

Village Views

FEBRUARY 2019

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF ACTON BURNELL, PITCHFORD, FRODESLEY, RUCKLEY AND LANGLEY



WELCOME

With Christmas behind us and spring on the horizon, this is the perfect time of year to get out and about, and maybe start a new hobby. Please take a look at the 'What's On' page to see what is on offer locally. If you know a local club or organisation which would like to be featured, please contact villageviews@hotmail.com, call 01694 731120, or speak to one of the Village Views team.

We are on the hunt for photos which we can feature in Village Views and the Directory, so please take a look at your snaps to see if there is something you would like to share with the community. Photos of local landmarks, landscapes, wildlife and village events would all be very welcome. Please email your photos to villageviews@hotmail.com.

And last, but not least..... Thank you to the Parish Council for continuing to support Village Views with funding from The Lightsource Fund.

SHROPSHIRE'S FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

Shropshire Council is conducting a Local Plan Review Consultation on preferred sites for development in Shropshire. Its purpose is to identify the housing and employment sites needed to deliver the Council's preferred level and distribution of development across Shropshire during the period to 2036.

The consultation document identifies around 70 preferred sites across 56 separate settlements including Shrewsbury, the principal and key market towns and each proposed Community Hub in order to deliver the preferred scale and distribution of housing and employment growth during the period to 2036.

Between now and 2036 the review says that Shropshire needs another 1430 houses per year- the plan to deliver this will be an urban focused development plan with only 27.5% of that total to be found from rural areas. In our Division of Burnell, there is only one village, Dorrington, that has been identified as a community Hub, and therefore Dorrington will have some development (around 150 new homes).

Condover Parish Council, which includes Dorrington, is currently writing a Neighbourhood Plan, and this Plan in conjunction with Shropshire Council will provide policies on how development in Dorrington should be managed to

support sustainable development. This could include identifying a development boundary for the village and specific site allocations. If you live in the Parish of Condover I do urge you to have your say and engage with the Neighbourhood Plan Process!

As always, if you have any questions or matters you think I can help on, please do get in touch by email (dan.morris@shropshire.gov.uk), on twitter (@dan4burnell), on facebook (dan4burnell) or by phone (07902408400).

Dan Morris

Council Member for Burnell

COMMUNITY LED PLAN

The group of volunteers who came forward following the questionnaire last year have now completed their work, producing a revised plan which is a review and update of the Parish Plan produced in 2013. The plan includes issues raised by those who completed the questionnaire, including updates on topics from the 2013 plan and a number of new issues.

The new plan was presented to the Parish Council at their meeting on January 15th and fully endorsed without comment. The plan can now be submitted to Shropshire Council for inclusion in the Church Stretton place plan and will affect how decisions are made and central funds allocated in support of local views and needs.

Before going forward the plan is available for you to consider and has been posted on the Acton Burnell Parish Council website at www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk/community-led-plans, with copies also available at the Post Office and at Village Hall pub nights. If you cannot access these please contact the parish clerk at the address below who will be able to email (or, as a last resort, post) a copy.

If you do have any comments these should also be addressed to the clerk:

Mrs E Wicks
The Granary Lower Farm Court
Pitchford SY5 7DW
07768 437032

Recording local history

A number of people have expressed an interest in contributing old memories, photos, and stories to the new local history group's collection of historical snippets about Pitchford and the surrounding area. A few interesting pieces of information have already come in. We hope there will be an update in the next edition of Village Views, and in the meantime anyone interested in offering a little snippet of local history, is invited to get in touch with either Beth Davies on beth.davies1@hotmail.com or 01694 731657 or Daphne Lewis on ldaphne26@yahoo.co.uk or 01694 731357.

Daphne Lewis and Beth Davies

The closing date for contributions to the next edition will be 20th April 2019.

Would you like to advertise your business in Village Views? Contact us on villageviews@hotmail.com for more information.



What's on

8th February

Wrap up warm and bring a torch to take part in an evening of talks and telescopes at Attingham Park. This introduction to stargazing is open to anyone over 16, and costs £8.00 per person (to include a glass of wine or a soft drink). The event begins at 7.00pm.

To book a place, please call 03442 491895

8th to 24th February

Shrewsbury celebrates the life, work and legacy of Charles Darwin with a festival which celebrates curiosity and independent thinking. The festival will include talks, lectures, guided walks and concerts. Find details of all events at www.originalshrewsbury.co.uk/darwin-shrewsbury-festival

9th February

An evening of stargazing at Cardingmill Valley, focussing on Orion the Hunter. Tickets cost £10 per person, to include a welcome bowl of homemade soup. The event starts at 8.00pm. Please bring binoculars and wear suitable clothing. Telescopes provided.

Call 03442 491895 to book a place.

9th February

Wondering how to get the best out of your fruit trees? The Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre is running a one day hands-on course on pruning and training fruit trees. Bring along secateurs, loppers, pruning saws or bow saws if you have them. Stout boots and gardening gloves are essential. The course costs £25 and runs from 10.00am to 1.00pm at the Discovery Centre, Craven Arms.

Please call 01588 676060 or email jade.marriott-lodge@growcoocklearn.co.uk to book a place.

9th, 10th, 16th & 17th February

Celebrate the spring with a snowdrop walk in Cound, followed by soup, tea, coffee and cake at the Guildhall, from 11.30am to 4.30pm. Proceeds in aid of Cound Church and Village Hall. Take a look at this edition's 'local stroll' to find out where to find the snowdrops!

14th February

Winter Wellbeing Cookery Course at the Shropshire Hill Discovery Centre, Craven Arms. Create delicious breakfasts, lunches, suppers and snacks specially designed to support your immune system, boost your intestinal flora and recharge your batteries. You'll leave with your delicious food and a new zest for cooking. £35 per person – please call 01588 676060 or email jade.marriott-lodge@growcoocklearn.co.uk to book a place.

15th February

Pub Night at Pitchford Village Hall. Come along for a pint and a natter. Children and well-behaved dogs welcome. Doors open at 7.30pm. Please bring along your completed questionnaires regarding the future of the Village Hall.

18th to 22nd February

Dragon-themed half term fun at the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms. Suitable for all 4 to 11 years olds, and costing £4 per child. Please note that children must be accompanied by an adult. There will also be a cookery course, running from 10.00am to 11.30am on 18th February, where young dragon trainers aged 4 to 11 can learn to cook dragon scale nachos, yaknog, dragon poop sweets and more. Cost £7.50 per child (accompanied by an adult).

Places for all activities can be booked in advance by calling 01588 676060 or email jade.marriott-lodge@growcoocklearn.co.uk

21st February

Join the rangers at Cardingmill Valley to make your own wooden bird box. All materials supplied. Tickets £5.00 per person. Workshops at 10.00am, 11.30am and 1.00pm.

Call 03442 491895 to book a place.

22nd February

Making bird feeders from logs and pine cones at Cardingmill Valley. Tickets £2.00, to include all materials. No need to book – just drop in anytime between 11.00am and 2.00pm.

23rd February

Take part in one of the lantern-making workshops being held over half term, and bring your lantern along to Attingham to take part in the a lantern lit procession through the grounds of Attingham. The procession will leave the stables courtyard at 7.00pm. Tickets are £4.00 for adults and £2.00 for children, and booking is essential.

Please contact 03442 491895. See the National Trust website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/attingham-park/whats-on for details of the lantern making workshops.

2nd March

Take part in the Attingham Park Night Run and help to raise money to look after this Site of Special Scientific Interest. Choose from the 2.5km Explorer or the 6km Adventurer routes and have fun at your own pace on our traffic free trails. Don't forget your head torch!

The Explorer route is suitable for everyone aged 6 years and over, and the Adventurer route is open to over 12 year olds. Children aged 6 to 15 must be accompanied.

More information available at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/attingham-park/whats-on, or by calling 03442 491895.

9th March

A talk on how the National Trust manages the Long Mynd. Begins at 6.00pm and includes soup and a roll. Tickets are £10.00 and booking is essential.

Please call 03442 491895.

13th March

Calling all crafters! Fancy some company while you craft? Want to try a new craft or have a skill you would like to share? Come along to the new lunchtime crafting group meeting at Pitchford Village Hall from 12 noon to 2.00pm. Please bring along your lunch and any craft projects.

15th March

It's Pub Night again at Pitchford Village Hall. All welcome from 7.30pm onwards.

24th March

Concord College will be hosting a Japanese choir and the Shropshire Big Band. This free concert will be taking place at 3.30pm in the College theatre.

1st to 29th April

Much Wenlock Guildhall plays host to a free exhibition by artist Diana Nuttall. Enjoy her quirky paintings featuring 'Mammoths in Shropshire, Lions in Venice'. Prints, cards, placemats and posters also available to purchase. Open 11.00am to 4.00pm.

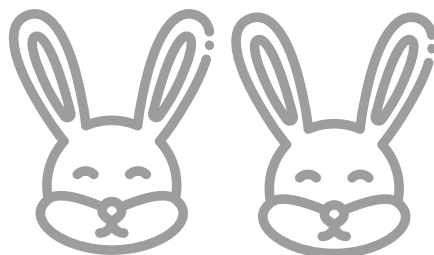
7th April

Enjoy the sound of Carding Mill Valley's dawn chorus and learn how to identify the birds from their songs. You'll need to be at the Pavilion by 6.00am to take part.

Booking is essential and tickets at £7.50 per person can be obtained by called 03442 491895.

13th, 14th, 19th, 20th, 21st & 22nd April

Join the great Easter Egg hunt at Attingham Park. Find out about native creepy crawlies, and solve the puzzles to win a chocolate egg. Open from 10.00am to 4.00pm. Tickets £2.50 in addition to the usual admission charge.



14th April

Enjoy the thousands of primroses in bloom in Walcot Wood on this guided one mile walk with a National Trust Ranger. This is a free event, but please be sure to wear suitable clothing and footwear. Please note, dogs are not welcome on this walk. Please meet at 10.00am at Bury Ditches car park (OS grid ref. SO 335 839; postcode: SY7 8BD). The car park is located between Clunton and Lydbury North, and the woodland is signposted from the B4368 and B4385.

17th April

An evening guided bird-watching walk at Carding Mill Valley. Booking essential and tickets are £7.50 per person. Please call 03442 491895 to book your place. Meet at the Pavilion at 6.30pm.

18th April

A fun walk for all the family at Carding Mill Valley, with a chance to spot some local wildlife. This is a free event, and booking is not necessary. Meet at the Pavilion at 11.00am for a mile and a half walk (taking around two hours). Sorry, but dogs are not welcome at this event.

19th to 22nd April

Easter egg hunting at Carding Mill Valley. Follow the trail to win a chocolate egg! Dogs on leads welcome. Cost per person £2.00. No need to book – just turn up at the Pavilion between 10.30am and 2.30pm.



ARE YOU A CRAFTER?

Fancy some company while you craft?
OR

Want to try a craft and need some help?

Have a skill that you would be happy
to share?

Then come along to the new

LUNCHTIME CRAFTING GROUP

Bring your lunch and your project to

PITCHFORD VILLAGE HALL

12-2 pm
Wednesday 13th March



FLICKS IN THE STICKS

Fancy a night out at the pictures? Flicks in the Sticks brings recent releases and classic favourites to village halls, schools and other local centres. We are lucky to have a number of venues locally, including Church Stretton School, The Edge in Much Wenlock, Cardington Village Hall, Cound Guildhall, Ryton Village Hall and All Stretton Village Hall.

Upcoming films on show include recent releases such as Blackkkklansman, First Man, Stan and Ollie and The Greatest Showman, as well as well-loved classics such as A Private Function.

Tickets can be obtained from www.artsalive.co.uk, where you will also find more information on all the films, or by calling:

01952 728911 for films at The Edge, Much Wenlock

01743 718239 for films at Ryton Village Hall

01743 761451 for films at Cound Guildhall

01694 771295 for films at Cardington

01694 724330 for films at Church Stretton School

07812 583113, or email catelatchford@hotmail.co.uk, for films at All Stretton Village Hall

Also coming soon are the following satellite screenings of live performances being shown at Church Stretton School. Call 01694 722209 for more information and to reserve your tickets (£12.00 for adults and £8.00 for children).

Don Quixote from the Royal Ballet, on 26th February.

Matthew Bourne's Cinderella, on 14th March.

La Forza del Destino, from the Royal Opera House, showing on 2nd April.

WI CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The WI is pleased to report that the Christmas Fayre was a great success, raising the largest amount ever. Their thanks go to all members of the public who attended and lent their support – they nearly ran out of bacon butties!

REMEMBERING THE FALLEN...

The 'Battles Over' Celebrations that took place on 11 November in St Mary's Church and on Acton Burnell Hill raised £150 for the Church and £265 for the Royal British Legion.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and to those responsible for organising these memorable and moving events.



CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLLS

Once every 6 years we have to completely renew our Church Electoral Rolls. The Church Electoral Roll is open to all members of the Church of England over the age of 16 years. Being on the Electoral Roll is an indication of membership, but also allows the member to be elected to the Parochial Church Council and to vote at PCC meetings as well as the Annual Meetings. Even if you are already on the Electoral Roll you do need to complete a new form to keep the roll up to date. In Acton Burnell you need to contact Jill Faulkner, in Frodesley you need to contact Louise Davies and in Pitchford you need to contact Beth Davies or Christine Leaman. The Electoral Rolls will be revised over the months of February and March.

Rev Geoff Garrett

Church Services, Easter 2019

Frodesley

9am Holy Communion

Acton Burnell

10.30am Holy Communion

Pitchford

11.30am Holy Communion

ACTON BURNELL, FRODESLEY, PITCHFORD, RUCKLEY & LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council meetings were held in November and January at Concord College. The minutes of both are available on the PC Notice Boards and on Parish Council website (www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk). Some of the issues raised at the meetings included:

- The PC website has been updated to include a page for Conservation and Preservation, to provide both general guidance and information specific to our local area. The page includes useful links to documents relating to protected trees.
- There had only been a 10% response overall to the Community Led Parish Plan Review, but 4 volunteers came forward from the community to review the data collected and produce a report. This has been approved by the Parish Council, and will form part of the Church Stretton Place Plan, forming the basis for decisions on development and funding for the infrastructure of the area over the next 20 years.
- Various road problems eg pot holes, obscured white lines etc have been reported to Shropshire Council for action. New grit bins have also been requested, and the Highways Department has been asked to clean and rod the drainage systems in Pitchford and Acton Burnell.
- The defibrillator cabinet installation site at Pitchford Village Hall is now complete and the one in Ruckley will be installed in the near future.
- The Roman Bridge over the Lynall Brook at Radnor Bridge is now included on the Historic England 'At Risk Register'.
- Proposals have been submitted for the reinstatement of the bridleway through Frodesley Hall Barns and this is likely to be open within the next few months.
- A number of planning issues were discussed, including applications relating to Mulberry House and Home Farm barns in Acton Burnell, and the proposed building to replace the former Swan Public House in Frodesley.
- A grant of £480 from the Lightsource Community Benefit Fund was agreed to support the production of 4 issues of Village Views in 2019.

What's that bug: Wasps

Not only stinging matters

Wasps belong to the order Hymenoptera and undergo complete metamorphosis, their life cycle goes from egg, larva, pupa to imago just like ants and bees.

The UK harbours thousands of wasp species, including solitary and social ones. Parasitoids (solitary) are the most diverse group but it's the black and yellow social species that are commonly noticed. Not all wasps are black and yellow or with a constricted waist. For example, sawflies and wood wasps have no narrowing between their abdomen and thorax.

Wasps will either have a solitary or social lifestyle with some unusual exceptions. For example, there are solitary species that will live in colonies but will only ensure the survival of their own progeny. Social species will start a hierarchical colony when the overwintering queen emerges in Spring. She will quickly search for a safe place to build a nest and lay eggs that will develop into the first few workers.

What is the difference between wasps and bees?

Wasps' bodies are mostly smooth in appearance, and bees are commonly quite furry.

Wasps are perceived to be more aggressive than bees. Both groups attack in response to feeling that they

or their nests are under threat.

Some wasps rear their larvae on a carnivorous diet by offering their offspring other insects (including other wasps) to feed upon. The adults kill or immobilise their prey, carrying it in chunks or the whole paralysed insect back to their nest. Some wasp larvae will feed on leaves, others on plant pith (spongy tissue inside plant stems) or wood. Whereas, bee larvae develop on a nectar and pollen diet. Adult wasps will feed on sugary drinks such as from fallen fruit and nectars.

Why do wasps sting?

Only female wasps can sting but not all wasps are capable of stinging. They can use their venomous sting, which is a modified ovipositor, for protection or to paralyse prey.

Queen and worker social wasps can respond to a source of disturbance by ejecting venom onto it, which induces other workers to take flight in response of the alarm signal (pheromone). These wasps will then follow the pheromone and attack the source with great drive.

Do we really need wasps?

Wasps play a role in pollination because they collect and transfer pollen when scouting flowers for nectar and/or insects.

Generally, the wasp larvae cannot find food for themselves so the female wasp will lay her eggs near a

food source. When the egg hatches the larva will be able to feed straight away. There are some Ichneumonoid parasitoid wasps capable of detecting the wood wasp larvae within the wood. They bore into the tree with their ovipositor and lay their egg near or on the larva. Upon emergence, the parasitoid larva will proceed to feed on the wood wasp larva and kill it once it has completed its larval development.

Parasitoids play an important role controlling other insects by using them as hosts for larval development. Wasps are voracious predators controlling insect numbers. Their hunting skills benefit us by preventing some insects becoming pests.

Ana Natalio and Nick Antill



Vespula vulgaris (Linnaeus, 1758) aka Common wasp



News From Pitchford Village Hall

Survey into the future of the Village Hall

As you may be aware, the Village Hall in Pitchford is the only social facility, open to all, serving the parishes of Acton Burnell, Ruckley and Langley, Frodesley and Pitchford. It hosts a pub night open to the whole of Burnell Ward (and beyond) every month as well as a variety of other events over the year. It is available to anyone who wishes to host either a private or a public function and rates are kept very low to allow as many people as possible access to it for this purpose. In an area where there are no local schools, no pub or club or other social venue, it is a vital institution to allow as wide a spectrum of members of the community as possible, to meet each other on a regular basis and to provide a base for possible clubs or other enterprises. No-one has to be a member of any particular community to use it, and without it, the population of our area could fragment and become inward with regards to the rest of our local community.

Over the last few years, the Village Hall Management Committee has had to deal with a number of problems with the current building, over and above the normal maintenance requirements. The Committee has now come to the conclusion, regretfully, that the building is nearing the end of its useful life. In addition to the potential loss of this facility to the community, this also impacts on any ideas we may have for refurbishment – there seems little point to spending money if the current building's longevity is in question. We are therefore starting to look towards the future and how we can retain a facility of this nature in our area.

The first step is to investigate the degree to which the Village Hall is important to our Community and the strength of feeling regarding whether we should either keep the status quo (which will result in a limited life for it), or investigate with confidence, the feasibility of upgrading the facility.

We would be really grateful therefore, if you could take the time to answer the questions contained in the questionnaire which comes with this edition of the Village Views. This should enable the Management Committee for the Hall to get a feel for the way forward. Strength of support is vital to any future evolution of a facility such as ours and in particular, should we receive a favourable level of support from the community, the

same evidence could then be a vital part of any possible future application we may put to organisations which could provide funding for any new works. We would be extremely grateful, therefore, for your time and effort in providing us with the ammunition we need to allow us to decide on a course of action, whether positive or negative.

Clearly, there is only one such questionnaire supplied with the Village Views but should you require extra copies for additional members of your household then these can be collected from the Post Office in Acton Burnell, or from a designated location in each village or at the village Hall itself at February's Pub night.

We would like to have all replies back with us by the 15th February, or as soon as possible after this. As such, we are asking that you bring your completed questionnaire and drop them off at one of the following places:

One of the following members of the Village Hall Management Committee, or the Parish Council, in each village:

- **Pitchford:** John Glover: 2, The Paddocks (opposite the Village Hall).
- **Acton Burnell:** Gilly Turner: Corner House on Acton Burnell crossroads.
- **Frodesley:** Carmen Culliss: Jasmine Cottage, second house in on the right from the crossroads.
- **Ruckley and Langley:** Gareth Ball: Netherview on the T junction in Ruckley.

Bring them along to the pub night on Friday 15th February where a collection box will be available. We will also have spare copies available which you can fill in on the night if you so wish.

You may also drop these off at the Post Office in Acton Burnell.

Thank you very much indeed in anticipation of you taking time to complete the questionnaire and going to the trouble of returning it. Without your help and contribution, the best we can hope for is a 'status quo' and a dying facility. A large response means we have the information and muscle to at least allow us to proceed forwards as far as we can. Thank you again.

Management Committee changes

Starting in January, there have been some changes in responsibility for some of the jobs carried out by the Village Hall Management Committee, specifically to reduce the extremely large portfolio looked after by Mike 'Mr Village Hall' Price!

Firstly, the job of running pub nights is being taken over by John Glover, so when the beer runs out early, you know who to blame! Pub nights are held every third Friday in the month and are a focal point for anyone in the community to come along to chat to others or to simply reduce the bar stock (or both!). Adults, children and dogs are all

welcome from 7.30pm onwards. On some special occasions, food in the form of snacks is provided and at many others, the Nippy Chippy also attends. Details are always updated on our Facebook page at Pitchford Village Hall.

Secondly, the Village Hall Tote (or '200 club') is now being managed by Jeanette Reaney.

January is collection time for the year's subscription to the scheme which is vital in order to raise funds to pay for the insurance and electricity bills incurred by the Hall. Without this we would struggle to keep the Hall running, so your continued (or even new) support is really appreciated. Callers from each village will have been round to you last month to collect your annual subscription if you were on our books in 2018, but if you were out at the time then Jeanette or another member of the Team will come knocking again soon! The annual cost is £12 per person and a draw is made each month with prizes of £50 for 1st place, a £25 2nd prize, 3rd prize of £15 and a 4th prize of £10. If anyone wishes to join then please contact Jeanette at jeanettereaney@hotmail.com and in doing so, you stand a good chance of increasing your financial status while helping to keep our number one facility in the area going!

There are quite a lot of things to do in order to manage the Hall, most of which goes on in the background but without which we would struggle to keep going. We are always on the lookout for volunteers to join the committee which usually meets four times a year and if anyone out there thinks they can lend a hand to do from as little as simply offering their opinion at meetings, to taking on a specific role or helping behind the bar at pub nights, then we would love to hear from you. You can contact our Chairman – Mike Price – by email at price622@btinternet.com or by mobile on 07740 067955, or indeed anyone else on the committee around the area or on pub nights.

Upcoming events

This year we have seen the start of two new ventures in the form of clubs at the Hall. Both the Craft Club and the Gardening Club had their inaugural meetings in January. Details of the Craft Club are included elsewhere in Village Views. However, if you want any further details on either club, then contact Chris Jones, whose details appear below.

... and finally ...

The Hall is available to hire for any private (or even public) events. Costs are purposely low to encourage use. Children's parties are charged at £20, meetings at £15 and other events at £25.

You can make bookings by contacting Mike Price (details above) or our Secretary, Christine Jones on csjay@btinternet.com or 07538 744807



Looking towards The Wrekin from near Harnage

Local Strolls: *Snowdrop Valley, Stevenshill*

This spectacular little tucked away valley is in the east of our area, close to the “Counds”, and is a real gem of a place. If you have been before then you will know about the spectacular carpet of snowdrops in late winter and if you haven’t, then make an effort to go – you will remember it and you will go back!

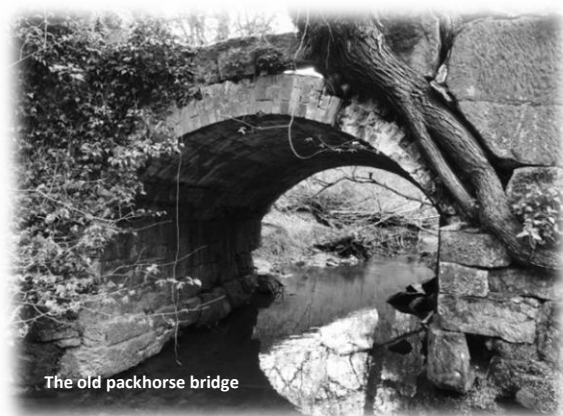
While there are several places to park in the area from where you can find your way onto the route, the best is on the road between Upper Cound and Coundmoor to the east of Acton Burnell and Pitchford. Here, there is room for three cars by the bridge over Coundmoor Brook from where you enter the valley floor through a new metal ‘kissing gate’. This path is not marked on the O.S. map but the one that is marked leaves the road along a forest track a few yards to the north of here. However, there are signs up marking this as private so be wary if you are playing at map reading!

At the right time of year, you instantly enter a carpet of snowdrops which covers the valley floor really lifting the gloom of this time of year and while I am not a heavy duty anthophile (posh word for flower lover!), it is genuinely impressive! The valley floor sweeps round to the right with the brook on the same side and a little further round the corner, a bank rears up in front of you giving you a choice of either a steep pull up a wide path, or a lower, but more exposed path above a bend in the stream. From here the valley opens up again but in the distance you will see an old stone bridge to the right and it is towards this you should go.

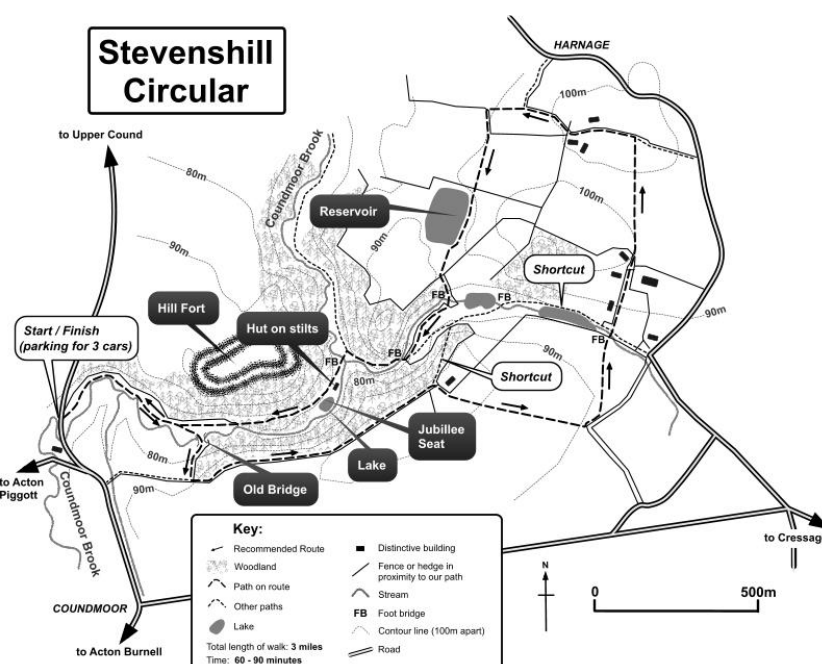
Whatever the truth, it is a real ruin with well-established trees growing out from the stonework whose sides have long since fallen away. Still, it hasn’t collapsed under my weight yet, so cross over with confidence and follow the fence and trees on your left to the top of the valley side where you meet a good track with a metal gate, again on your left. Pass through this and follow the track with the wood to your left and excellent views of Burnell Hill, Fetch Hill and the Ironbridge power station across the fields to your right. The wood is out of bounds and is used for pheasant rearing so probably best to keep your dogs out!

Above the valley now, you get tantalising glimpses through the trees of the valley bottom and the small lake which occupies it. This is a little treat for the end of the stroll.

After a few hundred yards or so, you come to a house before which is an opening on the right into a field. Walk through this and upto the house boundary hedge from where the path cuts diagonally across the field. A grey farm building on the other side serves as an aim if the track is not clear. You then reach the right angled corner of a hedged bridleway but do not go onto it! Instead, turn left keeping the hedge to your right and then cut across the same field aiming for a telegraph pole the path beyond which will take you to a partially hidden footbridge which you use to cross the brook. Head up the hillside keeping the houses in the hamlet of Stevenshill to your left and you will pass over a couple of stiles with a new build on your right. These bring you out into another large field with sweeping views of the Wrekin in front of you (top photo). The path takes you to an old red brick barn across the middle of the field and when you reach the edge, turn left and follow the track past another couple of houses beyond which the track



The old packhorse bridge



Try as I have, I can’t find any reference to this mystical old ruin on the internet although various folk who I have met there assume it is medieval.

clearly bends to the right. Our path cuts off to the left across another field to a gap in the hedge through which you turn left and follow the hedge line for a few yards before the path then carries on across a field to a stile. Beyond this is a large farmer's reservoir which you keep on your right.

Just beyond this is a gentle 'col' where a farm track descends to the valley floor. Don't take this, but do look to your right and you will see a metal gate which leads you onto a path which takes you down the same valley floor but through a wood.

Clambering over a footbridge at the bottom, turn right and hack through the open grassy field following the brook which is now on the other side of the hedge. You soon come to another stile over which is yet another footbridge which finally takes you into the wooded valley we have been circling. Keep left with the brook now on your left.

Fairly soon the tributary valley meets the main valley and you cross a large vehicle bridge on your left. A building in front of you is apparently a shooting hut and is built on stilts to reduce damage when the river floods onto its floodplain. The good track keeps well to the right of this and very quickly reveals the lake you probably spotted through the trees earlier in the walk. It is bounded by several large boulders with many a waterfowl playing on it (at the right time of year). A good resting place is a little

Further up where Cound has built a seat marking the Queen's jubilee. Good place to pull the flask out and enjoy the peace of the place.



The lake near the Jubilee seat

About 50 yards beyond the seat, there is a small path to the left marked by a large rock in front of a tall distinctive conifer. The main track suddenly becomes 'private' here! Into the woods you go with a carpet of flowers other than snowdrops, you end up back into the same field from which you crossed to the old packhorse bridge earlier in the walk. Full circle now and the last thing

to do is wade through the snowdrops again before reaching the road.

Up to the right and on the top of the hill through the trees, is an old hillfort. Sadly, it is on private land so there is no easy access, but even if you did sneak in, there's now nothing to see as its ramparts were ploughed away many decades ago. Aaaaargh!!

The whole stroll is a gentle three miles, but packed with variety, surprises and memorable views and is a hidden gem in stark contrast to the open landscapes more typical of our area. Add to this a lovely brook for kids and dogs to play in, it is well worth a visit.

John Glover

NEWS FROM PITCHFORD HALL

We capped off another successful year at Pitchford with a series of festive guided tours of the Hall and Treehouse. The Hall was brilliantly decorated with holly, ivy, mistletoe and fir by local florist Jenny Cordwell. In our determination to ensure everyone saw the treehouse we sometimes battled against the December weather but guests were revived by a hot glass of mulled wine around the Great Hall's fire.

In 2019 we'll continue with more guided tours organised through the Estate and Historic Houses. The tours have been well supported locally and nationally, and this year we'll be welcoming a number of groups from the United States. We are as always indebted to the volunteer guides, many of whom live in the Parish, who make it possible for over a thousand people each year to visit Pitchford Hall.

Other plans for 2019 are beginning to come together and will consist of open air cinema showing a period drama, ghost tours in the run up to Halloween, and we hope to do an open garden day in the early Autumn to raise funds to continue the garden restoration. The garden and grounds have always been a major part of Pitchford's attraction and are beginning to be returned to their pre 1992 state. We also hope to start doing visits for local schools this year so children get an opportunity to connect with the many periods of history that are enshrined within Pitchford Hall.

As always we are open to suggestions of events that Pitchford might be able to host from cultural to business events, etc. Our hope is that we will be able to start the restoration of the

Orangery this year which will create an events space in this stunning Grade II listed building set within the Hall's walled garden. The restoration of the Orangery has been a little slower than expected as nine species of bats were found to be living in its roof space. With the help of a local bat expert and Natural England we now believe we have found a solution in terms of creating a new habitat for the bats.

Thank you for supporting the restoration of Pitchford Hall since it was reunited with the Estate in September 2016 and we look forward to another enriching year in 2019.

www.PitchfordEstate.com

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James Nason

10 THINGS YOU (POSSIBLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ACTON BURNELL

The first of an occasional series on our villages, By John Long



Did you know that:

1. The place name 'Acton' comes from the Old English 'ac' meaning 'oak' and 'tun' meaning 'settlement'.
2. Before 1066, the manor of Acton was held by an Anglo-Saxon called Godric, but the Norman invasion soon saw it pass to Roger de Montgomery, 1st Earl of Shrewsbury, who was one of William the Conqueror's most trusted counsellors and who, for his services, received huge areas of land across the UK, including nearly 90% of Shropshire.
3. The second part of the place name comes from the Burnell family that moved to the area and held the manor from the latter half of the 12th century.
4. Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath & Wells and Lord Chancellor of England, held the manor at the end of the 13th century.
5. The abutments of the Roman bridge that crossed the Lynall Brook at Radnor Bridge, the only stream running through the parish, can still be seen although they are now on the Historic England 'At Risk' Register. The bridge can be found to the west of Acton Burnell on the footpath that follows the Roman road that runs from Pitchford to Frodesley.
6. This old road was still in full use in 1764, when it was turnpiked, but by 1808 the section over the Radnor Bridge and through to Pitchford was just a country lane and has been disused as a thoroughfare for over a century.
7. Originally, the village lay to the west of the Lynall Brook (the stream at the bottom of the hill past the village shop and Post Office) and was adjacent to the line of the old Roman road.
8. Black Dick's Pool and Shadwell Pool, the lakes to the east of Concord College, are probably the "fishponds" first recorded in 1292.
9. In the mid-18th century, a grotto lined with shells and tiles was built on Acton Burnell Hill to the south of Concord College. Little or no trace remains of this building.
10. Sham Castle, the Gothic style 'folly' south of Black Dick's Pool, was originally called 'The Lodge'.