicar@feckenhamchurch.org.uk

Church Warden: Vacant

For Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals please contact Fr Glenn

Website: www.feckenhamchurch.org.uk



PARISH CHURCH
OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Services for April 2024

7th April	10.30am	Morning Prayer	Rev Fiona Carter
14th April	9.00am	BCP Communion	Fr Glenn Reading
	10.30am	Family Service	Rev Fiona Carter
21st April	6.30pm	Evensong	Fr Glenn Reading
28th April	10.30am	Eucharist	Fr Glenn Reading

Drop in (in church)

Wednesday at 10.30am - 12.00pm

10th April and 24th April



All are welcome (coffee and cake)



FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH St John Fisher & Thomas More

Mass will not be held at St John Fisher and Thomas More until further notice.

Mount Carmel 6 pm Sunday Mass is now the Live Streamed Mass.

Link: www.eventcast.uk/live (Type the link into the browser)

Fr. Anthony Rohan, The Presbytery, Redditch. Tel 63096

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 893898

Church Notices

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

will be held in St John the Baptist Church, Feckenham

Thursday 2nd May 2024 at 7:30 pm

For the election of **two** churchwardens, and **one** representative to the Redditch & Bromsgrove Deanery Synod.

The Meeting will consider reports on the Electoral Roll, Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council, Activities of the parish, the Redditch & Bromsgrove Deanery Synod and the Financial Statement for 2023.

The formal notice of the meeting will be displayed on the church door for at least two Sundays before the Meeting.

Ian Hunter (Acting PCC Secretary)

Feckenham Churchyard

As I reported last month, thanks to volunteers, we are able to keep the grass at the front of the church tidy by mowing every two weeks. This does however generate rather a lot of grass cuttings and our compost bins are overflowing. We have no use for the compost in the churchyard because the objective is to reduce the fertility of the ground to encourage wildflowers. If anyone could make use of the compost then please feel free to help yourselves, although we do appreciate that it is not of the highest quality. There are compost bins beside the path down to the cricket club, on the far boundary by the cricket ground and by the allotments.

Ian Hunter on behalf of Feckenham Parochial Church Council.

EASTER LILIES

If anyone still wishes to donate towards lilies in memory of loved ones to be arranged for Easter there is still time. Please send your contribution to Angela Fletcher, 12 Mill Lane, Feckenham B96 6HY tel.no. 01527 894231 (cheques should be made payable to Feckenham PCC)

Thank you
Margaret and Marg Co-ordinators.

Children's Society Collection Boxes

The money collected helps to protect this country's most vulnerable children. In the year up to April 2023 the total collected from our members' boxes was £795. This huge amount is just from our loose change. This year's final count is in April so please hand your boxes in early that month. Please bring your box to a Church Service or contact me so I can collect from you. Anyone wanting to start a box for next year, please get in touch with me.

Vivien Hunter vehunter3@gmail.com

Churchyard Artificial Flowers

I've been asked by Alison who tends part of the church yard with her husband, Fred, for anyone who is thinking of throwing out any artificial flowers if they would donate them. Alison puts them onto any graves in their patch that have no family members attending them. If you have some to recycle, please leave them in the church. Alison sends her thanks and gratitude.

Jacqui Barrrett-Meade07875457826

Maureen Weaver Obituary

Feckenham Archive - Marion Chute



Maureen Weaver died on January 25th, at Red House Farm , Bradley Green, her home for 65 years. She was 97 years old.

Maureen is probably best known locally for her lovely garden and its accompanying nursery. From little more than a field, she created a beautiful cottage garden which featured in several magazine articles and on television, and when she opened it under the National Garden Scheme she raised thousands of pounds for charity. She started what became a popular and widely known nursery specialising in unusual cottage garden plants, firmly believing in supplying top quality plants at affordable prices. She remained actively involved well into her nineties and loved talking to her customers, sharing ideas and offering advice on plants and design.

Maureen also contributed to local village life. Until recent years she was a long standing member of Stock and Bradley Garden Club, acting as Chairman in its early days, and for several years she had a successful plant stall on Feckenham Village Green during the Wake and Open Gardens weekends to raise money for the nominated charities.

Her funeral was well attended by family ,friends, neighbours and customers, and her family would like to thank everyone for their support



Puzzle solved! We have been told that it was probably a house which was pulled down in the thirties but used to stand on the corner of Alcester Road and Moors Lane. Well done to local detective!

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GRANTS AWARDED FOR FECKENHAM COMMUNITY PROJECTS

As most of us will appreciate, we are lucky to live in a village which has many attractive heritage buildings as well as a great community.

At the heart of the village are The Square and the Grade 2 listed St John the Baptist church. The Feckenham In Bloom group have been awarded a grant to enhance the appearance of Church Walk – the track that links the Square to the Churchyard. Plans are underway to create an attractive border of plants directly in front of the walled length of Church Walk, and retaining the rockery by the Church gates. They are also hoping to improve the surface of the Walk as it is a vital thoroughfare for villagers as well as visitors to village events.

Artist Julian Bull has also been awarded a grant – this time to memorialise the fallen trees that were removed from the Churchyard as part of the Biodiversity initiative. Prints will be made from log sections to highlight the beauty of nature and the nature of loss. In addition a bespoke table will be made from a section of a fallen tree to consider how things and people can be discarded but also renewed and repurposed to positive effect.

Both projects have been funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and administered by the ReNew Cultural Compact for North East Worcs.

Updates will follow next month and if you would like to get in touch about either project please contact Gay Bligh of Feckenham in Bloom at m.gbligh49@gmail.com or Julian Bull at julian@visibull.co.uk

 Funded by
UK Government


ReNEW
Cultural Compact for North East Worcestershire


REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL


LEVELLING
UP



HAVE A GO...

Tuesday 9th April

TIME:

10.45am - 12.15pm

VENUE:

Feckenham Village Hall
High Street
Feckenham B96 6HN

ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS:

Please call Jill Rowe 01527 892666.

COME & HAVE A GO ...

MAPPING AND POETRY FREE WORKSHOP:

Interested in your local area? In maps and memories, local tales, and the Great Outdoors? If so, join Artist and Poet, Lee Mackenzie to HAVE A GO at creatively mapping Feckenham. Through conversations, writing prompts and a look at some local maps, Lee will support you to explore your relationship with the area, and create your own map, using collage, drawings, and words.



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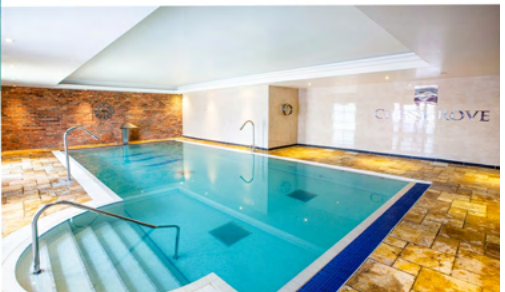


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FECKENHAM COUNCIL TAX

On your Council Tax bill you'll see a sum of money under the heading "Feckenham". This is the proportion of the bill that will be paid to the Parish Council and is known as the "precept".

This year the Parish Council took the difficult decision to substantially increase the precept in order to remain solvent and to allow essential projects to proceed. The Council's income had remained practically static for many years and an increase was needed to allow the Council to continue to function effectively.

This increase in the precept for 2024 was discussed, agreed and minuted at Parish Council meetings, and published on the Parish Council website, the Village notice board, and Village magazine.

The percentage increase, as set out on the Council Tax Demands, is shown as 196%. However, in real terms the precept has been increased from £50 per year to £150 per year, or an increase of £2.00 per week per household.

The Parish Council are repeatedly asked why they do not do something about matters within the Parish, many of which require significant funds to undertake. Below are some of the matters which the increase in the Precept will be used for...

WHAT THE MONEY WILL BE USED FOR:

Flooding: The Council are currently in discussions with Landowners, Worcestershire CC, (WCC), Redditch B.C, (RBC), and North Worcestershire Management, (NWWM), regarding works to alleviate flooding, namely at Swansbrook Lane and the bridge on the B4090. The Majority of funding would come via N.W.W.M, but as previously the PC and RBC would need to contribute towards the works. In addition to this, the brook really needs annual maintenance to ensure free water flow.

The estimated cost for this is in the region of £10,000 per year.

Traffic: A traffic group was recently set up by the PC to investigate highway safety measures. These works have now been costed by WCC at £70,000. We are investigating how such works may be funded, but again the PC, and possible RBC, would need to contribute towards any such works.

In addition to this the Traffic group identified that three new VAS signs were required to advise of traffic speeds on both the B4090, and Astwood lane. The PC have obtained funding for two units but we will need to purchase the third. Estimated costs, exclusive of erection and fitting, is £3,000.

Moors Lane: The Moors Lane Residents Association have applied for a grant of £5,000 towards the costs of £12,300 for emergency works to Moors Lane.

Play area: The PC have been approached regarding the possible "refit" of the play area on the recreation field to bring it more user friendly with modern equipment. The advice that we have been given is that this would cost in the region of £70,000. The PC further understand that match funding for this may be possible from RBC.

Groups and Organisations: The PC receives requests from various groups and events within the village each year. To make a difference and ensure the longevity of such activities a budget of in the region of £10,000 is anticipated, this being in line with last year's grant requests.

Running the Council: Whilst councillors all undertake their work on a voluntary unpaid basis, a budget of £11,000 is allowed to pay for the Clerk and the Lengthsman to undertake their duties. The PC is also obliged to retain funds to cover twelve months of operating costs due to unforeseen circumstances.

CONTACT THE COUNCIL

Should you require any help or further information please do not hesitate to contact Feckenham Parish Council on 01527 892522, email: clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk or check the website at

www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

WHAT'S ON IN

theWIM

INSPIRING WOMEN

Next Meeting - Monday, 15th April

BIKE MAINTENANCE

Come along and have a go!
8pm at Feckenham Village Hall
Visitors welcome - £5

QUIZ & CHIPS



SATURDAY, 20TH APRIL

7pm for 7.30

Feckenham Village Hall
Join us for a fun Quiz and
a chippy supper.

Form a team (up to 6 people)
or come along and we'll find you a team
to join.

Tickets £15 include Fish & Chip supper.
Licensed Bar

PLEASE BOOK BEFORE 13th APRIL

Book online at feckhall.org

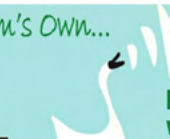
By phone on 0333 666 3366

or in person at The Rose & Crown or
The Village Shop

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Village Hall Improvement Fund

Feckenham's Own...



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SWANSBROOK Radio

FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL



DESERT ISLAND FLICKS



LIVE
& LOCAL

SUNDAY, 14th APRIL - 7.30pm

HARP & MONKEY

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SATURDAY, 18th MAY

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Village Shop and The Rose & Crown

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Phone bookings: 0333 666 3366

Feckenham READERS GROUP

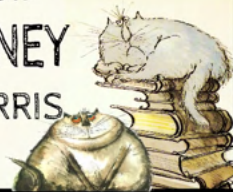
Wednesday, 17th April - 7.45pm

This month's book:

CILKA'S JOURNEY

By HEATHER MORRIS

Details: 892285



Send details of events for FREE listing to:

FECKENHAM



THE
FECKENHAM
SESSIONS
TRADITIONAL
MUSICMAKING
at THE ROSE & CROWN

First Tuesday of every month from 8pm
NEXT SESSION: Tuesday, 2nd April

Stock & Bradley GARDENING CLUB



ANNUAL BULB SHOW

Bradley Green Village Hall
Wednesday, 3rd April
at 7.30pm

ERSTWHILE



BORDER MORRIS

Twice monthly Sessions
at Feckenham Village Hall
2nd and 4th Fridays - 7pm

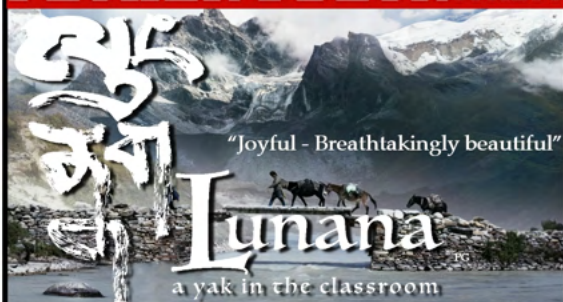
Feckenham Parish Council

MEETING

Thursday, 11th April - 7.30pm
Feckenham Village Hall
(Back Room)

All welcome - Meetings include a Public Forum
where parishioners can bring matters to the
attention of the Council and ask questions.

THE FECKENODEON CINEMA SOCIETY



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Lunana

a yak in the classroom

FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 19th April at 8pm



Wonka

PG

FAMILY MATINEE

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 27th April at 2.30pm



ANTHONY HOPKINS
HELENA BONHAM CARTER
JOHNNY FLYNN

ONE LIFE

12A

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 27th April at 7.30pm

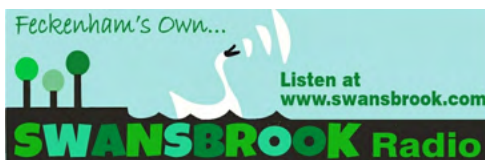
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ABOUT LOCAL PEOPLE

Many years ago, before the Great Plague swept the land, Swansbrook Radio had an ambition to talk to all of the interesting people in Feckenham so that we could compile an audio portrait of the village as it is in the 2020s. The programmes were called "In Conversation". The pandemic rather spoiled the exercise because we weren't allowed to talk to people up close and personal - and after the masks had been taken off we were all so busy that we never got round to restarting our recordings.... Until now.

We're going to have another go and we're starting by editing a programme we recorded way back in 2019 and which has been gathering dust ever since. Who is the subject/victim? Well you'll just have to have a look at swansbrook.com to find out - it'll be available to listen to by the time this magazine is delivered.

When you've listened to the new (old) programme do bear in mind that we've got lots of these fascinating people already recorded - if names like Doris Burley, Michael Mott, Oliver White, Arthur Brassington, Arthur Hind and Shirley Harman ring a bell... they and many more are available to listen to. Find out about their early life, their working lives and their lives in and outside the village. Some have dark secrets to reveal, others show a side to their character you'd never have believed possible. Each recording is an hour long - enough time to get under the skin of people you thought you knew so well.

Paul Furey will be dusting his microphone off and sharpening his questioning skills for a brand new set of programmes and this time - it could be YOU!

LISTEN TO THE SWANS

Go to www.swansbrook.com and follow the instructions you'll find there. Our programmes are available for you to play ON DEMAND - listen when and where you like - as often as you like.

FECKENHAM'S OWN Local Radio

www.swansbrook.com

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society

April sees the end of the 22nd season of films at our community cinema - watch this space for details of the 23rd season! As well as our regular shows we're restarting our family matinees - and starting off with a really sweet treat...

YAKETY YAK

A bored Bhutanese city teacher is sent to the most remote school on the planet. While he's there he learns about a different way of life, becomes more self sufficient and realises just how many things you can do with yak dung. This gently funny film was filmed entirely on location in the Bhutanese mountains. It's breathtakingly beautiful and quietly moving - and it's been nominated for an Oscar

LUNANA - A YAK IN THE CLASSROOM

(PG) Friday, 19th April at 8pm

WONKA - FAMILY MATINEE

Armed with nothing but a hatful of dreams, young chocolatier Willy Wonka manages to change the world, one delectable bite at a time. Timothee Chalamet plays the young Willy Wonka as he fights wicked rivals on his quest to make the perfect chocolate treats. Kids. Families. Adults. There's really something here for everyone and, like chocolate, it just makes you feel good. (USA 2023)

WONKA (PG)

Saturday, 27th April at 2.30pm

A QUIET HERO

The true story of Sir Nicholas 'Nicky' Winton, a young London broker who, in the months leading up to World War II, rescued 669 predominantly Jewish children from the Nazis. He had always been haunted by feelings of guilt that he couldn't do more. In 1988 on a live television show, he meets some surviving children and starts to accept his achievement. Stars Anthony Hopkins, Helena Bonham-Carter and Jonathon Pryce. (UK 2023)

ONE LIFE (12A)

Saturday, 27th April at 7.30pm

Tickets for all FeckenOdeon shows are on sale at *The Village Shop and The Rose & Crown*. You can also book by phone on 0333 666 3366 or online at www.fecknodeon.co.uk

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Feckenham Village Hall



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DESERT ISLAND FLICKS

Sunday, 14th April at 7.30pm

Another show from Live & Local - bringing professional shows to your doorstep.

Draw results

Feckenham Village Hall Improvement Fund March draw.

The draw was carried out on 5th March, 2024.

1st (£25)	140	Gerry & Margaret East
2nd (£15)	132	Q & Jen Cary
3rd (£10)	137	Steve & Jenny Dalloway

QUIZ AND CHIPS

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Get together with some friends - or just come along and ask us to find you a team to join.

Your ticket price includes a Fish & Chip supper BUT please book early - we need bookings by 13th April at the latest - so that we know how many fish to catch.

QUIZ AND CHIPS

Saturday, 20th April - 7 for 7.30

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Feckenham Village Shop - Alan Slater

As someone who regularly appeals for volunteers to join our Shop team, I wasn't too surprised to read in last month's magazine the article by the Chairman of the Parish Council calling for more villagers to become involved in Feckenham organisations and events. I can only endorse his sentiments that if our village is to maintain its wide variety of activities, then new blood is needed to support our ageing (me included) teams of organisers and helpers. It is amazing that a village with a population of less than a thousand inhabitants manages to deliver major events such as the Wake, Carols and Fun on the Square, the Scarecrow and Open Gardens weekends. Plus of course a myriad of other weekly or monthly meetings in the Village Hall. We are fortunate to live in such a wonderful community but if we want these activities to continue then we have to support them and more importantly, the people who make them happen. So if you want to continue to enjoy everything our village offers..... GET INVOLVED. I know you're out there because during the last few months the Shop has gained a few more volunteers though admittedly not all from within the Parish boundary.

On a more positive note, I am delighted that having just completed our 2023/2024 trading year, the early indications are that we have broken our previous year's financial performance. The audited accounts will be presented to the shareholders at the Annual General Meeting in September and an overview will be included in this magazine when the final figures are available. Our success is the result of a great team effort by our volunteers, many of whom as mentioned

live outside the Parish and travel considerable distances to be part of our Community. On a personal note, I would like to thank the Management Board who devote so much of their time to ensure that the Shop continues to go from strength to strength. Sadly we are losing one of those Board Members as Kate Farnilloe has decided to step down due to her many other commitments. Kate will be greatly missed, for she has been an invaluable member of our Team for many years, not only as an outstanding volunteer but also as a Team leader and Board Member. We will all miss her sound advice, enthusiasm and can-do spirit. No doubt her busy life will continue to be a success and we look forward to her joining us for coffee at any time in the unlikely event that she becomes bored.



Fully stocked and ready for Easter'

Finally thank you to all our customers for your continued support of the Village Shop as we look forward to another record year and please can we have some sunshine.

An Organic Allotment by Pete Delaney

Hasn't it been wet! I am writing this in March. Hopefully by the time it is read in April we shall have had a spell without rain so as to be able to work the ground in the plot. For me much of the first half of April will be spent playing catch up with some of the beds I would usually have prepared by now for their respective crops. Potatoes, I am only just getting in because of the inability to dig and walk on the plot. In so doing I have planted 2nd earlys and main crop at the same time. Parsnips and salads all got sown later than usual due to the soil sticking together in clods. In the end I threw on a layer of my own compost then a lot of quality organic potting compost into the bed and only lightly forked it in. This made the beds' soil a bit finer and more of the consistency to be able to sow light salad seed and for the first time I was not only sowing salads under cloches to protect against frost, but also to protect from too much rain and the soil being too water logged for the seed. I did the same with beetroot putting fleece cloches over seedlings to mostly protect them from water!

Onions also I am putting down late as the sets are not fond of too much damp. I hardly water onions anyhow, nor leeks. Garlic I do not water at all (after a tip from an old gardener). Talking of onions I have planted 3 type of shallots which I also protected under cloches. I shall leave these cloches over all onion crops until May is over to protect from the onion fly. Broad beans are growing strong, which I did manage to get into the ground, transplanting them after germinating in pots and bringing them on in the green house. I treated the bed with a good forked in layer of my own veg matter compost and I shall give them the occasional feed with some comfrey water. Wild comfrey shoots up around the country side in spring time and I shall be collecting young leaves to make ointments and teas. As the leaves get larger I collect loads of them, mash them up and steep them in half a barrel of water to make the best quality plant feed. Leave a lid half open on the barrel as it needs to oxidize, it goes through a very stinky period but that dies down and when it turns like a thin dark brown gravy then it is ready to use as a feed. Put a couple of inches in a large watering can and dilute to the

top with water.

At least indoor sowings have not suffered from the wet weather. In the poly-tunnel my leeks and brassicas are all coming on nicely in trays and modules. During April the cabbages will be big enough to transplant into their prepared bed in this year's constructed cabbage net. It is known not to grow cabbages in the same place for at least 3 years. I have enough room at the moment to rotate some of my crops for up to 5 years. This of course reduces the chance of disease remaining in the soil.

Leeks indoors near the end of April are usually ready to be transplanted from trays into separate pots, when they are about as thick as a pencil. In April I sow lots. I am already growing lettuce (2 kinds), rocket, mustard, chard and spinach (green leafed and red veined). All of those were sown in March and I shall repeat sow before April is out to give me a continuous summer supply. Of course not forgetting, with all this sowing, to put down some sort of protection from slugs, I use wool pellets, egg shells, brambles, anything rough and sharp they don't like to crawl over and of course search and remove by hand from all growing produce, I drop them on a leaf and throw them in the compost bin.

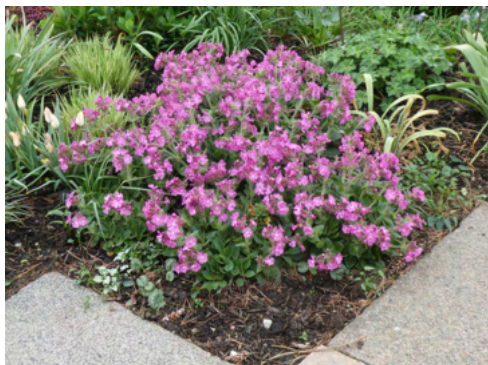
On the window ledge in pots we bring on cucumbers, peppers, chilli, tomatoes and this month add to them squashes (butter nut, Turkish turban and pumpkin), runner beans and dwarf french beans. Along with a few marigolds to scatter around the plot.

Outside, in some old guttering in good compost I grow peas, in a repeat of last year I shall do a main crop variety and plenty of mangetout of which I enjoyed a small crop of last year. Carrots I have put in a wide strip between 2 lots of garlic in a raised bed, hoping that the garlic will keep away the carrot fly and the carrots will hide the garlic from the onion fly. I have also sown a row of rocket at the side of the garlic bed, all in the hope that they hide one another from each others' pests.

I can not write an article at this time of the year without mentioning weeding: if you don't get them early they take hold quick. So it's away we'ho until next month.

Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

Silene dioica 'Rollie's Favorite'



This interesting Campion hybrid is a long-blooming plant, forming a low mound of dark-green, oval leaves, with clusters of starry, rich-pink blossoms, each with a white eye. It is very floriferous and is a good choice for near the front of a sunny border. If you cut it back by half, after the first flush of flowers wane in late May to early June, it will encourage repeat blooming later in the year. One account on the internet says to deadhead the spent flowers if you don't want volunteers from this prolific seeder, but I have never encountered any seed and certainly no seedlings. I can tentatively confirm, however, another report that says it is deer resistant.

I have it growing in a bed which receives lots of sunshine in the morning, but is shaded by a nearby conifer in the afternoon.

Accounts on the internet vary both in its origin and the spelling. One account says it is a cross between *Silene* and *Lychnis*, bred

by Herbert Oudshoorn of the Netherlands and is called *Silene x robotii* 'Rollies Favorite'. Another spells it as 'Rolly's Favorite' and says it was actually a plant cross that occurred in nature. The RHS Plant Finder has it as *Silene dioica* 'Rollie's Favorite' (which I have used as the title to this piece) and another website has it as *Lychnis* 'Rolly's Favorite', yet another as being a *Silene hybrida* cultivar. Some websites spell Favorite as Favourite and others spell Rollie's as Rollies or Rollys !!! All possible combinations appear to be exploited. Our plant was purchased from Ashwood Nurseries in March 2016, labelled as *Silene* 'Rolly's Favourite'.

So the naming is all a bit of a mess for a really good spring flowering plant that



should be more widely known and grown. Don't be put off buying it – however it's named, it is a really good garden plant.

Stock and Bradley Gardening Club Report



Our March 6th event was a talk by Nigel Hopes entitled 'A Year in John Massey's Garden'. Nigel is the Head Gardener and showed us how the garden looks throughout each season and described the work involved in keeping it immaculate.

NEXT CLUB EVENT - Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 7:30pm

The April meeting will be our Annual Bulb Show. Members bring along three cut blooms each of as many daffodil varieties as they can muster, and everyone judges each entry to decide the winner in each class. Lots of help is available for anyone not sure of which Class to enter. Make sure that you bring your own vases. More than one entry can be made in each Class, except for Class 8.

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Class 1 | Planted container of bulbs, any variety or varieties |
| Class 2 | 3 cut flowers Trumpet Daffodil or Large Cupped Daffodil |
| Class 3 | 3 cut flowers Small Cupped Daffodil or Poeticus Daffodil |
| Class 4 | 3 cut flowers Double Daffodil |
| Class 5 | 3 cut flowers Jonquil Daffodil, Tazetta Daffodil, or Triandrus Daffodil |
| Class 6 | 3 cut flowers Cyclamineus Daffodil or Dwarf Daffodil growing less than 8 inches tall |
| Class 7 | A Spring arrangement including at least one bulbous variety |
| Class 8 | Photograph (maximum size A5) depicting 'A Specimen Flower or Plant'.
One entry per member for this Class. |
| Class 9 | 3 cut flowers of bulbs, any variety of varieties |

This event is also an opportunity to socialise, so even if you are not exhibiting, do please come along and join in. It has become a tradition that we each bring along a few nibbles to share, so please feel free to do so !

Club meetings are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall, Church Road, Bradley Green starting at 7.30pm, and are free to members for an annual subscription of £5.00 for 2024. Visitors are made very welcome and may attend for £3.00 per meeting.

If you require any further information, ring Rob Cole (Chairman) on 07544 832052.



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Feckenham Cricket Club Bob Gordon

The first cut of the square took place on 6th March, although the South end was so wet that a light mower (kindly donated by a neighbour) had to be used to finish. The outfield is still too damp and soft for the gang mowers to be used but hopefully that can be mowed later in the month.

The bonfire pile has finally gone, much to our relief and a club member managed to retrieve the boundary fence that had been washed down the stream.

That particular fence was in a poor state (mainly rot over the last fifteen years or so) and joined the pile of around thirty that need attention. Our plans in that respect have changed thanks to a very welcome and timely grant from Feckenham Parish Council that will enable us to buy the materials needed for thirty new ones. We will be acquiring the timber, painting it, cutting some into “uprights” and assembling. Ideally this will be completed before the season start date of Saturday April 20th.

Over the weekend of 23/24th March we will be carrying out the annual preparation for the season – if you would like to help tidy, strim, mow, mend or paint, come down from 10am on the Saturday or Sunday. You will be very welcome.

If anyone who would like to help with this project please contact me via Facebook or phone (07749 884062).

In the last couple of weeks we have invited three drainage experts to take a look at the ground and suggest how to prevent water from gathering in the area between the corner of the square near the clubhouse and the south-west corner where cars part on match days. The objective is to produce a proposal that can be included in a grant application from the cricket authorities.

Ladies cricket - we had a ladies/girls softball team before Covid struck and would like to revive this - if you are interested please get in touch.

Upcoming home fixtures (subject to ground conditions...):

Sat. 20 th April 12:30	- Feckenham CC 1 st XI v Lye 2nd XI
Sat. 27 th April 12:30	- Feckenham CC 2 nd XI v Oldswinford CC 2nd XI
Sun. 28 th April 10:15	- Feckenham U13 v Ombersley “B” (T20 match)
Tue. 30 th April 18:00	- Feckenham U13 v Barnt Green
Sat. 4 th May 12:30	- Feckenham CC 2 nd XI v Ombersley CC- 3rd XI
Sun. 5 th May 10:15	- Feckenham U14 v Himley (T20 match)
Tue. 7 th May 18:00	- Feckenham U13 v Alvechurch & Hopwood



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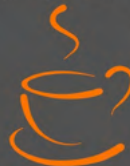
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