

FECKENHAM

July 2026

NEWS



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

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Feckenham News in July

Dates for your Diary

July

2nd	Parish Council Meeting
7th	Village Hall AGM
8th	S&B Garden Club Outing
17th	FeckenOdeon 2
20th	WI
21st	Readers Group
25th	Fun on the Square

Regular Sessions

Tuesdays	Tai Chi
Wednesdays	Playgroup (term time)
Thursdays	Bridge; Hatha Yoga

Second Monday of the month: Mobile Library
First Tuesday of the month: Lunch Club, Feckenham Sessions
Second Tuesday of the month: Craft and Natter
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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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.

Editor's Note

What a wonderful **Wake Day** we had once more. Thanks to all who made it happen - some more detail about the day is on page 7.



Climate Emergency I'm pulling the magazine together in more of a hurry than usual as my granddaughter's school has closed due to the extreme heat and granny is needed.

I think we have to ask ourselves how we are going to manage over the next few years and why we aren't prepared for times like this? Trains are not running normally, and I have heard that 3 in 4 MRI scanners are not functioning. What other systems that we all rely on are also failing as they aren't designed for this level of heat? We shall hear in due course.

Is this another wake up call to radical action for the planet and the following generations or will we put it down to a freak weather event?

A couple of weeks ago I attended a screening of the People's Emergency Briefing, details of which you can find here: <https://www.nebriefing.org/expert-briefings>. Apparently it's not too late to make the necessary changes but we need major system changes - the responsibility of leaders. I am sure you already knew that but it bears repeating. There *are* some things we can do as individuals. I'm thinking of changes to our diets to more plant-based food without necessarily giving up meat altogether, take fewer flights (I know I'm not a good role model here - yet), plant trees, drive electric cars and so on.

Each speaker talked about the repercussions of global warming from the point of view of their discipline and at the end summarised what can be done by governments and also what we can do individually. It's not too late yet, but, if we don't act, it will be a disaster for our children and grandchildren. Here endeth the lecture!

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 the receipt of applications

30th September, 2026

Further enquiries / applications to:
Mrs J. Bate (Clerk to the Trustees),
'Wychway', Droitwich Road,
Hanbury, BROMSGROVE.
B60 4DB
Tel 01527 821285
judy.bate@hotmail.com

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.

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'Wychway', Droitwich Road, Hanbury,
Bromsgrove. B60 4DB
Tel 01527 821285
Email: judy.bate@hotmail.com

A Heartfelt Goodbye to Much-Loved Headteacher



It's hard to put into words just how much our headteacher Mrs Jeannette Little has meant to our village school over the past 16 years. As she prepares to retire this summer, there's a real sense of sadness, but also huge gratitude for everything she's done. She's been at the heart of the school through so many changes and challenges. From leading the school through the uncertainty of COVID, to the move from a First School to a full Primary, she's always faced things with

calmness, care, and determination. With the introduction to Feckenham Primary of mixed-age classes, she showed, not just that it can work but that it can really help children grow in confidence, support each other, and succeed.

But what really makes her special isn't just what she's achieved, it's how she's made people feel. She has always taken the time to truly know every child, understanding their individual journey and making sure they feel seen, supported, and encouraged. Thanks to her, the school has become a place where children feel safe, happy, and able to be themselves. She's also built really strong, genuine relationships with parents and families. Her door has always been open, and she's created a school community where people feel welcome, listened to, and included. At the centre of it all is her team. Staff who aren't just colleagues, but like family, supporting one another and creating a warm, caring environment that everyone can feel as soon as they walk in. Her love of baking and reading has brought an extra spark into school life too. Whether it's sharing stories or bringing food into learning, she's made lessons memorable and full of joy—things the children will carry with them for years.

As she steps into retirement, she leaves behind a school that reflects everything she believes in: kindness, care, and a real love of learning.

She will be missed more than words can say.





STOP PRESS!

As this magazine heads to the printers the dust is just settling after one of the most successful Wakes ever. It's never easy to say exactly how many people attended but it's thought that well over 1,000 visitors joined locals for a fantastic afternoon out. There were certainly enough for an entire pig to have been devoured early on - and enough to fill the car parks to overflowing.

There was much for them to enjoy - whether it was the creations on display in the new Craft Village, the Arrow Valley Brass Band, the school's Country Dancers, Professor Chandler's Punch and Judy show or the new local bands (including the strangely named but highly entertaining "Binky's Maracas"). All the usual attractions were there of course - games for the youngsters and not so young, half a field full of shiny classic cars, huge steam engines and the daft dog show. But, there were some changes. Some things, like the bars, had moved onto the Recreation Ground and a brand new Performance Pavilion had sprung up to accommodate not only the bands but also the remarkable Thomas Trilby - juggler, stilt walker and all round entertainer... and then there were the Crimplene Crusaders - two forbidding ladies in head scarves ready to enforce their strict moral code without fear or favour. The ladies came from Vamos Theatre - Britain's leading full mask theatre company, based in Worcester.

UP, UP AND...

Not all went to plan - the massed take off by hot air balloons was again defeated by the weather conditions up aloft - but most things appeared on time - including the pig roast - tended all night as ever by the steady hand of Malcolm Cookes and his team.

The troupe of Morris Dancers has become a traditional feature - conveniently as a lunch stop on their annual tour.

The addition of the bands at the end of the afternoon neatly rounded off the event - and a jolly good time appears to have been had by all.



Phil Guise makes a couple of new friends at The Wake

THANKS

None of this would have been possible without a whole army of volunteers and Julian Bull, Chairman of the Wake Committee writes: *"I'd like to say a massive thank you to the volunteers that turned up to help us set up the Wake on the Previous Weds, Thurs and Sat, and again with takedown on the Sunday and Monday. Also a big thanks to those that volunteered to staff the events on the day. We definitely couldn't do it without you ! All in all it was a huge success with big crowds, a lovely atmosphere as well as a great day for traders and the Wake Committee who are now very tired!"*

Feckenham Wake Committee is Julian Bull, Alan Smith, Simon Statham, Erica Guise, Ian Bellion, Maggie Stephens, Simon Holmes, Jon Ratcliffe, Charlie Willetts, Tom Mayo, Janine Lynne and Kay Ramsden.... aided and abetted by the people of Feckenham



Newshound



We have some new residents in the village, Stuart and Karen Budd who have moved into Forest Cottage. Here are a few words of introduction to us:

We are both recently retired - Stuart as a Forensic Crash Investigator for Gloucestershire Constabulary, Karen as a Management Consultant working with the Government.

Originally we come from West London, via Windsor and then Eldersfield (between Ledbury and Hartpury) and now, very happy to be in Feckenham. We thought we would try village life having lived quite rurally for the last 10 years and are looking forward to being part of the community.

Stuart loves all things mechanical. He built a little roadster from a set of paper plans and custom builds old Harley Davidsons from boxes of bits and parts that shouldn't fit but he likes the look of so makes them work. He's less keen on working with wood (or DIY for that matter), although he keeps saying it's about time he learnt. He is an avid music fan, especially the 70s, and likes nothing more than to listen to music all day while he plays in his garage.

Karen is a craft wannabe - she paints/upcycles furniture, recently learnt to knit, wants to learn how to use her sewing machine that is still in the box, has recently bought an old cast iron book press to use as a flower press and has had drawing lessons from her artist friend who lives in France so she can eventually create pictures with the flowers.

We have one daughter, Izzi, who has just turned 20 and is just finishing her 2nd year of a Zoology degree based in Cheltenham at the University of Gloucestershire.



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Vicar - Vacant following the appointment of Fr Glenn to the Arch Benefice near Evesham.

Assistant Curate - The Rev Fiona Carter (unpaid volunteer - part time only)

Church Wardens - Vacant.

Weddings and Baptisms please contact the Rev Fiona Carter on fiona-carter@hotmail.co.uk

To arrange a Funeral please contact your Funeral Director

For all other enquiries please contact Ian Hunter, Secretary to the Parochial Church Council preferably by email to secretary@feckenhamchurch.org.uk or 07874 800108.

Website www.feckenhamchurch.or.uk



PARISH CHURCH
OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
FECKENHAM

Services for July 2026

5 th July	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
12 th July	10.30am	Family Service	Rev Fiona Carter
19 th July	6.30pm	Evensong	Rev Fiona Carter
26 th July	10.30am	Morning Prayer	Rev Kay Dyer

Drop in

Wednesday 8th & 22nd July at 10.30am
- 12.00pm.

All are welcome (coffee and cake)



FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH St John Fisher & Thomas More

Prayer and coffee morning at 10 am first and third Wednesday of the month
Everyone welcome

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)

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 01527 89389



SONGS *of Praise*

Sunday
23rd
of August

10:30 am
— at —
Feckenham Church

All welcome  All your favourite hymns
led by
Phil Tricklebank ALM

Shirley's Coffee Morning in aid of Feckenham Church Roof

It was a great success! The sun shone and over 50 of you attended. We made a grand total of £1325. What a result! It couldn't happen without all of your support, so thank you. Also a huge thanks to all the helpers and everyone who donated. You have all been most generous. It was wonderful to see old friends and new enjoying the party - Feckenham you have done it again, hip hip hooray!

**The
Children's
Society**

I am pleased to let you know that the box holders of St John the Baptist Church, Feckenham have collectively raised a total of **£902.79** for the Children's Society this year. Many thanks to all those who contributed.
Mary Smith Box Co-ordinator

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The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society



TOUGH NUTS HAVE SOFT CENTRES

The school in the city of Matamoros, in north-eastern Mexico, is one of the poorest performing educational establishments in the country. The battle-weary staff consider it a win if more than half of the pupils just show up to class. Then a new teacher joins the school and turns the tired, rote-learned routine upside-down – literally. The kids arrive to discover that Mr Juárez, or Sergio, as he prefers to be called, has upended the tables and turned them into lifeboats in the shark-infested waters of the classroom. This comedy/drama shows that even the hardest of hearts can be won over by a mix of good humour and imagination. *(Mexico 2023)*

RADICAL (12a)

Friday, 17th July at 8pm

(Doors & Bar open at 7.30pm)

The FeckenOdeon's main season - our 25th - begins in September. The programme includes the following films - with more to be added as time goes on:

**MOTHER'S PRIDE
THE THIRD MAN
SAVE THE CINEMA
HUGO
THE SHEEP DETECTIVES
MINISTRY OF FEAR
FACKHAM HALL**

There are full details at www.fecknodeon.co.uk and in brochures available at the Village Hall, the Village Shop and The Rose & Crown

Feckenham Square Management Committee

FUN IN THE SUN

This year's **Fun on The Square** is scheduled for **Saturday, July 25th starting at 6.30pm.**

This is a laid back event for villagers. A chance to enjoy our village green on (hopefully) a balmy summer evening. There'll be no sales pitches or pressure to spend money (apart from a raffle) - just an invitation to come out and socialise, meet old friends and perhaps make some new ones.

BRING YOUR OWN

This is a do-it-yourself affair. More of a village picnic than anything else.

- We shan't be selling booze - so bring your own.
- We shan't be selling food - so bring your own. There'll be a big barbecue all fired up and ready to cook any steaks, burgers or other meaty pleasures.
- If you want to sit down - bring a chair.
- If you want to eat at a table - bring a table.

ENTERTAINMENT

We shan't be engaging any trapeze artists or flying in Madonna for a glamorous gig... but there will be a bit of music. Sing along if you wish.

RAFFLE

Just for fun we'll be selling tickets for a **WHEELBARROW RAFFLE**. There's only one prize - a wheelbarrow load of goodies. Winner takes all - the wheelbarrow itself isn't included - but we might help you push it home.

FUN ON THE SQUARE

Saturday, 25th July - from 6.30pm

FECKENHAM SCARECROW WEEKEND

10th and 11th October

The gentlemen of the fields are coming back after a year off. Why not spend your summer planning and constructing the most wonderful scarecrow the village has ever seen?... or just leave it to the last minute as usual? You have been warned. They will return!



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

Feckenham WI

Our June meeting was reminiscent of a primary school farm trip, as we visited Lucy and Paul Harris at their farm, The Green Farm B&B, in Netherwood Lane in Crowle Green. We petted donkeys, a ram, had a look at a nature table, complete with fresh barn owl pellets, and we saw a broody hen tucked up in a pile of bulk bags in the barn. That would have been enough, as Lucy and Paul talked to us about the history of the farm and the delightfully restored buildings. However, we were there to see the meadows that they have created over the past few decades, and we weren't disappointed.



The wildflowers (none of which have been introduced) were like a jewelled carpet, and the butterflies (even at that time of night!) were numerous and beguiling. We all thoroughly enjoyed looking for orchids in the grass and then looking up to far

reaching views of Warwickshire and Worcestershire.



We are incredibly grateful to Lucy and Paul for giving us so much of their time, and sharing so much knowledge and inspiration with us.

Our next meeting is on Monday 20th July, and we will hopefully be going on a behind-the-scenes tour of S.E. Davis in Astwood Bank, including their many pieces of historic machinery and steam engines. We will leave Feckenham village hall car park at 8pm. Members are free and guests are very welcome and are encouraged to donate £5. For more information, contact Jen jen@thecarys.co.uk.

WHAT'S ON IN

Feckenham Square Management Committee

FUN ON THE SQUARE

Saturday 25th July from 6.30pm

Bring your own booze, food, chairs & tables
We'll provide a big barbecue - cook it yourself!

Live musical entertainment

Take your chances on our WHEELBARROW RAFFLE

A village picnic for Feckenham folk

theW
INSPIRING WOMEN

Next Meeting: Monday, 20th July

BEHIND THE SCENES

at S.E.Davis, Astwood Bank

Contact jen@thecarys.co.uk for details
or call 07773 883 039.

CRAFT AND NATTER

on the 2nd Tuesday of each month
in the bar at the Rose and Crown
from 7pm

You can come along with your craft,
watch others - or have a go at learning
something new

Feckenham Village Hall

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 7th July at 8pm
in the Back Room.

All welcome

Feckenham READERS GROUP

Tuesday, 21st July - 7.45pm

This month's book:

THE NIGHTINGALE

By Kristin Hannah

Information: 01527 892285



Send details of events for FREE listing to:

FECKENHAM



THE
**FECKENHAM
SESSIONS**
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First Tuesday of every month from 8pm
NEXT SESSION: Tuesday, 7th July



Stock & Bradley Gardening Club

COACH OUTING

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and DAVID AUSTIN ROSES

Wednesday, 8th July

Advance booking essential

Contact Rob Cole on 07544 832052



ERSTWHILE



BORDER MORRIS

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

Feckenham Parish Council MEETING

Thursday, 2nd July - 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

RADICAL

12A

It doesn't matter that you're wrong
It matters that you try...

FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 17th July at 8pm

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Feckenham's Own...



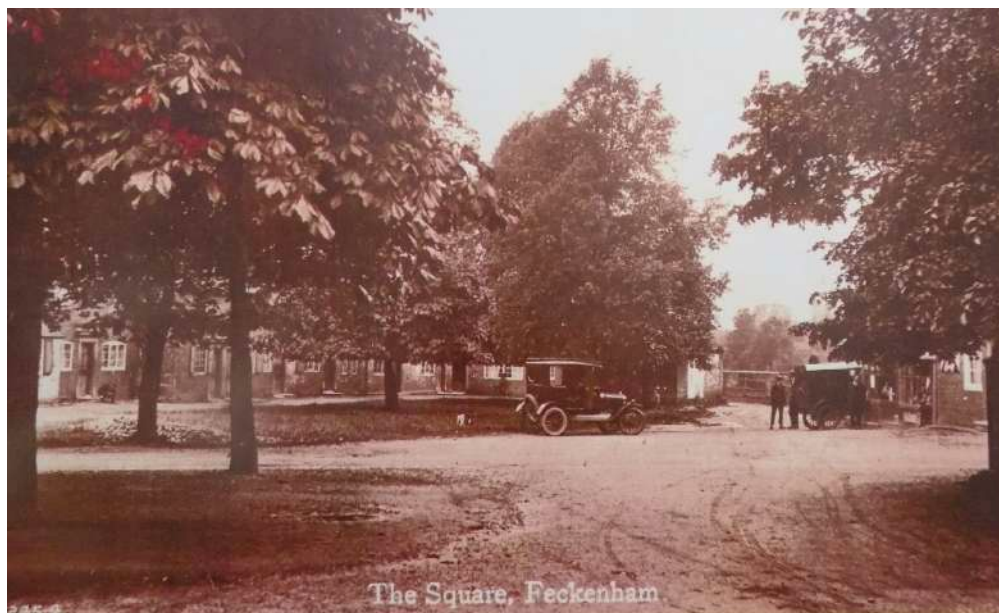
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A postcard of The Square in 1918



The Square Feckenham 1918

The Square was once a muddy quagmire. The residents clubbed together to have it grassed over and parked around.

*The Village Green
The Square Feckenham 1918.
The square was once a muddy
quagmire. The residents clubbed
together to have it grassed
over and parked around.*

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Letter from Fred Hicks

I have been looking at the May Feckenham News -Archive Article.

The top picture is of my Aunt, Alice Hicks at the shop in the High Street.

The second picture I believe is of the old co-op which was on the corner opposite Mrs Wattons shop

The reason is I worked for my Aunt and Uncle Frank for a year before they had to move due to health reasons, selling the business to a couple called Faulkner who then sold it after a short while to Pat and Carol Onions.



I remember that the shelves in the second picture are too long to be in their shop and also remember the old co-op building had shelves of that length. Also the chap in the picture is not uncle Frank. A family called Buckley was the manger there

Like you, I have a number of photos of the village.

My mother had the other shop in the High Street: it was next door to the vicar's rooms (no longer there) .

I have an in-depth knowledge of the village with 28 ancestors buried in the churchyard

Feckenham Village Hall

COME AND JOIN US!

Feckenham Village Hall, like most local organisations, is run for the benefit of the community by a small team of volunteers. The committee members attend a meeting each month - just an hour of practical, down to earth business which keeps the Hall ticking over. Members also assist with day to day tasks, undertake some caretaking jobs and help run major events. None of it is onerous and members do only as much as they feel they can cope with.

Many of the current Committee have been doing this for years and would welcome additional volunteers to share the load. If you feel you could help please come along to the AGM on 2nd July. We'll explain what we do and how you could become involved. If you can't get to the AGM just email us at hall@feckenham.f9.co.uk and we'll get in touch straightaway.

FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 7th July - 8pm
in the Back Room

Rose & Crown 48 High Street
Feckenham
B96 6HS

01527 892188
A traditional freehouse village pub
with Food - owned and run by the
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3 real ales on hand pumps every day
Traditional ciders - fine wines

WORLD CUP GAMES showing in the Bar

Tuesday, 7th July - in the Bar from 8pm - Free

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

BICA BIKE RIDE - 17th - 24th July
Cycling the W.Coast of Ireland for charities
Please give generously!

Thursday 30th July - THEMED MENU
Pop in to the pub for details

www.roseandcrownfeckenham.co.uk



BATTERY STATION

The Planning Application for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Wheaton Hill was due to be considered by Redditch Borough Council's Planning Committee on May 28th. Just days before the meeting the Planning Department decided that it should be postponed. No reason was given and no new date has yet been set. The applicant has now submitted an amendment to the original application. You can view the Application and associated documents at the Borough Council's Planning website using reference number 25/00888/FUL. The Parish Council has submitted a detailed objection to the proposal and this is also available on both Borough and Parish Councils' websites.

FLOOD ALLEVIATION

The Parish Council is still working on a solution to the delays to work on the Plack Brook which was due to take place this Summer. The Council will be further discussing the situation with North Worcestershire Water Management.

FECKENHAM IN BLOOM

Feckenham in Bloom, the voluntary group which looks after flower planting throughout the village, was founded as a working party of the Parish Council. The group has now decided to become an independent, free standing organisation in its own right. The Council will continue to support their work and thanks the volunteers for their dedication to making Feckenham a bright and beautiful place.

DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

There are a number of publicly accessible defibrillators dotted around the village - including the Parish Council funded one at the rear of the Village Hall - but would you know how to use one in an emergency? The Council is arranging a training session to take place in the autumn. The session will be run by Redditch and Bromsgrove First Responders. They ran similar sessions two

years ago and made their training very interactive and engaging. Please contact the clerk if you are interested. We will let you know when the dates are confirmed (and we'll publish them here in Feckenham News).

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Community Speedwatch is a national, police-supported initiative where local volunteers use approved detection devices to monitor vehicle speeds in problem areas. Volunteers log speeding vehicles, and the police send educational warning letters to the registered keepers, while repeat offenders may face further police action.

We have been informed that approval has now been given for Community Speed Watch to operate on Astwood Lane. If you're interested in taking part please contact the clerk. The police in conjunction with Safer Roads will arrange training which includes an interview with our local policing team.

NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd July at 7.30pm in the Back Room at the Village Hall. There is an "open forum" section at the beginning of all Council meetings where you can raise matters of concern or ask questions of the Council.

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



feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk



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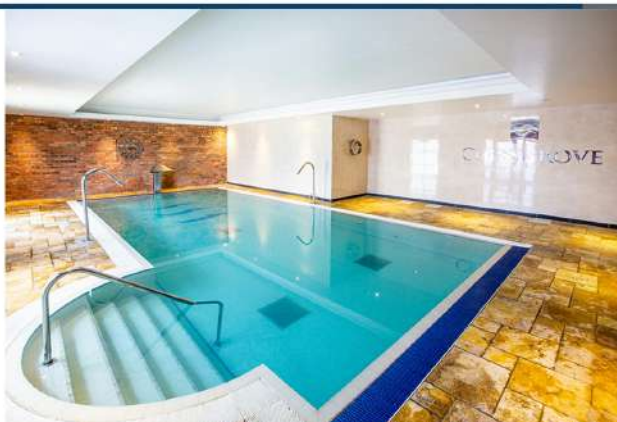
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Village Shop - Alan Slater

The Great British Institution that isn't Broken.

There are few things in modern Britain that still work properly. Trains don't, the weather certainly doesn't and judging by the state of most supermarket self service checkouts, neither does technology. Which makes the continued success of our village community shop frankly suspicious. Yet somehow our band of cheerful volunteers armed mainly with aprons and an alarming enthusiasm for stock rotation has delivered another record breaking financial year.

That's right. Record breaking in both sales and profitability and I will be providing all the details in my annual report to Shareholders in September. However we're not a giant corporation with management consultants so there won't be a power point presentation and I promise to do my best and avoid any dreadful management speak such as Customer Journeys, Off Ramping and Blue Sky Thinking. No, we're just a Village Shop where at least three customers still pay with exact change and someone's dog regularly attends the morning coffee crowd. The real star of the last year, however, has been the cafe veranda.

refuelling heroically after cycling almost five miles, walkers earnestly discussing blisters with military seriousness and at least one retired gentleman explaining how he could still reverse a tractor more accurately than anyone under forty. You get my drift, the cafe veranda attracts a very mixed and diverse clientele. It's popularity has become so enormous that securing a seat on some days if the sun is shining, requires either excellent timing or the tactical awareness of a Formula One pit crew.

And then there are the cakes. Nobody really knows how many calories are contained in a slice of Tracey's homemade lemon drizzle consumed outdoors in Worcestershire sunshine, but scientific evidence suggests they don't count if accompanied by village gossip.

Of course, none of this happens by magic. The Shop continues to thrive because of the extraordinary support from volunteers, customers and everyone who pops in for milk and somehow leaves an hour later having solved several world problems over coffee. So as summer rolls on, do come along and join us on the veranda. Financial records may have been broken last year but with enough cake and sunshine, there's every chance we can break a few more.

To hell with Blue Sky Thinking, the sun is shining so !'m off for some Blue Sky Drinking.... fire up the barbecue!



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An Organic Allotment - July

by Pete Delaney

July, I think of as the start of the proper summer harvest season. By the end of the month, my plate will be full of peas, broad beans and courgettes, along with some 2nd earlies potatoes.

It's been a slow start to the growing year due to cold weather through most of the spring and harvests are held back a bit. This doesn't always mean they will go on longer, getting gluts of veg instead as plants catch up with the season.

In late June my beans are still climbing the canes and need to grow some before flowering begins. Haricot french beans I grow in a row along side of my runners. Between the two bean rows this year I have planted a bed of mixed lettuce so as to use the ground. Red lettuce, romaine, butterhead and a few iceberg, which I have not had much success with previously, as they seem to be a delicacy target for the slugs. I'll see how I get on this time round .

In my onion beds, the shallots are beginning to yellow, by the end of the month they will probably be ready to harvest. I pickle them and put them away for winter. Garlic will come ready to harvest not long after. I hang them up drying in bunches on my shed. In my cabbage net, Savoys, red cabbage and sprouts are looking full of health and my few greyhound cabbages are building heads. This month I sow some spring cabbage in trays, later transplanting them into their own separate net. These I hope to nurture through the winter to be ready for early next spring.

I was even late with my usual polytunnel indoor plantings this year. Losing early tomato germinations to late frosts set me back a little. Now tomato plants are looking healthy and grow new side shoots as fast as I find them and break them off. I am growing tomatoes in bags and pots this year, I swop

the beds around with my cucumbers and grow in pots one year to keep a three year rotation with the ground in the greenhouse.

Peppers I also grow in pots in the greenhouse.

Back outside, in the middle of my plot my sage bush is giving a great show of purple flowers. I chop the leaves and the flowers in with lettuce and mustard for a tasty salad.

Leeks planted out in June look strong, so does my beetroot patch. All is on the grow and the weeds are on the compost heap. On the whole I find the summer harvest season a satisfying and rewarding time on the allotment. Good harvest.



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Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

Editing In the July Garden

Late spring is a delight in the garden - everything is growing neatly, flowers and buds are everywhere and nothing is crowding its neighbour. But by the middle of July things begin to fill out and flowering stems go over. This is the time to start editing.

We have never planted the native Foxglove, but every year without fail we get spikes of purple, white or apricot flowers out of nowhere. We welcome their early colour and height, but they start to set seed before the topmost flowers open and it is imperative to lift the plants before they shed their huge quantities of seed, even though there may be a few flowers still to come. We pull out the entire plant, turn it upside down into a large bag and cut off the flower spikes with their seed pods. We then cut off the entire root system into the bag, and then cut up the remaining stems and foliage into a wheelbarrow for the compost heap. Jakoti shears are the perfect tool for this job - far better than any secateurs and worth every penny. The bags of seed stems and roots go to the local tip. This way we can build a compost heap that won't spread unwanted seeds - even though you might think your heap is getting hot enough, it isn't.

A similar procedure is used for *Papaver somniferum*, the Opium Poppy, which also appears every year out of nowhere, but we do also specifically raise seedlings of 'Lauren's Grape' each year, a form with beautiful deep purple flowers.

Sisyrinchium striatum looks attractive when in full flower, but is a hideous mess when it

goes over and when many of the leaves turn black. So it too gets the top and tail treatment well before it has a chance to shed any seed. But again it appears uninvited every year.

We grow a number of forms of *Symphytum* for their excellent foliage, but by the time that mid July arrives the sprawling flower stems have elongated to smother adjacent plants. We cut these stems out completely, remove any remaining flowers or seed heads and again cut up the remainder for the compost heap.

By July, many plants in the garden have set seed, ripe enough to collect, especially *Geranium pratense* forms, but these plants too are ready to be cut back if you don't want the seed. This time we cut the whole plant to the ground before cutting off the seeding stems and chopping up the rest for composting.

Deadheading also starts in earnest, and in the case of *Kniphofia* we cut the whole flowering stem down to the ground, cut off the spent flower head and chop up the remainder of the stalk for composting. We find that cutting out the entire stem encourages new flower stems, whereas just cutting off the flower head leaves an untidy jumble of spent stems and only a few new stems. *Delphinium* and *Aconitum* both seed prolifically and need cutting back well before the seed ripens - if the seed pods have turned brown or black you are too late and you will inevitably spill seed as you cut them down.

Roses, of course, need constant deadheading - another good reason not to grow them !!! Oooops, sorry.



CLUB MEETING – Wednesday 3rd June 2026 was a talk by Helen Picton entitled ‘Montana and Beyond – Clematis’. Helen is one of our regular speakers and is best known for her nursery and garden at Colwall, near Malvern, which is famous for Michaelmas Daisies. She gave us valuable advice on selecting, planting, and pruning Clematis, and showed many of the varieties which are available for different seasons of the year.

NEXT CLUB EVENT – COACH OUTING, Wednesday 8th July 2026, is to John Massey’s garden at Ashwood Nurseries in the morning, followed by a visit to nearby David Austin Roses in the afternoon. Pre-booking is essential and all members have been given full details. If you haven’t booked yet, there is still time!

ANNUAL PLANT SALE was on Saturday 9th May in the Village Hall, from 10:00am to 12:00 noon and was another resounding success! The final result, after all expenses, was a profit of £1,650.63 – a remarkable achievement. Thank you to all who donated and helped in so many ways.

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 2026. 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 season rolls on with the firsts striving to gain a foothold in the division and pull themselves towards safety, the seconds, sitting mid table with some decent wins and the thirds competing gamely in a higher division. The u15's have been involved in some close games and the new u10's side has started brightly.

The World Cup is upon us and the clubhouse with its two large-screen tv's is open for all England games plus the normal weekend and match nights, memberships are available giving access to discounted drinks and all are welcome.

It is with sadness we note the passing of a club stalwart in Barbara Baylis. Wife of Dennis, a founder member of the club, Barb was a fixture in the club for many years. In the golden age of cricket teas she was a leading light on weekends with preparation and home cooking, closely followed by other members of the family. A formidable force in her own right, Barb was known to have remonstrated with Dennis as he sat on the roller, rolling pin wagging, after Dennis's black Labrador had eaten the cakes just baked for the following day's tea, much to the amusement of the players cowering in the dressing room.

Barbara & Dennis were keen bridge players in their later years and Barbara spent many hours in her allotment at the foot of the lane.

Barbara had 4 sons who all played cricket for the club and were the mainstay of the side for many years. Dennis, Simon & David predeceased her. She is survived by Kevin, Tim & Sarah plus her grandchildren. Our condolences to all of them.

Well batted Barb & thanks for the memories.

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