

FECKENHAM NEWS

June 2025

Published by Feckenham Church for the village.
Editor Gilly Cooper - feckenhamnews@gmail.com

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Feckenham News in June

Dates for your Diary

June

4th	S&B Gardening Club
6th	Mission Morogoro Thank You
10th	RBC Local Plan Consultation
12th	Parish Council Meeting
	Quiz at Rose and Crown
	Readers Group
13th	Grand Summer Coffee Morning
16th	WI
21st	Feckenham Wake

July

18th	FeckenOdeon 2
26th	Fun on the Square

Regular Sessions

Mondays	Junior Dance Class
Tuesdays	Tai Chi
Wednesdays	Playgroup (term time); Bridge
Thursdays	Bridge; Hatha Yoga

Second Monday of the month: Mobile Library

First Tuesday of the month:

Lunch Club, Feckenham Sessions

First and Third Wednesday: Community Choir

Second Wednesday Art Club

Third Monday of the month: WI

1st and 3rd Fridays : Erstwhile Morris Dancers

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Front Cover

Photo: The Church from the Old Vicarage Garden by the editor

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

Many articles in Feckenham News are contributed by members of the public. They remain the responsibility of the writers and neither the production team nor the publishers can be held responsible for the views and assertions contained therein.

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Editor's Note

They say it takes a village to raise a child - an African saying I believe - but it seems when villagers come together they can also make a hugely successful Flower and Garden Festival too! What a fantastic weekend we had over 17th and 18th May. I've included some photos of some of the flower arrangements that were on display in the church, some of the gardens and also photos of the helpers on the green and at the car park. Photos were taken by Judy Underwood, Cathy Fisher Cate Statham and myself.



Next month, the organiser, Carthy Fisher, will give some more detail but meantime I wanted to thank all those villagers who made it happen: the gardeners who worked for months to show us their gardens at their best, the church flower arrangers, the cake makers - including Eunice O'Brien who not only coordinated the tea and cakes but apparently made 91 scones herself - the WI team who ran the tea room in the village hall, and not least, the many helpers who set up and ran the car park, got the village green spruced up and many more whom I have failed to mention - you know who you are.

While many people now need a well deserved rest, some are getting ready for more village summer events. It's not too long till the Wake though before that there's the Coffee Morning on 13th June - not to be missed.

Also in the magazine there's an invitation for supporters to meet the Mission Morogoro team on 6th of June for an update in their activities. There's information about Redditch Writers who meet at the Library fortnightly and finally there is the first in an occasional series called Outings from Feckenham. I would be very pleased to receive descriptions of trips taken by villagers to places of interest within an hour's journey of the village.

Look out for Dr Hugo Hammersley's piece about the work of FABBS - Feckenham Against Battery Storage Systems and also details of the public meeting about the Local Plan for Redditch. Do attend if you can - details are in the Parish Council article on page 6.

Village Notices

Grand Summer Coffee Morning in aid of Feckenham Church Roof

Honeysuckle House
33 High Street

Friday, 13 June 2025
10:30 am to 12 noon
Admission £3

Cakes, jams, preserves, gifts, raffle, jewellery and much much more.



FOODIES WELCOME...

The Wake just wouldn't be The Wake without the legendary **Pig Roast**, slow-cooked to mouthwatering perfection by local culinary hero Malcolm Cookes. You'll smell it before you see it – and you'll definitely want seconds.

Craving something with a kick? Our handmade **samosa** stall is back, packed with flavour and always a crowd favourite. For something hot, cheesy, and straight from the flames, don't miss the **stone-baked pizzas** – bubbling, crispy, and topped to perfection. **Burger lovers**, we haven't forgotten you – a spectacular fast food van will be flipping patties and serving up deliciousness with all the trimmings.

Sweet treats... not one, but **TWO ice cream parlours** will be scooping everything from nostalgic 99s and classic cornets to gourmet sorbets that'll make your tastebuds sing. Add in candy floss, toffee apples, and other old-school fairground delights, and your sweet tooth is in very good hands.

DRINKS, ANYONE?

Feeling thirsty? Our ever-popular **Main Bar** will be pouring real ales, cooling lagers, ciders, and refreshing wine all day long.

Fancy something a bit fizzier? Head over to the **Prosecco Bar** – it's bubbly, it's classy, and it's the perfect place to raise a glass to summer.

There'll also be teas and cakes in the cool of the church.

WANT TO HELP?

All this activity is organised and operated by volunteers - and you could lend a hand. If you can spare some time on the day please get in touch - just email feckenhamwake@gmail.com and we'll get back to you. If you can help set up, we'll be around and about on the Square and Recreation Ground all day on Friday, 20th - just come along and we'll find you a job!

ROAD CLOSURE

At the time of writing the Police and County Council are telling us that we must close the road through the village for this event.

We're not sure how this is going to resolve itself but rest assured that village residents and their guests will still be able to come and go unhindered as usual.



ALL SYSTEMS GO!

Preparations are now in full swing for this year's **Feckenham Wake - 21st June from 12.30pm** on The Square and Recreation Ground. Entrance is free – though there is a small charge for parking in the Wake car park.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...

This year's event is shaping up to be an unforgettable festival of fun for everyone.

Whether you're toddling, strolling, or strutting in, there's something here with your name on it!

Little adventurers will be bouncing, climbing, giggling, and game-hopping their way through a wonderland of activities.

Competitive streak? Step into the spotlight for the **Trial of Strength** or take your team to victory in the life-sized table **football arena**. Fancy yourself a fighter? Slip into a giant padded suit and channel your inner warrior in our **sumo wrestling** showdown – we promise you won't regret it (or the photos).

The legendary **Fun Dog Show is back**, wagging its tail and ready to roll. Just tell your four-legged star that rosettes and raucous applause await. Bring Fido along and enter him/her into the class of your choice.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS...

Car buffs, rejoice! Over 100 polished-to-perfection classic cars will be gleaming in the sun at our **Classic Car Show** – a dream for anyone with petrol in their veins.

Entertainment takes centre stage with the timeless hilarity of Professor Chandler's **Punch and Judy**, the rousing tunes of the **Arrow Valley Brass Band**, soaring harmonies from **All Round Voices** Choir, and the infectious jingle and jangle of Massed **Morris Dancers** - and don't miss the magnificent **Fairground Organ**—it's a musical marvel.

Ever seen someone juggle while on stilts and riding a unicycle? You will. The incredible **Thomas Trilby** returns with his gravity-defying circus antics... and guard your pork baps well - the **Giant Seagulls** will be swooping throughout the afternoon!



ANNUAL MEETING

The Parish Council met on the 8th May for its "Annual Meeting". It is at this meeting that the year's accounts are discussed. This included the results of the internal audit which have to be agreed before they are sent to the external auditor. The budget for the coming year was also confirmed. All of this information is available on the parish website.

BESS NEWS

You may now be aware the Parish Council has been contacted by a further two BESS (Battery Energy Storage Systems) companies looking to move into Feckenham. One, Grenergy, is hoping to apply for planning permission in May or June. The company have no plans to engage with the parish other than contact with immediate neighbours and an online event with the Council.

The second company, ELG Planning, are working for Energy Cog and are looking to develop a site off Astwood Lane. They have advised us that they will soon be holding an event at the village hall.

REDDITCH LOCAL PLAN

Redditch Borough Council are looking to engage with Feckenham residents about the content of the next Local Plan. The Parish Council urge anyone with an interest in Feckenham both now and in the future to attend this event. Details are in the panel at the foot of this page.

THANKS

The Parish Council would like to thank our previous County Councillors, Craig Warhurst, Brandon Clayton and Mike Rouse for all the support, and financial assistance, they have given the Parish over the past years. Craig and Brandon are, of course, still our local Borough councillors. We now welcome Roger Bennett and Sue Eacock as the new county councillors for the Parish.

BLOOMING

The Parish Council would also like to thank Feckenham in Bloom for all their many hours of work around the village. It is looking beautiful ahead of the Garden Festival weekend. We are lucky to live in such a beautiful village. This is only made possible by the work of volunteers but most activities/clubs need new members. Details are available from the clerk should you have a few hours to spare.

NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 12th June at 7.30pm in the Back Room of the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

GET IN TOUCH

If you have queries or need help with local problems you are very welcome to contact the Council. Initially you can call the Parish Clerk on 01527 892522 or Email:

clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

NEED INFORMATION?

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

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

**There will be a presentation by Redditch Borough Council
at Feckenham Village Hall
on Tuesday, June 10th between 10.00 and 18.00hrs**

This public consultation concerns the start of the process for the new Local Plan for Redditch Borough. This is called the 'Issues and Options' stage. As this is the start of the process there are no development sites proposed. The purpose of this consultation is to help define the issues the next Local Plan will tackle and inform the potential options for doing so.

The Parish Council urges you to attend. The outcome of this process will influence planning matters in the Parish for many years to come.

Parish Council Litter Pick



The Parish Council organised a very well attended litter pick around the village on Saturday 10th May. There was an excellent turn out with junior pickers and new residents joining in. The PC is pleased to say there was a reduction in litter found although there were a number of empty cans and bottles. The village is looking tidier due to these efforts and thanks are due to everyone who took part. *Our picture shows the "gang" of young litter pickers before they set out on their mission. (Photo: Karen Reynolds).*

BABIES

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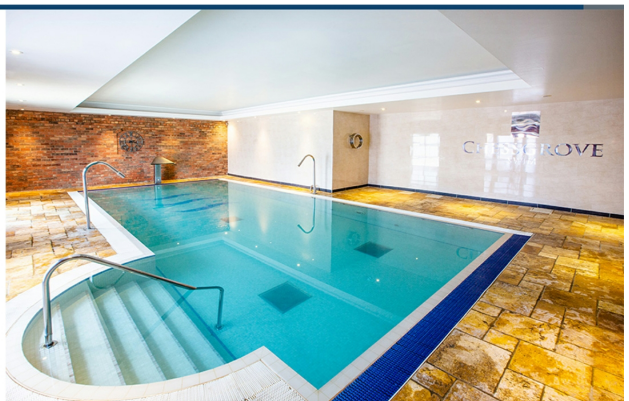
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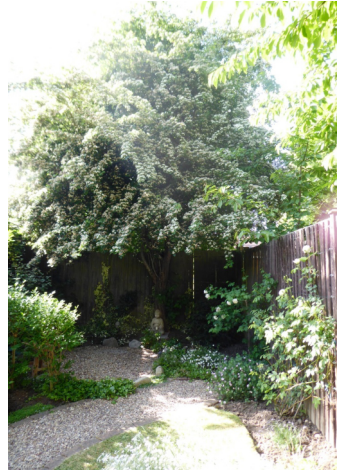


Ditchford Bank Road, Hanbury,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4HS



Feckenham Flower and Garden Festival









We didn't have a meeting in May as it was scheduled for Monday 19th and we thought that doing the teas and cakes for the Garden Festival all weekend prior to that would count as a meeting! And it certainly did: We had just as much fun as we normally do and we also learned an awful lot about how to run a very successful event and a lot about each other and our wonderful supporters. We were very nervous about committing to doing such a big thing for such a small group of us, but what counts is quality, not quantity, and when you have excellent people in your team, you can achieve great things. Our outstanding organiser, Eunice O'Brien, did an amazing job of thinking of every little detail and organising everyone so cheerfully, and also working like a machine! We were also absolutely thrilled and very grateful to have help from all sorts of people, many of whom came from the choir, but some just heard we needed help and stepped up. Pat Hawkins especially stood out as an expert and dedicated member of the team, as he spent all day Sunday

washing up. We also could not have been more impressed and grateful for the efforts of our local bakers – over 70 delicious cakes were donated and we received dozens of compliments about them all weekend. After such hard work and fun, we were all completely delighted when we totted up the money to find that we had raised just over £4,600 in total! So after costs and the WI's 50% share is taken out, this means that we will probably be able to donate around £2,000 to the church maintenance fund!

Our June meeting is on Monday 16th and we'll be visiting a local cut flower farm. We will be leaving the car park of the village hall at 8pm promptly. Subs for this year are due now and are £25.90 for 11 meetings. Please contact Jen Cary for more details jen@thecarys.co.uk 07773 883 039.

CHURCH SERVICES



PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

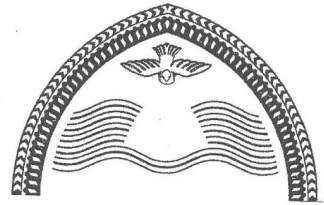
Vicar: Fr Glenn Reading 01527 894436

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
FECKENHAM

Services for June 2025

1 st June	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
8 th June	9.00am	Traditional Language Service	Rev Fiona Carter
8 th June	10.30am	Family Service	Rev Fiona Carter
15 th June	6:30pm	Evensong	Rev Fiona Carter
22 nd June	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
29 th June	10.30am	Eucharist	Father Glenn Reading

Drop in (in church)



Wednesday at 10.30am - 12.00pm
11th June and 25th June

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

MISSION MOROGORO

THE MISSION MOROGORO TEAM warmly invite you to join them at Feckenham Village Hall for 'A THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS' ON FRIDAY 6th JUNE at 7.00pm

Catch Up with all our latest news, stories and future plans and enjoy a well-earned drink with strawberries and cream as a 'thank you' from all our grateful Trustees.



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Tuesday, 3rd June in the Bar from 8pm - Free

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

12th June - 7pm **QUIZ NIGHT**
in aid of **BICA CHARITIES**

21st June - **THE WAKE** - Serving food all day

Thursday, 26th June
AMERICAN THEMED MENU

Serving 6-9pm - please call to book

www.roseandcrownfeckenham.co.uk

Reverend Fiona writes...

Feckenham News June

So, we are already in June the year goes so quickly. At the time of writing, we have the garden festival to look forward to in May, I know from previous years it is so lovely to see everyone's gardens. You all work so hard and thank you to everyone who has been involved. The gardens are always beautiful. It is wonderful the community coming together. And we really enjoy our involvement with the teas in the church, and to have the flower festival evensong is an absolute blessing.

I expect you are all thinking about holidays now. Many of you will have booked to go away and it is nice to have something to look forward to. We are going to Scilly this year, we went for the first time last year and found it very relaxing. I hope you can have a period of relaxation during the summer even if you are not going away. We all need to be able to re-charge our batteries.

This month on Sunday June 8th we celebrate Pentecost or Whit Sunday. And we have two services that week our Traditional Language service and our Family service. It celebrates the birth of the Church 50 days after Easter.

Pentecost celebrates the time that the Holy Spirit descended on the twelve disciples of Jesus. And because of this encounter with the Holy Spirit, they were able to speak in different languages which caused Christianity to spread. The disciples were gathered together in one place when a strong wind filled the house. They saw what seemed like tongues of fire resting on each one of them and they were enabled to speak in different languages.

This feast of Pentecost fulfils Jesus's promise to his followers that he would send them an advocate - the Holy Spirit. We also receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptised whether as a baby or an adult. This is a biblical thing to do as we are told when we want to become a Christian to repent and be baptised, and we have the assurance that we have the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us in our lives.

It's not only at baptism that we receive the Holy Spirit. We can ask the Lord anytime for the gift of the Holy Spirit to help and guide us, because Jesus is for us, and he only wants the best for us. But baptism is an outward declaration of our faith.

So, Pentecost is considered to be the birth of the Church when the community of believers empowered by God's spirit were able to spread the Good News of Jesus. The Church grew from a handful of believers and spread throughout the world. So, it is a very significant time for the Church, it is our birthday. So Happy Birthday to the Church.

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Church Bellringing in Feckenham



As part of the 80th VE day celebrations bellringers across the country were encouraged to ring their bells on 6.30pm, as happened on VE day on 8th May 1945. Many towers did have the bells ringing including Feckenham. Feckenham ringers rang a quarter peal, which entails non-stop ringing of 1260 changes of a method (a pattern of changing the bells around) which takes about 45 minutes between 6.30 and 7.15pm.

We have 8 lovely bells in the tower and we are always happy to teach this traditional skill to new ringers & encourage them to develop their own skills. Anyone from 10 years old can learn. It is an ultimate team activity, one ringer

needed for each bell, and keeps the brain active and also helps keep you fit. Ringers become part of a global group of friends. Ringers are always made very welcome at other towers around the world which have the traditional rings of bells. Several of our ringers have rung in Australia and New Zealand in recent years.

If anyone is interested in finding out more about this traditional skill or there are any lapsed ringers who would like to start ringing again (and like riding a bike you never forget the basic skills) please contact either Angela Fletcher (email: angela@2fletchers.co.uk or mobile 07709 911053) or Tim Haslam (email: timhaslam@quartzllp.co.uk or mobile 07976 723095)

WHAT'S ON IN

Feckenham Wake Committee presents

Feckenham WAKE

Saturday, 21st June



12.30pm to 5pm

**On the Square
& Recreation Ground**

FREE entry - Car parking £5
Parking fee includes a **FREE** programme
And **FREE** entry in the **GRAND DRAW**
Car park postcode: B96 6QH



CLASSIC CAR SHOW

PUNCH & JUDY - Fun DOG SHOW

SUMO WRESTLING - STRONGMAN STRIKER

CRAZY GOLF - FAIRGROUND ORGAN

ARROW VALLEY BRASS BAND

MASSED MORRIS DANCERS

PIG ROAST - Real Ale BAR - CREAM TEAS

PROSECCO Bar - Woodfire Baked PIZZAS

Home made SAMOSAS - Artisan ICES

TOMBOLA - Craft and other STALLS

**THE GIANT
SEAGULLS**

**THOMAS
TRILBY**

www.feckenhamwake.com

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, 3rd June



**GRAND SUMMER
COFFEE
MORNING**
in aid of the Church Roof
Friday, 13th June - 10.30-12noon
Honeysuckle House, 33 High Street
Admission £3
Cakes, Jams, Jewellery,
Raffle, etc.



Stock & Bradley Gardening Club
**POT & CONTAINER
GARDENING**
A talk by Samantha Hope
Wednesday, 4th June - 7.30pm



Feckenham Parish Council
MEETING
Thursday, 12th June - 7.30pm
Feckenham Village Hall
(Back Room)
All welcome


THE
FECKENODEON CINEMA
SOCIETY



THELMA 12A
FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 18th July at 8pm

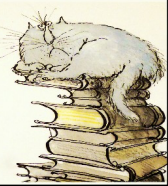
The FeckenOdeon Cinemas
at Feckenham Village Hall
Tickets for all shows from **The Rose & Crown and Village Shop**
Telephone Booking 0333 666 3366* Online Booking* & full information at
www.feckenodeon.co.uk
*Booking Fee applies to Phone and Online Bookings
*Phone calls answered by Ticketsource and charged at standard rates - NOT a premium line

Rose & Crown Thursday, 12th June
at 7pm
QUIZ NIGHT
Call at the pub to enter your team!



To support Matt and Eoin Clarke's charity bike ride from the Giant's Causeway to Blarney
Birmingham Irish Cycle Appeal
BICA

Feckenham READERS GROUP
Thursday, 12th June - 7.45pm
This month's book:
**I CAPTURED
THE CASTLE**
By Dodie Smith
Information: 01527 892285



whatson@feckenham.f9.co.uk or call 892130

Feckenham Square Management Committee

SPICK AND SPAN

The Square Committee has been in action over the past few weeks making sure that our “village green” looked its best for the Flower and Garden Festival. Bill Rollins has been seen mowing and strimming at all hours and special mention must be made of Miranda Powell who took over the planting of the flower tubs during Judy Hooker’s indisposition. The result was that The Square was a fitting centrepiece for a horticultural event. The challenge now is to keep it in top condition throughout the dryer months. To that end Committee members and residents have organised a watering rota. If you live on or close to The Square you might like to join in. Contact Dave Powell or Alan Smith if you think you can help.

GENTLE FUN

This year’s Fun on The Square is scheduled for Saturday, July 26th. As with last year’s event, it has been decided to keep it low key - a pleasant evening for villagers to come together to chat and enjoy the village’s green heart. There’ll again be a “cook your own” barbecue, you’ll be invited to bring your own booze and there may or may not be some musical entertainment. The closest you’ll come to commercialisation is a Grand Wheelbarrow Raffle with one big prize - a wheelbarrow full of goodies (and, no, you don’t get to keep the wheelbarrow!).

FUN ON THE SQUARE

Saturday, 26th July - from 6.30pm



Wheelbarrow Raffle prize - contents may vary!

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society



93 NOT OUT!

The FeckenOdeon is enjoying a summer break but there’s just one film showing in July to whet your appetite for things to come:

Thelma Post is a 93-year-old grandmother who loses \$10,000 to a con artist on the phone. When the police prove inept, Thelma takes matters into her own hands. After stealing a souped-up mobility scooter from her friend Ben (Richard Roundtree), the pair eventually team up, setting out to retrieve her money from the scammer (Malcolm McDowell). June Squibb, herself 94, gives the performance of a lifetime in this warm hearted film. (USA 2024)

THELMA (12A)

Friday, 18th July at 8pm

Doors open at 7.30pm - Licenced Bar

NEW SEASON STARTS SEPTEMBER

Pick up a brochure from the Shop, Rose & Crown or The Village Hall - or see fecknodeon.co.uk

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

Paddock Care & Cutting Services

Feckenham based + surrounding areas
Large orchard / grassed areas also cut
contact Phil

paddock-care@outlook.com



Feckenham Village Hall

IMPROVEMENT FUND

Work has now started on replacing the benches that run down the sides of the Main Hall. The existing benches were hastily installed during the refurbishments of 2003 following the removal of the 1930s oak originals. These replacement MDF versions have never been entirely satisfactory and have now become unstable and unattractive. The new benches are being made in oak by Redditch Joinery and it is hoped that they will restore some of the original character to the Hall.

The project has been made possible by a generous grant from Feckenham Charity together with the funds generated by the monthly Improvement Fund lottery - the results of the latest draws are set out below:

Feckenham Village Hall Improvement Fund

April draw.

Carried out on 5th April, 2025.

1st (£25)	81	Steve & Jenny Dalloway
2nd (£15)	92	Mandy Beck
3rd (£10)	93	Mandy Beck

May draw.

Carried out on 6th May, 2025.

1st (£25)	18	Judy Hooker
2nd (£15)	90	Steve & Jenny Dalloway
3rd (£10)	172	Tony Hunt



OUT AND ABOUT...

One of the first events Swansbrook Radio covered way back in 2016 was the Flower and Garden Festival so it was almost inevitable that we would revisit the scene of the crime this time around. In 2025 Ian Bellion visited gardens throughout the village chatting to garden owners and visitors as he went. The visitors were universally complementary - revelling in the beauty of the village and in the warm welcome they received. We spoke to people who had moved to the village and who had found themselves allowing total strangers into their private quarters - and, after the surprise had worn off, quite enjoyed the experience. The resulting programme reflected the warm and happy feeling of a weekend where the village showed off and basked in the limelight. You can hear **Happy Hour: Flowers Exposed** by going to swansbrook.com and selecting the "On Demand" tab.

We'll be let out of the studio again on 21st June when a special programme hosted by Colin James will be broadcast live from The Square during The Wake - so, if you're not able to be there in person you can still join in the fun by tuning to Swansbrook radio.

GREMLINS

In last month's Feckenham News we proudly boasted that ex BBC presenter Andrew Easton would be joining Swansbrook Radio. We should have kept quiet - a gremlin must have read our report and decided to foil our plans because, try as he might, Andrew couldn't persuade his programme onto the air in the first week of May. We're assured that the bug has been identified and sent packing - so please join Andrew at the start of this month for his Stage Door show - probing behind the scenes at Malvern Theatres.

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Perhaps you are already an accomplished and well published writer living in the Feckenham area or just someone who likes to write occasionally for fun. Maybe you have never written anything in your life but have always fancied having a go; if only you could somehow get started.

Well, did you know Redditch Library has a writers' group? We've been running for over two years now and recently even put together an anthology of our favourite submissions. We meet up twice a month, always from 5 to 6:45 pm on a Tuesday, and it's a brilliant way to meet other writers, get some positive reinforcement, and try out games and exercises which will help you improve your craft.

Some of the regulars do have books on the go and we do have several published authors like the prolific crime fiction specialist Austin Gower, who writes as Ryan Stark. However, within the group there is a varied range of experience levels, including several complete beginners, who often just enjoy the challenge of putting a few words down now and then. We do come from all kinds of backgrounds and ages and everybody is made very welcome.

It's not just a general fiction group: poetry, fantasy, sci-fi, non-fiction, opinion, memoir and writing for children get equally represented.

If you are of a mind to get published, in today's world of agents, self-publishing, e-publishing and the like, it can be a minefield but within the group are people who have navigated it and are only too keen to help others.

Typically, once a month, a week before a forthcoming meeting, people can submit a piece of up to 2000 words for circulation, and subsequent review and discussion. There is usually a loose monthly theme but you don't have to follow it, or submit at all for that matter. We also discuss samples of writing from well-known or mystery authors. The other meeting in the month we usually reserve for chat and to have a go at some on-the-spot writing exercises. Whether you show, or read, your work to others is completely your choice. No pressure.


I'm not sure we have anybody attending from Feckenham but people do come along from as far away as Astwood Bank and Wychbold; so why not give it a try or even start your own rival group in the village.


Mike Hudson

✂ Stop the Surge: Why Feckenham Is Pushing Back on Speculative Battery Schemes

Dr Hugo Hammersley, for FABSSS (Feckenham Against Battery Storage Systems & Solar)

Since Autumn 2024, FABSSS has worked to protect Feckenham from speculative Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) proposals threatening our Green Belt. With strong local backing and clear technical evidence, we've exposed the risks and demonstrated that these schemes are neither needed nor safe.


 **Clear Community Opposition**
In January 2025, a local survey received over 300 responses. An overwhelming 92% of Feckenham residents opposed BESS development near the village. This gives FABSSS and the Parish Council a clear mandate to resist further proposals.

 **Oversupply, Not Energy Need**
Our analysis of the Government's Renewable Energy Planning Database and Clean Power 2030 Action Plan shows that battery storage targets have already been exceeded:

UK-wide:
2030 target: 27.1 GW
Already built, under construction or approved: 45 GW


Midlands Region:
2030 target: 4.3 GW
Already built, under construction, or approved: 7.8 GW

That's 66% over target nationally and 80% over in our region — and it's only 2025. The issue now is how to deliver what's already approved, not approve more. Allowing further BESS development here would only waste farmland and increase risk, with no added benefit. In planning terms, development in the Green Belt is only allowed under Very Special Circumstances — where benefits clearly outweigh harm. With national and regional oversupply, those circumstances no longer apply. There is now no need for any more BESS planning applications or planning consents in Feckenham.

 **The Statkraft Scheme Has Expired**
The Feckenham Statkraft 50MW scheme, approved in 2022, expired in January

2025 without meeting fire or environmental planning conditions. It cannot be built unless a new application is submitted — one that would now face serious obstacles, including clear evidence of oversupply and public opposition.

 **BESS Fires: A Growing Concern**
Our April 2025 fire safety review identified four significant UK BESS fires since 2020 — in Liverpool, Gloucestershire, East Tilbury, and Aberdeenshire. These fires lasted for days, caused evacuations, and released toxic materials — even in new facilities. There are still no binding UK fire safety rules for BESS. Most planning applications downplay the risks. Using published data and known incident rates, we calculate that the proposed 400MW Innova scheme for Feckenham could face a 13.5% chance of a major fire within 10 years. If all 1.5 GW of proposed local BESS capacity were approved, we estimate a nearly 40% chance of at least one serious fire in our area over the same period. These aren't guesses — they are foreseeable risks based on careful analysis of real-world incidents in the UK involving similar BESS technology.

 **Holding the Line for Feckenham**
With no need, no consented projects, and mounting safety concerns, FABSSS is ready. We've prepared robust objection templates with professional planning input and will respond to any new BESS applications — including from Greenergy and Energy COG, who are now considering making planning applications. We believe further schemes will not succeed, and that developers and landowners hoping for quick profits at the expense of precious Feckenham Green Belt land will be disappointed.

To find out more or get involved, visit www.fabsss.co.uk or contact us at info@fabsss.co.uk.

Feckenham Archive - Marion Chute

Chestnut House at the top of the Square features in this month's photo taken in 1976. In this scene it is clear to see the previous use as a garage.



...and in this much earlier one the evidence is there!



MEL DID IT!



Mel Clarke writes:

As part of BICA (Birmingham Irish Cycle Appeal) Ladies team I participated in Women V Cancer Ride, the night event on 10th May. Our team: Villager Sharon Lavin with her sister Caroline and BICA friends Jeromine, Nicola, Caroline, Ciranda, Jo & Karina. Thanks to Brett and Raj for driving and sorting the bikes for us. This is an annual fundraising event that raises money and awareness for two cancer charities: Breast Cancer Now and Ovarian Cancer Action. So far I've raised over £1800. Thanks to all who have donated and supported my efforts. BICA Team - over £4000 with more to come in.

This was a big challenge for me. 8 Weeks ago I cycled 1 mile and thought - I can't do this! But over the weeks with the help of Matt and the BICA team in particular Joe Argue, I have built up the miles by cycling around Worcestershire with Sharon Lavin to get some way ready for it.

The Ride started at Windsor Race course. Our wave set off at 9.30 pm and we cycled our way on open roads into central London taking in the sites along the way - Big Ben, Tower Bridge, Millenium Wheel, Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace. It took 8 and half hours and there were no injuries except feeling a bit sore in 'certain areas'. 66.1 miles on completion. We were very fortunate that the night was dry and mild with no real wind. What slowed our progress down was traffic lights and traffic. Overall a lovely experience and I may keep cycling.

Thanks, Mel.

We are reliably informed that the pink tutu pictured above did not survive the ride and will not be making an appearance behind the bar of the Rose & Crown.



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Outings from Feckenham

A Circular Walk to Ledbury 25th April 2025 from Church Car Park at Colwall 10 miles
Distance from Feckenham to the start at Colwall 25miles/50 minutes

Though a little overcast, it was a lovely Spring day for a walk as the wild flowers were abundant in the hedgerows and forested areas we walked through.

The ground was fairly dry and the paths well maintained as we walked mainly on the Hereford Trail /Geopark Way. The final part of our route was on a small, quiet road.

We used the Ordnance Survey App to find a route and opted for one called: Country Walking: Ledbury, Herefordshire but rather than start from Ledbury, we walked towards the town so we could have a pub lunch. We opted for The Seven Stars pub which was very good though we had many pubs or cafes to choose from.

Along the route we bumped into few other walkers who seemed to be mainly locals. One lady had to stop to tell us she had just seen her first swallow of the season and elsewhere, as we came over Oyster Hill, we came across a beautiful house called Hope End which has a stunning walled garden and large greenhouse. The wild flowers on the meadow were stunning and we happened across a gentleman on the meadow below the house who was spraying the hogweed to allow other wildflowers space to thrive. It looked like a momentous task but he said that gradually wild flowers are coming back. As I did a little digging, if you'll excuse the metaphor, I found that the poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning spent her early childhood year at Hope End in the 1830s.



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Village Shop - Alan Slater

I have often written about the sense of Community that is engendered by the Village Shop. I suppose the clue is in our title.... Feckenham Village Community Shop! So it comes as no surprise that many of our Community spirited Volunteers become involved in other activities and good causes in our area. No more so than Sue and Keith Lawrence who always open up the Shop on Tuesday mornings. They have BOTH just completed the Manchester Marathon and raised over £1,700 for the restoration fund at St John the Baptist Church in Stock and Bradley Green. For Keith, who is a dedicated runner, Manchester was his fourth marathon and he completed the course in an impressive 3 hours 53 seconds, whilst Sue came in at a very respectful time of 5 hours 12 seconds. We are extremely proud of their achievement and the Shop was only too pleased to be able to sponsor them. If you would like to add to their fundraising total, their Just Giving page is still open until the end of this month at Klawrence -1.



We are sad to announce that Tracey Somers has stepped down from our Management Board this month. Tracey has been a stalwart Member for several years and has given a tremendous amount of her time as a key member of

our Buying Team. Fortunately she will be continuing to supply us with her delicious cakes and remain as a valuable part of our Volunteer Team who serve in the Shop. So on behalf of your colleagues on the Board, thank you Tracey for all your past effort and commitment.

As the sun continues to shine, our trading performance is equally as bright with daily sales figures breaking records on a regular basis. We are looking forward to the Open Gardens Event when I'm sure we will enjoy a bumper weekend. I just hope that we don't run out of ice creams and the sun continues to shine.



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An Organic Allotment by Pete Delaney

It's hard to believe that we are already at the month that hosts midsummer's day, yet I feel the growing season has only just begun. Weather conditions this spring, early summer have given the allotment the total opposite challenges to last year's continuous rain, with this spring showing hardly any rainfall at all. Still, I prefer the good weather, at least you can do something about too little water; you can do nothing about too much. As I write now, in mid May, my early sowings and plantings on the plot, mostly salad leaves of lettuce (red and greens.), Chard, rocket and mustard are growing on strong and I am harvesting young lettuce and the first radishes. Early sown beetroot though has not coped well with the dry weather and young saplings withered in the hot sun, lots of water and a bit of netting for shade seems to have them in recovery. Broad beans are in flower and by the end of June I shall be harvesting the first pods. In May the flowers give



their delicate colour to the plot. Sometime in June the black fly will appear on them, as soon as I see the first ones I cut the head off of every plant. This solves the problem as it is only the growing head that attracts the black fly. They appear so quickly that one day there are none and the next day they are massed on the plants' heads and upper stems.

In late May and early June I am busy planting all that I have brought on in pots as I prepared the various beds: cabbages, sprouts, peas, beans, courgettes, pumpkin and

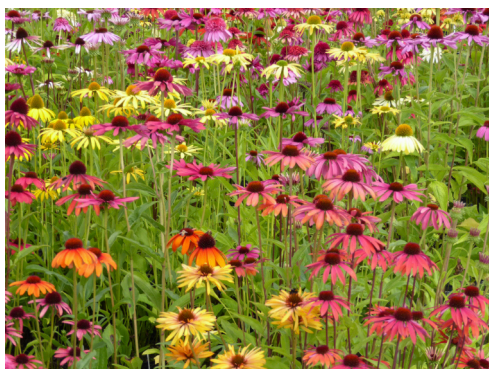


squash. Runner beans I plant into the earth covering pre prepared compost trenches, canes mark the edges of the trench to ensure bean saplings are planted where the feed is. This year I grew radish and chard between the composting rows that were awaiting the bean plants. I shall follow this on by sowing more radish and rocket down either side of the growing beans. Potatoes are looking good and next month (July) I shall be harvesting my one row of 2nd earlys. I also have three rows of main crop for later in the year. This month I get them earthed up to protect the spuds and increase the yield. I continue to throw on my own leaf mould compost and feed regular with stewed comfrey water as potatoes plants love nitrogen, as do all brassicas, salads, peas, beans, and practically all growing green leaves across the plot... including unfortunately the weeds, grow on... hoe on.

Rob Cole's Gardening Tips: Spring Foliage

I am often asked to name my favourite plant or a plant which I could not live without.

I have been selectively breeding Echinacea since 2005 when I sowed my first seeds from the then newly introduced, bright orange, 'Art's Pride', so this is definitely the plant which I could not do without, and which has brought me so much enjoyment over the years.



It all started when the gardening press said that 'Art's Pride' did not produce any seed, but my plant did and I saved it and sowed it and raised 88 plants. Many were miserable specimens which reverted back to the majenta colour of the *Echinacea purpurea* species, but some of them were orange like their parent plant and some even better in size and form. I saved seed from the best of these, sowed it, selected the best seedlings and so began my yearly search for better colours and stronger plants.

The range of forms and colours which my

seedlings produced has been remarkable, and every year in late July and August I have the excitement of going to look at the latest batch of seedlings coming into flower for the first time, and then selecting and potting up the 'very best' from which to collect seed for next year's batch. Large numbers of the seedlings, however, found their way onto the compost heap, and my wife is ruthless in her condemnation of any borderline selections!

I collect the seed from the best seedlings in September and October, sow it in late December in pots left outdoors, prick out the seedlings in the following April or early May, and many of them flower in their first year. Those that don't are left for a further year, and any that don't flower in their second year are discarded.

Indirect pleasures from my dallings with Echinacea have been an appearance on 'Gardeners' World', an article in 'Gardens Illustrated' magazine, a piece in 'Gardening Which', a short piece in 'Garden News', an article which I wrote for the Hardy Plant Society journal, and being asked to join the RHS 5 year trial of Echinacea at Wisley as one of the assessors. None of these would have happened in my life if I had not become fascinated by the genus, some twenty years ago now.

They may have a reputation for being short lived, but my passion is long lasting.



ANNUAL PLANT - at Bradley Green Village Hall, Church Road, Bradley Green

Our annual fundraising Plant Sale was held on Saturday 10th May 2025 from 10am to 12 noon and proved to be an enormous success. The plants for sale were all raised by our members, and our visiting nursery and plant supports table all did equally brisk trade. We opened at 10am, although queues formed at the entrance from 9:30am, and by 10:45am the majority of the large number of plants on display had been sold! Our visitors enjoyed tea/coffee and cake and went away with boxes crammed with keenly priced plants. Provisional figures recorded a total income for the Gardening Club, after expenses, of around £1,834 - an all time record. This event allows us to keep our membership subscriptions low, and for us to be able to subsidise the cost of our coach outings.

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday 4th June 2025

Our next meeting will be a talk by Samantha Hopes entitled 'Pot and Container Gardening'. Samantha is a regular speaker at our Club and has a wide experience of the horticultural world. The theme for the monthly competition will be 'A Pot Plant in Flower'.

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 2025. 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.



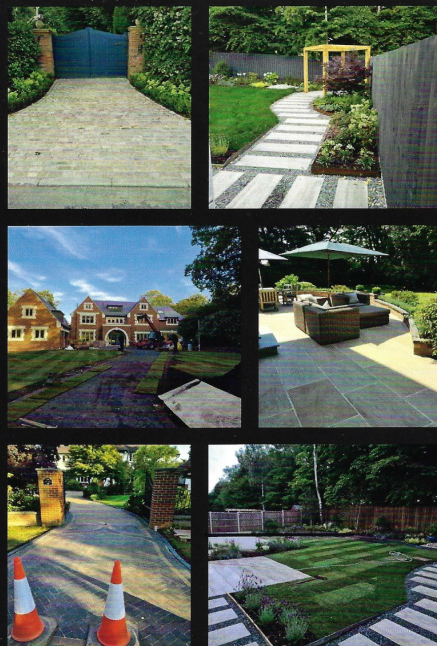
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Feckenham Cricket Club

The cricket season is now in full flow and has been blessed with some superb weather. The Men's 1st XI had a convincing 60 run win in their first League match of the year against Droitwich Spa 2nd XI. This included 48 from Nasir Mehmood and 3-38 from Owen Rea. There was also a narrow defeat against Stourport in a 600 run match where Jamie Griffiths (71), Angus Hardy (59) and U16 Sam Curtis (48) all made key contributions.

The 2nd XI has started their Division 8 campaign with two consecutive wins against Cookhill 2nds and Avoncroft 2nds. Star performers here include Nick Fowkes scoring 53, Alex Hardy 3-24 and an all round effort of 33 not out and 3-6 from Matt Grubb. The 3rd XI had a strong win versus Enville in the first match with Nev Drumm top scoring with 54 and U13 debutant Benny Reynolds taking 3-29. This was followed by defeat at Stone despite a 73 from skipper Jon Dean.

The Junior U14 squad has a full programme of both 8 a side Pairs and 11a side T20 matches this season and commenced their campaign with a disciplined Pairs win at Hagley. This featured a strong combined bowling performance with Tommy East taking 3 wickets in the final over of the Hagley innings. There was a strong knock by Rory Freeman (17 not out) before Tommy East guided the team to victory in the final pair with 22 not out.

On June 2nd Feckenham plays host to a Worcestershire Over 70s v Wales fixture and on the same evening the U15 team will commence their League season away at Ombersley. The club's newest team (Under 9s) will play their first of four Softball tournaments on June 8th at



Cookhill. Please let us know if you have any Under 9 or Under 8 boys and girls that might like to join in these matches. The bar is open Thursday to Sunday & other nights where there is a match to all members and new members alike. Keep an eye on Facebook for our Friday food offerings on junior training night



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