

# Village Views

November 2020

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



## WELCOME

We are pleased to be back in print (and in colour!) after our move on-line during the earlier lockdown. After much discussion, we have decided to go back to a printed version, so that we can be sure that everyone in our community gets a copy. We hope you will enjoy having our newsletter dropping through your letter box once again, and would like to extend our thanks to all the volunteers who deliver Village Views. We couldn't do it without them! As always, you can also find both current and past editions of Village Views on the Parish Council website at [www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk/village-views](http://www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk/village-views).

The last seven months have been a difficult time for families and businesses, and particularly for key workers. In our little corner of Shropshire there has been a real feeling of community and of people working together to make sure everyone stays safe, healthy and connected. The coming winter will bring new challenges, but hopefully we will all be there for each other.

So make the most of Christmas 2020, and here's to a brighter 2021!

With next wishes from the Village Views editorial team:

*Chris Harrison, Karen Fisher and John Glover*

## WANT TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

Shropshire Council runs frequent consultations to enable the public to have their say on planned changes, developments and initiatives in the county. These can be anything from commenting on a proposed experimental one-way system in Shrewsbury to the county-wide community and rural strategy. Visit [www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/) to find out what consultations are currently open and how to make your point of view known to the Council.

## STOP PRESS

The decision to introduce a four week lockdown until 2nd December was made while we were in the process of finalising the contents of Village Views. It is likely that some shops and facilities will be unavailable for the next four weeks, or offering only a limited service. While we have made every effort to check accuracy, please carry out your own checks on opening hours and restrictions.

## LOCAL THEFTS

There have been reports of a few thefts in the Cantlop and Pitchford areas, with small items being taken from outbuildings. Please make sure your sheds, garages and outbuildings are securely locked. If you signed up to the SmartWater scheme, then you may want to make sure your chainsaws, mowers, tools etc are marked, so that they can be reclaimed if they are found.

## ROAD CLOSURE

The road from Acton Burnell to Kenley will be closed just past the turning to Cound Moor until 6th December. The works are being carried out by Western Power Distribution and will include a road reinforcing programme. Information on all Shropshire road works can be found at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-network-management/interactive-roadworks-map/](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-network-management/interactive-roadworks-map/)

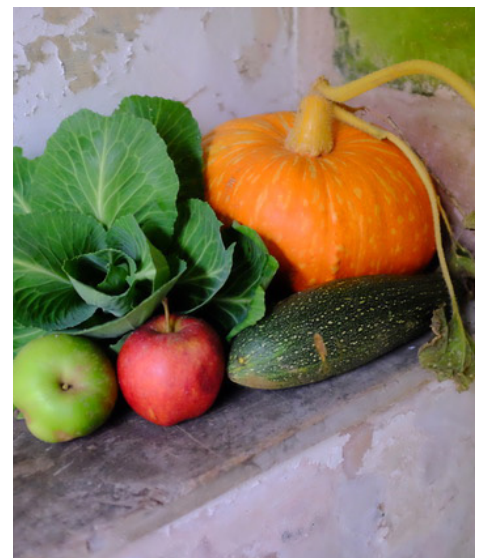
## NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

### We Don't Buy Crime

West Mercia Police have visited the area and have put up most of the 'We Don't Buy Crime' signs. The Parish Council is arranging for two additional signs to be put up in the near future: one at Causewaywood and the other at the bottom of Rowe Bank.

### External Audit of Parish Council Accounting Returns

The Parish Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Returns have been accepted by the External Auditor, PKF-Littlejohn. They have certified that 'the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR 19/20 is in accordance with Proper Practices' and 'no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern'.



The closing date for contributions to the next edition will be 22nd January 2021

Would you like to advertise your business in Village Views? Contact us on [villageviews@hotmail.com](mailto:villageviews@hotmail.com) for more information.

## HELP DURING THE COVID EMERGENCY

Shropshire Council has announced that employed or self-employed people on low incomes who are told to self-isolate, but whose income would be hit by staying at home, can now claim a £500 support payment.

From Monday 12 October 2020, Test and Trace payments of £500 will be available to those who meet the eligibility criteria and have been told to self-isolate on or after 28 September 2020, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

To be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment, an individual must be:

- asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- employed or self-employed
- unable to work from home and will lose income as a result, and
- currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

Please go to [www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits/what-help-can-i-claim-from-the-council/covid-test-and-trace-support-payments/](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/benefits/what-help-can-i-claim-from-the-council/covid-test-and-trace-support-payments/) for more information and an application form.

### Emergency Assistance Funding

Shropshire Council has been granted emergency assistance funding to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19. Applications are open to anyone who has been financially affected by coronavirus and is finding it hard to meet their essential outgoings as a result. If you, or someone you know, is having difficulty meeting outgoings, or there is risk to your home, please call **0345 678 9078**. Advisers will go through an initial grant application with you, as well as putting you in touch with the other help that may be available. After that, a specialist adviser will deal with your application. Please note that there is limited funding, so please don't delay if you find yourself in difficulties.

### Age Concern

Age Concern has compiled a database of local groups and businesses providing shopping and other neighbourhood support. The list is regularly updated, and, while very useful for older people, can also be helpful for other people who may be self-isolating or shielding. Find their list for Shropshire at [www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford/about-us/news/articles/2020/coronavirus-covid-19-update/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford/about-us/news/articles/2020/coronavirus-covid-19-update/).

Also, very importantly, Age Concern continues to run a number of its services, and their **Help at Home** and **Telephone Buddy** services are open to new clients. Call **01743 233788** for Help at Home, and **01743 233123** for the befriending service.

## REMINDER TO ALL ACTON BURNELL DOG OWNERS AND WALKERS

Just a reminder that you are welcome to put any bagged dog mess in the bins at the crossroads in Acton Burnell and at the entrance to the castle. Both of these bins are emptied weekly.

Recent weeks have seen a number of instances when dog mess has been left on the pavement leading up to the crossroads, around the castle and church, and alongside the footpath through Home Farm. Please make sure you have a good supply of bags with you when you leave home to walk your dog.

### ACTON BURNELL POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The Acton Burnell Shop and Post Office is now open from 9.00am to 1.00pm and from 2.00pm to 5.00pm on Monday, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Please make sure you have a mask with you to wear while in the shop, and keep to the social distancing requirements. Hand sanitiser is available for use on entry.

Please note that these opening hours may be subject to change in line with Government advice.

### SEVERN HOSPICE

Rose hopes to have Severn Hospice Christmas cards and calendars on sale at Acton Burnell Post Office very soon. Please support this very worthwhile local cause, which raises two thirds of its running costs through charitable fundraising and donations.







# What's on



The continuing Covid crisis means that many Christmas events, fairs and celebrations have been cancelled. However, there will be a number of virtual or on-line events, and a few 'real-life' events to get us in the Christmas mood this winter! Please make sure you check before travelling to any event. There may be some last minute cancellations or changes to arrangements, and some events require pre-booking.

## 21st & 22nd November

Outdoor Christmas Craft Fair at Salop Leisure, Emstrey, with up to 50 stalls offering hand made and artisan gifts and foods. Open from 10am to 4pm on both days. Entry £1 per person. Prebooking essential and all tickets will be for a timed entry. Go to [www.pinkpebblevents.co.uk/event-details/shropshire-handmade-and-creative-christmas-market-2020](http://www.pinkpebblevents.co.uk/event-details/shropshire-handmade-and-creative-christmas-market-2020) for more information and to book tickets.

## 27th & 28th November, and every Tuesday to Saturday in December until 22nd December

The Severn Valley Railway will be offering spectacular evening rides with stations transformed

into winter wonderlands, magical creatures to spot along the trackside, and with trains lit up with thousands of colourful lights. Trains depart from Bridgnorth Station at 4.30, 6.30 and 8.30pm. Private compartments for groups of six or four, and tables for two are available. Go to [www.svr.co.uk](http://www.svr.co.uk) for prices and booking information.

## 28th & 29th November

Ludlow will be hosting a virtual medieval fayre, with a full programme of workshops with favourites from the annual medieval festival, from making your own decorations and hand-crafted gifts to cook along workshops with the regular food and drink vendors. Go to [www.ludlowmedievalchristmas.co.uk](http://www.ludlowmedievalchristmas.co.uk) for more information.

## 5th December

Have a crafty afternoon and raise money for Mind, the mental health charity. Go to [www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/donate-or-fundraise/do-your-own-fundraising/crafternoon/](http://www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/donate-or-fundraise/do-your-own-fundraising/crafternoon/) for information on how to bring your family and friends together on-line (or in your household bubble) to have fun

making Christmas crafts and raise some money for this important charity. Find recipes, games and fundraising booster ideas, as well as instructions on how to make cards, paper wreaths, bunting, journals and much more.

## 10th December to 10th January

Watch a performance of The Nutcracker, recorded in 2016 at The Royal Opera House, London, streamed live to your home. With music by Tchaikovsky, this ballet is sure to put you in the Christmas mood. Details from [www.roh.org.uk/tickets-and-events/the-nutcracker-2016-details](http://www.roh.org.uk/tickets-and-events/the-nutcracker-2016-details)

## 16th & 24th December

Help to raise money for local charities by taking part in 'Carols on the Doorstep'. Sing along in your household bubble, or organise a doorstep concert with your neighbours. Carol sheets and music will be available to download, and Radio Shropshire on 96FM will be broadcasting to keep you in time and in tune. Go to [www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/](http://www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/) for information on how to get involved.

## EVENWOOD CRAFT FAIR

Following a successful day at the end of August (despite high winds threatening to carry off the carefully placed gazebos) Katrina and Rob Jones of Evenwood were pleased to report that their craft fair raised £310 for the NHS.

This well-attended fair gave everyone the chance to see and buy locally made crafts, and to enjoy some very good cake in beautiful surroundings. Thank you to Katrina and Rob for arranging this event! There may be a repeat event in 2021 – watch this space for more details.



## MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR DAN MORRIS SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR FOR BURNELL

### Rural roads

Ways to ensure that large agricultural vehicles can manoeuvre around Shropshire's roads safely and without causing damage are to be jointly considered by Shropshire Council, West Mercia Police and the National Farmers' Union. It follows a meeting of the Council's Place Overview Committee, of which I am member, on 3 September 2020 at which it was agreed that a collaborative approach was the best way to identify and bring improvements.

Shropshire is a largely rural county with a thriving agricultural sector which is reliant on ensuring that goods and operational vehicles can move around the highway network safely and efficiently. But many rural roads are narrow historic lanes, which have not been designed and constructed to meet modern needs, including heavier and wider agricultural equipment.

The meeting was positive and a number of views and different perspectives were raised. The consensus of the meeting was that the momentum on this issue should not be lost, and indeed the opportunity should be taken to see how a collaborative approach could bring further benefits and improvements. It is vitally important that residents know that their concerns are being taken seriously.

The road network and highway infrastructure play a fundamental role in connectivity and enable

rural businesses and communities to thrive. The changing nature in rural businesses, especially around farming and agriculture is, however, placing extra burdens on the road network. To help reduce the deterioration of rural roads as far as practical the council has carried out a range of work, but further work is required. Discussing this important issue with our police and NFU partners on an on-going basis will be extremely helpful in helping to identifying long-term solutions.

It's hoped that the meetings – set to be held four times a year – will also develop an annual plan of the work and activity undertaken and issue an annual report that captures and identifies the collaborative contribution that all organisations have provided. A reference group will also be created so that local perspectives, issues, concerns and local knowledge is fed into the meetings.

### Climate action

Shropshire Council is working with and supporting a group of sponsors who have come together to create a Climate Action Partnership for Shropshire. The new Shropshire Climate Action Partnership (SCAP) has been created to drive forward the urgent need for businesses and communities across the county to take action to address the climate crisis.

Both local authorities in the county of Shropshire are committed to the partnership which also includes

key organisations like Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, Severn Trent and the Wrekin Housing Trust, and many more. By engaging with the business and local communities as widely as possible across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin areas, the Partnership will aim to produce a zero carbon Shropshire Plan (ZCSP) by the end of 2020 that best represents the needs of the county. The plan will set out how the county can achieve net carbon zero by 2030 and will be implemented from January 2021.

Businesses and residents alike are encouraged to become members or simply pledge their support to help the wider Shropshire community achieve net zero carbon by 2030, and can sign up at [www.ZeroCarbonShropshire.org](http://www.ZeroCarbonShropshire.org).

For any further information, please contact the acting chair, Mark Fermor at [MarkFermor@ZeroCarbonShropshire.org](mailto:MarkFermor@ZeroCarbonShropshire.org). Keep up to date with the latest news from SCAP by following Zero Carbon Shropshire on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

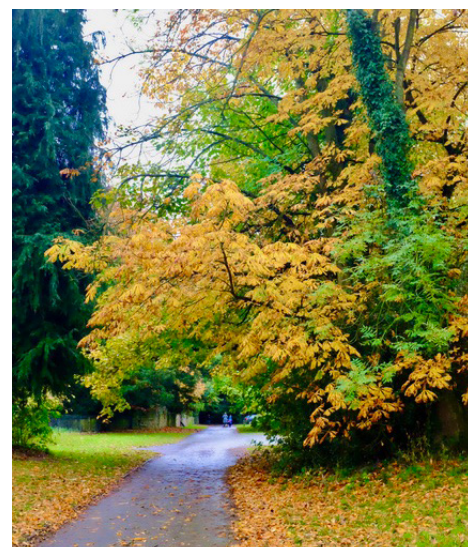
As always, if you have any questions or matters you think I can help on, please do get in touch by email ([dan.morris@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:dan.morris@shropshire.gov.uk)), on twitter ([@dan4burnell](https://twitter.com/dan4burnell)), on Facebook ([dan4burnell](https://www.facebook.com/dan4burnell)) or by phone (**07902408400**).

*Dan Morris*

## SHROPSHIRE LARDER

If you, or someone you know, is finding it hard to put food on the table, wants ideas on how to make their food budget go further, or needs advice on accessing free school meals or healthy start vouchers, the Shropshire Larder website can provide useful information and assistance.

The Shropshire Larder is a food resource which brings together information on a wide range of projects and community initiatives. The website includes links to advice on debt and housing, Covid-19 advice and support, and how to access emergency food parcels. Go to [www.shropshirelarder.org.uk](http://www.shropshirelarder.org.uk) for more information.



## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

At the time of going to press, we do not know which Christmas services will be able to take place and we have church council meetings in November when we will be able to decide which ones will go ahead where, but that still depends on the restrictions when we come closer to Christmas. One thing is certain, we will not be able to hold any carol or crib services, because by their very nature they involve singing carols! If we are able to go ahead with Christmas morning services, the usual pattern is as follows:

Midnight Communion at Condover Church 11.15 on Christmas Eve

Frodesley	9am
Acton Burnell	10.30am
Pitchford	10.30am

These times are subject to change if necessary and we will endeavour to communicate any changes as widely as possible. Please keep an eye on Church notice boards for information.

### A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

As some B-lister turns on the lights on Oxford Street, and the television offers up another excruciating visit

to Mrs Brown's Boys, I generally have prophet Isaiah running on a loop in my head. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." My job is to point to that light, to hold it up and offer it as hope to those living in darkness. But it can get lost amid all the twinkling light pollution of the season. Maybe it will be different this year. We do not know yet what kind of Christmas we are going to be able to have. As churches, what services will we be able to hold and how many people can we accommodate – will we have to have a booking system? As families and friends how are we going to be able to gather together to exchange presents and share together in the usual Christmas Fayre? It is all very uncertain. Isaiah, the prophet who wrote those words, was prophesying at a time of trouble and uncertain times where the people were under threat from a powerful neighbour. We too are under threat – the threat of virus, an unseen threat and until we find a vaccine or other treatments that threat will always be with us. There is a common saying that 'there is

light at the end of the tunnel' and maybe that has a resonance with the words of Isaiah as he seemed to be saying that too, because despite the present tense of the words, he was looking to the future. Christmas is all about looking to the future. The readings in our carol services from the Old Testament all look to the time of the coming Saviour. The readings from the New Testament look forward to the birth of Jesus and the account of the Nativity looks forward to the impact that the one promised in the Old Testament will have and Matthew reminds us that Jesus is Immanuel which means 'God with us'.

So however we are able to celebrate Christmas this year, we still have the message of light and hope – the light of God coming into the world who will bring light to our darkness and give us hope and peace.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas and may 2021 bring the light and hope which appears to have deserted us in 2020.

*Geoff Garrett, Rector*

## ST MARK'S FRODESLEY COMMUNITY HUB

Good progress is being made on the Community Hub project at St Mark's Frodesley. The project group has been continuing to meet, mainly via Zoom, during the Coronavirus lockdown.

A rigorous architect's selection process took place during the summer, including inviting shortlisted candidates for socially distanced interviews at the church in August.

In September the PCC approved the project group's recommendation to appoint Mark Newall, of Shrewsbury based Baart Harries Newall. Mark is an experienced

Conservation Architect and will lead the design team that will work alongside the community group to develop the project, secure the necessary permissions and provide the information needed to submit bids for capital funding in 2021.

Over the next few months, we will be firming up on the proposals to install much needed facilities at St Marks, including toilet and kitchen, enabling the building to be used more widely for community events and activities. Mark said, "We are really pleased to be working with the project group on the proposals for St Marks, Frodesley. We enjoy

working with communities using a collaborative design approach. We find this to be an effective way of ensuring the design proposals meet local needs, bringing forward new ideas and uses for heritage buildings to make them more sustainable for the future."

If you would like to get involved in the project and the design process you can get in touch with Revd Geoff Garrett or any member of the project group.

For more information contact **Sam Hine**, Project Manager on [sam@samhine.co.uk](mailto:sam@samhine.co.uk) or **07974 772840**.





## LONGNOR CE SCHOOL NEWS

### Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning has always been a major part of what we do at Longnor School, wellies and a waterproof coat are almost part of our uniform. Being in the fresh air is even more important at the moment, so we are taking every opportunity to get the children outside for lessons, extra exercise and even assemblies. The saying that 'it is never the wrong weather only the wrong clothes' rings so true.

### Forest School Wood

We are very lucky to have been offered the use of a local wood to teach Forest School. The parents held a working party to clear the wood of brambles and risk assessments are being carried out, so we are nearly ready to start using it. The older children will be the first to visit the wood for Forest School so they can continue setting it up for

the younger children to use. It's a really exciting development for Longnor School as we will be able to broaden the opportunities for doing Forest School at a time when being outside is crucial.

### Gardening Club

Gardening club has started up again for groups of children from the same bubble. The new raised beds at the front of the school are being planted up with flowers and vegetables. Many children discovered a love of gardening during lockdown, especially for growing fruit and vegetables, so we have lots of keen gardeners to help with the club.

### School Circle

Our School Circle work tirelessly to raise funds for the extra items around school. It is difficult for them to run the usual events this year due to Covid restrictions, however they have put a

great deal of thought into what can be done and have put together an exciting programme of events for the year.

### Harvest Festival

Although we are unable to get the Longnor School family together to celebrate Harvest Festival, the classes are putting together songs and poems to share with parents online. The resilience everyone is showing during this difficult time is amazing, they are really rising to the many challenges.

The [www.longnorschool.org.uk](http://www.longnorschool.org.uk) website is continually updated and tells you about all the exciting and inspiring things we get up to at Longnor C.E. Primary School. To contact the school please email [admin@longnorschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@longnorschool.co.uk) or phone Rachel Reynolds or Louise Childs on **01743 718493**.



The students here at Concord College have remained Covid-free since we reopened to boarders on 27th August. We initially isolated them in boarding residence, or household, bubbles and then changed to year group bubbles on 14th September when the day students joined real world lessons in classrooms on campus (as opposed to having online classes). We have utilised the services of a private laboratory in Liverpool and have now completed 800 Covid PCR tests of both staff and students. Covid testing and isolation measures are going to have to be repeated in January 2021.

Every member of our community has their temperature monitored daily and is instructed to self-isolate if they have any of the three main symptoms of Covid-19 infection. Face coverings are generally worn on campus and a lot of hand washing and sanitising is taking place. A small number of boarding students have been unable to return to campus at the time of writing, but we hope they will do so between 3rd and 5th January 2021 after the Christmas holiday.

Our Covid RA (or Risk Assessment) working group is continuing to meet at least fortnightly and we review all our Covid-Secure measures in these and other management meetings. If you are interested in reading more about our Covid RA then please click on the following link:

[www.concordcollegeuk.com/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19-Summary-Risk-Assessment-Concord-College.pdf](http://www.concordcollegeuk.com/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19-Summary-Risk-Assessment-Concord-College.pdf)

We are also restricting access by visitors to our campus at this time as part of our effort to remain open in order to provide education for both boarders and day students. If you would like more information on visitor restrictions, please follow this link:

[www.concordcollegeuk.com/wp-content/uploads/Guidance-for-visitors-Updated-October-2020.pdf](http://www.concordcollegeuk.com/wp-content/uploads/Guidance-for-visitors-Updated-October-2020.pdf)

You might be interested to learn that most of our boarding students have not left the campus at all since returning to the UK at the end of August or beginning of September. Initially, we did not even allow them to visit the village shop, but this restriction has

since been eased. We are trialling a first Wednesday afternoon shopping trip of the academic year for just over a hundred of our Lower Sixth boarders on 14th October. If all goes well, we will allow nearly 50 of our Upper Sixth boarders to go to Shrewsbury next Wednesday afternoon and then each year group will have an opportunity to go shopping in town over the half-term week. The vast majority of our boarders will be remaining on campus over the October half-term and, for the first time in recent years, a significant number of boarders will also be staying on campus over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

Sadly, the College swimming pool needs substantial work done to improve its air management system so that it complies with Covid recommendations. This work is likely to take some months to complete. Neither members of our College or residents of the Parish will be able to use our pool for swimming until further notice.

*Jeremy Kerslake  
Vice-Principal (Pastoral) & DSL*

## THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER OF THE LIFE OF SAMUEL LEE (1783-1852)

The previous chapter, outlining Samuel Lee's life up until the age of 30, can be found in the August edition of Village Views, available at

[www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/village\\_views\\_august\\_2020.pdf](http://www.actonburnellparishcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/village_views_august_2020.pdf)

Samuel Lee, having left school at 12 to become a carpenter, entered Queens' College Cambridge at the age of 30 in 1814, thanks to a grant from the Missionary Society. Just as for many students today his early months were filled with money worries, especially for his wife, who was trying to exist on £1 a week back in Longnor. As well as studying for his BA degree he took over the editorship of the Syriac New Testament as well as producing biblical texts in Malay, Coptic, Persian and Hindustani. Samuel was also engaged in teaching outgoing missionaries in these languages as well as Hebrew, Arabic, Sanskrit, Bengali and Ethiopian. He also helped prepare the first grammar and vocabulary of the Maori language.

The link with the Corbett family continued as Samuel often took tea at Trinity College with Joseph Corbett's son Waties. During his time

as a student Samuel was helped both practically and spiritually by Rev. Charles Simeon, Vicar of Holy Trinity Church Cambridge - one of the most influential clergymen of the day. Samuel was humbled and privileged to be supported by such a great man and this humility never left him. During this period Samuel became a convinced Evangelical Anglican.

Graduating in 1818 Samuel was ordained and for much of the rest of his life was in charge of various parishes, being a much loved pastor and teacher. A month after Samuel's ordination he preached for an hour in St Chad's in Shrewsbury on behalf of the Bible Society, raising £67 for them in the collection (equivalent to £5,777 today).

In 1819 Samuel was elected the Professor of Arabic at Cambridge by a large majority including ten heads of college. In 1820 he visited Longnor to see his sister and former neighbours, when the Arch Deacon's sister Katherine noted that he 'retains all the simplicity of manner he ever had, with the polish of good society'. That Sunday Samuel preached morning and evening in Longnor church to

what must have been an incredulous congregation of villagers including childhood friends.

In 1823 Samuel became Chaplain of Cambridge Jail and in 1825 became Rector of a church in Yorkshire. Samuel continued his religious studies and became a Bachelor of Divinity in 1827 and then in 1831 he was appointed Vicar of Banwell in Somerset. Samuel became the Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge in 1831 and in 1833 he became a Doctor of Divinity.

In 1838 Samuel became Rector at Barley in Hertfordshire where he died in 1852 aged 69, having also translated the Bible into Arabic. His daughter's governess wrote of her experience of him during that period:

'In visiting the sick and dying, his manner and style of conversation were gentle and encouraging, and his prayers simple and earnest. Samuel was beloved and respected by all his parishioners, both Churchman and Dissenters...As a master he was strict, but not severe...his servants universally loved and respected him.'

Ron Repath

## SETTLE DOWN WITH A GOOD BOOK

Shropshire's libraries re-opened in August, and are now able to offer a Covid-secure service to library users. Hand sanitiser is available for customers, and protective screens have been placed on library counters. It is still possible to take advantage of library computers, but these must be pre-booked with the relevant library, and sessions may be limited to 45 minutes, to allow time for cleaning and sanitising between users. Masks must be worn at all times in the library.

If you prefer not to visit the library in person, the e-Library service allows you to borrow e-books, audiobooks, newspapers and magazines. More information can be found at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-book/e-library/](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-book/e-library/). The Ready Reads service is also continuing, so that you can pick up a selection of books, selected to match your preferences, from the foyer of the library.

The opening hours for local libraries are as follows (correct as of 17th October):

### Much Wenlock

Tuesday and Thursday – 9.30am to 1.00pm; 2.00pm to 4.00pm  
Saturday – 9.30am to 12.30pm

### Church Stretton

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – 10.00am to 12.00 noon; 1.00pm to 4.00pm  
Saturday – 10.00am to 1.00pm

### Bayston Hill

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – 10.00am to 12.00 noon; 1.00pm to 4.00pm  
Saturday – 10.00am to 12.30pm

### Shrewsbury

Monday to Friday – 10.00am to 12.00 noon; 1.00pm to 4.00pm  
Saturday – 10.00am to 1.00pm

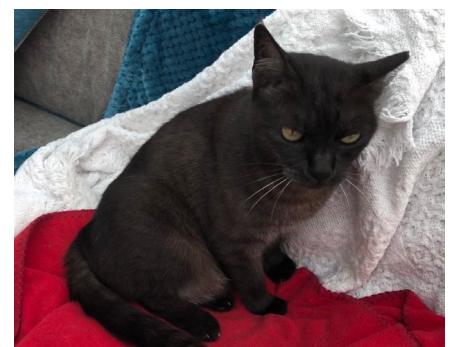
The Shropshire Library Service is also offering the opportunity to take part in Writers' Lab Q&A sessions via Zoom. Featured authors include Tony Ballantyne, science fiction author, on 3rd November, Amy Vickery, former head of press at Channel 5, on 17th November, and Ian Whates, publisher of science fiction and fantasy novels, on 1st December. These events are free to join – to register please email [shrewsbury.library@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:shrewsbury.library@shropshire.gov.uk).

## HAS ANYONE SEEN MY LOVELY LITTLE CAT?

At the beginning of lockdown my cat went missing in Pitchford. I am sure she has found another family as every now and again I think she has been in the house or I see a glimpse of her in the village but I would really like to know she is alright and happy. She is a funny little thing, very timid, very noisy and has the top of her left ear cut off. She loves affection and I have been looking after her for a friend who rescued her from the streets of Dubai.

If you have seen her or know what happened to her you can contact me on 07891257441. Thank you.

Karen Fisher





## THINGS TO BE DOING IN YOUR GARDEN RIGHT NOW (EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT A GARDENER)

As we head into November, there is no denying that winter is well and truly upon us, and the garden may be a less attractive place to spend time. However, there are still things to do to make your space more attractive and welcoming – both to people and wildlife.

Think about leaving seedheads and spent flowers in place, both to provide food for birds and small mammals, and also to provide some structure in the winter garden. The seedhead of teasel, echinops or alliums can look wonderful when frosted with ice, and the seedheads of honesty almost glow in winter sunshine.

If you are looking for a little more drama in your garden, then think about adding some lighting. Even in winter, solar powered lights can provide a warm glow at night following a reasonably sunny day, or maybe dot some tealights around the garden to provide a magical effect for a special occasion. Pop the tealights into jamjars for safety, especially if you are having a socially-distanced get-together in the garden.

If you are thinking about improvements to your beds and borders, then remember that November is the peak time for planting bare root trees and shrubs. These are often much cheaper than container grown specimens, and can usually be ordered on-line from reputable nurseries. When your shrub or tree arrives, check to make sure that the packing material around the roots is moist. If it has dried out in transit, then sprinkle with water until just moist. Keep in a cool, dry, but frost free spot. Most plants will be fine for a day or two, but try and get it in the ground as soon as possible.

November is also the time to get busy planting bulbs for colour in spring and summer next year. Daffodils and narcissus should be planted by the end of November, but you can take your time and plant tulips up until Christmas. For a long lasting container display, think about having a go at 'lasagne' planting – this is not a suggestion that you should start burying your pasta, but refers to the idea of planting layers of bulbs in the same pot, so that they come up and bloom in succession. The bulbs that bloom last are planted at the deepest level, and the ones that bloom earliest are planted nearer the top. An example would be tulip at the bottom, followed by narcissus, and finally by crocus nearest the top. Use a free-draining compost, mixed with some horticultural grit if you have it. Remember to feed during the growing season, and you should find that your flowery lasagne will keep going for several years!

As the weather worsens, please think about providing some food for the birds. There are plenty of proprietary seed and grain mixes available, and fat balls are always very popular in our garden, but if you would prefer not to buy in bird food, then you might like to try some of the following:

- Have a go at making your own fat feeder by melting lard or suet in a pan and then mixing in unsalted peanuts, currants, sultanas, oats, breadcrumbs and grated cheese. Aim for a stiff paste. Thread a string through the bottom of an old yoghurt pot, and then spoon the mix into the pot and leave to set. Use the string to hang the pot from a branch or bird table. For something a little more adventurous, you can try moulding the mix around a pine cone.
- Core an eating apple, and push sunflower seeds into the skin (you may need to cut small slits in the skin with a knife to do this). Find two sticks roughly 20 cms long and tie them together in an X shape, then thread the string through the apple and hang in a tree. The sticks support the apple and give the birds a handy perch.
- Make a fruity kebab by threading cubes of cheese, bread, and apple on a thin stick and attach a string at each end. Alternatively, thread on some twine and make into a fruit loop.

If you enjoy welcoming birds to your garden, and you have the space, think about adding some berrying plants to your garden to provide birds with plenty of natural food throughout the winter. Cotoneaster and berberis are good for smaller gardens, or consider rowan, holly or guelder rose if you have more space.

An overlooked plant, and one which offers food and shelter to a wide variety of birds and insects all year round, is ivy. Although we don't think of it as a flowering plant, once established it will produce small yellow flowers in autumn, which provide valuable nectar for a number of insects. The dense foliage provides cover and protection from winter weather for birds and small mammals, and the small black berries provide food for blackbirds and thrushes.

And in the run-up to Christmas, long ivy branches can be twisted into wreaths, or draped along a mantelpiece for a quick and easy decoration.

Enjoy your garden this winter!

*Chris Harrison*





Pitchford Village Hall

## NEWS FROM PITCHFORD VILLAGE HALL

Firstly, the bad, but certainly expected news: Given the current circumstances with no clear light at the end of the tunnel and a steadily worsening situation with the pandemic, we are keeping the Hall shut until at least March. A Committee meeting scheduled for February will look at the situation then at which point we will make a decision about whether to re-open in early spring or continue to hibernate.

We are looking to use this 'closed time' constructively and, as we speak, we are looking at several possibilities for improving the structure and possibly the internal appearance of the Hall. We will keep you abreast of this in the next edition of Village Views and on the Acton Burnell Community Facebook page.



PVH Onion Champion 2020: Jeanette Reaney

In the meantime, the Tote runs on with monthly winners still gleefully accepting a little extra spending money as a result of their £12 annual gamble! Between now and the end of January, representatives of the Hall will be knocking on your door hoping to persuade you to either continue your membership of the Tote or to encourage you to join for the year 2021. The annual cost is £12 and monthly prizes consist of a £50 first prize, a £25 second

prize, £15 third prize and a fourth prize of £10. Please be supportive when we come round – the net profit to us essentially pays for the insurance and the electricity bills for the Hall and is a vital source of income which helps us to keep this, the only community facility we have, still open for you to use once the situation returns to normal!

Another little earner was the Grand Onion Competition which we held again this year, albeit in a slightly different way! Our own Tote Organiser Jeanette Reaney finally broke the hold of Trevor Clay with a monster weighing in at 1.543 kilograms pushing Trevor into second place with a very respectable 1.483 Kilos and our PC chairman elect Paul Harrison into third with a close 1.42 kilos. Well done to all the entrants and a genuine massive thanks to you all for first of all playing and supporting, and then remembering to pay for your entries even though we only asked for it 6 months after the event launched which says a lot about the good folk of our patch!

Finally, we can't sign off without a massive thanks to Gilly Turner, who has left the Village for a new life nearer the A49 and the facilities which this brings! She has given years of hard work and sound advice and been a formidable and very active presence on the Village Hall Committee and we will miss her. All the best Gilly!

As usual, if you have any other queries, feel free to contact the following:

Mike Price (Chairman Pitchford Village Hall Management committee):

email: [price622@btinternet.com](mailto:price622@btinternet.com)

mobile: 07740 067955

Christine Jones (Secretary Pitchford Village Hall Management committee):

email: [csjay@btinternet.com](mailto:csjay@btinternet.com)

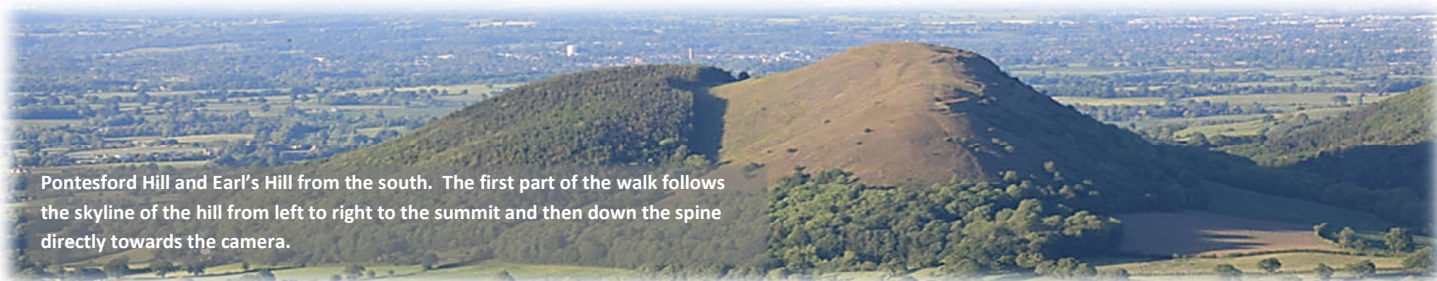
mobile: 07538 744807

Jeanette Reaney (Tote Organiser)

email: [jeanettereaney@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanettereaney@hotmail.com)

As I ended the last article, so I do again with the hope the pandemic reduces to the extent that we can all return as much as possible to life pre-lockdown, and the Hall can re-open at the end of the year shinier, brighter and full of the wonderful community spirit which exists in our neck of the woods.

**John Glover**



Pontesford Hill and Earl's Hill from the south. The first part of the walk follows the skyline of the hill from left to right to the summit and then down the spine directly towards the camera.

## Local Strolls: Earl's Hill

**Earl's Hill is not technically on our 'patch', but it is only a 20-minute drive away, albeit across country. It's very distinctive shape sits just to the east of Pontesbury which does have a couple of pubs and a café to attract you after your exertions up its steep but wonderfully rewarding slopes.**

The best access to the hill is to take a left turn coming from the north along the A488 Shrewsbury to Pontesbury road, between Pontesford and Pontesbury, and signposted "Nature Reserve". The car park is a short distance down here on the left.

Resembling a sleeping dragon in some folk's eyes, the hill is really an amalgam of two – the wooded Pontesford Hill, and the higher but bare Earl's Hill. This distinctive mound spectacularly dominates the drive in from Shrewsbury and is made from the same Uriconian Volcanic material as our Lawley and Caer Caradoc. These are over 560 million years in age and are the oldest rocks in Shropshire and indeed most of the UK. However, this outcrop is on the other side of the Long Mynd syncline from us with these old ash and lava deposit dipping under the Mynd to reappear as our Lawley etc.

Earl's Hill is also the Shropshire Wildlife Trust's first acquisition, being bought in 1964 and then added to by Pontesford Hill in 2016 when the Trust along with local people from Pontesbury bought the northern end. Wildlife abounds here!

From the furthest section of the car park, there are some wooden steps which lead up to a small partially hidden hillfort. Amble across the length of the 'fort' after which you drop down to a good track. Sadly, you don't walk on this, but go across it, again up some more steps and onto what will be the hardest bit of the stroll. This is a steep ascent of the 'north ridge' of Pontesford Hill through woods. Not quite a Himalayan ascent but it may feel like it! Once you level out at the top of the slope, a short stroll takes you through a gate and out into the open and onto Earl's Hill itself, which is another short climb through the ramparts of a much more impressive hillfort than the one lower down and up to the trig point at its summit.

Needless to say, the views are tremendous – the Berwyns, Shrewsbury, the Wrekin, Lawley, Caeradoc, the Long Mynd and the Stiperstones are just a few in this wonderful 360° vista. The summit plateau is magical – a real playground (although do be aware that just a short distance towards the east there are some steep cliffs worthy of that Himalayan peak you ambled up and which you don't want you, or your dog, or your kiddies to fly down, as hitting the bottom will sting a little). The fort is probably from the Iron Age and built as much as 600 years before the Romans turned up and is one of a myriad of such features which crown the tops of most of the hills in our area.

Once you have finished with the highest point of the stroll and your playtime is done, walk south following the track as it gently takes you down along the spine of the hill. Gentle that is until you reach the end then it does become particularly steep. Kids



Earl's Hill summit hillfort from the air. The woods you come out of are top and left from the far end of the ramparts.

and dogs will fly down, but older folk among you may need your walking poles or each other! Through a gate and a short drop down and you reach a path where you turn right which you follow until you reach a much bigger track and turn left. After a short while, you cross a large farm track and carry on down the edge of a field to a footbridge which you cross.

After a few 10's of yards into the woods, you meet a good farm track and turn left which takes you into an open field. Halfway through this you leave this track and angle off through the field to your right aiming for a gap in the fence running up the hill. Pass through this and you will reach another good track which you cross and go up into the woods, popping out at the top and into another large field.

Track around the raised area to your left and follow this along a less distinct path, gradually bending round to the left and keeping the line of trees and hedge below you. Reaching a gate, you pass through keeping to the side of the field with the hedge now immediately to your right. Through another gate, you reach a good farm track and follow this until you almost reach the road in Oaks. In front of you is a house but turn sharp left just before it at a T junction in the tracks. The track can be a little muddy after rain but soon after you enter some woods, you come across a wider clearer track where you keep right with the woods to your left and an open field on your right. You reach a small opening in the woods and bend right, soon after which a small track leaves the main one going downhill to your left. Navigation is now simple again! Ish!!

Earl's Hill and its eastern crags which I warned you about when you were on the summit, are now directly in front of you. Legend has it that that these rocks are the home of the Pontesbury Archers. This is not a local bow and arrow club, but



a group of little men known only to the locals and who shoot arrows at unsuspecting climbers on the crag. Another legend says that a battle in Saxon times resulted in a golden arrow being shot and then lost and is now waiting for someone to find it again which will assure them of a fortune! Peregrines do nest among the crags. Maybe it's them lobbing sticks at folk daft enough to clamber on these outcrops!

Soon, you descend to the second footbridge over Habberley Brook. Cross, go up to the good path and turn right. Wander along the path which zigzags over the stream until you reach another path junction with a footbridge to the left which you go over. Follow the path through some fields and after a while, you pop out into a wide field with a large tree standing alone in front of you. Here, you leave the track and go off to the fence on your right and you will find a stile which you go over and pass a small pond before descending some steps though the woods back to the river and turn right.

Here is Lyd Holes waterfall. Not many folk reach this as it is off the 'beaten track' but it is well worth it. Dogs, kids and even adults can splash around in it, but be aware that, like all waterfalls, the plunge pool under the fall itself is deceptively deep! Waterfalls generally form where a hard band of rock exists, often overlying a softer one. The water plunges over the outcrop and eats away at the softer stuff beneath it, undermining the larger caprock which then, having nothing to support it, caves in. In this way, the waterfall moves back up-stream leaving behind a steep sided gorge marking where the fall used to be hundreds of years ago. The gorge is clear for all

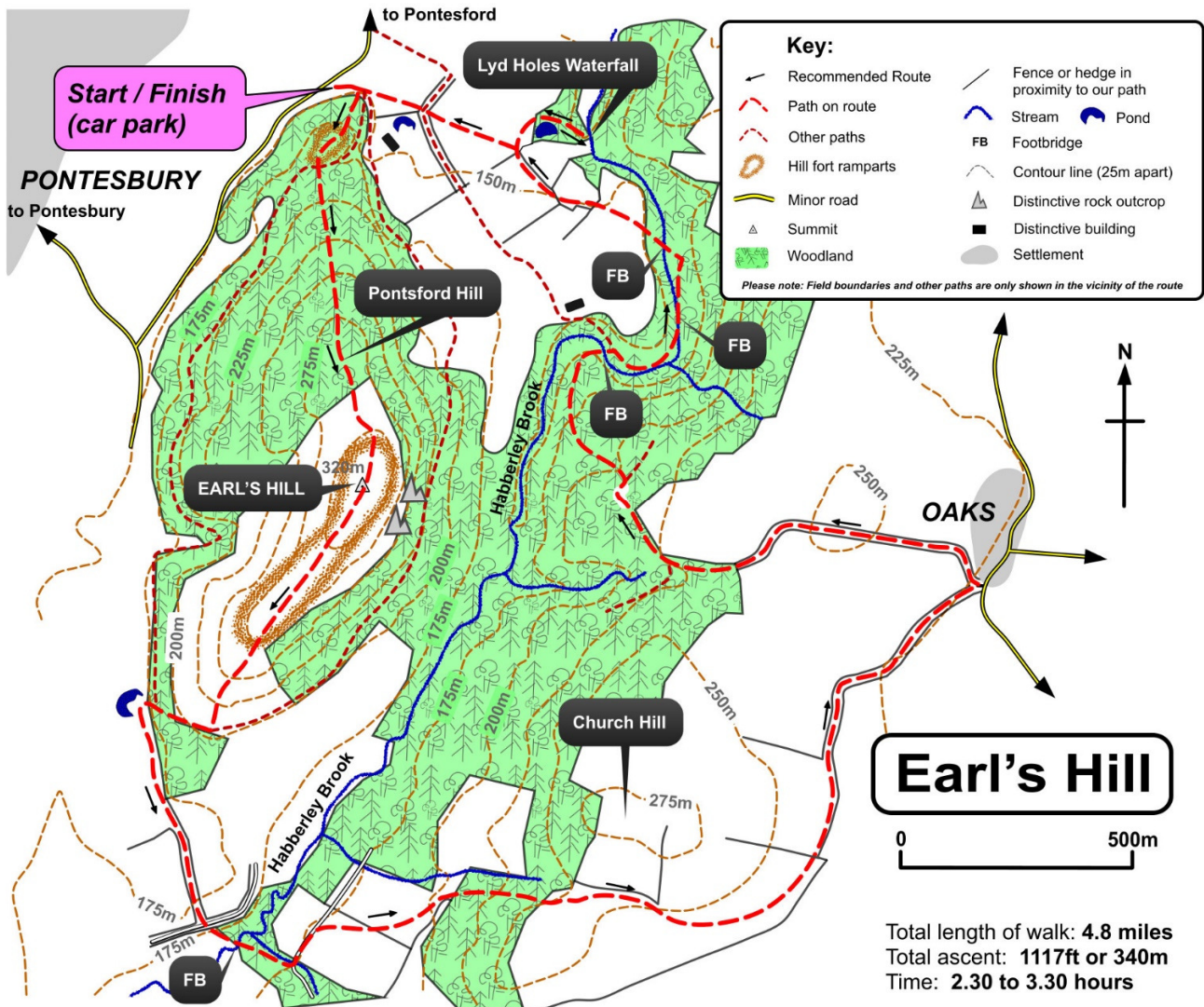
to see and includes bare rocks with massive tree roots exposed which makes for good scrambling for the kiddies!

Finally, go back the way you came and into the large field with the lone tree and aim to the left of this to pick up a faint track



which will take you to a farm track which you cross and over a stile. Pass a farmhouse on your left and before you know it, you are back in the Nature Reserve car park and you are done!

John Glover





# What's that bug: Hawk Moth

Hawk Moths belong to the family Sphingidae in the order Lepidoptera along with other moths and butterflies. They undergo complete metamorphosis, passing through the stages of egg, larva, pupa and imago. The adults emerge in spring and they tend to overwinter in the pupal stage in soil or leaf litter. The adults will feed on nectar from various flowering plants and the caterpillars can feed on a diversity of shrubs and trees.

There are 18 known species in the UK, some of which immigrate with warmer temperatures. Greater diversity of Sphingidae can be found in the tropics. They are easily recognisable due to their large size, colourful and striking patterns, and the ability of some species to hover such as the dayflying Hummingbird hawk-moth (pictured).

## Do they all hover?

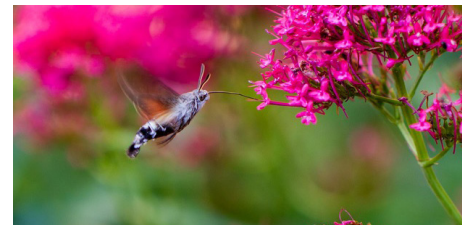
Not all species can hover in flight whilst feeding on nectar from flowers. This type of flight is of great interest to the scientific community. It is known to have evolved separately (convergent evolution) between species of hummingbirds, bats, hoverflies, and hummingbird hawk-moths (i.e. sphingids).

## Why are they colourful and/or with patterns?

The bright colouration of some species is not a signal of danger but is used to attract potential mates. The different colours emit radiation which is selectively perceived between same species. Different species have evolved to detect colour at specific wavelengths depending on whether they are day or night flying moths. Hawk-moths can

also have eye spots which are used to warn off predators. However, not all hawk-moths are brightly coloured or have striking patterns and are in fact excellent at camouflaging themselves.

*Ana Natalio and Nick Antill*







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