

The Cleobury Clarion

THE WASH HOUSE WINS

The annual competition to pick the winner who will be able to display the Clarion Cup in their shop window for a year attracted a very strong entry for the three judges when they gathered in December. Councillors Guy James and Tina Hobin worked with the editor in a number of walks up and down the High Street, swapping opinions and in the end agreeing that the winner should come from three outstanding entries: past winners Red Hare Salon and Severn Hospice shop plus regular entrant The Wash House.



Mary, Serina, Hayley and Grace
The Washhouse Crew

All judges agreed that the standard was high, with new entries from Cleobury Opticians and Spire

Hairdressers much admired, but in the end it was down to the short list of three.

The Wash House got the final vote, for an eye catching display in a very limited space where the day to day business carried on in its usual busy manner.

Our congratulations go to manager Serina and her team of Mary, Grace and Hayley for the way they coped with smiles and just getting the extra work done. Done well enough to win the Clarion Cup for the year.

KATHIE - HERE FOR THE YEAR

If you go to the Cleobury Country Farmers' Market it's almost impossible to miss the partnership of Kathie Rowbotham and Bev Taylor, plus whatever animals they've brought along.

They're partners in raising support for New Bridge Cat Rescue and do it with laughs and smiles all the way. Kathie has a zest for life that beats all the illness she has to deal with, her smile and chatter just too good to ignore.

And she can write a good story, telling about the animals that seem to fill her family house with a mixture of tears and laughter that make you smile as you read her words.

She has offered to tell one of her



tales in every Clarion issue in 2025. Most people I've spoken to recently have wished a Happy New Year with the hope that it will be better than 2024. With Kathie's tales, the first of the year on Page 9, we're off to a great start.

PHOTOS, PLEASE

We are looking to improve the looks of the Clarion as we approach its 20th birthday. 20 years since this title hit the streets, and it's grown from a print run of 550 to 900 and it's also available as a monthly website with something like 750 readers.

We are looking to improve our photo coverage and would be glad to talk to local photographers. See Page 23 for more details.

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All the news - The Cleobury Clarion - February 2025



Our new columnist



Caption cup winners



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Nigel from OvenGleamers cleaned my oven and the results were stunning. My oven has never looked so good. I can certainly recommend OvenGleamers. I should also say that Nigel was polite and friendly and cleaned up everything after he'd finished. A brilliant job and well worth the cost.
Adrian T

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GREAT NEWS ON PANCREATIC CANCER

A phone call in December to thank me for supporting the work in fighting Pancreatic Cancer was a good friendly touch. But a brief discussion about recent developments brought some really good news that had me smiling with joy.

There is a Cancer Breath Test in development that will be in use soon and we can look forward to the day when every doctor's surgery will be kitted out to offer tests to anyone. It's not just for Pancreatic symptoms, but for any patient who asks for it. I was assured that it's just like the breath test given to drivers who show signs of alcohol intake, but this one will give you the all-clear or the need for a more detailed examination. Wonderful!

IN PRAISE OF

I would like to sing the praises of Tim Clare of TDC Carpentry services.

Tim has carried out work for us over the years and apart from the excellent service he offers, Tim is one of the nicest people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. But a few days ago he really excelled himself.

Our neighbour is an elderly lady of 93 and she had a problem with a broken hinge on one of her cupboards. Now in the past, even with my limited DIY knowledge, I have always been able to fix any problems but not this time.

I contacted Tim and he said that he would call the next day at 10 o'clock; He was good as his word and carried out the repair.

Tim would not accept any payment which is typical of the lovely kind man that he is.

Phil Westwood

HANDY REMINDERS

Scout Hut/Pump House

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Tiny Tots playgroup

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term time, 10-11.30 in the Parish Hall £2.00 £2.00 per child. All welcome! Contact: alisonlaurajones@hotmail.com or 07752 542 853 for more info

THE FOODBANK NEEDS A SHED

The Foodbank is having to move to new premises in the town at the beginning of April. We need to purchase a storage shed to accommodate all our stock and allow for marking up and packing – this will have to be purpose built to fit the space available to us. We are hoping there are some people out there who could give us a price for doing this. We would like to be able to use a local trader and craftsman. We are a charity and so need to get 3 quotes for the work. If you think you could help us, please ring Liz Smith (Chair of Trustees of the Foodbank) on 01299 489135.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and hopefully getting in touch. *Liz Smith*

T10 TO TENBURY

The T10 Orchestra have been booked to perform at the Regal Theatre on February 15th at 7.00. They will perform music from the films, from the romance of Romeo and Juliet to the dramatic works from James Bond and Doctor Who. Special guests performing with the 30 piece orchestra will be vocalist Amy Alden and oboist Lee Clarke-Butler, performing pieces from the films 'Il Postino' and 'The Mission.'

It promises to be a great evening for for lovers of firm music. Tickets are £15, for Concessions and Blue Light Card Holders £12.50, while children under 11 go free. Tickets from the box office on www.regaltenbry.co.uk or 01584 811442.

2024 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY DAY RESULT

The Royal British Legion Poppy Day in London had an amazing result, with £1,285,000 raised for the support of forces members in need of aid or because of old age, illness or the effects of combat either mental or physical. A wonderful achievement, confirming the esteem in which our forces are held.

HOBSON'S ARE WINNING AGAIN

It seems that every time Hobson's take their ales off to any show or competition, they come back to base with a handful of awards. Which confirms the quality that busy brewery is producing.

In December they were at the Champion Beer of the West Midlands Awards, and came home with four prizes. 'Town Crier' took a Gold Award in the Bottled - 4.4% and Over category, then 'Town Crier' also took a Silver Award in the Premium Pale, Blonde and Golden Ales category before it was the Bottled Under 4.4% category and 'Old Prickly' took another Silver Award for the trophy cabinet. And finally 'Champion Mild' was handed a Bronze Award in the Milds category.

Those results amount to more than that - 'Town Crier' moves on to the National Finals, where the name of that friendly little bewery in Cleobury Mortimer is quite well. The editor goes back a few years in this matter of beer quality and can remember a phone call from a keen drinker several years ago asking if I knew this brewery that had just won Beer of the Year or some similar award for their Mild ale. Shortly after that there seemed to be a lot of mild ales on the market as a traditional ale was rediscovered.

'DO IT YOURSELF' QUIZ

This sounds interesting. Each team brings a set of ten questions to ask the other teams. It's at Hopton Wafers village hall on Friday the 21st at 7.00 and teams can be up to five but no more.

The cost is £10 a head and that includes a chilli and baked potato supper, with a vegetarian option available. If you don't want a supper, the price is £5.00 You bring your own drinks, so the price is reasonable and there's no need for a license. And there will be a raffle raising funds for the local First Responders

Booking is essential, via Mark via hoptonwafersvents@gmail.com, or text 07971603316.



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Clarion Clippings - The Local News

BREAKFAST CLUB IN DECEMBER

On December 3rd, St Mary's Breakfast Club met at the Golf Club to hear something of Jennie Kitching's work as a hypnotherapist. She prefaced her address by saying that she is addicted to making people happy – surely a worthy aim!

Jennie is a practising hypnotherapist, with several published books to her name. She will be the Bereavement Counsellor for local undertakers Perry & Phillips, and currently runs sessions in the Market Hall. She offers one-to-one consultations with anyone seeking her assistance in solving their personal problems, whether these have arisen from conflicts, trauma, or addictions. She is an advocate for bringing together the conscious and unconscious minds, because conscious willpower can solve some problems, but not all, and healing behaviour needs the strength of the unconscious as well as the conscious.

Mark Baldwin

...AND THEN JANUARY

It was perhaps rather early to tax one's brain but at January's meeting members, fueled by an excellent breakfast provided by the Golf Club, rose to the challenge!

In his talk entitled 'How Big is Infinity', Eddie Humphries our speaker proposed that indeed infinity could be possibly measured. The concept of infinity had always been imbued with mysticism until the 17th century mathematician Georg Cantour conceived the basis of calculations to measure infinity in terms that the layman could understand and thereby debunk such mysticism.

In the 19th century, the mathematician David Hilbert sought even further to help the layman – and fellow scholars – to appreciate that infinity could be measured by likening it to a hotel

where, when all the rooms were occupied, occupants were simply shifted along the corridor to the next available rooms which were limitless in number. To say that lively discussion of this concept ensued is perhaps an understatement and Eddie had to fend off many a robust challenge!

The Club's next meeting will be at the Golf Club on February 11th, the speaker to be advised. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Angela Drennan on CM 270636.

Diane Waddington

VAL SIMPSON

Val has sadly died after contracting pneumonia - she was 78 years old and had just celebrated her 56th wedding anniversary with her husband Graham. He and their two sons would like to thank the many Cleobury citizens who have sent their condolences and offered support. Val led a full and rewarding life and she left her mark on Cleobury since she arrived in 2002. Earlier she had been a mother, teacher, magistrate and volunteer prison visitor. She soon became well known for her enthusiasm and organisational skills. As a member of Cleobury Country, she was behind events such as the Food and Ale Trails and a Simon Evans weekend. In between she found time to be an active governor at Lacon Childe, coordinator of the community car scheme and supporter of other local causes. A stroke in 2016 sadly put an end to her active involvement, but she was determined to start a Stroke Support Group until dementia recently slowed her down. The family and many others will miss her greatly. The funeral will take place at the Wyre Forest Crematorium on Thursday February 13th at 12.30pm and there will be a reception at the Golf Club afterwards. All are most welcome. The family request light clothes and please no flowers.

Graham Simpson

THE READING GROUP

God of Small Things' by Indian writer, Arundhati Roy. A family drama about the childhood experiences of fraternal twins, it presented many topics to discuss. A third of members loved the book whilst the rest of us found various aspects made it a difficult read. Although great in parts, it could also be frustrating. Most common point made was the jumping backwards and forward in time plus confusion of names. Well written with beautiful descriptions capturing the atmosphere of India. It was remarked that you could almost smell some scenes. Amusing and covering many subjects it was also distressing to some. The multi layered society was of interest to all and as three people had been to India, their experiences added another dimension. We ended the evening talking about bananas! Our last book of 2024 'Midwich Cuckoo' by John Wyndham was liked by all, despite being rather dated. We meet again on February 17th for a chat about 'The Passenger' by Ulrich Alexander Boschwitz.

Deana Kimber 271754

GOURMET SAN

This is the name above 37 High Street with an announcement that it would be opening shortly under new management. To most locals it's just 'The Chinese' and a place that once had a very good name.

That was when Steve and his family ran the business and did such a good job that my Chinese daughter-in-law always welcomed a takeaway from them.. I call Elena m Chinese daughter-in-law but shje's a native of Shanghai and tells me she's Shanghainese.

Steve has been seen around the place and one suggestion was that he's back in charge. Not what he told me months ago, but we'll have to wait and see. If you want to place an early order, the phone number on the sign is 01299 698529.



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Kathie's Animal Magic Page

Kathie Rowbotham is a remarkable lady. In 2020 she suffered a massive brain seizure and lost both her power of speech and mobility, enough to make anyone give up trying to live anything like a normal life. But her great friend Bev, who shared Kathie's love of animals and a determination to help them, stood by her and encouraged her to keep up their campaigning. You can see them at the Cleobury Country Farmers' Market every month, as they raise funds for the Newbridge Cat Rescue Service. Kathie has agreed to tell her Animal Magic stories to us.

I hope you enjoyed my article, 'Reviving Swallows' in last month's Clarion. It was inspired by Sam Clegg's homemade video, called 'Send me a Sign'. For every download of his beautiful song, 100% of proceeds go to his two charities, Friends of the Elderly and Re-Engage, to help tackle loneliness in the UK.

It was my 'hero', my Dad, who taught me to love/rescue and rehabilitate animals. I've spent every summer, befriending my garden Robins, helping them to feed their young, by digging over our muck heap for them to grab worms. Me, Sam and thousands of other people, see a Robin as a sign from a loved one in heaven.

Once their young have fledged, from late September onwards, our adult Robins need humans and rely on us for food. In winter 2016, my Mr Robin came to call and fed out of my hand. He even flew beside me, as I walked around our garden. In January, my beloved Dad, who lived at Doddington Lodge, started to deteriorate rapidly, but 'My' Mr Robin was always there, to make me smile.

The 8th of February 2017, was the worst day of my life. My Dad Roy, passed away in my arms. I drove home and sat in the garden crying my eyes out. I heard my Mr Robin singing, then saw he was sitting on the arm of my chair beside me.

In February, our beloved Robins fight to defend their territory and many fight to the death, before courting begins. One morning, I went outside to call my Robin, but something

caught my eye in the flower border. It was his dead, little red and brown body, but no sign of injury. It only took me a second to remember what I'd done with that little baby swallow.

I picked him up, rushed into the kitchen, wrapped him in a towel on top of the Aga and started chest compressions. Nothing! So I put my mouth over his nose and mouth and gave him two small breaths. As I restarted chest compressions, I cried as the air released from his lungs, made him sing. But, after a few more breaths, he opened his eyes! Yayyyyyy! I'd saved my little boy! Big hugs n kisses, before his release. During that summer, he brought his wife and kids to meet me!

The 24th of December that year was our son, Josh's 20th birthday, the first without Grandad Roy. We all went to Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club for a drink. As the six of us stood in the bar, the front door blew open, then a Robin flew in over our heads and landed in the conservatory. I went over to him, put my hand out and he jumped onto it. After a kiss from all of us, I released him out of the front door and he's remained there, at the club ever since, following Josh everywhere!

The best sign ever from my 'Hero', my Dad, Grandad Roy! Please watch Sam's video on full volume!

Kathie

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INSPIRED BY HERITAGE

A new community resource at St John's Doddington



Our songwriter in residence Sid Peacock has been busy with local groups for the Song of the Hill project. He has been working with Piece of String Media and young people from the local area to make field recordings on the hill which will be woven into the final pieces of music. They have captured the sound of babbling springs, thrumming cattle grids, the calls of birds and even passing quad bikes. This and all the new pieces will be showcased at the finale performance in May at St Laurences Ludlow.

Inspired by the local myth of the Clee hill giants, Clee Hill born

illustrator Gordon Yapp has created an animation to accompany Sid's music. We plan to turn these drawings into flip books for participants in the project. Pupils at Clee Hill Village Academy have also been inspired by Gordon's giants to write a song celebrating the epic battle which in myth created the Clee hills.

There has been good progress with repairs and improvements to the church building with the new floor going down and the toilet created. The old wall panelling proved to be too riddled with wood worm to put back in place so timber was found to match the original. Our building even used a Victorian moulding plane to shape each panel as the original carpenters would have done. We will be offering guided tours of the site as we approach completion. If you want to see inside while the work is underway, please get in touch.

To find out more and keep up to date the project follow us on Facebook and Instagram @stjohnsdoddington or visit our website stjohnsdoddington.org

CLEOBURY W.I.

Happy New Year from the Cleobury WI as we look forward to another successful social and fundraising year. Our roundup on the festive celebrations began with the Town Christmas Light Switch On event where we provided cakes, and cookiez Our December social gathering was a murder mystery evening, three of our members taking starring roles in the storyline.

Fun was had by all accompanied by a lovely buffet supper. The lead up to Christmas was completed with a bracing walk sporting an array of Christmas jumpers and hats before enjoying a spread of midmorning festive eats courtesy of Sue Kershaw.

Our January meeting focussed on the Kitchen Pharmacy with Hannah Charman from Highley. Hannah gave an insight into the health benefits of foods, spices and herbs we all have in our kitchen and how we can use them to alleviate coughs and sore throats to name just two maladies. There really was something for everyone to learn. January's Afternoon Tea was enjoyed in the Community Hub with scrumptious cakes on offer.

We are looking forward to seeing all our supporters as we host the second of our Winter Warmer Lunches at the Parish Hall from 12 – 1.30pm on Wednesday 26th February with more soups, delicious desserts and a raffle.

Future Events:

An Eastern Dance Workshop with Tina Holbin on Tuesday 11th February @ 7.30pm.

Coffee Morning at Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club on Thursday 20th February @ 10.30

Please contact Judy on 01299 270983 or email judysant10@gmail.com for further information on joining WI. Check out the Cleobury Mortimer WI Facebook page!

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Clarion Clippings

THEATRE IN THE WILD

I'm not sure about the title this report has been given, because the village hall at Farlow and Orton is far from "In the wild". "In a pleasant place" would be nearer the truth. But it does have this charming habit of offering small scale theatre that intrigues with its title and then enchants with the way a village hall can become a place of mystery or simple joy, all through the talent of one or maybe two actors. In October two Croatian ladies presented "Pepper and Honey"; it was written by Kristina Gavran and performed by Tina Hofman, who together form the Notnow Collective.

The essence of the play is two Croatian women of different generations have come to the UK and settled in the midlands, where they want to make homes and form community bonds. You would logically expect two actors of differing ages to perform the roles and it was only after ten or more minutes that I realised just one woman was playing both parts and doing it so effectively. The way Tina Hofman could change her voice was little short of amazing and the way she could adopt the bent crouch of an ancient and then stand up as she cast aside a shawl and filled the garment beneath it like a woman of 30 or so years was just outstanding physical theatre.

I will admit my poor hearing was not helping me tell one character from another as her voice changed, but the combination of changes left me amazed. That from English to Croatian helped the illusion too. When the play ended, the audience held the performer on stage with prolonged applause, so impressed with her subtle role and age changing were they.

I obviously have a great regard for what can be achieved in a modest rural location, but in the years I have lived in the midlands I have been close to tears at the command of communication you can find at Stratford. Or experienced the sheer thrill of the

late Pete Postlethwaite's stage presence when he starred in the Manchester presentation of 'The Tempest', with only chairs to add to the cast's presence at that theatre-in-the-round performance. That was an international star lifting the occasion to acclaim. At a much more modest location we watched a modest star transform the normal to the special. Live theatre, whatever the status of the occasion, can be a very moving experience. I look forward to the next occasion at Farlow and Oretone village hall.

Jim Reynolds

MELVILLE CHAPEL

The Chapel is a short step along the lane from the Farlow and Oretone village hall, so this is an appropriate to offer this friendly message from Ruth Downes:

Soup lunch Spring Season begins at Melville with a Valentine's Special on 12th February 12.30p.m-2.00p.m We look forward to welcoming friends old and new.

Thank you,
Ruth

CLOWS TOP GARDENING CLUB

Once February is well established there is a definite feeling that spring is on the way. I, for one, can't wait!

Our speaker this month is Stephanie Mcroft, a member of the Teme Valley Wildlife group. Her subject will be "what's in a name?" an A-Z of flowers.

As usual we will also be holding the flower of the month competition, and bringing our magazines to swap. We would love to welcome some new members to join us on the 4th Wednesday of the month, or to share cars to visit local gardens of interest.

Until then, "may the weather be with you" as Peter Gibbs says at the end of Gardeners Question Time.

Judith Lawson

SIMON EVANS EVENT

Simon Evans, born in Wales in 1895, joined the Cheshires on the outbreak of World War One, and served throughout the war, surviving several injuries and being gassed. After discharge, he returned to his

pre-war job as a postman, and obtained a transfer from urban Birkenhead to rural Shropshire, where he worked as a postman in Cleobury Mortimer from 1926 until his death in 1940.

In 1928, he took a correspondence course at Ruskin College, Oxford, and subsequently developed into a successful writer and broadcaster, with five books and many articles to his credit. His gentle prose vividly evokes life in rural Shropshire in the interwar years. He is well remembered in Cleobury, and is commemorated by plaques, beers, a street name, and a waymarked walk.

Dr Mark Baldwin ran a secondhand bookshop in Cleobury for over 30 years, and was thus introduced to the works of Simon Evans. Mark's biography of Evans was published in 1992, and this has led to numerous invitations to speak about Simon Evans, the next of which will take place at 4 pm on 12 February in the Methodist Chapel in Broad Street. This is a meeting of the Ludlow Civic Society, open to members (admission £5) and non-members (£7).

HOPTON WAFERS CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

A big thank you to all who attended our Carol Service on Tuesday 3rd December. We had an attendance of nearly 120 people there which was a record number.

We raised just over £2,000 which will go towards the removal of two large fir trees which came down in the Churchyard in the December storms! However, what an amazing achievement and what a lovely evening it was.

It was wonderful to see our Church full with so many friends and neighbours, old and new.

Thank you to Ashley, our Rural Dean, for conducting an excellent Service, and to Brian, our Auctioneer, who did a brilliant job in extracting money from the bidders. Also, thanks to Marissa and Sarah for their assistance.



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1 FEBRUARY



8 FEBRUARY



22 FEBRUARY



1 MARCH



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Letter from Westminster

Stuart Anderson MP

Happy New Year! Within the blink of an eye, 2025 has arrived. I am writing to you, having just begun my recovery from reconstructive surgery on my foot. I suffered a high velocity gunshot wound during a live firing attack at the age of just 17, which shattered my foot and has required treatment ever since. I am using this opportunity to highlight the ongoing physical and mental impact that ex-service personnel face. As home to some 4,000 veterans, I know many others in South Shropshire share this experience. That is why I am so committed to making Shropshire the best place to be a veteran – ensuring it is as easy as possible to access the right support at the right time.

The new year has begun with a flurry of announcements from the government, following the Prime Minister's 'Plan for Change' published in December. Sadly, his Plan does not mention rural areas even once. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the government has decided to plough ahead with its decision to 'redirect' funding previously dedicated to rural areas. Last year, it saw Shropshire Council equipped with an extra £9 million to deliver services. As the Council has reported, Shropshire's rural geography means that it takes longer and costs more to deliver services than it does for most other authorities. Without the necessary support, rural councils may have to resort to steep increases in the council taxes levied on local residents. Due to financial pressures being faced by the Council, it is looking to save an extra £8.5 million and launched a public consultation on ways of doing so. I would encourage local residents to take part before the deadline of 26th January 2025. The quickest way to take part is completing the survey online, at www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/budget-consultation-202526/, but assistance to take part is also available at local libraries and Shropshire Local Hub. I will continue to stand up for fairer funding for rural councils.

On the final week of the parliamentary year, the government announced it will not provide financial compensation to women affected by increases to the State Pension Age. Almost four million women were impacted. The Ombudsman found two incidents of maladministration – in 2005 and then again in 2006 – when the government at the time could have been

better in communicating the changes. It has made a clear recommendation that compensation should be paid to those impacted. Ignoring their advice erodes trust in politics. I am calling on Ministers to step up to their responsibilities and take swift action to address injustices inflicted the last time that they were in government.

January has also brought with it news of increasing energy prices, as the Energy Price Cap has increased by a further £21. This will be worrying for many residents across South Shropshire. When added to October's increase, it means that the Cap on typical annual bills has risen by £170 since October – an increase of more than 10 per cent. I want to ensure vulnerable households get the support they need. So, I am pleased to be supporting Energy Savers' Week. It is an annual campaign, this year running between 20th and 26th January 2025, to raise awareness of how to make homes more energy efficient and get the best deal from energy suppliers.

South Shropshire is home to many historic buildings – like New Market Hall in Bridgnorth. Yet, urgent action is needed to ensure its continued use. So, I was delighted to meet Bridgnorth locals, Huw Rees and Richard North to discuss it. Huw has initiated a petition calling on Shropshire Council to use its powers to acquire the building for the good of the community if urgent remedial action is not taken by the owners. After a decade of disrepair, it is time to revive the building for the future.

This year, the litmus test for me will be whether the government's plans will benefit rural communities, where we have so much unlocked potential to drive economic growth and prosperity. I am clear that the government must not only continue its financial support for farmers but secure a fairer price for their produce, who are too often ripped off by larger companies. I also want to find out your thoughts on what the government should prioritise. Whether it is health, housing, education, or planning your feedback is important to me. So, do visit my website and share your views. If you prefer a paper copy, just let me know.

Stuart Anderson MP

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

01584 872187 stuart.anderson.mp@parliament.uk



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Let's Beat the Scammers

Welcome back to 2025 and your monthly roundup of all things related to keeping you safe from Scamming. 2024 saw a significant increase in the quantity and quality of attempts to defraud innocent people out of their money.

More sophistication using emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence has been seen but on the other hand combatting the crime has been enhanced by the introduction of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), a UK Government organisation providing advice and support to the public and commercial sectors, raising awareness of computer security threats.

So, let's look forward to 2025 and explore the possible approaches that scammers might use and more importantly how to spot them. On our list is the emerging use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). From deepfakes to copycat websites to fake QR codes, fraudsters are always utilising the latest trends and technology to make their scams more convincing and target more people. To identify and avoid these scams, you should look out for unnatural details – scan images for small details such as lighting, hair and hands that look strange, and look out for any blurry parts of the image. If the image looks too perfect, it might be created by AI

Voice cloning is when scammers use AI tools to clone your voice. They will then use your voice to call people you know impersonating you and asking for money. Fraudsters can get hold of your voice through calls and clips on social media. Ofcom has new rules coming into force on 29 January 2025 prohibiting overseas callers from spoofing UK mobile numbers.

This means fraudsters won't be able to change the display number their call is coming from to look like it's coming from a UK number on a mobile phone.

This could prompt scammers to home in on voice cloning to make their scam calls more persuasive, and we've already started to see some instances of it. To identify and avoid being caught out, if you receive an

unexpected, distressed call from a friend or relative that sounds suspicious, verify that it's actually them by contacting them using another trusted contact method.

Make sure your social media profiles are private as fraudsters can record your voice from your video or audio content.

Consider setting up a safe phrase with your family or close friends that you can say to verify if you're speaking to them.

Hacking is a method for scammers to steal your personal data while spreading their scams further through hacked accounts. Fraudsters set traps to access your email and social media accounts through data breaches, details gleaned from phishing websites or malware downloaded to your devices. In 2025, it is believed that personal data will continue to be a big commodity for scammers buying and selling details on the dark web. AI tools appear to be enabling scammers to find new ways of exploiting weaknesses in systems and launching cyber-attacks at scale. On more than one occasion we have identified tips to avoid hacking. Don't use the same password across different accounts, create strong passwords and use a reputable password manager. Download antivirus software on your devices.

Set up two-factor authentication (2FA) or two-step verification (2SV). This is when you provide a separate form of identification, such as a code being sent via text, when you log into an account.

The world changes very quickly and we hope you take something from our attempts to outline some of the ways that scammers will try to target you.

While this is a monthly briefing, you can stay up to date by signing up to our social media on Facebook (if you have access). The group is called SCAMS and How To Stop Them. Here you will see at a minimum weekly piece of advice and up to date information to help you stay safe.

Thank you for reading and stay safe.

Nigel Reid

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Stepping Out

Who's Walking, When and Where

WALKING FOR HEALTH

It's a simple formula. Meet at the Market Hall by 10.00, dressed for the weather and walk at a reasonable pace with a guide and good company for an hour or more. Return to the Hall for coffee and cake. Take in the scenery on a variety of routes, and if you're not a long established local you'll begin to realise what a great part of England you're in. If you want to do more viewing and exploring, contact the Footpath Association.

This year's Walking for Health programme is:

February 12th and 26th; March 12th and 26th; April 9th and 23rd; May 14th and 28th; June 11th and 25th; July 9th and 23rd; August 13th and 27th; September 10th and 24th; October 8th and 22nd; November 12th and 26th; December 10th only.. There are five Awayday Walks and these will be notified on this page as they occur. It's worth noting that you are responsible for your own safety on these outings.

ROCK PATHFINDERS

Free guided walks along our footpaths and bridleways taking 2-3 hours, off the roads and into the countryside. Our walks are between five and seven miles and many of the routes are undulating with stiles. We usually walk at a brisk pace. Everyone welcome but sorry no dogs allowed.

Thursday February 6th. At present we do not have a leader for this walk, Please check the website for changes: www.rockpathfinders.uk

Thursday, February 20th starting at 10am
From The Fountain Inn, OLDWOOD,
Tenbury Wells WR15 8TB
email:mdsskev@rockpathfinders.uk
Or ring Alan on 01299 400304

THE FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION

Our monthly Country walks will recommence on February 2nd.

I know it will be February when you read this, however Happy 2025 from CMFA. We

hope the coming year is kind to you and your dear ones.

Our annual New Year's Day Walk was extremely popular with over thirty walkers – children, adults and a few dogs joined us for a walk around Cleobury Mortimer. Our walk leaders managed to create a route to avoid the worst of the mud, and the weather was thankfully, kind to us. There was a pleasant, festive atmosphere as we walked and chatted, some of us walking off the indulgences of previous days.

The Fountain pub was our destination where CMFA had arranged a meal of soup and rolls for those who wished to partake. It was a lovely end to the afternoon, and we thank the Fountain for their hospitality.

Our monthly Country walks will recommence February 2nd, 2025. We look forward to another year of beautiful walks in the stunning countryside around us.

More information about CMFA, can be found on our website - our country walks, membership and our ongoing work.

If you would like to become a member of CMFA, please contact us on one of our country walks or e mail us. Our contact details can be found on our website.

For those who walk locally, if you have not already noticed, the footbridge over the stream, by the Glen Caravan Site was quickly replaced and the path is once again open. Our sincere thanks to the team from Shropshire for their speedy response.

No new restrictions for the footpaths on Mawley estate have been applied for. We have been advised that since this is the case, we can assume that the paths are now open. The bridge over the weir is in place and the fencing has been removed. The restriction for the path from the river up to the walled garden, ends at the end of January. This path should be considered 'out of bounds' until then. It will be wonderful to once again be able to walk around those lovely grounds. The snowdrops will soon be out which always provide a show as you walk around there.

Happy walking,
Joy Wilkinson



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A WARM WELCOME AWAITS YOU.



February in the Wyre Forest

Linda Iles

At this time of the year we all get a little tired of short days and grey skies. It just takes a little observation, however, to see that signs of spring are plentiful.

I have already heard the Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in that special way that means, 'This is my bit of the forest and I'm looking for a mate!' and every morning the dawn chorus is growing, with new singers joining as the month progresses. Get outside at around 7.30am and you may hear Great Tits, Song Thrushes and Wrens joining in with the Robins which have serenaded us during the winter. This is a good time to learn to identify some of the songs, as you have a chance to become familiar with the small number of species singing.



Many birds will be starting to build nests this month. Nests are protected by law as well as the birds themselves, and we should be careful not to disturb them, especially not to cut down or trim any trees or shrubs where birds are building. Bird species have different requirements regarding the location and type of nest they make. Robins choose well-hidden

spots and are highly original: we had nests built three years running in a cardboard box containing a woodworking saw in an outhouse. Their nests are made of dry leaves, grass, moss, hair and feathers and the eggs are off-white with brown speckles. Blackbirds build nests of twigs reinforced with mud, often near buildings and occasionally on the ground: a strategy risking trouble from garden operations and domestic pets. The Song Thrush nest is a beautiful sight with its smooth mud lining and sky blue eggs (pictured). Male Wrens build several nests of twigs and moss in their territory to attract a mate but will only finish the nest selected for use with a lining of feathers, while Long-tailed Tits make almost spherical balls of soft moss, lichen, feathers and spider silk.

Many birds will make use of nestboxes and the week following St Valentine's Day, ie 14th to 21st February, has been designated National Nestbox Week. It's a good time to check on old nestboxes, cleaning out old nest material which may contain parasites (or even dead nestlings) and repairing damage. Predators such as squirrels and Great Spotted Woodpeckers are known to gnaw or peck their way into boxes to take eggs or young, so a metal reinforcement around the entry hole is a good idea. Most of our boxes on the farm are occupied by Blue Tits: the female making the nest of moss, wool, hair and feathers then laying up to 14 eggs which she incubates while her mate feeds her.

Meanwhile keep feeding your birds and with luck your space will provide a 'des res' for a little family which will delight you through the spring and summer.

Linda Iles

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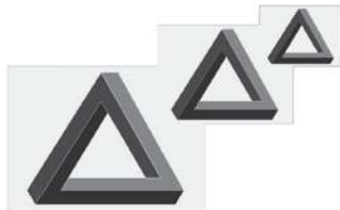


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Clarion Clippings - The Local News

CHANGES IN THE CLARION

This newsletter cannot stand still and ignore change. I recognise that colour printing is quite normal today, but when I look at the cost I don't see it as good value. Adverts on these pages work well and the message they put out would not be any better in full colour.

I am determined in the current business climate to hold the prices steady. I will be talking to our printer about the cost of just the outside covers in colour and will bear that cost without increasing advert prices if it can be done.

With this development in mind I would like to invite photographers, amateur and professional, to submit shots they think would suit the front cover. The picture will be chosen by me, with beauty, good humour or the season reflected.

I am at uncle.jim@icloud.com
Jim Reynolds

IN PRAISE OF...

The phone often rings at Clarion Towers, but when the voice of my lady love tells me that she's stuck at the top of the Bewdley By-pass it's time to move. Her Hyundai had refused to engage drive and when it got smokey she thought the engine was on fire.

The car is serviced and tended by Mawley Matt, but a call to him revealed no towing facility. Matt recommended Jones Rescue in Kidderminster and gave me their card.

Tina had been helped by trucker Dave of the Owens Group, who pushed the silent Hyundai off the road and onto the verge by that roundabout, staying with Tina until she established that I was on the way. She's going to write to

Olwens Group and say what a great and helpful guy Dave is.

She called Jones Rescue and they were on the way, so she sent me home work on this edition. Another call, full of praise for Carl from Jones Rescue and his lady crew member. The car left at Mawley Matt's, they gave her a lift home and Carl's lady told Tina if she wanted any shopping fetching, they fit it in with their movements.

In a world where the lack of peace can get you concerned about where we're all heading, experiencing service and care like this deserves praise. Jones Rescue, we salute you and your fine staff.

POETS INVITED

This came as an invitation to members of the Nearly Dead Poets' Society, but we thought it should extend to those readers who love poetry:

I am an independent author and publisher based in Wem. I will be running a two-night writing retreat at a beautiful place in Guilsfield on the first weekend of May. I wondered if I might share some details with the Nearly Dead Poets? (great name!)

The retreat is for any writer, of any genre, at any stage in their writing 'career'. The theme is 'Find Your Focus' with the aim of finding ways to fit writing in to already busy lives. I have written and published 20 books of my own over the last ten or so years, and I have also worked with more than seventy other authors to help them develop and often publish their work. I started off writing poetry myself and I went on a retreat at an Arvon Foundation centre in Yorkshire, with U.A. Fanthorpe as one of the tutors. It was one of the best weeks I've ever had, and showed me how much I could write in the right circumstances, and I'd love to have some poetry writers at this weekend.

I want the retreat to be a chance for people to realise how much (and how well) they can write given the opportunity, and for them to leave

with some good ideas and strategies to make sure they stay committed to their writing. I should also mention I hope it will be a really good fun weekend and I can vouch for how well looked after everybody will be by Helen and Anne-Marie who run the retreat centre.

If you'd like further details, please let me know, and also the best way to do so - I can send more details by email, share info on a Facebook page, send you some fliers for your next get-together... whatever you think is best.

With best wishes,
Katherine Smith

www.katharineesmith.com
www.facebook.com/smithkatharinee
www.instagram.com

Cleobury Mortimer Footpath Association programme of Walks for 2025

DATE	Saturday in month	LEADERS
22 nd February	4 th	Paul and Hazel
22 nd March	4 th	Judy and John
26 th April	4 th	Rob and Judi
24 th May	4 th	John and Helen
21 st June	3 rd To avoid clash with Cleobury Festival	Alan and Deana
26 th July	4 th	Russell and Mazella
23 rd August	4 th	Peter Dunkley
29 th September to 3 rd October	Midweek	CMFA Llandudno Holiday
25 th October	4 th	Richard Allman
22 nd November	4 th	Leader required - we are away
4 th December	Thursday	Morning Walk and Christmas Lunch



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A Real White Christmas

It was an invitation just too good to miss. My lady love's daughter Nikki in distant Australia wanted her whole family to get together for a White Christmas. She aimed for a convenient locale in Europe and the best advice she got was Austria.

Nikki is a real go-getter and found a house to rent near Innsbruck with enough rooms to accommodate the clan of seven Hobins plus one extra. We had to arrange flights and local travel.

Lufthansa from Birmingham to Munich and a Flixbus booked to Innsbruck, where a taxi took us out to our home for the coming week. In the evening dark the scenery did not impress; that was to come.

Greetings and introductions over then down the road for a meal and a briefing about travel - two cars with Nikki's husband and Tina's brother driving. Warm clothing all round and sensible boots, which could be dried overnight in the cellar boiler room. Next door to that was the gymnasium; I didn't see anyone using that.

Austria is a hilly country, with a wide river between our village location and a range of breathtaking mountains topped with snow and a bright blue sky as the backdrop. No disrespect to Shropshire intended, but these were really serious hills.

Cross country journeys to the likes of a cable car viewing spot were very smooth and traces of snow on the roads meant a sensile cruising speed with no slip-sliding dramas. That's the effect of the law in both Austria and Germany that in the winter your car wears winter tyres; it probably applies to other civilised European countries. I opted not to take the cable car, having tried it once years ago and not liking it at

all. Tina went with the family and was bubbling with excitement when they came down.

One local attraction is the Swarovski crystal factory, the rock presented as an affordable option to diamonds. There was a very impressive store that caught our eyes when we had a shopping expedition into Innsbruck and next day we drove out to the official site to see just how much you do with crystal. The range of uses was huge and the affordable attraction was an iPhone case that glittered and tempted at just 89 Euros; but they didn't have one to fit my phone, so that was 89 Euros saved.



He's behind you! Tina seems unconcerned to be within reach of the monster at Swarovski.

Christmas Day in Innsbruck saw a big firework show in the evening, with the main park given over to a big range of displays of lights by the corporation and local shops, and entry to the facility free.

Shopping in the town is a matter of finding what might suit those back in Britain, but I'd given each

of my family a card with a cash donation to their choice of shopping. That kept the Euro spending within reasonable limits and funding the final dinner night was affordable; I could fancy going to Austria again just as a couple. Linda Fowler, she of much wider travel than me, tells me the country is just as beautiful in the summer with window boxes overflowing with geraniums and the like. Note for future planning.

The food in the restaurants was definitely compatible with British tastes and not expensive if you opted for modest places, which were all spotless and the staff very courteous. If you prefer to travel overland rather than fly, there's plenty to see as you cover ground in Europe.

We saw this on the Flixbus journey back to Munich airport. The bus was a 40 or so seater, there were two drivers because relief is normal on long hauls, in this case about three hours. The view of rural Austria and on into Germany was just great, the bus keeping pace with cars on the autobahn and negotiating the narrow mountain roads with the professional ease you expect from good companies. Austria impressed me enormously as a friendly country, far more so than the much richer but seemingly less welcoming Switzerland.

It was a wonderful experience and I cannot thank Nikki Hobin enough for her planning and guidance, plus her ability to converse in German when necessary. She's an international traveller and may be over here to see her mum this year. I do hope we can impress her with our British hospitality.

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Clarion Clippings the Local News

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Branch's Annual Lunch will be held in the Parish Hall on March 9th. The cost of a ticket is £28.00, which includes a three-course meal. A licensed bar and a speaker will be available, along with the usual raffle. Posters outlining details of the event are displayed around the town and tickets can be obtained from:

Paul Serrell-Cooke: 07791 378240
Mike Hermolle: 01299 271384
Mark Baldwin: 01299 270110
Ron Breakwell: 01299 270830

Cleobury Mortimer can boast one of the oldest Branches of the Royal British Legion and we are grateful for the support we receive from the community. The Branch has some 53 members which is on the face of it pretty good. One issue that I feel we need to address as a Branch and as a community: we have just eight members who are younger than 60 and we need to attract and welcome younger members into our community.

Membership costs just £20.00 a year and members do not need to have served in the Armed Forces to be involved. I will work with the Committee to do all we can to encourage new blood into the Branch, but if you are interested in becoming a member yourself please get in touch in the first instance. You can contact me on 07791 378240.

This year is the 80th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) and Victory in Japan (VJ) Days which fall on 8th May and 15th August respectively, and we will have the opportunity to be a part of the national celebrations.

Paul Serrell-Cooke

FEBRUARY FESTIVAL OF FRENCH FILM

As ever, the Parish Hall have come up with another special attraction to give those winter blues a lift. And do not forget that they have a licensed bar to give you a little ex~tra cheer if it's a foggy night.

These dates are all Saturdays and the the doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30 start. Tickets are the usual £5.00

and to keep those hunger pangs at bay you can order soup and a pudding for just £4.00. Great value.
1st February - Les Intouchables
8th February - Le Samourai
22nd February - La Nuit Americaine
1st March - Les Quatre Cents Coups
More info at:
www.cleoburyparishhall.uk

Sally Walker tells us about her new year beauty salon move:

I can't believe it's already February—one month of 2025 has flown by! StillMind is now happily settled in Leominster, and business is growing. We offer two chair yoga sessions each week, along with meditation classes and a ladies' group that meets on alternate Thursdays. Bookings for Reiki, hand reflexology, and energy healing are picking up, which is great. Let's carry on with living seasonally as we slowly ease towards Spring. Let's consider seasonal essential oil blends to help us emerge from hibernation and good seasonal winter foods to keep our spirits up and provide us with great nutrition.



During Winter, we seek cosiness, comfort, uplifting scents, and wellness support. While warm

blankets, gathering with family and friends, and enjoying warm drinks are wonderful, aromatherapy is also an essential wellbeing tool.

Evergreen oils such as Douglas fir, cedarwood, and spruce are excellent choices for uplifting spirits and promoting grounding. These oils serve as middle notes and provide a solid foundation for oil blends. Warming resinous oils like frankincense, myrrh, and benzoin encourage a sense of comfort, balance, and calm. These oils act as base notes, adding a sweet earthiness to winter blends.

Finally, consider uplifting essential oils such as bergamot, ginger, rosemary, and peppermint. These oils are delightful when you're reading or learning a new skill, acting as top-to-middle notes that give your blends a zesty kick. By combining these oils, you can create a beautiful blend that helps ease the challenges of winter.

As we move into the winter season, it's worth noting that many foods are now available year-round due to imports. However, it's still a good idea to focus on seasonal foods that are abundant during this time. Eating seasonal produce is not only healthier but also provides us with the nutrients we need.

This season, look for warming foods that offer a balance of sweetness and saltiness. Some excellent fruits and vegetables for winter include bananas, sprouts, carrots, oranges, limes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes, among others. Additionally, red meat, poultry, fish, and seafood are great sources of protein. Incorporating eggs, black pepper, ginger, turmeric, and cinnamon, along with oils such as olive oil, coconut oil, and avocado oil, can also enhance your meals. Don't forget to include some dairy for added nutrition.

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Clarion Clippings - The Local News

IN BUSINESS - SHROPSWEEP

I knew I'd get along with Mark Breakwell when he rang in the morning of our appointed sweep and asked if he could come early as he'd had a cancellation. No problem for me if it meant I had a clear afternoon to get on with other work, so in he came.



Smart van with his ShropSweep title, every tool of his trade unpacked in order and carried in clean bags and boxes. We got talking and it was clear he's a

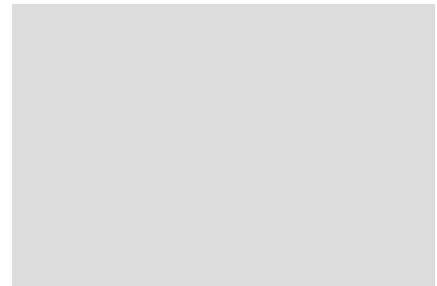
local lad, born and bred in Cleobury. Even better, he was educated at Lacon Childe School and remembered my late missus as a decent person who would listen when necessary.

He's a relatively new face at this business, with a few years since training and qualifying at Stafford. He's building the business as well as working as a manager in a local food chain, so clearly he's not afraid of work. That showed in the easy he unrolled his tool pack, laid down the protective covers on my carpet and plugged in. One small wood burning stove cleaned and inspected, an official receipt and confirmation of performance made out and a cost rather surprised me with its modesty. Then outside to the big vertical flu for an inspection and clean, him clambering up a mini ladder to proper access.

This was a pleasant experience, as I find with almost all local



traders who come to my home to do a job, large or small. I happily use people who advertise with me, I pay their normal price and report on their work with complete honesty.



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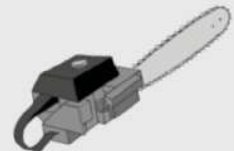
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Doddington Lodge is a place where friendships are made and special moments are shared. We organise many fun activities that everyone can get involved with, whether that's a sing along, arts and crafts, collecting fresh veg from the allotment or just simply helping each other with a crossword in our daily newspaper. Each day is different, we certainly have many happy moments...

With a modern bistro dining room and bar with a delicious daily menu created by our accomplished chef. Individually designed spacious double rooms, allowing couples to stay together or beautiful single rooms all with en-suites and stunning countryside views. Even a hairdressing salon for a little pampering to provide a place of well-being.

Our home is a loving community and family, where you can consider Doddington Lodge a home away from home. We will provide you with all the key information, guiding you through every step of the process, whether you are staying with us for a short or long stay.

**Come along!
Coffee morning
on Friday 14th
February 2025**



Join us for a warm cup of cheer and plenty of laughs at our monthly Doddington Lodge Coffee Mornings!

Every 2nd Friday of the month, come together with residents, family & friends over tea or coffee. Enjoy freshly baked cakes as well as the Doddington Lodge monthly raffle.

For only £2.50 per person – including your beverage and slice of cake – join us for our get-together on Friday, February 14th, 2025, from 10 am until midday.

We look forward to seeing you!

www.doddingtonlodge.com | E: enquiries@doddingtonlodge.com | T: 01584 707084

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Our amazing Activity Coordinators have once again outdone themselves, planning events that filled our days with smiles and laughter.

We had the absolute pleasure of welcoming some very special guests - Abberley Pre-School! The little ones will now be visiting us every 3rd Thursday of the month, we can't wait until their next visit!

Another highlight is always the visit from George Balls, who always brings plenty of entertainment and ways to keep active for everyone. And let's not forget the delicious celebrations on Cheese Lovers Day, where we indulged in tasty treats and shared our love for all things cheesy.

Adding to the fun, we had lively games of hooking the fish, bingo and quizzes. A special shoutout to our wonderful Activities Co-ordinator, Manuela, who's been busy creating exciting new cognitive games for our residents.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our coffee morning. You made it a truly special event, and we're already looking forward to doing it all again on Friday, 14th February.

What a month it's been - great times shared together. Here's to even more in the weeks ahead!



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THE LATEST FROM CORAL & TOM...

With the post Christmas market now in full swing, the property market has seen increased levels of activity throughout January, with 2025 off to a strong start! We are seeing many buyers still hoping to complete before the end of March the benefit from the stamp duty relief, however with solicitors becoming busier with increased sales numbers, timescales then on average tend to slow and this date could be in jeopardy for many parties. As always it is essential to fully research the firms you are considering engaging with and carefully reading other customers reviews to ensure that your moving journey is as smooth as possible.

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Simon Morton In The Garden

Gardening in the Soggy Lane

To quote Talking Heads: “Same as it ever was.” Despite the turn of the calendar to a shiny new year, I’m gazing out the window at a scene as familiar as it is soggy. Rain. Endless rain. If my garden were a football pitch, John Motson (RIP) wouldn’t even bother pulling on his sheepskin. Rain has most definitely stopped play.

My once-glorious garden now resembles a “tough mudder” course. I struggling to remember what it looks like in full bloom. Was there ever a time when it wasn’t just sad and sodden? My hazy memory wasn’t helped by the Summer of 2024, which came and went in very much a blink-and-you-missed-it fashion.

Of course, rain or shine, there’s always something to be done in the garden. Right now, that something involves clearing the beds and mulching. Yes, yes, I know it’s late to tackle these tasks, but I’ve been busy, don’t you know? Life doesn’t stop for horticulture. The problem is that what should be straightforward tidying has turned into a squelchy slog. And then there’s my wheelbarrow, the twin-wheeled marvel I once touted as a game-changer. It’s stable, sure (I can push it one-handed if the mood takes me), but on soft, waterlogged ground, it’s a different story. Instead of leaving a neat single track, it carves out twin trenches that make the garden resemble a BMX track designed by a lunatic. Progress feels less like gardening and more like crossing a swamp with an unruly shopping trolley.

At moments like these, I’m tempted to chuck in the trowel and retreat indoors. Why bother with mulching and muck when I could be warm, dry, and contemplating the meaning of life over a

mug of tea? This isn’t completely wasted time - there are planting schemes to dream up, seeds to order, and layouts to reconsider. This year, I’m teetering on the brink of radical change. I might (brace yourself) move beyond my tried-and-true Cosmos configuration.

This is a big deal. For years, I’ve relied on Cosmos as my horticultural safety net. They’re reliable, cheerful, and, most importantly, idiot-proof. But after last summer’s lacklustre showing, even I have to admit that it might be time for a shake-up. My wife has been particularly vocal on the matter. Usually, she’s happy to let me bumble along in the garden, but last year’s dismal display seems to have triggered something in her. She’s developed “Strong Opinions” about what should go where, leaving me questioning if my desire for change is an act of creativity or simply submission. I think we both know the answer to that particular question.

So here I am, staring out at the rain as it lashes against the window. The garden can wait a little longer while I deliberate. For now, I’ll make another cuppa and see if the kids have left any Hobnobs. (They haven’t. They never do.)

As I sip my tea and ponder the great Cosmos question, I’m struck by how much gardening mirrors life. It’s messy, unpredictable, and often feels like an uphill battle. You make plans, only to have them washed away by forces beyond your control. But every so often, things come together—a blossom here, a sunny day there—and it reminds you why you bother. For now, though, it’s still raining. Same as it ever was.

Simon Morton



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Mrs Grumpy

Work proceeds on the new sewage plant at the bottom of town with much soil being rearranged. One result is a large area of standing water near the river which some wags have named the 'Cleobury Lido'. I hope

the substantial cost of all this work has been allowed for as Severn Trent has recently paid out more in dividends (£146 million) than they made in profits (£141 million). High interest rates also mean that they will have to pay more to service their £7.66 billion net debt mountain. No doubt bills will be going up but someone has to cover the multi million pound salary of the Chief Exec...

Good news for bus users in the West Midlands as it has been announced that bus travel after 7 pm will be free and result in 250,000 extra journeys. Sadly none will happen here as...we don't have any buses after 7 pm. Still, those that do run during the day seem to be fairly reliable now although they don't appear very crowded and there is no sign yet of the much hyped pedal powered version which was exclusively previewed in the 'Clarion' some time back. There has been some discussion on the term 'Twirly' which is apparently used for bus pass holders arriving before the 9.30 am start time for these (but not here as the buses are so infrequent). A similar term is apparently used for 'third age' folk in France who are known as 'les Tamalou' as in the greeting: 'Tu as mal ou' (where are you aching?).

Thank you to the Council for providing our Christmas lights and the volunteers for putting them up and taking them down. I must say that you get used to seeing them there and the street looks a little bare when they go. The lime trees have had their annual haircut and are looking neat and tidy. However, the bad news is that the end one near the Church has been condemned and will have to be removed although it is planned to

replace it with a good sized sapling.

Congratulations to our Bishop Richard, the Bishop of Hereford, who has been appointed 'Clerk of the Closet' with an annual salary of £7. Not sure exactly what the job involves but I trust on that pay scale, it won't be too onerous...

A recent story related to the owners of a £23 million Notting Hill house suing over a moth infestation brings back memories of an old Barry Cryer joke about a husband who comes home to find his wife in bed and a naked man in the bathroom clapping his hands. 'I'm from the council as your wife reported moths' he explains. 'You're naked' says the husband whereupon the lover looks down in surprise and says: 'The B*****ds!'

Fed up with darning socks and mending other garments?. Here is a solution from a lady in Cardiff. She has a 'mending' bag into which family members put items that need repair. When it is full she throws it away. Problem solved.

Dear old Shropshire Council feature again in this years Private Eye 'Rotten Borough' awards due to the then leader of the Labour group, Julia Buckley, being accused of starting a 'class war' and having a 'Marxist agenda' for daring to suggest bringing social care services back in house. After all, we all know how well it's going being run by offshore companies... Still, at least this time it doesn't involve spending over £80,000 tarmac the lane leading to a Councillors house.

It will be interesting to see how the Government's proposal to merge local councils into larger groupings will pan out. I thought as we already had a unitary council in Shropshire, we wouldn't be affected but apparently all kinds of suggestions are coming out to merge counties including one involving Worcestershire and Gloucestershire but no mention of Shropshire. If something like this comes to pass, I imagine Cleobury ending up even more forgotten than it is now.

Ariadne J Grumpy

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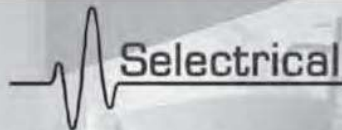
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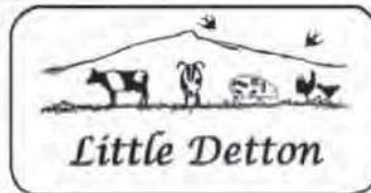
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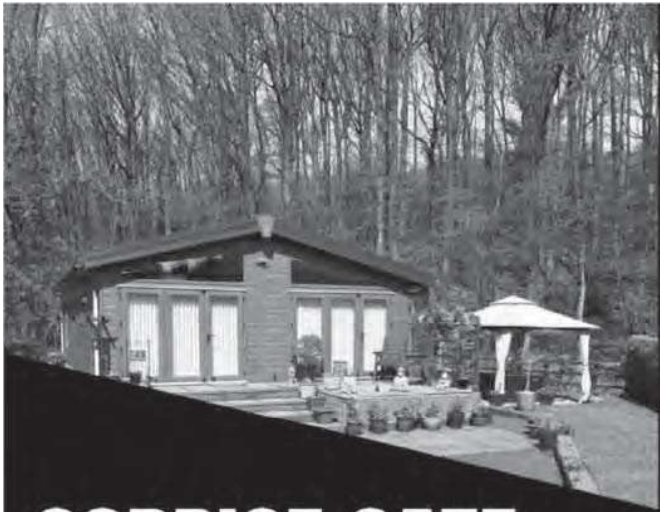
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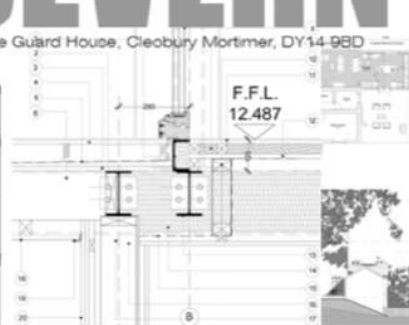
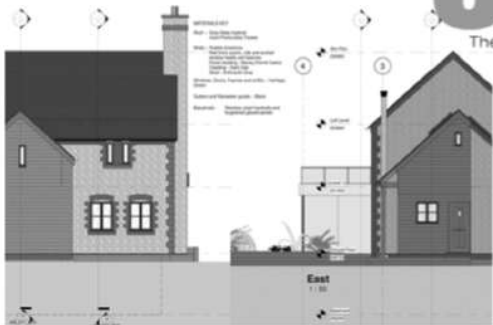
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THE FEBRUARY SOCIAL CALENDAR

Sat 1 st , 8, 22 nd , 7.30	Films, Parish Hall	p27
Wed. 5 th 7.30	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall	
Feb 11 th 7.30am	Breakfast Club at Golf Club	p7
Tues 11 th , 7.30pm	Eastern Dance Workshop with Tina Hobin	p11
Wed 12 th , 10.00	Walking for Health, meet at Market Hall	p19
Wed. 12 th 4.00	Dr Mark Baldwin on Simon Evans, Methodist Chapel, Broad Street, Ludlow	p13
12 th Feb, 12.30	Soup lunch, Melville Chapel	p13
Thu 13 th , 12.30	Wyre Forest Crematorium, Val Simpson Funeral	p7
Fri. 14 th 8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall	
Feb 15 th 7.00	T10 Orchestra at Regal Theatre, Tenbury	p5
Mon 17 th 7.30	The Reading Group gather at the library to discuss "The Passenger"	p7
Wed. 19 th 7.30	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall	
Thurs 20 th 10.30am	Coffee Morning Cleobury WI, Golf Club	p11
Thurs 20 th 10.00	Rock Pathfinders, Meet at Fountain Inn, Oldwood	p19
Fri 21 st 7.00	Do It Yourself Quiz Night, Hopton Wafers Village Hall	p 5
Wed 26 th , 12.00	Winter Warmer Lunch, Cleobury WI	p11
Wed 26 th , 10.00	Walking for Health, meet at Market Hall	p19
Fri 28 th 8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall	

REGULAR EVENTS OF INTEREST

Monday: 8.00 Bingo Nights at the Market Hall, Church Street.

Tuesday: 8.00 Friendship Club meets at the Parish Hall.

Thursday morning: Saint Mary's church coffee and chat session.

Thursday 7.30. Tina Hobin's Birth Dance and good health club, Market Hall.

2nd Wednesday in Month, Royal British Legion, Sports & social Club 7.00pm

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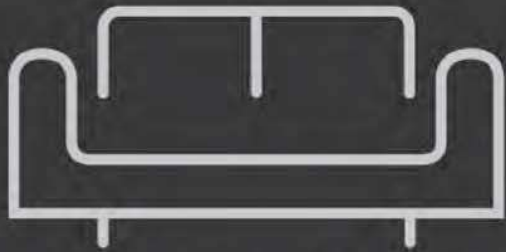
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Councillor Surgery

Cllr Hobin, Cllr James and the Clerk attended the monthly Councillor Surgery held in the Market Hall, alongside the Farmers Market, on Saturday 18th January. Items raised included potholes, street lighting and the ongoing lack of Post Office services in Cleobury Mortimer. All issues are being addressed with the appropriate authorities. If you have an issue you want to raise, you can contact the office on the details above or drop into the next monthly Councillor Surgery on Saturday 15th February 2025.

Christmas Lights

Thank you to all the volunteers who once again gave up hours of their time to put up and take down the Christmas trees and lights. Their commitment to the community is very much appreciated by us all. If anyone would like to help with the Christmas Lights or the Christmas Fayre event this year, then please do get in touch.

Policing and Reporting

If you become aware of a crime or anti-social behaviour there are various ways to report them. If the issue is non-urgent, you can either call the police on 101 or report it through the West Mercia Police website www.westmercia.police.uk. Always dial 999 in an emergency if you or someone else is in immediate danger or if a crime is in progress.

Alternatively, if you prefer to make a report anonymously you can contact Crimestopperseither by telephone on 0800 555 111 or online through <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>. They will pass the information about the crime to the police.

If you have any issues with highways, parking, dog fouling, waste collections etc please report them to Shropshire Council Customer Services. Please telephone 0345 678 9000 or email customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk. Alternatively, most highways issues can be reported via the Fix My Street app.

You may have seen some Operation Snap signs around town. You can report any driving offences such as:

- Someone driving without due care and attention
- Someone using a device such as a mobile phone
- Someone disobeying traffic laws.

Send your photos or footage to West Mercia Police at www.westmercia.police.uk/operationsnap

Dates for your Diary

Next Council Meeting – Monday 3rd February 2025 at 6.30pm, at the Cleobury Country Centre.

Councillor Surgery – Saturday 15th February 2025, from 10am – 12noon, at the Market Hall.

Annual Town Meeting – Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 6.30pm, at the Market Hall.

Cleobury Festival is being held on Saturday 28th June on the Playing Field.



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THU	4.30pm - 10pm
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