

FECKENHAM NEWS

September 2026



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

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Feckenham News in September

Dates for your Diary

September

2nd	S&B Gardening Club
3rd	Parish Council Meeting
17th	Readers Group
21st	WI
24th	Shop McMillan Coffee Morning
24th	Shop AGM
26th	FeckenOdeon

October

10-11th	Scarecrows
28th	Church Charity AGM

Regular Sessions

Mondays	Dance Academy; Move It or Lose it
Tuesdays	Tai Chi
Wednesdays	Playgroup (term time)
Thursdays	Bridge; Hatha Yoga; Tumble Tots

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

2nd and 4th Fridays : Erstwhile Morris Dancers

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Front Cover

Photo: Giles Shenton
as "Three" Men in a
Boat - 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.

Editor's Note

This month is a 28 page magazine. it's usually 24 pages but when we are busy it goes up to 28. That's surprising this month when so many have been away on holiday. What a busy vibrant village we are. I feel very lucky to have lived here since the early 1980s.



Looking forward, don't forget the McMillan Coffee Morning at the Village Shop on 24th September. Also, I hear that the very successful playgroup needs new volunteers to step up. It is such an asset, it would be a shame if it was lost. If you think you can help please make contact through the Village Hall.

Meantime, looking back over the month, we had a very successful Fun on the Square and the outdoor theatre was a joy. I expect it raised plenty to support the Village Hall.

It's been such an unusual summer with heat and drought. It's a strange feeling to look forward to sunny warm weather while knowing that wild life, farmers and so many others rely on a normal amount of rainfall. So many plants have withered away that we are considering a change to our planting for next year and I'm glad to see our resident gardening feature includes some information to aid our thinking.



A few weeks ago we went to the Battle of Evesham re-enactment. The event was really spectacular and I'd definitely recommend it for all ages. It's free to enter though a donation is requested. There was a medieval festival and camp with demonstrations of cookery, weapons and medicine, plus the main battle re-enactment. I chatted with a few very enthusiastic re-enactors who had come from far and wide and learned a lot about the way of life in the 11th Century.



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Village Notices

Cayla Carter, our beautiful daughter and sister died on 6 August following complications after surgery to remove a brain tumour. She lived in Feckenham during her 25 years.

We will be holding a Thanksgiving Service as we celebrate her life on September 15th at 1pm with refreshments served afterwards.

At: Oasis Christian 4 Plymouth Road, Redditch, B97 4QB, near bus and railway station.

Car parking at: Kingfisher Centre Car Park One
<https://share.google/7zT9q3HtHP1Ofktnp>

If would like to attend or you would like the livestream link please text 07799002757.

There are a small number of Disabled parking spaces available at Oasis church but please let us know if you need a space so we can support you.

Dress: Colour and Sparkles

Donations in lieu of flowers:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/caylacarter?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=WA

Richard, Rose and Janelle Carter



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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 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

Email: judy.bate@hotmail.com

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.

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It's good to
be *home*



Feckenham Square Management Committee

A REAL VILLAGE EVENING

It was a relaxed band of villagers who gathered for Fun on The Square on the evening of 25th July. The weather was just right. Picnics were shared, steaks were sizzled, wine was drunk. Old friends met and new friends were welcomed. Alan Smith, Dick Churchley and Tom Mayo provided gentle musical accompaniment. The wheelbarrow raffle was enthusiastically supported and Peter Teisen found himself the proud owner of a barrow full of booze, sweets and novelties. After removing a few items he generously allowed everyone to take something - so no-one went home without a prize. A lovely, convivial event!



THEY'RE ALMOST HERE...

Feckenham Scarecrow Weekend will happen on **10th and 11th October**. Preparations are well in hand! The Scarecrow Trail will open at 11am on both Days and there'll be Teas, Sizzling Grills and all sorts of delights to complement the exhibits. **Of course, none of this will happen if nobody makes any scarecrows - so get making NOW!** There are details of how to enter and an entry form in this magazine (if you don't want to spoil your magazine there are also forms available in the Shop, Rose & Crown and Village Hall - and you can enter online too!).

SCARECROW ASSISTANCE

Like all village events the Scarecrow Weekend is run entirely by volunteers. It's quite a big undertaking with set up work starting a few days earlier. There are tents to erect, furniture to move, parking signs to be put out. We'll be creating a tea-room and a grill station and, over the weekend itself, we'll be handing out maps, serving teas, flipping burgers and doing all the other things that keep the event running and safe. So - we need help! Please get in touch if you can spare some time and effort.

just email willumconker@gmail.com and we'll find a task that suits you and your availability!

A couple of pictures to illustrate Fun on the Square





Feckenham SCARECROW Weekend

10th & 11th October

We need YOUR Scarecrow! Enter NOW!

Feckenham Scarecrow Weekend is back. BUT without scarecrows there would be no Scarecrow Weekend so this is where YOU come in.

We want you to make the most eye-catching and original scarecrows you can imagine. There's no theme and very few rules so let your imagination go wild! (Though keep it decent - this is a family event!)

- Scarecrows can be as big or as small as you wish, can be by themselves or in a group.
- Your scarecrow must be placed where the public can see it from the pavement and be within the central village.
- If you live outside you'll be welcome to display your masterpiece on The Square.
- There'll be prizes for the **BEST SCARECROW**. There's no charge for entering - and the public will be the judges. Winners will be announced at 4.30pm on Sunday..... So get stuffing! There's no time to lose!

PLEASE NOTE: So that the Scarecrow Trail Map can be prepared in time we **MUST** have received your entry form by 4th October.... **AND** your scarecrow must be ready to greet the public by 11am on both days.

Use this form to enter - you can also enter online at willumconker.wixsite.com/feckenham-scarecrows



Feckenham Scarecrow Competition 2026

Name of Your Scarecrow: _____

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Will your Scarecrow be at home [☐] or on The Square [☐] (tick box).

Are you under 12? (Yes/No) _____

Please drop this form into the letterbox at Feckenham Village Hall (in the porch).

We MUST receive your entry by Sunday, 4th October.

CHURCH SERVICES



PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

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 September 2026

6th September	10.30am	Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
13 th September	10.30am	Informal Family Worship	Rev F Carter
20 th September	10.30am	Installation of Rev Richard Grigson @ St Peters	
20 th September	6:30pm	Evensong	Rev Fiona Carter
23 rd September	9.45am	Wed Morning Prayer *	Rev Fiona Carter
27th September	10.30am	Morning Prayer	Rev Kay Dyer

* With prayer for children and young people term time only

Coffee Stop

September 8th Tuesday 2pm - 3.45pm (Term time only)

Drop in (in church)

September 23rd Wednesday at 10.30am - 11.30am (Term time only)



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

HARVEST



LUNCH

Sunday 4th October, 12pm

AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

£10.00

(FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12)

You are warmly invited to Harvest Festival Lunch

**Pork baps, all the trimmings, salads & desserts
(vegetarian option available)**

**The lunch will follow on from a
Thanksgiving Service at 10.30am - all welcome**



Enjoy the Harvest flowers



PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT THE UPKEEP OF THE CHURCH

*Help us to plan and buy your tickets in advance at
Sunday services or by contacting Angela Fletcher
angelaletcher8.com 07709 911053*

T4U CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL 2026



Dear Shoebox Friends,

Once again I am asking if you would be willing to fill a shoebox for children and families in Eastern Europe.

Due to your kindness and generosity, last year, 397 disadvantaged children in Ukraine had the most joyful, magical and unforgettable Christmas ever. In 2024 we sent 449 boxes to children in Moldova. Over the past 28 years you have supported thousands of children in need throughout Eastern Europe, thank you so much!



Sadly, there is still much hardship and poverty in this part of the world. Through no fault of their own parents struggle to provide for their families needs. For many there is simply nothing over for non essentials such as Christmas presents. Your gift boxes are so important as they give immeasurable pleasure to these children who have so very little, to their parents too, as no parent wants to see their child going without especially at Christmas Time. Your boxes are most probably the only presents that these children will receive. They are distributed to families, schools, hospitals, many are distributed to children in orphanages. This is probably the very first time in their lives that these children have had anything to call their very own, how lovely is that ! Please be assured that every single one of your Shoebox Gifts will be given to a child or family in need.

If you are new to the 'Christmas Shoebox Appeal', please consider making up a box for a child or family in need this Christmas! Please personalise your boxes by adding a Christmas Card and a Photo of yourself, don't forget to add a sprinkling of love and a big handful of hope for these children to look forward to a brighter future.



You will find leaflets with all the information you will need to get started in Church or passageway of Kopper Cottage Droitwich Road. Find an empty shoebox, wrap it in some Festive paper and you are good to go. Flat pack boxes will be available in church if this is your preference. If you don't feel able to make up a box but would like to contribute there will be a basket in church for donations, and if you enjoy knitting, hats, gloves, scarves, soft toys etc., are always very much appreciated.

Please take your boxes to church before Wednesday 25th November

There will be a Special Shoebox Send off Service on Sunday 29th November at 10-30am. Please come along to this lovely service, meet a member of T4U and help us to load our boxes into the lorry to begin their journey.



Thank you, in anticipation, Lin

YOUR SHOEBOX GIFTS REALLY DO CHANGE LIVES

Friends of Feckenham Church Charity AGM

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Church Charity will take in the Church on Wednesday 28th October 2026 at 7pm

EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME

Up to date details on the Charity's finances will be available including progress on the roof renewal.

See you there!

Phil Guise

Secretary to the Board of Trustees

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society

25th Anniversary Season



FOR THE 25th TIME...

The village's volunteer run cinema has been going for a quarter of a century. The opening showing of "The Smallest Show on Earth" took place on 29th September 2001 and since then well over 500 films have been shown...and it's all about to happen again. On 26th September the FeckenOdeon's 25th Season will open. The cinema has always operated on a mixed basis - you can pop in for the occasional show - or you can join The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society for a great discount on all shows - full details are in the brochure inside this magazine and at

www.fecknodeon.co.uk



LAUGHTER? IN A PUB?

The new season opens with a British comedy about a failing pub, a divided community and a grieving family whose lives are changed by brewing real ale and entering the Great British Beer Awards. From the writers, directors, and producers of "Fisherman's Friends" and "Finding Your Feet", it stars Martin Clunes, James Buckley, Jonno Davies, Gabriella Wilde, Mark Addy, and Lana Moorcroft. A suitably hilarious start to The FeckenOdeon's anniversary season. (UK 2026)

MOTHER'S PRIDE (12A)

Saturday, 26th September at 7.30pm

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

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AFTER THE SUMMER...

September is the month when the Village Hall welcomes back all its regular activities - and adds some new ones.

Continuing throughout the heat have been the **Empire Dance Academy** (Mondays 6pm), **Bridge Club** (Thursdays 10am) and **Yoga** (Thursdays 6pm). **All Round Voices Choir** have also continued their bi-monthly rehearsals on 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings.

Tai Chi classes resume on Tuesdays at 6.30 and the **Playgroup** returns on Wednesday mornings - but volunteers are being sought to take over the running of this busy group.

Erstwhile Border Morris will continue their Friday evening sessions (2nd and 4th Fridays).

New this autumn is Tumble Tots on Thursdays (10am until 2pm) - "Fun-filled, age-appropriate classes for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers - helping build essential physical skills for life".

On Mondays at 1.30 we welcome **Move It or Lose It** - an exercise class for those of a certain age who want to maintain or improve their flexibility, endurance, balance and strength through fun and sociable sessions. Liz Hoare, who'll lead the classes, is offering a free taster session - so you can try before you buy!

SPICK AND SPAN

On the morning of 8th August a fine crew of volunteers gathered to tackle the annual job of erasing a year's worth of wear and tear. The interior of the Hall has received its annual lick of paint and it's all now ready for the autumn activities. Our thanks are due to everyone who turned out on a warm day to work their magic!

BOAT RACE WON!

The garden performance of "Three Men and A Boat" on 15th August was a great success. The weather was perfect - as was the the play. Giles Shenton of Stratford Theatre Company gave a virtuoso performance to a packed an appreciative audience.

We are most grateful to Jane and Julian Bull for allowing us to turn their garden into a 120 seat theatre - and we're also grateful for all those who joined us to do the fetching and carrying and sheer hard graft that goes into such a show.

IT'S LIVE AND IT'S LOCAL

Since 2003 Feckenham Village Hall has welcomed live shows from the county's touring arts programme. Originally known as "Shindig" but now called "Live and Local", the scheme aims to bring the best professional performers to local halls. You can see top quality acts at a fraction of the price you'd pay to see them in the big cities - and without the hassle. It's subsidised by the County and Borough Councils and Arts Council England.

The 2026 - 27 programme has been announced and tickets for the following shows are now on sale:

Saturday, 24th October 2026:

The Pocket Choral Society in Please Drive

Carefully - A comedy a cappella show combining beautiful close harmony singing and quirky songwriting - with much laughter!

"Utterly quirky and hugely engaging very clever and very silly"

"Tom Lehrer crossed with The Bonzo Dog DooDah Band"

Saturday, 20th March 2027:

The Classic Blues Show - Spend an evening in the company of this fine six-piece band to celebrate the British Blues explosion of the 1960s. From BB King to John Mayall, from Muddy Waters to Peter Green: The Classic Blues Show recreates the authentic sound of British Blues musicians and the artists who inspired them.

Sunday, 11th April 2027:

Victor & Albert - Join identical twins Professor Victor and Dr Albert for an evening of riotous comedy, interaction, original songs, games, mayhem and sprinkling of magic. A good old-fashioned two-man variety show brought kicking and screaming into the 21st Century.

PLUS : Not in the Live & Local programme, we proudly present what has become an annual event - the Christmas concert by one of the UK's finest bands. **The Neil Coley Big Band** will return with a sparking seasonal concoction on **12th December**.

TICKETS for shows at the Village Hall
are on sale at The Village Shop
and The Rose & Crown.

Book online through www.feckhall.org

Book by phone on 0333 666 3366

WHAT'S ON IN



**Feckenham
SCARECROW
Weekend.**

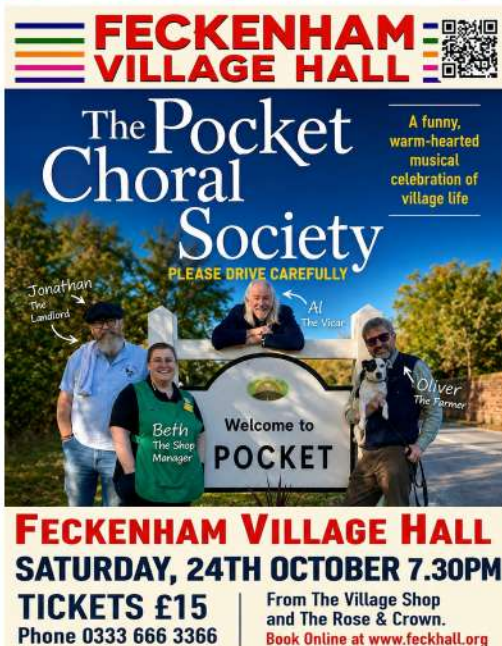
10th & 11th October
Throughout the village
FREE Exhibition!

📍 Pick up your Map of the
Scarecrow Trail at
The Square (village green)

🕒 Trail Open 11 am

☕ TEAS served all day
🔥 Sizzling Grills

🏆 Grand Prizegiving
4.30pm - Sunday.



**FECKENHAM
VILLAGE HALL**

**The Pocket
Choral
Society**

A funny, warm-hearted musical celebration of village life

PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY

Jonathan The Landlord, Al The Vicar, Beth The Shop Manager, Oliver The Farmer

Welcome to
POCKET

FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL
SATURDAY, 24TH OCTOBER 7.30PM
TICKETS £15
Phone 0333 666 3366

From The Village Shop
and The Rose & Crown.
Book Online at www.feckhall.org

Feckenham READERS GROUP
Thursday, 17th September - 7.45pm
This month's book:
THE NAMES
By Florence Knapped



Information: 01527 892285

ANNUAL COFFEE MORNING
at The Village Shop.

📅 Thursday 24th September. Coffee, Cakes ... and home made Jam.



In aid of **MACMILLAN. CANCER SUPPORT**

Rose & Crown CHARITY RACE NIGHT

AT FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL
FRIDAY 2ND OCTOBER
★ 7PM ★

IN AID OF BICA CHARITIES



theW
INSPIRING WOMEN

Next Meeting: Monday, 21st September
A life and work in
EMBROIDERY

8pm - Feckenham Village Hall
Contact jen@thecarys.co.uk for details

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, 1st September



Stock & Bradley Gardening Club
Wednesday, 2nd September

CLASSY PLANTS FOR AUTUMN

with Josh Egan-Wyre
Stock & Bradley Village Hall - 7.30pm



Feckenham Parish Council MEETING

Thursday, 3rd September - 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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the Friends of the Church Charity

In the Church on

Wednesday 28th October 2026 at 7pm

EVERYONE IS VERY WELCOME

Up to date details on the Charity's finances will be
available including progress on the roof renewal.

THE FECKENODEON CINEMA SOCIETY

JONNO DAVIS - MARTIN CLUNES
JAMES BUCKLEY- MILES JUPP
JOSIE LAWRENCE - MARK ADDY

MOTHER'S PRIDE



12A

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 26th September at 7.30pm

Join us for our 25th Season of
FILMS at The FeckenOdeon
for details of our programme
visit **feckenodeon.co.uk**

or pick up a brochure
at The Village Shop, Rose & Crown or
The Village Hall

**Membership only £30 - includes 8 great
films and discounts at all other shows.**

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

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

Rose & Crown Charity Ride



SORE BUTT SATISFIED

The Rose & Crown cycling team have done it! Mel, Matt and Eoin Clark have completed their mammoth Irish ride - They've conquered the Wild Atlantic Way. They've cycled over 600 miles from Mizen Head to Malin Head, through Bantry, the Ring of Kerry, the Burren, and Westport and finishing with the challenging Mamore Gap.

The Clarkes have done all this as part of the Birmingham Irish Cycle Appeal - raising money for a variety of good causes including Birmingham Children's Hospital's Cystic Fibrosis Unit, UHCW's Teenagers with Severe Mental Health Needs Appeal, Enterprise Sailing and Cancer Fund for Children.

ON TARGET

They're well on the way to achieving their target of £3,000 thanks to generous sponsorship from villagers - and customers at the Rose & Crown. It's not too late to help them over the finishing line. You can add to the total by asking at the pub - or you can type "Imelda, Matt and Eoin Clarke" into Google to find their Just Giving page. There'll also be some events in the near future to help top up the fund. The first of these is a **Race Night** to be held at Feckenham Village Hall on **Friday 2nd October at 7pm**



The BICA cyclists at the start of their journey



Matt and Eoin celebrate reaching the highest point of their ride.

Rose & Crown 48 High Street
Feckenham B96 6HS
01527 892188

A traditional freehouse village pub
with Food - owned and run by the
Clarke family

Proper Pub Food at Proper Prices

Special Dishes - every day
Quality locally sourced meat
Full Menu available daily
Lunch & Evenings (not Sunday evening)

Real Ales & Ciders
3 real ales on hand pumps every day
Traditional ciders - fine wines

Tuesday, 1st September in the Bar from 8pm - Free
TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Thursday 24th September
Special Fish Menu
Served 6pm-9pm - Pop in for details

Friday, 2nd October - 7pm
CHARITY RACE NIGHT
at Feckenham Village Hall

www.roseandcrownfeckenham.co.uk



HOT STUFF...

Throughout the endless waves of heatwaves, when most village activities slowed almost to a stop, our local radio station has carried on regardless. We've broadcast details of local happenings, talked about matters of state and of no matter at all... and kept music (to suit almost all tastes) flowing out from Feckenham to listeners all over the world... and that's cool!

IT'S ALL YOURS

Throughout out 10 years on the air we've striven to make this YOUR local station - broadcasting your messages, your activities, your requests... but, do you know what would make it more local, more YOURS? That's simple - YOUR participation would make all the difference.

EXPANDING OUR TEAM

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

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FLOOD WORKS

The Parish Council is disappointed that the works to alleviate the flooding in the Astwood Lane / Swansbrook Lane area have not yet started. The Council has put aside a significant amount of money to ensure that this goes ahead but the matter now rests entirely with North Worcestershire Water Management. We are awaiting a response and information from them. As soon as this is received it will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. *(All meeting agendas are available up to five days before the meeting on the Council website or the notice board by the post box).*

GRANTS

The Council has a limited amount of money available for grants to local charities, Community Interest groups and other local organisations. Groups must be properly constituted and have their own bank accounts. For more details please visit the Council's website or contact the Clerk.

NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 3rd September 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.

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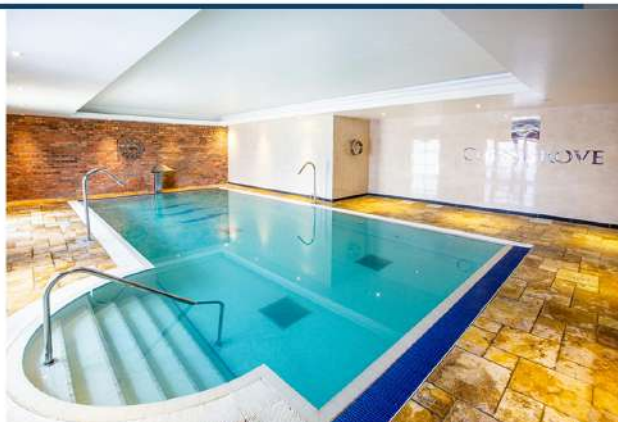
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Feckenham Archive - Marion Chute

The Worly/WhirlyWhorley (which is it?) Hole is a favourite subject for locals.



This photo back a while, reprinted in a Redditch Memories book but with no date.

Below is one from a postcard from the Newland family and a 2010 winter one



...and (right) a recent photo of the swans by Phil Guise



Hedgehogs - Jen Cary

Hedgehogs are rarer than tigers. In the 1950s there were an estimated 36 million; in the 1990s there were an estimated 2 million; now there is evidence that there may only be 1 million left. It's a depressing set of figures, but there are really small things that everyone with any outdoor space can do to help:

- Leave out a clean dish of water, every night.
- Hedgehogs are insectivores, so don't use pesticides in your garden.
- Leave fallen leaves under bushes to make good habitat for beetles and insects.
- If you let your dog out in the garden at night unsupervised, consider putting a muzzle on it in case it encounters a hedgehog.
- Make a couple of holes in your fence to allow them access to your garden and neighbouring ones. It only needs to be the size of a CD case (remember those?!)
- Don't let fallen peanuts and meal worms from bird feeders stay on the ground at night. Hedgehogs love them, but they are very bad for them (meal worms especially can lead to broken bones).
- If you have a pond, an uncovered drain, or anything sunken that they could fall into, consider if you could cover it over or put a few bricks in or a sturdy stick to make a ramp so that they don't get trapped.



Hedgehogs out in the daytime are dying of hypothermia, so if you see one, don't assume it's ok. Instead, pop it in a box with a dish of water (no food), and a hot water bottle inside which is wrapped in a smooth tea towel and get it straight to a rescue. We have two hedgehog rescues within easy reach of us:

- [Henbrook Hedgehog Rescue in Stoke Prior 07572 525 315](#)
- [Array 4 Hogs near the Maypole, 92 Highters Heath Lane - 07990 585575 - \[array4hogs@mail.com\]\(mailto:array4hogs@mail.com\)](#)

We really can make such a difference to these little creatures, so that our children and grandchildren can still have the joy of coming across one in the garden.



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Village Shop - Alan Slater

We Are in a Real Jam

There are some things in life that make you wonder whether civilisation might actually be hanging on by its fingernails. The Village Shop for example. It sells essentials, fabulous coffee, cakes and somehow manages to be the place where you discover that someone's cousin's neighbour bought a new lawnmower.

And then there is Feckenjam

This month, The Shop will be holding its Annual Macmillan Coffee Morning on Thursday 24th September. This means cake, coffee and an opportunity to eat something sweet while convincing yourself that you are doing it for charity. This is frankly one of the finest forms of philanthropy ever devised. The real stars of the show are our fabulous range of handmade jams and marmalades. These are not anonymous supermarket concoctions, assembled in some enormous factory by people in hairnets who have never actually seen a raspberry. Ours are made from local fruit lovingly cooked and bottled here in Feckenham. They're also not your bog standard varieties but more interesting offerings such as damson, plum, blackberry and rhubarb. I can also recommend the orange lime and lemon marmalade, though I have to confess that we have imported those fruits, although if the weather continues to be Mediterranean next year we might be planting orange trees! There is something wonderfully satisfying about spreading something on your toast that has previously been grown in a garden in the village. It's also considerably more interesting then spending £3.50 on a jar containing an alarming amount of sugar

and E numbers with the vague suggestion that the fruit once passed through the building.



Best of all every penny raised from our sales will go to support the nurses' charity. So you can buy a jar, eat it, feel smug about supporting a very worthwhile cause and then buy another one because the first jar has mysteriously disappeared.

If all that excitement wasn't enough, the same day also brings the shop's AGM starting at 19:00 in The Village Hall. Now I appreciate that the acronym AGM generally has the power to empty a room faster than the arrival of a tax inspector, but ours is worth celebrating because we have another record year of sales and profits behind us. We will also be offering attendees complimentary wine so that's a good enough reason to come along anyway. It's a remarkable achievement for a village shop and one that belongs to everyone who uses it, supports it and remember that it is considerably more useful to the community than another parcel delivery van.

So come along on the 24th for coffee, stay for the cake, admire the jam, congratulate our volunteers and if you can possibly manage it, buy a jar. If you can't make it then I hope to see you at the AGM. Or, pop into The Shop any time this month as the Feckenjam will be on sale throughout September.

Finally I am delighted that during the last 12 months we have welcomed many NEW VOLUNTEERS to The Shop Team. A few weeks ago we held a drinks reception on the veranda for the newbies. The weather was glorious (no surprise there!) and a very pleasant time was had by all.



I look forward to seeing you on the 24th

Blackberry and Lemon Magic Pudding Recipe



Ingredients:

225g blackberries
110g butter
3 tbsp soft brown sugar
2 tsp cornflour
Zest and juice of half a lemon
2 eggs
85g castor sugar
110g self-raising flour

Method:

Pre-heat the oven to 180/350 Gas 4
Cook the blackberries in a pan with 200ml water until they are soft and bathed in black juice.

Add a tablespoon of the butter and the brown sugar until dissolved.

Mix the cornflour with 2 tablespoons of cold water, stir into the blackberry mixture until smooth and the consistency of single cream, and add the lemon juice.

In a separate bowl beat together the eggs, caster sugar, flour, lemon zest and rest of the butter.

Pour into a 1.5ltr dish and spread out.

Pour the blackberry sauce over the top and bake for about 30 mins and is well risen and golden.

Good recipes like stories are passed on from person to person and this is no exception. In this instance, Marion Chute sent it to me but she had found it in the Stock and Bradley Magazine a couple of years ago. Thanks to Kate, who shared it then. I hope you don't mind me sharing it here. It is just right for the time of year when the hedgerows are gifting us a profusion of blackberries. Here are her words and instructions:

I cut this recipe out of a paper about 15 years ago and having seen so many ripening blackberries in the hedgerows over the last week or so reminded me of it.

Rarely do I tire of blackberry and apple crumble but if you get to that stage, This may be worth a go!

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An Organic Allotment - September by Pete Delaney

September is the last proper harvest month of the season, well usually. This year though, with the dry conditions we experienced, harvests have been all over the place. Some harvests early, some late and some not at all.



All my main crop potato plants died off early, finishing in mid August. Still they gave me a good crop, harvesting 45lb of white Kingsman potatoes and 25lb of red Desiree. These I stored in drawers lined with cardboard and layered the

spuds with straw.

Runner beans suffered badly in the dry weather, struggling to convert flowers onto pods. Those that did, grew very slowly and took on an old appearance quickly. I took to giving the roots a good soaking: this did seem to help some of the beans come through.

All through the growing season I periodically sow lettuce to keep a consistent reply, this season tho' my mid summer sowings bolted to seed whilst only young and I experienced a mostly lettuce-less August. I solved this by sowing some all year mixed lettuce leaf and within weeks was harvesting young leaves. One Romaine lettuce I left to go to seed, had several seedlings spring up around it. I wait until they are big enough to handle, then transplant them into a prepared bed, to grow on under cloche cover through the winter.

In my brassica net I experienced an infestation of flea beetle, which at one point

looked to destroy my cabbages and sprouts. I removed all the affected leaves and hung several sticky fly catchers up in the net. This reduced the flea beetle population dramatically and seems to have solved the problem.

This time of year I sow spring cabbages, also to grow on through the winter under cloche cover, to harvest in the spring.

Some of my squash and pumpkin also struggled to produce fruit after flowering, I did wonder if this was due to a noticeable lack of bees and other flying insects for pollination.

In the green house tomato plants produced plenty of green tomatoes, but took an age to ripen any into red fruit, I heard on Gardeners' Question Time, that many of our British tomatoes don't like it in temperature over 32 degrees. If hotter summers becomes the norm, maybe we will have to rethink many of our cropping breeds and timings. Cucumbers did ok, but after a first glut of fruit did not produce any more flowers. The dry summer made me consider what it would have been like when a poor growing season was experienced a generation or so ago, when every one depended on their kitchen garden.

As I write this in August we are still in drought. By the time you read it in September I'm hoping we shall have had some rain.



Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

Three Drought Tolerant Plants and a Sunny Success

The months of June and July this year have proved to be the longest period of prolonged hot and dry weather we have ever experienced. Most summers include a few days of baking sunshine, but this year is exceptional, with day after day and week after week of hot, drying sunshine and no rain.

Three plants stood out as being particularly drought tolerant, and a fourth was unexpectedly prolific but had to be watered every day.

The first three are *Lavandula 'Hidcote'*, *Lotus hirsutus* (formerly *Dorycnium hirsutum*) and *Euphorbia myrsinites*. All are grown in full sun, the lavender in a thin layer of soil in a narrow border, and the *Lotus* and *Euphorbia* were self-seeded in a hardcore drive covered in gravel. None of them received any water at all, but they all flowered exceptionally well without any stress whatsoever. Their Mediterranean provenance and ability to naturally grow in poor soil and in high temperatures is no doubt the key to their success in this summer's hot, dry conditions.

My third plant is the cherry Tomato 'Maskotka', seed of which came free with a gardening magazine. I raised a number of plants for the Stock and Bradley Gardening Club plant sale, but decided to keep three to see if this trailing outdoor bush tomato might give a better yield without all the fuss of tying up and pinching out. Each was planted in a 10 litre pot in our usual peat free compost and placed outside in a sunny position where they could trail. We watered them each day but just left them to do their own thing, and they just loved the hot sunny weather. Their success was phenomenal - we picked (and used) 502 tomatoes weighing in at 7.3Kg (just over 16lbs) and there are a few more still to come.

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CLUB EVENT, Wednesday 19th August 2026 at 2:30pm

As an extra to this year's programme, we arranged an afternoon visit to Anna Brian's Flower Farm which is situated on the road to Droitwich, just opposite the recycling centre. The visit was inspirational and very much enjoyed by over 30 of our members.

CLUB MEETING, Wednesday 2nd September 2026 at 7:30pm

Our next club meeting is a talk by Josh Egan-Wyer entitled 'Classy Plants for Autumn'. Josh is a regular visiting speaker and always brings along a range of plants for sale.

The theme for the monthly competition is 'A Late Summer 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 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

As we enter the autumn of the season, the sun is still shining and there's no rain in sight. The nights are drawing in though, at least making it harder to see the bone dry outfields and the widening cracks in the ground.

The firsts continue in their quest for survival, the seconds continue to sit in the middle of the table and the thirds continue to turn out and be competitive. All new members continue to be welcome as both social and playing members, and we are set for the winter with our sky sport subscription showing the football each weekend.

Feckenham WI

Our August meeting was more energetic than was originally planned (we were going to be making baskets out of lavender), as we did a taster session of 'Move It or Lose It' with Liz Hoare. The session was very engaging and covered a wide range of useful movements, aiming to improve flexibility, aerobic function, balance, and strength. Although all of the exercises could be done seated, we chose the more active versions, and we found the mental challenge of following the moves almost as useful as the exercises themselves! Liz was a fantastic instructor and I think she'll have several new takers for her class, when it starts in September.

If anyone is interested in trying out one of Liz's classes, the sessions are 1 hour long, cost £8 on a PAYG basis (first one is free), and the Feckenham one starts on Monday 7th September at 1.30. Contact Liz on 07505 134 281 to book your place.

Our September meeting is on Monday 21st in the back room of the hall, and we'll be having a talk by a Master (or should I say Mistress?) Embroiderer, on her life and work of embroidery. Doors open at 7.45, the meeting starts at 8pm. Members are free and guests are encouraged to donate £5.



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