

Holford news & views



February 2024

The editorial team

Mo Plomgren, Mike Pearce, Mike and Gae Richardson and Emma Cavendish

Editorial



I do hope that you were able to have some quality time with family and friends over the Christmas holiday. Those of you whose new year resolutions have fizzled out, don't despair – it's not too late to make a new start. January is definitely not the best month to try out tough personal challenges. The gyms are full to bursting in January but by February things have quietened down again. As someone who

is not a fan of mid winter weather I can't wait for the arrival of Spring. The snowdrops, crocus and camelias are all beginning to flower and that is certain to lift the spirits as is the annual ritual of scanning seed catalogues for a new season of sowing and growing. Our fervent encouragement of wild life makes getting vegetables to thrive is a constant battle. The triumph of hope over experience! Today we had one very fat pheasant and two cockerels visiting!

The world seems to be becoming more and more divided and dangerous and it is quite alarming how things have panned out in the last couple of months. Keep calm and carry on.... you may need a 'News Fast' if it makes you anxious.

It looks like we are in for many months of electioneering in 2024. Hopefully there will be some serious debates rather than constant in-fighting which is quite depressing. Don't forget to register to vote and whenever it turns out to be you will need photo ID to vote on the day.

On a more mundane note there are some changes to our refuse collection dates about which you should have had via a flyer from the council.

We hope you enjoy this edition. Please let us have your submissions for the April edition by March 16th. Please send to emmacavendish01@aol.com or hand copy to any of the editorial team. Thanks to all our contributors to this edition.

Our thanks to Kilve Stores for sponsoring this edition

Holford News and Views will also be on the Holford Village website

www.holfordvillage.com

our thanks to David Talling.

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For all of you interested in countryside issues we are including part of this end of year report from CPRE.



With the year drawing to a close, We wanted to share our highlights of 2023.



We got off to a flying start with the government announcing hedgerow planting targets. Although lower than our recommendations, it was still a landmark decision, and our hedgerow campaign was recognised

later in the year with a first prize at the Charity Awards.

We're into our third year of the Hedgerow Heroes project, with nine local groups working hard to restore hedgerows in the countryside. Together with our Hedgelife Help Out activity, we've truly demonstrated the value of hedgerows for nature and our countryside this year.

As winter gave way to spring, we called for a 'rewilding' of our night skies and the results of one of our biggest Star Counts yet showed only 1 in 20 in England enjoy a truly dark sky. Following the results, almost 2,000 of you put pressure on MPs to stand up for starry skies.

Soon after, we co-funded an explosive report which laid bare the hidden homelessness crisis in our countryside, backing this up only last month with an impactful report on the rural affordable housing crisis. With rural homelessness increasing, it's clear that rural communities are being left behind. That's why we're calling on the government to act urgently to deliver homelessness support services and truly affordable housing in our countryside communities.

Much more information available from them on their website

[Home - CPRE](#)

Holford Parish Council - January 2024

Chairman's report

There have been a series of meetings in the last two months of 2023 which have been attended by representatives from Holford Parish Council. We are not the smallest of the Parish Councils attending and we have made noticeable contributions.

The most important ones have been the Hinkley Point C Transport Forum where it was announced that there are currently 10,000 people employed on site and it may rise to 12,000 although there will be redundancies as sections are completed. As far as the bus accident at Cannington last winter, there was found to be no fault by either driver nor the road having been gritted. To reduce road traffic through Bridgwater barges are now being used to transport heavy items to Combrich wharf from Bridgend.

The process of trying to remove the requirement for a fish deterrent from Hinkley C will be the subject of an enquiry in the Spring. A programme of mitigation is being planned.

An LCN meeting for all 16 neighbouring parishes in the Dowsborough LCN did agree on some action points to be pursued before the next meeting but Somerset Council's financial emergency overshadowed the meeting. Cllr Bill Revans, Leader of Somerset Council, gave a full explanation of the position at the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) which was held in Somerton in December.

On a very practical level I have been in communication with a number of Somerset Council Officers and as a result we have had three visits by highways and many of the gullies, not all, and grits (cut outs on the verge for drainage) have been cleared and cleaned. Many of the gullies had disappeared under vegetation or were blocked. However, providing highways with a map of their locations helped the process. We are proposing to include additional work on our Parish maintenance contract to try to keep them working and to minimise standing water on the A39 in the village. A new contractor, Kier Transportation, will take over Somerset highways maintenance from 1st April 2024.

This year highways work associated with new housing developments on the A39 at Wembdon may cause delays as there will be a 20mph speed limit in place for some time

Residents can play an important part in this by notifying Somerset Council of any highways issue from potholes to overgrown trees.

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>

We now await details of the services provided by Somerset Council that may be withdrawn or reduced but it is likely we will have to increase our precept to ensure we can provide such services.

Updates

Somerset Council

The Executive Committee met on 15th January to discuss money saving proposals due to the current financial position. They will have a further meeting on 7th February to confirm their decisions. Please keep an eye on the local press for more information. Somerset Council are also applying to the Government for permission to increase Council Tax by 9.9% in order to set the 2024/25 budget.

Hinkley Point C - Proposed Planning Application consultation

Amongst other things this is an application for removal of the requirement to install an Acoustic Fish Deterrent system associated with Hinkley Point C's cooling water system.

The documents can be found at: www.edfenergy.com/hpc-dco

Police Funding Survey

Here is the link to the Police Funding Survey. The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for setting the amount of money you contribute to local policing through your Council Tax bill (known as the precept)

<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/working.../precept/>

Holford Church News

Thanks to everyone who came to the various church events over Christmas time. It was lovely to see so many of you. Our Carol singing was a great success - so simple but such pleasure! We were able to send £100 to the Children's Hospice. Thank you all for coming.

The Crib Service on Christmas Eve was, as usual very well attended and superbly choreographed by Stephen. All our canine friends also appeared to enjoy it! We were able to send £126 to the Children's Society so thank you for your generosity.

There is some talk of a jumble sale in the village hall but as yet, I am finding it difficult to find a way of getting rid of the left-overs. The people who used to take everything are no longer about which causes quite a problem and now there is talk of the Recycling Centre in Williton closing due to Council cuts. So all I can say is 'watch this space'.

There will, obviously be a Lent Lunch during that period and I will advertise it when we have a firm date. This is always a very popular occasion and the soup is delicious!

Thank you - Sue Ayshford

Richardsons' Ramblings

When we were in Dumfriesshire last year, we spent a day at the Dumfries & Galloway Aviation Museum – perhaps a tad more interesting for Mike than me as he was in the aircraft industry. (He often comments on aircraft, new and old being mis-named on the TV)! Mike added to his collection of aircraft books with one on Halifax bombers as his uncle was a navigator in one in WW2 – John was shot down and became a POW for 3 years.

The aircraft and displays were very well presented, and all done by volunteers including restoration work. One hangar housed the Loch Doon Spitfire – Scotland's only Battle of Britain veteran Supermarine Spitfire. The chap giving the talk was part of the team who retrieved the wreckage but unfortunately, he was difficult to understand as Dumfries and Galloway accents are quite strong! In October 1941 Flying Officer Frantisek Hekl took off from RAF Ayr and was flying the spitfire just above the waters of Loch Doon when he banked the aircraft with the starboard wing hitting the surface. On the shore the Loch Doon water bailiff witnessed the Spitfire disintegrate and disappear into the loch. All that was left was an oil patch.



Frantisek Hekl, a Czechoslovakian joined the Polish AirForce in 1939 fighting against the Luftwaffe. He and other airmen retreated towards Romania but were caught by the Russian Red Army to be interred in Russia. Hekl somehow got on a train leaving Russia in 1940 eventually reaching Britain after a very difficult journey through Turkey, Egypt and India. He then joined the 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron and his flight over Loch Doon was only his second one in a Spitfire. Despite searches Hekl's body was never found – he is commemorated by a memorial stone by Loch Doon.

Prior to the crash SW Scotland had had exceptional rainfall and storms (sounds very familiar!) so lochs were at record high levels making it difficult for the RAF salvage crew to find the wreckage. In 1977 divers from various sub-aqua groups joined the Dumfries & Galloway Aviation Group in their search for Spitfire P7500 and eventually much of the aircraft was found. The Group then had the mammoth task of restoring the Spitfire and what an amazing job they have made of it.

When we were moving from NE Dumfriesshire to its south coast, we decided to go via Loch Doon only to find the direct route was closed and we nearly ended up in Ayr before finding a B road down to the area. (We went through 'sunny Joppa' for anyone who watches the Scottish gardening programme Beechgrove). It was a very dreary day and although quite a scenic loch it felt dour.

A sunny day was spent walking in Glen Trool in the Galloway Forest Park, and it was a change to be up in the hills away from the coast. We were disappointed not to have seen any red squirrels but what should be crossing the main road back down from Glen Trool but a red squirrel – success! Our neighbours at our remote cottage in the far west of Galloway (could see Ireland) were 2 Hebridean rams that always gave Ella very steely stares when I was walking her up the track past them – she couldn't make them out either with those horns. The farmhouse down past us on the cliff was derelict and always looked a bit spooky!

Cattle were in the fields around us and one day a farm worker returned at dusk to herd a cow back down from the lane – I thought some cows were wandering loose by the farmhouse!



Little snippet from the past from an Esso advertisement in a 1975 'The Countryman': 'Green Shield stamps with every gallon of home heating oil – 1,500 with a 500gallon delivery!' (I'm having a clear out)!!

Gae



£600 raised for Cancer Research!

About 60 people enjoyed Christmas Bingo in the village hall on Saturday, 9th December. For some of us it was a bit of a learning curve but we soon got the hang of it!

A big THANK YOU to:

- The Bridgwater Cancer Research volunteers
- Local businesses who donated great prizes – The Plough, The Combe House Hotel, The Castle of Comfort, Quantock Candles, Jane Blake Hair, Michele Wellington Aromatherapy and Marilyn's Christmas Cakes.
- The people of Holford for their kind donations

AND not to be forgotten – Brian Gay for making the bingo signs, Dave Talling for designing the posters and the wonderful people who set up the hall and cleared away!

The magic of Language – some food for thought!

Seasons change. People change. Languages change too. If a language hasn't changed in its words, meanings, pronunciations, or spellings, chances are it's a dead language. If you have exactly the same beliefs and opinions as you did 10 or 20 years ago, check your pulse.

But in a world where words constantly shift in meaning, how do we keep track? The secret lies in the gradual nature of these changes, occurring over decades or centuries. Moreover, context is a powerful tool, often revealing half of a word's meaning in how it's used.

New words added to the Oxford English dictionary recently are :

- **Flirtationship** : A period of repeated flirtatious behaviour between two people; a social relationship which is based on and does not go beyond reciprocal flirting.
- **Mansplaining** the explanation of something by a man, typically to a woman, in a manner regarded as condescending or patronizing.
- **Speedrun** : An instance of attempting to complete a video game, or a specific section of a video game, in as short a time as possible, typically by memorizing patterns, finding shortcuts, or (esp. in later use) exploiting unintended features or defects in the game's design.
 - Speedruns are frequently livestreamed or shared online.
- **Chumocracy** : A culture characterized or dominated by influential networks of close friends. In later use (chiefly British Politics): spec. government...
- **hypnic jerk** : A sudden involuntary spasmodic or convulsive movement of the body or a part of the body, occurring when a person is beginning to fall asleep. (*Know that one!*)

These you probably know by now

- **screen-sharing** : The action or process of viewing, or enabling others to view, a computer's screen display remotely and in real time by means of specialized software.
- **porch pirate** : a person who steals parcels that have been delivered and left unattended outside the intended recipient's home, business, etc.
- **Crash diet** : a diet intended to result in a very rapid weight loss through severe restrictions on calorie intake over a relatively short period of time. (*No comment!*)

2023 Christmas Card Collection



The collection this year went without a hitch, and we are delighted to report that we have sent £170 to the Friends of Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance. That is £35 up on last year, but still £40 pounds down on the pre Covid donations. We delivered a total of 350 cards. The task would have been much greater without the help of Mo and Erl.

Despite the possibility of an alternative service, via Holford News & Views, we anticipate continuing with this service next year.

Happy New Year to All,

Sue & Keith

*Many thanks for all your hard work for which we are all grateful!
Holfordians : Don't worry if you are not able to send cards. No-one counts their cards to see who sent them. We send cards to show our appreciation to all at Christmas! Emma*

Quiz of 2023

1. Celebrations chocolate tubs saw a big change earlier this year with limited batches of the chocolates sold without one flavour - but what was it?
2. Sweden won their sixth Eurovision Song Contest in 2023, but in which year did the country gain its first victory?
3. What month was Twitter rebranded to X?
4. On what date was the Coronation of King Charles?
5. Which British city hosted Eurovision this year?
6. Who is the author of the book "Endgame" that was released this year?
7. Which member of the British Royal Family welcomed a new baby this year?
8. Irish singer Sinéad O'Connor died aged 56, but who wrote her massive hit single Nothing Compares 2 U?
9. Who was crowned the Queen or King of the Jungle in I'm A Celebrity this year?
10. Which popular British retailer went into administration this year but has since made a comeback?
11. What was the highest-grossing film of 2023?
12. Which famous pop band announced a return tour for 2024?
13. Which daytime TV programme saw two of its main presenters step down this year?
14. Who was the famous doctor that made a return in 2023?
15. Who won the 2023 Wimbledon Men's Singles title?
16. Can you express the year 2023 in Roman numerals?
17. What was branded Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year 2023 & where did it come from?
18. Which television presenter made their debut on the British Bake Off this year?
19. What happened this season for the first time in Premier League football history?
20. Name the England cricketer who announced his retirement from the sport this year

Answers on Page 17



Trees in the Landscape

exploring how and why the landscape of the Quantocks has altered over the last 300 years, and implications for the future.

Presented by Dan Broadbent - Historic Heritage Officer,
and Jem Gibson - Wildlife Officer, Quantock Landscape
Partnership Scheme

@

Holford Village Hall

Tuesday 13th February 2024

Doors open at 7.15pm - Talk starts at 7.30pm

Entrance fee £2 for members £3 for non members





On Tuesday January 9th, 2024 Holford History Society hosted Dr Tony Davis and a talk on the history of navigation. 11 members attended the talk subtitled 'How did the Kings find Bethlehem?'.

Dr Davis took us on a gallop through the entire history of the subject and discussions were included on whether the 3 Kings alone could have done it at all and why modern sat navs so often get things wrong when finding a destination for us. He also gave us an insight into what should be coming next to improve things further.

Our thanks go to Dr Davis and spouse for braving the dark roads and lanes to come and talk to us.

Upcoming talks are as follows:

Tuesday February 13th Dan Broadbent - Historic Heritage Officer and Jem Gibson - Wildlife Officer QLPS. Trees in the Landscape. An update on recent research conducted by volunteers of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme, exploring how and why the tree landscape has altered over the last 300 years and implications for the future.

Tuesday March 12th Sir Nicolas Chipchase. Taunton Over the Years.

Doors open at 7.15pm, talk starts at 7.30pm
Entry £2 for paid up members and £3 for guests. Refreshments included.

Mike Wise



Volunteers need for Holford Community Speedwatch

Only one hour per week!

We are a friendly bunch and make SpeedWatch enjoyable with a bit of banter and a catch up on village news. Of course, we also also record speeding traffic efficiently too!

Please get in touch if you are interested:
maureenyoung@hotmail.com

Mo Young.
Coordinator Holford Community SpeedWatch

KHARS

Kilve and Holford Community Car Scheme
Run by volunteers

CAN YOU HELP ?

Brian House our co-ordinator is moving from Kilve in the coming months so we need to find someone to replace him.

The duties include:

- Receive telephone calls for trips from our registered passengers.
- Inform our voluntary drivers, via e-mail of the requests.
- Allocate the trips to drivers, via e-mail or phone.
- Update information on the system.

Are you interested in the above or even becoming a driver?

Then contact one of the following:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------|
| • <i>Brian House</i> | <i>Chairman / Co-ordinator</i> | <i>01278 741384</i> |
| • <i>Sheila Collins</i> | <i>Treasurer</i> | <i>01278 741077</i> |
| • <i>Roger Cuff</i> | <i>Driver Liaison / Committee member</i> | <i>01278 741229</i> |

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26 - 29 April
31 May - 3 June
5 - 8 July
16 - 19 August

Almond cake with clementine curd

This French classic is a winter beauty: a true frangipane best served warm with lemon, orange or clementine curd.



Serves 6

Ingredients

270g whole almonds
120g plain flour
270g unsalted butter
5 well-sized eggs
320g caster sugar
1 vanilla pod
Zest of 1 orange, finely grated
Juice of 2 oranges
1 tbsp icing sugar

To serve

Clementine curd (see below)
Double cream, whipped
A handful of flaked almonds, baked until golden

Method

1. Make the cake. Heat the oven to 180C (200C non-fan). Line a 24/25cm cake tin with baking parchment. Grind the

almonds until coarse. Add to this the flour and grind again until fine. A food processor is best.

2. Place the butter in a pan and set to melt over a gentle heat. Crack the eggs into a bowl, add the sugar and beat well until pale. Split the vanilla pod lengthways and scrape out the seeds. Add the seeds to the bowl and beat. Add the orange zest. Gently stir in the almonds and add the melted butter slowly.

3. Pour the batter into the lined cake tin and bake in the oven for 45-50 minutes until risen and golden. The time-honoured insertion of skewer to ensure doneness is appropriate.

4. Whisk together the orange juice and icing sugar while the cake is still warm and spoon over to give the lightest touch of frosting. Let the cake cool before slicing. Pour on a spoonful of curd, then add a spoonful of cream. Strew with more almonds and take a bow.

Naughty but very nice! Diets always begin tomorrow!

Ode

by

Arthur O'Shaughnessy

We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams; —
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying,
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming
Unearthly, impossible seeming —
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

Full version available on line at the Poetry Foundation
[Ode by Arthur O'Shaughnessy | Poetry Foundation](#)

MONTHLY MEETING
2pm MONDAY 26th FEBRUARY
CROWCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

**A PERSONAL STORY OF WARTIME
SURVIVAL**

**A talk by Yolanda Bentham about her
remarkable father, consultant psychiatrist
David Ropschitz, and his journey from Vienna
to imprisonment in an internment camp in
Italy in the 1940s**



Village Hall Coffee Mornings

The monthly Saturday coffee mornings raised £1400 in 2023 so thanks to everyone who went along for coffee and cake and participated in the raffle. Well done to Marilyn and Mark for running these mornings and especially to Marilyn for baking the sumptuous cakes to which our waistlines attest.

Education

Throughout our education
we were marked all along
a tick showed what was right
X told you what was wrong

We were taught to be inquisitive
learn to swim and not to sink
our brains were all important
to shape our ability to think

We laughed at the comedians
of every sense of humour
and did not judge our people
on the basis of a rumour

We had no social media
algorithms feeding news
we read and discussed issues
minds developing our views

Criticism was constructive
not clothed in words of hate
and we could agree to differ
at the end of the debate

We hope that common sense
will now bring balances and checks
and draw comfort from the fact
that Twitter's been marked X

Mike Pearce - Jan 2024

Quiz of 2023 Answers

1. Bounty bars
2. 1974
3. July
4. Saturday, May 6 2023
5. Liverpool
6. Omid Scobie
7. Princess Eugenie
8. Prince
9. Sam Thompson
10. Wilko
11. Barbie
12. Girls Aloud
13. This Morning
14. David Tenant, Doctor Who
15. Carlos Alcaraz
16. MMXIII
17. 'Rizz', a shortened version of the word 'charisma' coined by Gen-Z
18. Alison Hammond
19. The 10 teams in the top half had a positive goal difference and the 10 in the bottom half had a negative goal difference
20. Stuart Broad

Oil delivery Scheme

Time to stock up again?
For those wishing to make use of the community oil delivery scheme, orders will need to be placed by Monday for deliveries in the following week, usually on Wednesday

Please put these order dates on your calendar

Mondays
Feb 5th, Feb 19th,
March 18th, April 22nd
and May 20th

But you can contact David at any time :

David Young on 741249
davidyoung1934@talktalk.net



Lottery
The Lottery is up and running again!

Winners

December

1st. Prize –

Tom & Polly Halliwell

Runners Up: Tim & Polly Tilsley and Mo & David Young

January

1st. Prize – Nigel & Carol Venner

Runners Up : Mike & Liz Copland and Chris Smetzer

Refuse collections :

Every **three** weeks on Fridays Collections a day later after Bank Holidays. **Extra refuse collection on Sat Feb 17th**

Recycling collections

every Friday Collections a day later after Bank Holidays

Holford and District Village Hall

What's On? – Dates for your Diary



For full details see the
Holford and District Village Hall website
www.HolfordVillageHall.org

Bookings : Emily Hecksher T : 741694
or on line at www.HolfordVillageHall.org

VARIOUS REGULAR EVENTS PLANNED
BUT DO CHECK THE VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION

Mon	2 nd Monday in the Month U3a Genealogy	2pm
	Yoga	6pm
	Short Mat Bowls – Kilve Village Hall	7.00pm
Tue	Pilates – note : 3 rd Tuesday of the month is Gardeners' Group	5pm and 6pm
Wed	Kundalini Yoga	6.30pm
	Every other Wed U3a Wellbeing	
Thu	Table Tennis	7.30
Fri	Art Group Craft Group	10.00 – 1 pm 1.00 – 4pm
Sat	Monthly Coffee Morning First Saturday in the month	

We hope you have enjoyed this edition

If anyone has any articles, ideas, news, snippets etc please do let us have them.

before the deadline March 16th

Please send items for the next issue to

EmmaCavendish01@aol.com

Publication date April 1st

Please don't send pdf files or images and text directly from your phone – these are very time consuming to edit. Save your photos to a jpeg file.

Emma