

# FECKENHAM NEWS

July 2024



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

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# Feckenham News in July

## Dates for your Diary

### July

2nd	Village Hall AGM
9th	Lunch Club
15th	WI
18th	Parish Council Meeting
19th	FeckenOdeon 2
23rd	Battery Storage Meeting
27th	Fun on the Square

### August

14th Shakespeare in the Garden

### September

27th R&C Bandits Golf Cup

### October

5-6th Scarecrow Weekend

### 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

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The editor - Wake Day

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[www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk)

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## Editor's Note

A couple of days ago I was sitting in my garden enjoying the sunshine and hoping this was truly the start of summer at last. There was a wonderful sense of anticipation as the team of volunteers spent the day preparing the Square and Recreation Ground for the Wake: erecting gazebos, putting up bunting and everything else that needs to be done to prepare for the big day. The hog roaster was set up and areas roped off for the car and pet show. The committee have invested in some new stronger and more colourful gazebos which looked very attractive.



The Wake yesterday was a fantastic event, perhaps the best in recent memory. There was truly something for everyone. The sun shone and the crowds came. I liked that it started earlier than before at 1230 pm and went on till 5pm, giving lots of time to see everything and enjoy all the food on offer.

The committee which is now 11 strong - Julian Bull (chair), Ian Bellion, Erica Guise, Simon Holmes, Louise Jordan, Janine Lynn, John Ratcliffe, Alan Smith, Simon Statham, Maggie Stephens and Charlie Willetts - along with their helpers who are too many to name individually deserve huge congratulations and thanks. This morning they are out again clearing up.

In the magazine on pages 8-9, please look out for the article from the Parish Council about the proposed battery energy storage station and meetings associated with it. From what I hear, this will be a very long running issue.

## Feckenham Square Management Committee



### **COOK IT YOURSELF POUR IT YOURSELF ENJOY IT YOURSELF**

On the evening of **Saturday, 27th July** you're invited to come to The Square for some FUN... and it won't cost you a penny! Bring your own food. Bring your own drink. You can even bring your own tables and chairs though there'll be a few to get us started. We're having a DIY celebration! There'll be a great big barbecue all stoked up and ready for you to cook your own food on. There'll be entertainment from local musicians and The Erstwhile Border Morris will dance for us. The aim is to mount a pleasant evening for villagers to socialise and enjoy - a simple village party. No fundraising, no pay bar. Just come along and enjoy the company of your fellow Feckenhamsters - and if you're new to Feckenham it'll be a chance to meet your fellow villagers. A village do in the heart of the village!

**FUN ON THE SQUARE**  
**Saturday, 27th July from 6.30pm**

### **SCARECROW REMINDER**

The **Feckenham Scarecrow Weekend** will return on **5th and 6th October**. You'll again be invited to make the most remarkable straw creations for display around the village - so start designing now! You'll be surprised how fast the time goes - and scarecrows wait for no man (or woman)!

# Village Notices

## Rose and Crown Golf Society Bandit Cup 2024

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024  
Fulford Heath Golf Club, Tanners Green  
Lane, Wythall, Birmingham B47 6BH  
First tee time 12:30  
Followed by supper and prize presentation  
at the Rose & Crown.

£45 for 18-holes or £25 for 9-holes (incl  
green fee and prizes)

This annual golf competition is open to  
Feckin Ladies and Feckin Gents and this year  
will be running a separate 9-hole  
competition for those no longer able to play  
18-holes.

Do please contact Jenny Dalloway to book  
your place.

[jenny@dalloway.com](mailto:jenny@dalloway.com)  
07899 790523



Pete Masters has recently stepped down as Vice Chair of Moors Lane, Allotments. It was decided that his service needed recognition, so a very nice bottle of wine was given to him along with Honorary Life Membership. He's pictured with his certificate which was presented to him as a surprise on a recent fishing trip.



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[thewren@wrenandbramble.co.uk](mailto:thewren@wrenandbramble.co.uk)

The logo for 'Wren & Bramble' features a stylized bird silhouette filled with various flowers like roses and lilies. The text is arranged in a clean, modern font with a green and purple color scheme.

## **FECKENHAM EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT**

The endowment makes grants to young people in the pursuit of further education or training. If you are under 25 and live in the Ancient Parish of Feckenham or the District of Redditch you may be eligible for a grant. Any such grants are divided on the basis of 4/5 to the Ancient Parish and 1/5 to the District of Redditch. All applications will be carefully considered. An individual may make a maximum of three applications. The decision of the Trustees is final.

Closing date for receipt of applications

**30th September, 2024**

For more information and an application form contact:

Mrs J. Bate (Clerk to the Trustees)  
'Wychway', Droitwich Road  
Hanbury, BROMSGROVE  
B60 4DB  
Tel 01527 821285

## **FECKENHAM CHARITY**

Funds are dispensed from this ancient charity to individuals and organisations within the boundaries of the Ancient Parish of Feckenham, as the Trustees think fit.

Closing date for receipt of applications

**30th September, 2024**

Further enquiries/applications to:

Mrs J. Bate (Clerk to the Trustees)  
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## The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society



### JOKE ENCOUNTER

When Graeme and Clive (Simon Pegg and Nick Frost) accidentally meet a being from outer space things don't exactly go as they might have expected. Paul (that's the alien) doesn't ask to be taken to their leader - he's more likely to ask to be taken to MacDonalds. Once they've got over the shock of their first close encounter, our heroes dedicate themselves to protecting Paul from the security forces who want to do unspeakable things to him.

Much of the fun in this homage to every sci-fi cliché you've ever heard of (and some you haven't) comes from the laid-back character of Paul - the extra-terrestrial who has spent so much time earthbound that he's picked up all sorts of horrid human habits and mannerisms.

Not to be taken seriously! (UK/USA 2011)

**PAUL (15)**

**Friday, 19th July at 8pm**

#### OUR 23rd SEASON:

The main programme for the FeckenOdeon's 2024/25 Season is now open for booking. There are details to be found at

[www.fecknodeon.co.uk](http://www.fecknodeon.co.uk) and in leaflets available at the Shop, The Village Hall and The Rose & Crown. Films showing include: Wicked Little Letters, The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, Bob Marley - One Love, South Pacific, The Great Escaper, The Producers and A Haunting in Venice.



*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](http://www.fecknodeon.co.uk)*

## Feckenham School News

The weather has definitely made itself known to us this year, with flood days, our new bell tent deciding to go 'walk about' in our neighbour's field and the Forest School site over the road becoming a bog mire then a shallow swimming pool.

However, let's look on the bright side and say a huge 'thank you' to local residents and parents for fixing our fence at Forest School, so we can at last use the site safely. The weather had caused the fencing around the brook to fail but kindness and fortitude shown by our parents have put that right and I am pleased to say that the Mustard Seeds (our Reception class), made a return to our wonderful site as soon as they could get their wellies on!



Owls Class (Year 1 pupils), have been on a tree hunt, identifying the range of trees by looking closely at the leaves as well as using the magnifying glasses to identify all the essential parts of plants.

The poly tunnel has been cleared out (and rabbit holes filled in!), so we can start to grow again.

We are so fortunate to have access to such an interesting and huge Forest School site and in the coming weeks will be making the most out of the gentler weather.



## NOW HEAR THIS!

Feckenham Parish Council has been advised of a further BESS (battery energy storage station) being proposed by INNOVA.

They have arranged a “**DROP IN**” meeting to be held on **Tuesday 23rd July between 1500 - 1900 hrs**. This is despite our advice that the majority of Parishioners may not be able to attend at such times.

**The Parish Council are arranging a meeting to follow this at 19.30 hrs in a hope that this may be more convenient**, in order to try to advise residents about the proposal.

## A TSUNAMI

**This is now the third current proposal covering some 50 acres of land with approximately 650mw of battery storage in 500 metal shipping containers.**

If you include the Transfer station itself the area covered, even at this point is some 100 acres - dwarfing the size of the village.

### ***But this is the tip of the iceberg***

National Grid have granted licences for 2.2GW of Solar Parks and BESS stations in and around the Parish. The Tsunami of applications to come are estimated to cover 10,000 acres with solar parks, and BESS stations.

## SOME FACTS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. The storage of energy in Lithium cells, IS NOT GREEN ENERGY. The power consumption and carbon footprint in extracting base material, refining the small lithium element, transport around the world and back to create and distribute batteries is immense. In addition the batteries need to be replaced every 8 years or so, producing approximately one ton of hazardous waste per container.
2. National Grid estimate that the current number of licences granted would produce six

- times the energy they require. Note that in Spain this situation has already be reached.
3. The National Grid estimate that the cost of upgrading the system will cost £3 trillion. So any thoughts of this being cheap energy is Incorrect.
4. The siting and connection for such proposals does not have to be adjacent to the Transfer Station, connections to the grid can be anywhere, it is as it says on the tin, a National Grid, and the problem is a National one.
5. It is a known fact that BESS stations are best sited adjacent to the point of energy production, not the point of connection o the Grid.
6. Wind Farms operate at 50 – 78 % efficiency. Solar operates at 10 -0 15 efficiency.
7. Solar panels should be used to reduce the need for power from the grid. That is roof top mounted on both residential, commercial and industrial property.
8. Hydrogen can be used to power existing heating appliances in all buildings without major infrastructure expense. Existing service stations can be used to fuel vehicles which would only require minimal adaptation to convert from fossil fuel. This again vastly reducing carbon footprint.

Electricity is storage in Lithium cells is not the way forward, it is not green energy and produces vast amounts of toxic waste, as do solar farms.

## WAKE UP BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

### **Innova Drop In session**

**Tuesday 23rd July - 3pm to 7pm**

### **Parish Council**

### **Information Meeting**

**Tuesday, 23rd July at 7.30pm**

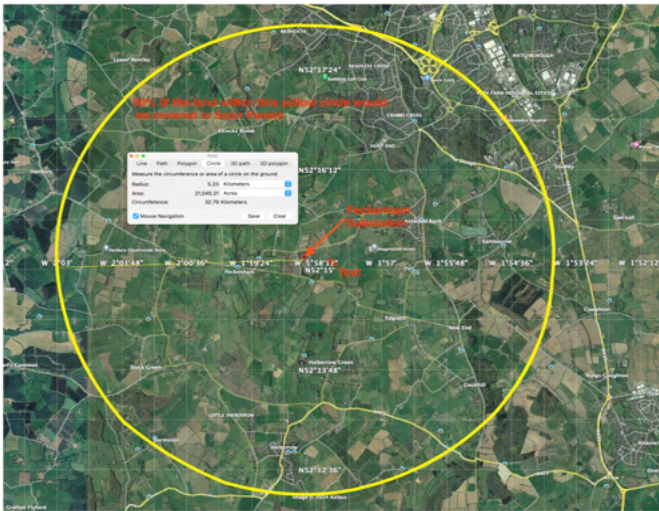
**Both at Feckenham Village Hall**

Visit the Parish Council’s website for information about the Council, planning issues, local organisations and useful contact details to help you solve problems. You’ll also find digital editions of Feckenham news going back to 2012.

**[feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk](http://feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk)**



The map above shows the areas (outlined in yellow) that would be occupied by the battery park schemes already made public - there are more in the pipeline. The land likely to be taken up is already larger than the village of Feckenham.



**Area likely to be needed for solar panels projected for connection to Feckenham substation.**

Given that not all the local land will be suited for solar panels because it also contains roads, houses, woods and small parcels of private land, etc, we estimate that only about 50% of the total local land stock could be utilised for solar panels – thus we are looking to a total land area of about 21,000 acres – with 50% having solar panels on it. This 21,000 acres would need to be as close as possible to the Feckenham substation to minimise cable costs. The illustration shows what it would look like on Google Maps – the yellow circle is 10.5km wide and encompasses the whole of Inkberrow and half of Redditch.

## Salt Way Energy Storage Community Consultation Event

Innova Renewables are proposing an 400 MW energy storage development on land near Salt Way, south of Astwood Road, between Feckenham and Astwood Bank and would like to hear your views. We are holding a community consultation event where the project details and plans will be on display. Members of the team will be present to answer your questions and listen to your feedback.

**Date: 23 July 2024**

**Time: 3pm - 7pm**

**Location: Feckenham Village Hall , High Street, Feckenham, Redditch, B96 6HN**

Please feel free to attend this drop in event at a time of your convenience to learn more about this renewable energy project. If you are unable to attend the event, please visit [www.innova.co.uk/projects/salt-way-energy-storage/](http://www.innova.co.uk/projects/salt-way-energy-storage/) or email [info@innova.co.uk](mailto:info@innova.co.uk) referencing Salt Way Energy Storage.

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## Feckenham Village Hall



### A BARD AMONG THE BUSHES

It's summertime - time for outdoor frolics and al fresco refreshments. When the Village Hall Committee heard that a fine company of professional actors was passing this way en route to the Edinburgh Festival it decided that it was too good an opportunity to miss!

The Globe Players are based in London and have been taking high quality shows to unusual places for over 50 years - and now they're coming to Feckenham to put on a show in a village garden. Jeremy Irons and Haley Mills are among the company's patrons.

The show "Shakespeare in the Garden" is packed with comedy, tragedy, romance and mystery. The players will take us on a whistle stop tour of the Bard's life and work with plenty of magic, scandal, love and gore for all the family!

### SHAKESPEARE IN THE GARDEN

**Wednesday, 14th August at 7.30pm**

**In the garden of 7 Droitwich Road**

*By kind permission of Julian & Jane Bull*

### TICKETS

Are on sale at The Village Shop  
and The Rose & Crown.

Book online through [www.feckhall.org](http://www.feckhall.org)

Book by phone on 0333 666 3366

## Draw results

### Feckenham Village Hall Improvement Fund June draw.

The draw was carried out on 3rd June, 2024.

1st (£25)	89	Miranda Powell
2nd (£15)	136	Steve & Jenny Dalloway
3rd (£10)	115	M.Davis

Feckenham's Own...



## RIO ON THE BANK

One of our area's biggest events is the Annual Astwood Bank Carnival. For the past few years Swansbrook Radio has had a stand at the Carnival and brought listeners highlights and action from the show. Swansbrook's veteran DJ, Colin James, has been heavily involved with the event. He's provided the public address system and been the lead announcer for many years. This year he decided to retire from that role and anticipated a quite day recording interviews and sipping cold beer in the Swansbrook pop-up studio... but this was not to be. A couple of weeks ago he discovered that he'd been elected Honorary President of the Carnival - and that means that he has to be driven round in a Rolls Royce, crown the Carnival Queen, present prizes, etc... So we've decided to follow him on his big day and make a programme about the Day in the Life of The President - it'll be at least as interesting as a day in the life of President Trump and with better hair. The Carnival, which this year has a Mardi Gras theme, is on Saturday 13th July and the Swansbrook programme will be on the air from Monday, 15th July.



Presidents James & Trump

## LISTEN TO THE SWANS

Go to [www.swansbrook.com](http://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](http://www.swansbrook.com)**

# CHURCH SERVICES



## PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Vicar: Fr Glenn Reading 01527 894436  
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Church Warden: Vacant

For Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals please contact Fr Glenn

Website: [www.feckenhamchurch.org.uk](http://www.feckenhamchurch.org.uk)



PARISH CHURCH  
OF  
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
FECKENHAM

## Services for July 2024

7th July	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
14th July	9.00am	BCP Communion	Fr Glenn Reading
	10.30am	Family Service	Rev Linda Nicholas
21st July	6.30pm	Evensong	Rev Fiona Carter
28th July	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter

### Drop in (in church)

Wednesday at 10.30am - 12.00pm

10th July and 24th July

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](http://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**

## Reverend Fiona Writes

By the time you all read this I will have been ordained as a priest in the Church of England at Worcester Cathedral on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The last year has been amazing, as I have been learning so many new things. Learning how to conduct baptisms and funerals has been an immense privilege as I have been sharing in these very significant family events. Obviously, these events are very different. Baptisms are a joyous event and funerals, although very sad, are very important for the families to be able to say goodbye in the right way for them. Getting to know the families has been an immense privilege.

What I also enjoy doing is talking to and getting to know people in the community I serve in. I am able to do this at the toddler group on a Wednesday at Feckenham village hall where I help to wash up. Also, at Feckenham school where I serve as a governor, and at the monthly "coffee stop" we hold for our community at Astwood Bank church. Even just walking round Astwood Bank village I get to say hello to people, dog walkers, mums and dads and children. We have also started a family service in Feckenham and Astwood Bank churches on the second Sunday of the month. The next one is at 10.30am at Feckenham church on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome.

I am also looking forward to the year ahead as I become more confident with the things I have learnt this year and start to do new things as well. Presiding at the Eucharist is one of those things. It feels an absolute honour to be able to do that. On the 30<sup>th</sup> June I will be presiding for the first time. Why do we do eat the bread and drink the wine? Well, because Jesus commanded us to. Jesus wants our company, and he wants everyone else's company as well. Rowan Williams speaks of the Eucharist as a place

of hospitality. Hospitality is a very important part of Jesus's ministry. We come to the Eucharist because he asks us to be there. In the Eucharist he binds us together in love and creates a celebration. All we have to do is say yes to Jesus and in the Eucharist, we can receive him and his transforming power into our lives and our hearts, and be changed by the gifts of bread and wine.

Blessings

### **WI Centenary Memorial**

The Parochial Church Council is pleased to provide a home in the Church for the framed banner celebrating the 100 years of Feckenham Women's Institute from 1919 to 2019. It is the work of Margaret Matthews, Sheena Shale, Jane White, Glenda Smith, Kath Powell, Vivien Hunter and Eunice O'Brien. It is located in the North Aisle next to the North Door.

### **Defibrillator in Church**

The Parochial Church Council is pleased to report that a **Defibrillator** has now been installed inside the Church. It is located in the corner of the nave to the left of the entrance door. Ideally it would have been installed on the outside of the building but its status as Listed Building prevented this. However, the Church is open all day, every day from 08.30 to 22.30, so it is readily available. There is a sign inside the porch and on the notice board at the end of the drive.

Ian Hunter on behalf of Feckenham Parochial Church Council

### **Church of England Children's Society Collection Boxes**

We are pleased to report that the boxes collected in April have all been emptied and the contents banked. A grand total of £817 has been donated to the Children's Society. A big THANKYOU to all who took part and contributed to the care of children in need.

Vivien Hunter

# WHAT'S ON IN

Feckenham Square Management Committee

## Fun On The Square

Saturday, 27th July - from 6.30pm

Bring your own food - cook your own food

Large barbecue provided

**Bring your own booze**

Music from local musicians

Erstwhile Border Morris will dance

Limited seating

bring your own tables and chairs if you can

A simple sociable evening  
for simple Feckenham folk

### ERSTWHILE



### BORDER MORRIS

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

## FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL

THE GLOBE PLAYERS PRESENT

### SHAKESPEARE IN THE GARDEN

★★★★★

'Shakespeare as we like it, rich, beautiful & connected.' Remote Goat

★★★★★

'Capturing the emotional heart.' The List



BEST OF  
THE BARD  
FOR ALL THE  
FAMILY!

In the Garden  
of 7 Droitch Road

By kind permission of Mr & Mrs Bull

Wednesday, 14th August at 7.30pm

Tickets from: The Village Shop  
The Rose & Crown

Book Online through [feckhall.org](http://feckhall.org)  
or by phone on 0333 666 3366



## theWOMEN

INSPIRING WOMEN

Next Meeting - Monday, 15th July  
A VISIT TO INKBERROW

### NUCLEAR BUNKER

Leaving at 8pm from Feckenham Village Hall

Contact [jen@thecarys.co.uk](mailto:jen@thecarys.co.uk) for details

Feckenham Parish Council  
**IMPORTANT  
INFORMATION MEETING**  
**Battery Parks and Solar Farms**

Come and find out what's being proposed and what  
we may be able to do about it.

Wednesday, 23rd July at 7.30pm  
Feckenham Village Hall (Back Room)

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 July



**FECKENHAM  
VILLAGE HALL**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Tuesday, 2nd July at 8pm  
in The Back Room  
All welcome  
New Committee Members will be  
extra welcome!!



Feckenham  
**Scarecrow**  
Weekend  
5th & 6th October

Feckenham Parish Council

**MEETING**  
Thursday, 18th July - 7.30pm  
Feckenham Village Hall  
(Back Room)

Please note change of date  
due to general election.

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

**PAUL** 15



Fugitive,  
celebrity,  
Slacker,  
joker...  
...alien?!

**FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 19th July at 8pm**

2024/25 programme now out  
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How useful it is for future generations when people note down the names of subjects on the back of photographs. This one depicting the family living in no 1 The Square has notes "Auntie Florrie, Lily, Phillis (nee Povey)Davies, Amy Badger Arthur Davies " The date would have made it perfect!

Recently I've had enquiries from a gentleman who is trying to find out more about his family, in particular his mum Ivy Phyllis Court born 20<sup>th</sup> February 1912 in the sub district of Feckenham. Can anyone help?

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## Introducing... Ian Ridley



This month I met with Ian Ridley in his studio to hear about his artistic journey which started 20 years ago. Ian and his wife, Sue, moved to the village from Redditch in 1995. Both of them were teachers in Birmingham. Prior to becoming a painter, Ian worked with wood but after developing tennis elbow he was encouraged to go along to Feckenham Art Society by friend and village artist, Lew Howe Bennett. He was immediately hooked and found himself painting in all his spare time. Lew continued to be a mentor right up to his passing, with them spending many an afternoon discussing each other's work. After a few years, he gave up working and took up art professionally. He was elected a member of the Birmingham Watercolour Society which is quite a difficult process including having a

number of pieces assessed and then an interview. Once a member, one has more credibility in the art world.

He has exhibited and has taught all over the country. The best piece of advice he ever had was: Paint what you want to - not what you think will sell.

For about 10 years he worked exclusively and traditionally in watercolours before establishing a style of his own with more imaginative and atmospheric landscapes. More recently he has been working in acrylics producing "big sky" landscapes and seascapes

His works are always originals as he doesn't do prints. He is continues to be influenced by Lew who villagers will remember I'm sure and who is greatly missed.

After Covid, Ian and Julian Bull had a successful Nature Exhibition in the village hall. Following that, they set up the group of Feckenham Artisans. There are now about 16 members who range in their work from crafts to art - some as hobbyists and others more commercially.

Ian is very keen to support charities and a proportion of his sales have gone to a range of charities. This year, as a part of the Warwickshire Open Studios, he will be donating to the Rob Burrow Centre for MND Charity. His cards and book have raise thousands for Cancer Research.

People are quite welcome to visit the studio by appointment. His website is [www.ianridleywatercolours.co.uk](http://www.ianridleywatercolours.co.uk).

# Feckenham Wake 22nd June 2024





## Feckenham WI



On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May we headed out to Ipsley Alders Marshes in Winyates, near the big Amazon warehouse on the way to the A435. Walking through and under the roundabout on the Coventry Highway to get to it felt slightly subversive! The reserve is one of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's hidden gems and it was lovely English Longhorn cattle grazing peacefully amidst the flowers and rushes, just a hundred metres or so from a big housing estate. We did a bit of litter picking as we went along and then held our AGM at The Oast House pub in Church Hill South, with the following being re-elected: Jen Cary as President, Maggie Meixner as Treasurer, Emily

Peters as Secretary and Pauline Westbury as Membership Secretary.

For the last two June meetings we've done air rifle shooting but this year we thought we would take advantage of the longer evenings by doing a car maintenance session. Adam from Feckenham Garage and Will from Col's Mini Centre very kindly took us through how to change a tyre, how to tell if someone's done a good service on your car or not, and loads of other hints and tips. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and are very grateful to Adam and Will for their time, patience and expertise. We also wish Dean a speedy recovery.

Our July meeting will be on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 8pm – hopefully at our local nuclear bunker in Inkberrow. We will be meeting in Feckenham Village Hall car park at 7.45pm and leaving at 8pm. For more details contact Jen Cary on 07773 883 039.

If you like trying something a bit different and educational one night a month, we are always glad to welcome new members. It's £48 for 12 meetings, which works out at £4 per session and includes the monthly WI magazine, or you can pay £5 per session as a guest. We meet at Feckenham Village Hall back room every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 8pm-9.30pm. For more information contact Jen Cary on 07773 883 039 or [jen@thecarys.co.uk](mailto:jen@thecarys.co.uk).



## Village Shop - Alan Slater

Despite the dreadful Spring weather, the Shop enjoyed a record sales month in May. The Cafe continued to gain in popularity boosted by many first time visitors who had heard about our excellent coffee and quality home baked cakes. With the beginning of Summer (allegedly), I am confident that the upward sales trend will continue. The ongoing financial success of the Shop means that we are able to sponsor many of the local events in and around Village. For example in June the Shop supported the Feckenham Horse Show and the annual Wake (I hope you enjoyed our sponsored Punch and Judy show). This month we will be promoting the Shop at the Hanbury Country Show. Local sponsorships are important in helping to maintain these events and with it the distinctive character of Feckenham. We will continue to do so but it's only possible with your support. So please support us as we support the Community.



Although it's some time ahead, we will be holding our annual Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Nurses on the last Friday in September. You may recall that last year's event was a huge success as we raise £1,000 for the charity. A magnificent total that was partly achieved by the sales of home made FeckenJam and this year we will be repeating that initiative. So at this early stage I am issuing an appeal for any used or non used jam jars that could be useful to us. If you can help

please bring them to the Shop during the next couple of months. Also if you have a surplus of any soft fruits our jam maker would be grateful for that as well. Just text Geri 07765 939900 and we will arrange collection if necessary. To beat last year's result will be a challenge but with a bit of help I'm sure we can do it.

Finally my regular plea for additional volunteer help as we are struggling to cover some of the Saturday shifts. If you could spare an hour or two between 10.30 a.m and 4 p.m that would be brilliant, just drop by and give your details to any of our volunteers and we will give you a call.

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# An Organic Allotment by Pete Delaney

Mid summer just passed and the year tips over into the true harvest season of July, August and September, although this year due to the wet conditions we have experienced, harvests have been slow to come so far and some produce has had a hard time coming to fruition. All across the allotment there seems to be a yellow tinge amongst the greenery, salads seem to have suffered and my sweet corn could be doing better.

Runner beans are growing slower than I've ever seen them before. Also my runner beans have been in a battle with flea beetle, which I have not experienced on beans before. I pull off the leaves as soon as I see any presence of their feeding (the green of the leaf disappearing leaving just the leaf's skeletal structure) however you cannot leave a plant with no leaves on it, so at times I cut the part of a leaf off that is infested, I find removal the best way to be rid of flea beetle, although if you are not on the case they can destroy a plant within a few days. For this reason I have held back some haricot beans I have in pots to be sure I am rid of the flea beetle infestation to my beans before I plant the haricots out.

Some yellow leaves are welcome of course. On the garlic it means it's practically ready to harvest, onions will be looking that way too by the end of this month.

Also some crops seem to have thrived in the damp conditions. My potatoes are looking great, although I am part putting it down to the chopped up comfrey plants that I scattered along the drills at planting. Regular watering and nitrogen, a potato plant's paradise I reckon. Broad beans are giving me a good crop although, usually good to support themselves in a block, this time the middle of the patch fell over in some heavy rain. This was after they had flowered, so thankfully did not affect the crop.

My first go at growing sweet potatoes is

producing rambling plants of which I look forward to seeing its produce later in the season.

Later this month I shall cut my Jerusalem artichoke plants in half, to stop them growing up to flower and put their energy into the tubers instead.

Summer raspberries are fruiting well this year. At the end of July/start of August the summer raspberries finish and I shall prune the canes that have fruited down to the ground. In August my autumn fruiteders will be coming through.

The small column apple tree I planted in February is looking healthy and I hope it will have a little fruit next year. However the column cherry and column pear I planted at the same time are struggling a little. I shall feed them some rotted horse muck compost, forked gently in around the roots to try and give them a bit of a boost. In the polytunnel several sets of tomatoes are in place on my 13 plants in a bed and 4 plants in large pots. As the crop begins to ripen I shall keep an eye out for blossom end rot, treating with lime watered into the roots if it should occur.

Cucumbers are climbing and showing flowers. We germinated them a little late this year, accidentally following the example of this year's late natural season.

A first for me in the polytunnel is a couple of aubergine plants, they are growing well but not in flower or fruit yet as I am writing this article in mid June.

My peas are just flowering with loads of buds and I hope they shall be my main July harvest.

Well let's hope the second half of the growing season remembers to give the plot a little sunshine to help the harvest's fruition.

# Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

## GARDENING RECORDS - A LUST FOR LISTS

I have a great fondness for records and lists.

The idea of putting bits of information together in an orderly and standardised fashion has always appealed to me, and the advent of computers meant that I could run amok with my list making. My first computer was a Sinclair ZX, a complete joke by today's standards, but it introduced me to databases. My current software for my lists is the database part of the old Microsoft Works, not a particularly powerful programme, but it allows me to sort alphabetically on any of the fields, to carry out searches for records matching a set of criteria, and to find key words in an instant.

My first seed sowing records on a 'proper' PC go back to June 1990, and each year since then I kept close records of what seeds we sowed for our nursery, where the seed came from, the date of sowing, the number of pots or trays sown, the date of potting up, and the number of plants yielded, together with any comments. I now have 34 years worth of records (21,405 entries) to draw upon, which I use in deciding the optimum time for sowing each species or genera and which now forms the basis of another database called 'Time to Sow'.

During the 1990's I was a keen grower of Auriculas, and had collected books on them to gain information on the various cultivars, but none of the books had all of the information. So in 1998 I started a database gathering together details from all of the books and from any other sources I could find, including writing to some of the growers for first hand facts. The list has been updated and added to annually since then, and is currently in its 22nd edition and now describes over 5,783 cultivars. As far as I know, it is the only such list available which covers these plants so comprehensively.

Not all my lists are as ambitious, though some are as lengthy. I have a database of all of the plants we grew at Meadow Farm, which includes the plant name, where it was bought, when we bought it, how much it cost, and where the plant was located. By the time we left it had 4,291 entries. I also kept a list of all the plants we lost or discarded over the years - a staggering 3,933 entries in twenty two years, I dread to think of the cost. And I have a list of all of the wildflowers and grasses I managed to identify in the meadow (43 entries). Of course, since we moved to Salford Priors, I now have a database of all of the plants in our new garden (1,422 entries).

All of our horticultural books are catalogued (248 entries), and I have a separate database of my books on Primulas (44 entries). My list of local horticultural societies (241 entries) was absolutely invaluable when it came to target advertising our plant sales and horticultural events. I also have a database of commercially available Echinacea species and cultivars (a particular breeding passion of mine), and the total has now reached 533.

All gardeners have their Wants List, and mine has 436 entries - where I shall put them if I ever get them all is anybody's guess.

I have just realised that the only list I haven't yet tackled is a list of my lists - better get started.



## PLANT SALE

Our annual fundraising Plant Sale final income figures have been confirmed, after expenses, and amount to an amazing £1,555.00 - an all-time record.

Our 5<sup>th</sup> June meeting was a talk by Josh Egan-Wyer entitled 'The Very Best Plants for June' which he demonstrated with live plant material. Sales of his plants were keen!

*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

League cricket is now well underway, although both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Teams have not yet hit its stride, having each had two of their fixtures having been cancelled due to the wet ground. The conditions also resulted in the Worcestershire Over 70s v Wales Over 70s match at Mill Lane being called off. However, it is likely that we will now be hosting Worcestershire Over 70s v Warwickshire Over 70s on Monday August 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Junior cricket season is now in full swing with Feckenham Under 13, Under 14 and Under 15 teams all being in recent action. The U15 team has played two games in this period which included a tense win in the Hundred competition against Avoncroft where Sam Curtis (46 off 29 balls) provided a solid foundation before local boy Ben Eost played a match winning innings of 55 not out from 33 balls securing victory by chasing down a total of 137 with an over to spare. The team also played in the National Cup but were beaten by a very strong Barnt Green team.

The U14 team have played two T20 matches and have been unsuccessful. There was a 13 run defeat to Droitwich in the Cup where Feckenham were unable to chase down 93 for victory despite 21 not out from Shashank. There as also a League defeat to Hagley where Tommy Eost starred with his first half-century being reached on the last ball of our innings.

The Under 13 team have made an impressive start to their 2024 across both their Pairs and T20 league formats. With 3 out of 5 Pairs wins and 2 out of 2 T20 wins the team currently occupies Top position in both leagues. This is particularly significant given that there are some very big Clubs that play in these divisions. The team has recently secured three victories within four days against Droitwich, Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. A couple of weeks earlier, the team crushed Astwood Bank by 36 runs. A key feature of the team has been consistent disciplined bowling from everyone with wickets being shared around. There have been good all round performances from a number of players including Rory Gavin, Tommy Eost, Rory Freeman, Moin and Benny Reynolds. There have been a number of new players join the squad this year who have fitted in very well and team morale is very high.

If you know any juniors that might be interested in playing cricket this season then please contact James Reynolds for more details on 07841615410.

We will have been at The Wake on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June

We are on the lookout for additional senior players and anyone that would like to help with either Junior Coaching, umpiring or scoring games. Please contact the club by email to [feckenhamcc@outlook.com](mailto:feckenhamcc@outlook.com) or send a message to us from the club's Facebook page.

Ladies cricket - we had a ladies/girls softball team before Covid struck and would like to revive this. It will be playing a gentle form of cricket - maximum fun, minimum fuss. No pads, no hard ball, no heavy bat, no head-scratching rules. The Fillies will probably play local tournaments and occasional friendly matches against local clubs. You do NOT need to be an athlete – all are welcome. If you are interested please get in touch.



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