

Link Magazine

The Parish of Tidenham

Summer 2026

£1.80

Tutshill Scarecrow Trail 2026



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Which ANIMALS IN FILMS can you identify? (Answers inside)

**St Mary & St Peter
Tidenham
Sunday: 9:00am**

**St Michael & All Angels
Tidenham Chase
Sunday: 6.00pm**

**St Luke's
Tutshill
Sunday: 11.00am**

www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk

Vicar	Revd Sharon Gleed	07305 006693
Associate Priest & Wellbeing Chaplain	Revd Nicki Bullivant	07936 787409
PTO	Revd Canon Tudor Griffiths	07718 906066
PTO	Revd Anna Griffiths	07504 662539
PTO	Revd Miri Keen	07933 172552
PTO	Revd Canon Ed Pruen	07752 569794
Reader	James Parsons	07970 489362
Church Warden	Robin Riordan rrtpcc@aol.com	07711 173240
Church Warden	Brian Duerden bduerden70@gmail.com	01291 623310
Deputy Warden Tidenham	Cate Phillips	07596 185918
Deputy Warden Tutshill	James Parsons	07970 489362
Deputy Warden Chase	Susanna Jacks	07411 188627
PCC Secretary	Iain Gardiner	07738 095839
PCC Treasurer	Paul Coombs 814yug@gmail.com	07831 469951
Bell Ringers	Cate Phillips	07596 185918
Tidenham Choir	Roger Martin	01291 627800
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Robin Riordan tidenhamsafeguarding@gmail.com	07394 693940
Parish Administrator/Notices	Robin Riordan tidenhamparish@gmail.com	07553 779632
Pastoral Visit Co-ordinator	Julia Parsons	07769 335049
The Link Editor & and Link Distribution	Tanya White	01291 623169 07802 874036

tanya.rockymead@gmail.com
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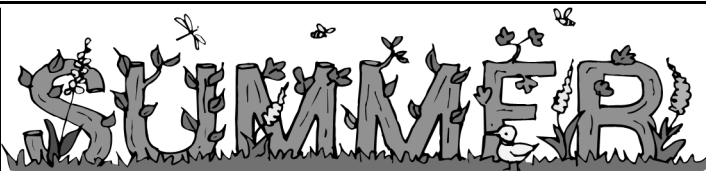
The Link Advertising

Roger Martin

01291 627800



Tanya White



Welcome to our Summer Link magazine

I hope that everyone is well.

This month:

- Words from our new Vicar Revd Sharon Glead (pages 4-5)
 - News from Sedbury Space (pages 12-13)
 - Scarecrow Trail (page 22-23)
 - PCC Highlights from our PCC secretary (page 32)
- Remember that our Link magazine Annual Subscription is now £7.00

See what you can discover and enjoy our magazine,
prize for mistake spotting!

Love from **Tanya**

Parish Contact Website Address

Parish Website: This has information, documents and links to other sites. <https://www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk>

YouTube channel: 'Tidenham Parish Online Church' with videos to assist your devotions.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UckRjOlVDBT9M9usfhp2722w>

St Briavel's & Hewelsfield web-site:
www.stbandhchurches.org.uk



PLEASE NOTE

All copy for the **Autumn Link**
(September, October & November 2026)
must be with **Tanya by Friday, 31st July 2026**

Email: tanya.rockymead@gmail.com

or posted to: Tanya White, Rockymead, Coleford Road,

Tutshill, Chepstow, NP16 7BU (01291 623169 or 07802 874036)



Revd Sharon Glead

Exciting times for our Parishes

I'm delighted to be writing this month's article. Depending on the vagaries of British weather, hopefully signs of summer will be around us - lengthy days of sunshine, light evenings, the smell of summer carried on a warm breeze, accompanied by the prospect of days out, school holidays and community events.

I write from a place of waiting and anticipation, of looking forward to my ministry amongst you to begin, but by the time you read this, Edward and I will have arrived, and I'll have had my service of Institution and Induction.

My ministry will be shaped by the promises I will have made before God and each of you and by the responsibility entrusted to me; to care for you, pray for you, lead you and encourage you in your witness and by the tokens given to me which symbolise the way in which my ministry is to be lived out among you. Rejoicing and sharing with you the fullness of life given to us through Jesus, reconciling, studying God's word, welcoming all at Christ's table and being rooted in your community.

Sustainable ministry and life are both collaborative and interdependent and encompasses the whole community. At my service, we will have spoken words of commitment to one another as we seek to grow in faith and discipleship, to be a Christ-like community of love, to tell the good news of Christ, to worship and seek to be Christ's body and good news across our communities.

I recognise I can't do everything and wouldn't wish too. I'm encouraged by the way you're already working together. Part of my role will be establishing my unique contribution, whilst encouraging and enabling you to flourish in yours.

My priorities in these early days are going to be spending time getting to know you, learning your stories and those of your communities. I want to establish connections with you in your various places and be present among you, learning how you do things and journeying with you through



the coming seasons, so I can gain a sense of the rhythm of your life together.

I want to discover together what living in the flow of God looks and feels like in the Forest of Dean and the Wye Valley, building on the good works that have already been done and looking at what we might creatively do together next. This will come about through careful and prayerful listening, learning about your history and what you're doing now, so we can collectively discern what God's words for us are in this new season and what God might be calling us to be and to do in the future.

I'm so excited to be joining in with God's work across your dynamic group of churches and welcoming, serving and witnessing to your communities; whilst living in the flow of God's love.

What a joy and privilege to write these words -

From your vicar
Sharon

Fact
gatherings...

Is there a connection between summer and ice cream sales?

Absolutely! Ice cream is a refreshing treat to cool down on a hot day.

Summers are heating up and so is consumer desire for ice cream in the United Kingdom.

A minority even go so far as to eat ice cream from a tub on a daily basis.

This is expected to increase in the coming years



Folk Club
St Luke's
Church
Saturday,
6th June 2026,
summer break,



then
Saturday, 12th September
2026
6- 8.30pm
(doors open 5.30pm)

Coffee & Tea will be provided.
But please bring along any
further Refreshments to share...

Contact Bill & Tanya White
(01291 623169)



Parish Life Group Meetings

- **Monday** 2-3.30pm Bible Study at Sedbury Space
Nicki nicki1002@hotmail.co.uk
- **Tuesday** 1.00pm Life Group - Julia Parsons, venue varies -
juliaparsons727@gmail.com
- **Wednesday** 10.15am Food for Thought Life Group
@ Café on the Hill
- **Wednesday** 7.30pm Life Group - Fiona and/or Wendy
fiona.m.gardiner70@gmail.com
- **Thursday** 10.00am Life Group - Tanya White at Rockymead
tanya.rockymead@gmail.com

Please do speak to someone in church if you are unsure
about any of the above groups.



Come along to a relaxed performance of interactive live music, with singalongs, refreshments and a chance to chat and reminisce. These Informal, friendly sessions are particularly for anyone in the local area worried about memory loss or living with a diagnosis of dementia or other brain disorder, along with their family, friends and carers. But they are also a great chance to get out and to meet new people.

If you'd like to find out more: call Mel on 07966 627840; email us at wvmim@wvm.org.uk; or visit our website www.wyevalleymusic.org.uk or Facebook page @WyeValleyMusic.

And to find out more about dementia services in our area, visit our Information Table.

So, turn up and take a seat at the Music Memory Café.

Every third Wednesday of the month,
from 10.30am – 12.00pm.

St Briavels Assembly Rooms, East Street, St Briavels,
GL15 6TG.

Entrance free. Parking nearby.

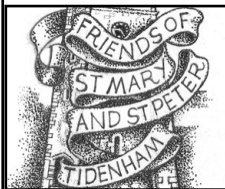
Next dates: Wednesday 17th June;
Wednesday 15th July; Wednesday 19th August.



Music is the best medicine!



Rules for Editing: Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.



**Charity no.
1159658**

Friends Update

As the Friends major projects are nearly complete we thought it worth reviewing the success of the past 12 years.

Following a threat to place Tidenham Church on the “endangered list” in 2012, a public meeting was held that attracted over 100 people who were all keen to see the church survive. The majority were not regular church goers and so the idea of a “Friends Group” developed who were interested in making the church available for wider community use.

With no water and no place to park cars, resolving these issues were considered essential to the survival of the church.

The Friends became established as a charity in May 2014, and received donations to Light the Tower, Repair the Clock and Repair the Organ. An architect was appointed and a second consultation worked up various options for reordering. The now annual Christmas Tree Festival was started in 2015 and various Flower Festivals, Concerts, Plays and Open Days have been held in the church together with other fund-raising events.

Investigations revealed some rough ground below the church was owned by the Treasury Solicitor and this was purchased by the Friends in 2015.

Planning permission was obtained in 2016 which included ecology requirements of moving 300 slow worms to a hibernaculum at the top of the site, beyond snake fencing, the car park eventually being opened for use in 2018.

Planning the reordering of the North Aisle was more complex with many layers of interested parties – endless meetings attended and papers being written.

Late 2022 the Friends agreed to purchase Church Cottage which enabled the requirements for the North Aisle to be reduced and in 2023 a land swap with Tidenham Manor provided space outside the churchyard for a septic tank and rainwater soakaway for both the church and the parish office. Having reduced the requirements, permissions were finally agreed for the reordering of the North Aisle.



In 2024 work commenced on the North Aisle. The aisle was cleared and two inserts were made, providing a kitchette, disabled toilet, an enlarged vestry together with storage.

Funds were raised from events, donations and grants, the major donor being the Tony James Legacy Fund. 2025 saw the tower repairs done, which was overseen by the PCC, and work commenced on the Parish Office which was completed in May 2026. An approximate amount of £650,000 was raised and spent.

The Friends currently still own and fund the carpark and the Parish Office and continue to provide support, both practical and financial to the PCC for Tidenham Parish church.



St Mary & St Peter's Church
Flower & Arts Festival

Friday, 5th June 2026
Saturday, 6th June 2026
Sunday, 7th June 2026

2pm-4pm

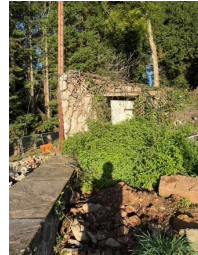
Refreshments available

Re-ordering Service
Sunday, 14th June 2026 - 3pm
Bishop Anthony will be blessing the re-ordering
of St Mary & St Peter's Church, Tidenham

Ride & Stride
12th September 2026

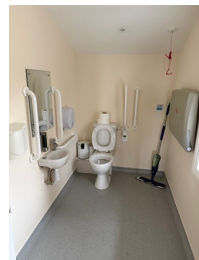
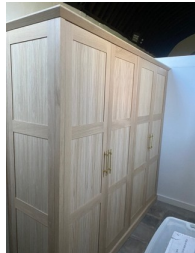
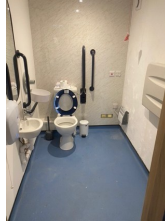


BEFORE Re-ordering





AFTER Re-ordering





11, King Alfred's Road,
Sedbury
NP16 7AG,

e-mail:

ManagerSedburySpace@gmail.com
07522 178639

Reg Charity No: 1173511

SEDBURY SPACE MANAGER'S NEWS
SUMMER 2026

Wow! The light nights are here, that can only mean, WINTER IS OVER! Bring on SUMMER sunshine.

Our regular sessions/cafés continue to steadily grow and be well attended, Our **TUESDAY WEEKLY DROP-IN CAFÉ** remains extremely popular, and we have enjoyed much more than just chat and cuppa's. We have facilitated Covid and Flu Jab drop-ins with Gloucestershire NHS, had forestry hearing drop-ins, been entertained with music and song, and not to forget the many fund-raising raffles. We have much more in store this summer so please come and join us.

Our **QUARTERLY QUIZ NIGHT** with a Kibby's fish & chip supper, remains fully booked each time and is a great fun night.

THE COMMUNITY LUNCH continues to provide a home cooked

meal once a month, an example of the menu we have enjoyed... cottage pie and veg & cheesecake/ ice-cream.... Slow cooked shredded pork & homemade fruit flan. every dish cooked and served with passion and love by our amazing volunteer's.

Our **CANCER SUPPORT CAFÉ** continues to be of great help on both the lunchtime and evening monthly meetup.

Our **WELLBEING CHAPLAIN** remains ever present, from bible studies, prayer group, chatroom, foodbank, and much, much more we are so very grateful to have a "Nicki" on our team!

NEW GROUPS, we have a new **LADIES SUPPORT** group who meet up every month with Nicki B being at the helm but very much letting the ladies say how they would like the meeting to run. So far they have had breathing exercises, hand massages all whilst supporting each other through forming new friendships.



MONTHLY DROP-IN SESSION. we are pleased to continue to facilitate a connection with your local parish councilor and the community police team where you can meet monthly on a specific date and seek help or advice. (Look out for the poster with date and times) If you would like us to connect you outside of the drop-ins please just ask and we will arrange a 1-1, confidential meeting where possible.

GAMES CAFE - 2nd Wednesday of each month we have our games cafe which is growing in numbers and very fun. From scrabble to cards, snakes & ladders and of course tea and biscuits are on offer.

MEMORY CAFE 1st Wednesday of each month Des and his team of volunteers will be bringing their session “home” to Sedbury Space from the village hall, same time 2.00pm just different venue.

UNIFORM SWAP we will be holding another Wydean school swap/drop event in conjunction with the school, where pre-loved uniform items can be picked up free. Logo items are so costly, and we have been asked to hold another swap day, so we have listened and acted. look out on our Facebook page for more info.

This year saw us take part in the *wig

gig* thanks to Chepstow Events team, where we raised an amazing £297.00. As well as raising vital funds for the hub we had the opportunity to introduce ourselves to the community wider than Sedbury. As always, our volunteers joined our manager to run our stand. Carol, Lynne and Maggie certainly got in the “swing” of the day with their wigs.... and Michael S drove the community minibus helping many to get involved in the day. This year will see us have a much-needed push on our Fundraising. The cost of living is having a negative impact on most charities and we are no exception. So, if you see us holding a raffle, please buy a ticket and help support us. Without you we cannot offer the services that we do.

As always, we are so very grateful for all the support we receive from our sponsor’s, and we would love to work with any new business’s- get in touch with us to find out more.

We are very excited to welcome back friends of our manager, Frankie and Lucianno to entertain us in June, fresh from Britain’s Got talent. Our Facebook post with our video from the day they entertained us last year has grown to over 1,000. Views, so please like our Facebook page to see clips from their next visit.



St Luke's Wellbeing Coffee Morning

This will be held 10.00-12.00

We meet on the last Monday of each month except Bank Holiday Mondays.



Next Parish Coffee Morning dates

Monday, 29 June 2026

Monday, 27 July 2026

No Coffee Morning in August

Monday, 28 September 2026

Monday, 26 October 2026

Monday, 30 November 2026

No Coffee Morning in December

See you all in the New Year 2027



Welcome **FREE** good coffee/tea, cake and biscuits



Hosts Polly - Pastoral Assistant
Wellbeing Chaplain—Nicki Bullivant

Please come along and support us.

Contact Polly (07724738848)
paulinemorgan23@gmail.com





MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd & Making Music, and is a Registered Charity (no. 112798)
www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk

Chepstow Choral Society

WEDNESDAY 24th JUNE 2026

at

The Arts Hall, Chepstow School,

7.00pm

“JUST AS THE TIDE WAS FLOWING”

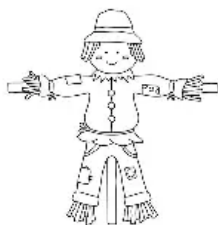
**A celebration in music and words of
our famous rivers and bridges**

***Including items by John Rutter, Vaughan Williams,
Gilbert and Sullivan, Mendelssohn and
arrangements of standard popular classics with
appropriate readings***

Musical Director – Graham Bull

Accompanist – Richard Kubiak

**Tickets £10.00, u/18s and students free,
including post-concert refreshments
from Choir members, Chepstow Bookshop,
www.eventbrite.co.uk**



Tanya's Link Summer Prize Challenge

This Wordsearch puzzle has words **taking us on the SCARECROW TRAIL**

If you did not walk the Trail, there are all the pictures on our front cover. So see who you can identify!

See pages 22-23 for an article and the answers

Letters not used and taken in order give the answer.

Please send this to me: Tanya White, at Rockymead, Coleford Road, Tutshill,
NP16 7BU,

mail: tanya.rockymead@gmail.com to be in with a chance winning the prize!

ABU	LADY	PORG
BABE	LOVELACE	RAFIKI
BARRY (B BENSON)	LYLE	RAJAH
CHESHIRE CAT	MARSHALL	RANGO
(101) DALMATIONS	MELMAN	REMY
FLASH	MILO	SKIPPER
JAWS	MUFASA	STUART LITTLE
KAA	NEMO	TICK TOCK
KERMIT (THE FROG)	PADDINGTON	TOTO
KING JULIEN	PIGLET	WINNIE THE POOH
16	PO	ZERO



E L Y L C R E P P I K S H W
 L O V E L A C E A I M R R I
 T A B A B E O L N A T A S N
 T S Y O T T Z G R E O F N N
 I A R A C E J S N N T I O I
 L F R F R U H A O A O K I E
 T U A O L A A T W K R I T T
 R M B I L A G V C S P O A H
 A A E L A N S O T I L Y M E
 U N T L I B T H G I I M L P
 T Y E D M K U L M A M E A O
 S D D M C A E H A J A R D O
 C A A I O T N P O R G K E H
 P L T A C E R I H S E H C K



The Spring Link Prize Challenge was to find words about **“SPRING CLEANING”**.

There were 30 words to locate before the remaining letters gave the answer:

“(S)WITCHES, GLASS”

My mistake this time was to list collection word as **“FANS”** rather than **“FAN”** so you can see that this gave the answer as **“WITCHES”** rather than my intended **“SWITCHES”!!** Well done for having a go at the puzzle and for all who entered anyway, I received 4 correct entries.

Winner this time is Coral Blandford of Beachley

Good spotting for the next Wordsearch listed!



News from our Parish Schools



DEAN CLOSE
ST JOHN'S
CHEPSTOW

Recently, our U13s swapped the netball court for something a little different and enjoyed an enriching afternoon of padel in Bristol! The girls had a fantastic time learning the rules, practicing

a variety of shots, and taking part in some fun, competitive games. It was wonderful to see them

embracing a new challenge with such enthusiasm. Trying new sports is so important, and we're delighted they had this opportunity.

We're already looking forward to more padel sessions in the future!

Dean Close St John's School
01291 622045



Music: At St John's, we feel that music is a vital part of our curriculum, supported through extra-curricular clubs and 1:1 lessons with our team of visiting music teachers. Research shows that musical education is essential to a child's cognitive development, offering a creative outlet that encourages students to cooperate with others and to explore their own musical individuality.



Our school is part of Lift Schools

Lift Schools is a national network of schools across England dedicated to education where we are dedicated to providing an excellent education for every child in every classroom, everyday. We create an inspiring environment filled with opportunities to learn, grow and discover their potential.

Everything we do, every decision we make and the way in which we behave is focused on achieving that end goal and underpinned by our values.



Offa's Mead
Academy
To make our best better

Offa's Mead - 01291 622932



Wyedean

School and Sixth Form Centre

Aspire together, achieve together
adfecere pariter, perfecere pariter

Wyedean School – 01291 636180

Oxford Trip:

Mr. Thomas accompanied the

year 12 students who visited Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University. They had a welcome and Insightful lecture covering life in Oxford, the tradition and courses on offer from the outreach team. Following this they were involved in a debate;

"Artificial intelligence or robots - which is best?"

The tour of the campus took in the accommodation,

library, chapel, student

union and extensive

gardens. Lunch in the

main dining hall was

followed by a

question-and-answer

session with first and

second year students

who study English and

biochemistry.



Tutshill School
01291 622593

KNEX Challenge 2026 - Year Six took part in the KNEX Challenge 2026. The challenge was to build an

automated warehouse that could automatically move an item from a shelf to another part

of a factory! The children worked co-operatively, showing fantastic teamwork and resilience.

Congratulations to Rocco Jones and Santino

Dibartolo who will be

representing Tutshill School at the KNEX County

Finals which are on 18th May.





SUMMER



War Memorial Hall, Coleford Road, Tutshill, Chepstow, NP16 7BN
01291 629134



PHOTOCARDS AI

Please Notice This



Found in other churches' notices:

"Applications are now being accepted for 2 year-old nursery workers."



The Parish Lunch ...

Thursday, 4th June 2026

Thursday, 2nd July 2026

(No August Parish Lunch)

For info and lifts
phone
George or Beryl
on 01291 625551

Parish Lunch, 12.15pm

Woodcroft Centre

The May Parish Lunch had the pleasure of welcoming the Tyke Ukulele Band as guest players during lunch.

They entertained our members for over an hour and included many well known sing along songs.

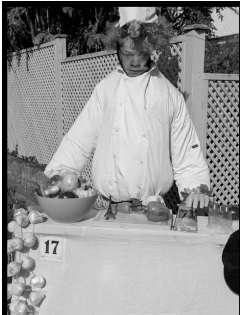
The Tykes had been invited at the suggestion of one of our loyal guests Bob Civil.



The June and July Parish Lunch dates will be held on the first Thursday of the month.

There is no Parish Lunch in August. New guests are always welcome.

Please contact Beryl or George for further information
(01291 625551)



Scarecrow Trail Animal characters from films

The 2026 Tutshill Scarecrow trail was a happy community event with 33 scarecrows made by local families and community groups.

The theme was Animals in Films, the scarecrows were amazingly creative, and we are so grateful to everyone who helped make one. Thank you ! Thank you also to those that hosted a scarecrow along the route.

450 entry forms were bought and many people in families and groups were seen walking around the route and enjoying it all. A big thank you again to the staff at the new Morrisons Daily store in Tutshill for selling the forms so cheerfully.

Thank you also to Cafe on the Hill, Toytastic and Chepstow Book shop for donating prizes.

We raised £1336 and 10% of this will be given to each of our nominated charities, Guide Dogs and the local Charity Breathe Youth which provides mentoring and support for young people in the Forest of Dean. The rest of the money supports our parish churches.

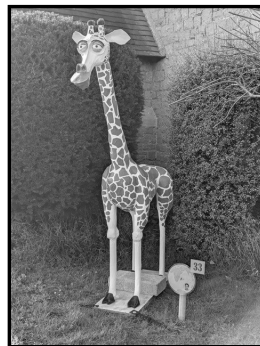
If you would like to make a scarecrow next year please let us know by emailtutshillscarecrow@yahoo.com. You do not have to live anywhere near the route as we have people who live on the route who kindly offer their front garden space to a scarecrow.

Thank you to everyone who helped organise the Scarecrow event, made a scarecrow, hosted a scarecrow and walked around to guess them all.

Favourite Scarecrows:

1. Remy (17) - 41 votes
2. Melman (33) - 37 votes
3. King Julien (10) - 29 votes

2 Wining entries from Ethan Wyer and Peter Mayo





TUTSHILL
SCARECROW TRAIL 2026
Animal Characters from Films
Congratulations to all the creators

1	CHESHIRE CAT	18	SKIPPER (& PRIVATE)
2	RAJAH	19	NEMO
3	MUFASA	20	KERMIT THE FROG
4	TOTO	21	ABU
5	PORG	22	CHARLOTTE A CAVATICA (& WILBUR)
6	LOVELACE	23	FLASH
7	RAFIKI & SIMBA	24	STUART LITTLE
8	PO	25	LADY
9	WINNIE THE POOH	26	MILO
10	KING JULIEN	27	MARSHALL
11	JAWS	28	BABE
12	ZERO	29	101 DALMATIANS
13	TICK TOCK	30	CAA
14	RANGO	31	BARRY B BENSON
15	PADDINGTON	32	PIGLET
16	LYLE	33	MELMAN
17	REMY		



From St Michael's Tidenham Chase - Sustainable Church Flowers and Caring for Gods Acre

We are very excited:

In February, the General Synod voted to adopt the principles of Sustainable Church Flowers (SCF), within the Church of England.

“To encourage the use of sustainable practices in church flower arrangements, and to strongly discourage the use of all floral foams in churches and churchyards.”

SCF encourages the use of locally grown, seasonal flowers, grown without harmful pesticides, packaged without unnecessary plastics, grown by people paid a liveable wage and most importantly not arranged in floral foam.

Wonderful news and see more at

<https://suschurchflowers.com>

It's a really attractive and joyful website.

At Chase we will also, during 6-14th June, be repeating last years exercise of
“Counting for Nature”
for the “Love your churchyard week”
for “Caring for Gods Acre”.

Last year we recorded over 150 species of wild life in Chase churchyard. There are many different species of tree around the perimeter of the churchyard and we hope to offer a short quiz for the young/not so young or just the curious!

We will have a moth trapping exercise to monitor the moths which people can attend - but it will be early in the morning!

These activities also celebrate the spirit of the schools
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust nature quiz
which celebrates 50 years this year.

We will suggest short walks from Chase church taking
in our neighbouring GWT reserves - currently so full of
bluebells

Spring is a lovely season!





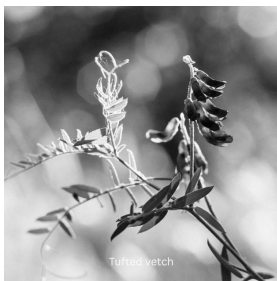
Flowers of the Meadow part 1

June really is the loveliest month for meadow flowers. Hopefully many of you will have left an area of churchyard grass to grow long, either for No Mow May or else in preparation for some nature spotting as part of Churches Count on Nature.



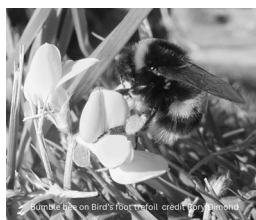
One of the most showy flowers in a meadow is the Oxeye Daisy, also called Moon Daisy and Moonpenny; the large white petals drawing pollinators in to the bright yellow centre. Look out for a variety of vetches, members of the pea family. You may find Tufted Vetch – look out for 6-spot burnet moths on this one. Bush Vetch and Common Vetch are likely too and a great many churchyards contain Bird's-foot-trefoil also known as Eggs and Bacon because of the mix of yellow and orange on the flowers. Richard Mabey, in his fantastic book *Flora Britannica* lists many names for Bird's-foot-trefoil including Hen and Chickens, Tom Thumb, Granny's Toenails, Cuckoo's Stocking and Dutchman's Clogs.

Lady's Bedstraw is often found in churchyards. It smells sweet when dried and would be added to hay stuffed in mattresses, particularly when preparing a bed for childbirth. Look out for the froth of yellow flowers (other bedstraws have white flowers) and the scent of honey. The Lady in the name is the Virgin Mary. Perhaps your churchyard contains orchids, the most common one flowering in June is Common Spotted Orchid. The presence of orchids indicates an old grassland which has matured over time and developed a range of species within the soil. All orchids depend on a fungal partner, feeding the plant underground via the threadlike mycorrhizae.



Tufted vetch

Your churchyard meadow areas act as pitstops or cafes for insects and can buzz with life. Try and spend a little time enjoying them and seeing which pollinators are using them.



Bumblebee on Bird's-foot-trefoil credit: www.peterdinkley.com



BELL RINGING AT TIDENHAM

Life in Tidenham tower continues much as ever – with all now enjoying the longer lighter evenings on practice night, not least for the chance to admire our view of the Severn! We continue our happy relationship with Alvington ringers and make an occasional foray to join the monthly ten-bell practice at

St Mary's, Chepstow, if we can't muster enough ringers for Tuesday practice that week. And, yes, we're still very much open to anyone wondering about giving bellringing a try to see whether they'd like it ... (contrary to popular misconception, you don't need to be musical, mathematical or strong).

On 25 April, 'the beautiful church of St Mary and St Peter, Tidenham' was the venue for the Forest Branch Practice – 'Fabulous ringing in a fabulous setting on a fabulous day' – all their words, not ours! It was great to have the use of the north aisle to serve refreshments – bellringers appreciate good cake, as anyone who has attended a 'ringers tea' knows. We also received several compliments on the new arrangements of the kitchen, cupboarding etc., with some saying they wished their own churches would do something similar.

Our highpoint was, of course, the Service of Institution and Induction of Revd Sharon Glead on 3 May, when a home band (Vic, Richard, Sarah, Sophie and Howard) was joined by Frances Day of St Briavels to ring a glorious welcome as the congregation gathered. At the end of the service Vic helped Revd Sharon to ring a bell to mark the start of her ministry. And for the following Friday he assembled a band to ring a congratulatory quarter peal in her honour.

We wish her all good things for her ministry in Tidenham as our Vicar and look forward to many years of ringing under her incumbency.

Still on the hunt for local talent to increase our numbers, we would like to remind you that our regular practice night is Tuesday, 7.30–9.00pm, at St Mary & St Peter's, Tidenham – all ages and abilities welcome. If you think you might be interested in 'giving it a go' – maybe a one-to-one try out – contact Cate Phillips (07596 185928).

Visiting ringers planning to drop in are also advised to contact Cate, as practice may be cancelled if there are too few ringers available.



Cartoon by
Dom White



REFLECTIVE JACKET

Fact
Gatherings...

What causes the increase in bugs during summer?

Warmer summer temperatures accelerate the life cycles of many insects.

They reproduce faster, their eggs hatch quicker, and development from larvae to adulthood is sped up.

Additionally, some insects, like cicadas, emerge from the ground in massive numbers following long underground life cycles



From the Registers

Funerals & Burials

Ann AITKEN (87)

Thursday, 19th February 2026

Cremation at Langstone Crematorium

Wendy Margaret Preston-Jones (64)

Tuesday, 24th February 2026

Service & Burial at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Peter Frazz ZIMMERMAN (78)

Wednesday, 24th March 2026

Service & Burial at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Rosalind Maude LANGLEY (78)

Monday, 9th March 2026

Service & Burial at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Peter Clive TREVELYN (83)

Monday, 23rd March 2026

Internment of Ashes at St Michael & All Angels, Tidenham Chase

Robert Alan WEBSTER (Rob) (79)

Friday, 27th March 2026

Cremation at Forest of Dean Crematorium

Emily Louise BROWN (24)

Tuesday, 31st March 2026

Service at Langstone Vale Crematorium

William Hugh WALTON (92)

Friday, 17th April 2026

Service at Langstone Vale Crematorium

Terrance Eli Harry Tyrrell (85)

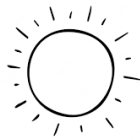
Tuesday, 7th May 2026

Service at Langstone Vale Crematorium

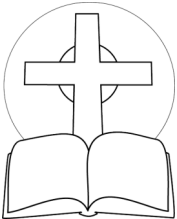
Mary Lavina Elliot (85)

Tuesday, 14th May 2026

Service at Forest of Dean Crematorium



Further register entries will appear in Autumn 2026 edition of the Link



John 14:15-21 The Promise of the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ 'If you love me,

you will keep my commandments.

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever.

¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸ 'I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.

¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.

²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'



**Rev Sharon Glead
At Tidenham Church
Sunday, 3rd May 2026**







Highlights from PCC meetings in March & April 2026

PCC members:

- thanked Tidenham PCC Treasurer and Vice Treasurer for monitoring our Utility bills, achieving a satisfactory conclusion to our electricity contracts with SSE and setting up new 3-year contracts with British Gas Lite from 1 January 2026,
- signed off the Trustees' Report and Annual Accounts for 2025,
- thanked Treasurer Paul Coombs for setting up a 99% paperless church accounts system from 01 January 2026,
- reviewed all the Lent and Easter services and events,
- noted arrangements were well in hand to review the church electoral roll by 26 April - in advance of the annual church meetings on Sunday 18 May,
- finalised arrangements for the licensing service in Tidenham church on Sunday 3 May for our new vicar Revd Sharon Glead,
- considered the implications of Martyn's Law *and*
- welcomed the news that the Archdeacon had given List B permission for the proposed repairs at Chase church costing approx. £30K.



A businessman ordered flowers to be sent to the opening of his friend's new branch office. When the businessman got there, he was shocked to see the flowers with the inscription. "Rest In Peace".

He was so outraged that he stopped at the florist to complain.

"It could be worse," the florist said, "Just think: Today someone was buried beneath a floral arrangement with the inscription. 'Congratulations on Your New Location!'"



Obituary:

Our church was saddened to learn this week of the death of one of our most valued members, Someone Else.

For many, many years as a part of this church Someone Else did far more than a normal person's share of the work.

Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, everybody said, "Let Someone Else do it."

Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results; "Someone Else can work with that group."

It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the most generous givers.

Whenever there was a financial need, everyone assumed Someone Else would make up the difference.

Now Someone Else is gone! We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did?

When you are asked to help this year, remember — we can't depend on Someone Else anymore.





News from Jane Penny

What's in a name? Do the names we give things really matter? For those of you who have chosen the name of a child, then yes, they do.. And this is an important decision and a huge responsibility.

Recently we changed the name of Thrive on Friday to Thrive on FriYAY! As we all say Yay for Friday... It's the end of the school week and for many, the working week, a chance to relax a little... This idea came about because a friend sent me a message with a little picture that read. It's FriYAY! And I liked it so much I wanted to share it with you.

This took place just after Easter so we had fun creating Easter gardens and planting cress... see how our seeds have grown. One family enjoyed their cress in an egg sandwich Here's an eggsample of some of our creations >>>

We heard the Easter story and how God loved the world so much that he stretched out his arms of love on a cross for all of us... so that people could be friends with God. Jane used Duplo bricks to illustrate how the world was broken but how God's love helps to mend it and give us a relationship with God.



Another name change which some of you may have noticed is that CtiL has changed its name!

Last autumn at a gathering of those who support the Community Family Ministry it was suggested that Churches together in Lydney would be better known as *Christians* together in Lydney. This was discussed earlier this year and everyone agreed! As a group, we are made up of people who are followers of Jesus, who call themselves Christians, and choose to live their lives showing Jesus' love. We are also members of churches in and around Lydney/across the Forest of Dean area.

THRIVE ON FRIYAY 2026



Making quesadillas



Cress heads



Easter Gardens





Churches Count on Nature 2026

Churches across England and Wales are being encouraged to take part in Churches Count on Nature 2026, which will take place from Saturday 6 June to Sunday 14 June as part of Love Your Burial Ground Week.

The initiative invites churches to discover, record and celebrate the wildlife found in churchyards and burial grounds. The information collected contributes to a wider understanding of the ecological value of churchyards and burial grounds across the UK.

Churchyards can provide important habitats for wildlife, particularly in areas where green space is limited or heavily managed. Many have remained relatively undisturbed for centuries and can support a rich variety of species, including wildflowers, lichens, mosses, pollinating insects, birds and small mammals.

One of the simplest changes some churches are making is leaving certain areas of grass un-mowed. Allowing grass to grow longer can encourage native wildflowers to emerge naturally, providing food and shelter for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. In turn, this helps support wider ecosystems within churchyards.

Churches taking part in Churches Count on Nature in the past have often organised community events such as wildlife walks, species surveys, talks, outdoor activities and guided nature recording sessions. Many also make use of identification charts, bird boxes, and the iNaturalist phone app to help participants recognise and record the species they find.

Erica Siddall, Strategic Net Zero Carbon Lead for the Diocese of Gloucester, said:

"Many people appreciate nature and have experienced God when spending time in creation. We tend to focus on buildings, but spending time beyond the doors of the church is a great reminder that God's beautiful creation also honours Him and is worthy of our love and care. It feels good to learn more and feel more connected with your surroundings, your neighbours and God.



“In the past six months I have enjoyed starting to use the iNaturalist app, and I have also begun paying special attention to our churchyard yews. If these sound too vigorous, simple personal prayers of thanksgiving for creation are also a great starting point.”

For more information about Churches Count on Nature 2026, visit <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/love-your-burial-ground-week-national-cemeteries-week-and-churches-count-on-nature/>

As part of Churches Count on Nature 2026, the Church of England and Caring for God’s Acre will also host a series of lunchtime webinars on Zoom exploring different aspects of land and nature. You can find more information about these webinars at <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/churches-count-nature>

Events and training
More details for all these events at
gloucester.anglican.org/events

Community day
St Paul and St Stephen’s Church, Stroud Road, Gloucester, GL1 5AH, Saturday 6 June, 10am to 2pm.
A family friendly day of fellowship with arts and crafts, food, stalls, and a bouncy castle. <https://www.stpaulstephenglos.org.uk/>

Have your say Visit Facebook **f/Diocese.of.Gloucester**
Email Katherine **kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk**
Visit website **gloucester.anglican.org**

‘Songs for a summer evening’
St Philip and St James Church, Leckhampton, GL50 2DD, Saturday 20 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm
An evening with performances from The Cheltenham Singing Groups’ The Tuesdays and The Cheltones, alongside The Ladybrook Singers, raising money for Maggie’s Cancer Care. <https://pipandjims.churchsuite.com/events/wqlll6xn>

Gloucester Cathedral organ festival
Gloucester Cathedral, GL1 2LX, Sat 13 June to Monday 15 June
A celebration of the unveiling of Gloucester Cathedral’s new organ with a weekend of gala concerts, family performances, recitals, and workshops



Christian Aid Week (10–16 May 2026) is one of the most powerful moments in our year. **For nearly 70 years**, it has united churches, neighbours and supporters across the UK and Ireland - turning faith into action and walking with communities who are working to put poverty behind them for good.

This year, the need is real and urgent. In Gaza, families are rebuilding lives amid ongoing conflict. In Sudan, millions have been forced to flee their homes. Across the world, our partners, rooted in communities and trusted by the people they serve, are responding with compassion and courage.

Every year, Christian Aid Week brings people together with a shared purpose: to fundraise, act and pray, and stand with communities as they challenge poverty and injustice.

From local bike rides to 24-hour challenges, from art exhibitions to hill climbs, supporters across the UK are stepping up in creative and inspiring ways.

Together, they are part of something bigger – a movement of people choosing to turn hope into action. Whether you fundraise, give, or spread the word in your community, your support helps our partners reach more families.

Together, we can put hope into action.





News from Heather Johnstone Church Mission Society

Location: Tanzania

What I do: Helping to empower the most disadvantaged women and children in Mara through the Rehema Project

I returned to Tanzania on 14 January 2026 after my departure at the end of October 2025 had been marked by hasty and disjointed goodbyes, as the post-election unrest made it impossible to bid farewell to the Rehema women properly.

To my surprise and delight, they transformed that missed farewell into a joyful “welcome home” celebration at my house – organised within less than 24 hours of my arrival in Musoma. Though I wasn’t sure I was ready for such exuberance after long flights and road travel, the day turned out to be a wonderful, spirited gathering. The laughter, songs and shared meal reminded me of the strength of community and the joy of reunion.



Welcome home Party

The very next morning, however, reality came rushing back. Work resumed at full speed, and life has been non-stop ever since. Yet the memory of that heartfelt welcome continues to carry me through the busyness, a reminder of the bonds that make this place home.

We were blessed to have a team of five gap year students from the UK support Rehema Café four times a week for almost three months from January to April. The team from Christian charity Go Make a Difference in Tanzania were lovely and really bonded well with the Rehema ladies. They had a lot of fun together and the team were invited to share a fabulous meal at our cook’s home on Easter Sunday, which they thoroughly enjoyed. We were sad to see them leave on Easter Monday.



Guide
Dog
Puppies
in our
Parish

Umber has become a Guide Dog Dad for the first time. He and Golden Retriever Rosie have three boys, all yellow, and five girls, two yellow and three black. The puppies stayed with their mum until they were six weeks old, and then after a week of health checks and assessments at Guide Dogs' Breeding Centre in Leamington Spa, they were placed with Puppy Raisers in Scotland, the North East, the North West, the Midlands and the South East.

Many Guide Dogs are named by sponsors who choose a name, often in memory of a loved one or a special place. Some litters are given names on a theme (e.g. the Christmas litter that included 'Parsnip', 'Tinsel', and 'Pudding'). But the majority of litters are given names that begin with a common letter. Umber's first litter have all been given names beginning with L. The boys are Luke Lex and Lionel. The girls are Lena, Lexi, Leyla and Lilac.

We're looking forward to hearing about their progress in the months to come.

News from our pups

Diesel has just celebrated his second birthday and has learned all the high level skills that are required of every Guide Dog. He and his Puppy Raisers enjoyed a very happy reunion in Roath Park where the daffodils showed Diesel's handsome black coat to great advantage.



Diesel

Des is growing fast and is jumping over bigger and bigger obstacles during his walks in the woods. He has recently enjoyed a holiday in Pembrokeshire where he loved the common land around Dinas Head but remained suspicious of the waves that crept up onto his toes when he played on the beach!

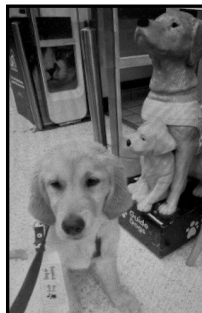
friends,

Dora is enjoying meeting new

but not all of them are able to play!

Honorary Chepstow pup Diffy has been matched and is working on the Isle of Wight. We wish him, and his Guide

Dog Owner health and happiness.



Dora



Des & Toddy

Now that honorary Chepstow pup Toddy has had all his vaccinations, and has been signed off by his Puppy development Advisor he is enjoying lots of free runs and outings.

To find out more about Guide Dogs and their amazing work take a look at the website www.guidedogs.org



Update from Miri Keen



Please Notice This



Found in other churches' notices:

"illiterate? write to the church office for help."



Fairtrade Chocolate Quiz

For the Easter Holidays there was a Fairtrade Easter Egg Hunt in Chepstow Town Centre. The following are the questions from that Hunt. Do you know, or can you find the answers? All correct entries will be entered into a prize draw and the winner will receive some Fairtrade Chocolate.



- Q1. What does buying Fairtrade chocolate mean for the farmers?
- Q2. What community projects does Fairtrade support?
- Q3. Where does the cocoa come from in Green and Black's Maya Gold bars?
- Q4. How much of the chocolate eaten in the UK is Fairtrade?
- Q5. What is the Fairtrade mark recognized for worldwide?
- Q6. How many children work on Fairtrade farms?
- Q7. Who in Ghana owns the Divine Chocolate Company?
- Q8. What was the first product to be awarded the Fairtrade mark?



Have a go and see if you can win.

(Fairtrade Forum members excluded.)
Answers will be in the next magazine.



Rules for Editing: Be more or less specific.



Bullet Point News

✝ Thinking about Baptism/Christening or a Wedding in church?

It has been lovely to have people getting in touch once again about getting their baby christened or perhaps having a wedding in church. Many congratulations if you're at this stage of life!

Please do get in touch with Revd Nicki Bullivant or one of the team.

For weddings visit <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>

For baptisms/christenings visit <https://churchofenglandchristenings.org/>

✝ Is God calling you?

All of us reflect on the purpose of our lives at some point. Part of this reflection can lead us to having a sense of being called to do something particular in or with our lives. May the Holy Spirit lead you to respond to what the Lord may require of you. Please do not hesitate to speak with someone at church about this. It is quite normal and remember, God can use any of us he chooses!

✝ Illness

We would like to remind parishioners (church and non-church folks) that they should not hesitate to contact us in the event of illness and hospitalisation. If nothing else, vital prayers can be offered for those in need.

✝ Churchyards

Our churchyards are very special spaces for remembering departed loved ones. Therefore out of respect for *all* mourners please remember that grave-areas **should conform** to the churchyard regulations. This allows for peaceful use and trouble-free maintenance throughout the churchyard. The Parochial Church Council kindly asks that no extraneous additions (stones, plastic flowers, ornaments and statuary, plants, trees, vases, kerb-edging, etc.) are placed in or around graves. ***The planting of trees is a particular issue which may cause damage to other graves and prevent a grave space being reopened in the future.*** Thank you.

✝ Legacy

We have been humbled and most grateful to have received legacy donations in the past. Perhaps we could all think about leaving a financial gift when we die which can help towards the costs of mission and ministry for the future, particularly at this challenging time.



Chase WI

Our February meeting was more informal than usual being the Members' meeting where the WI resolutions were discussed and voted on, plans for future outings, walks & picnics were finalised and which ended in a quiz devised by our President, Helen Watkins, whose decision was final!



Great Oaks
H O S P I C E

In March we had a visit from representatives of the Great Oaks Hospice. Contrary to most members' ideas, GOH does not have resident beds in the Hospice but does Hospice @ Home Care 365 days a year for those in the Forest of Dean requiring end of life care. The Hospice itself runs daily sessions with different groups including complementary therapies such as massage, reflexology and flower remedies, as well as supporting families at a difficult time. It is not a place to go to die! Our WI has previously supplied cakes for the Hospice but this time was asked for small items suitable for raffle prizes and responded in the usual generous fashion.

Members had requested a refresher course in CPR and the use of defibrillators and in April this was provided with humour and enthusiasm by four members of St John's Ambulance. We were shocked by the statistics on cardiac heart failure - only 6 - 8% of sufferers achieve a successful recovery in England and only 4% in Wales. We had the opportunity to try CPR on the dummies provided and were also given advice on the best methods to deal with a choking emergency.

Some members went to see "Calamity Jane" at the Savoy Theatre in Monmouth later in the month and enjoyed an entertaining evening and plans are afoot for a walk in our lovely Gloucestershire countryside in May which will be led by our most experienced walker, Shirley Rickards. We are hoping there will not be TOO many hills!

If anyone would like to join us, we meet on the second Monday of the month at Chase School at 2.15pm and new members will be very welcome.



CHASE GARDENING CLUB



Our recent meetings, as usual, have offered a wide variety of topics.

In February we were treated to a wonderful set of photographs by Mandy Bradshaw. She

explained that her career as a journalist took an unexpected turn when she was asked to write a gardening column. She found she really enjoyed the experience and eventually wrote the gardening column for *Country Life* for 22 years. As a journalist she gained access to many gardens, both private and public, and showed us how different designs and plantings had been incorporated into many gardens in Gloucestershire. She particularly recommended visiting Highnam Court several times a year since Roger Head, the owner, is constantly developing new areas within the gardens.

Kevin Alviti gave a fascinating and amusing talk in March on Unusual Fruit and Veg. Kevin is a smallholder, carpenter and stay at home Dad of three children. His talk started with a description of his very busy life style and went on to describe about 20 of the more unusual crops he grows. These include Peruvian Black Mint, which looks a bit like cannabis but is not related and grows to 8ft tall and is very minty and Yacon, which is related to sunflowers and whose swollen roots contain thirst quenching water and a sugar substitute useful for diabetics. Yacon is also good in stir fries but not so successful when made into crisps!

For our April meeting Marion Stainton gave a talk on The Spring Garden - Works and Wonders. Marion's talk was an informative illustrated list of the gardening jobs that need doing in spring along with useful hints and tips on how to do each of them. Her recommendations included a "NO DIG" approach to soils to preserve their structure, ecosystems and carbon dioxide storage.

We were told what to prune in spring and how to do it including the useful reminder "If it flowers before the end of June - prune after flowering, if it flowers after the end of June prune in winter." Finally, she gave a list of pests and diseases to look out for.

We held a successful plant sale in May and in June we will hold a Summer Supper to round off the Chase Gardening Club year. We are a friendly club and welcome visitors and new members. Meetings are held at Chase School on the third Friday of the month at 2:30 pm Our next meeting is on Friday 18th September.

For further information please contact Stella Caws 07941 213777
or Bill Kerr 01291 621100



TUTSHILL W.I.

Over the last few months, we have enjoyed a talk/mini-demo on Willow Weaving which culminated in us creating our own wicker dragonflies, a Juggling Workshop when we also grappled with plate spinning, diabolo, devil sticks and a poi – degrees of success were various, to say the least! – and a talk on the history of women policing in Gloucestershire.

This month (May) we look forward to a talk on gin by Andy Cole of Vintopia then a Shiatsu Workshop in June, by Georgina Hope. Weather permitting, there will be a visit to Eastcliff garden in July, maybe with picnic, but that of course will depend on the weather gods ... As usual, there will be no meeting in August and we will reconvene in September for a session on Lip Reading.

We have an associated Craft Group who meet twice a month (usually at Café on the Hill), whose handiwork is often to be seen displayed on the bus shelter. There is also a monthly Book Club who meet in Chepstow. You do not have to be a WI member to attend either group.

If any of the above appeals to you, why not come along and see what you think of us? Our meetings are usually, though not always, on the third Monday of the month, 7.30pm in Tutshill Memorial Hall; but may take place elsewhere depending on the speaker/topic of the evening.

If you would like to know more about our activities, do please contact our Secretary, Pat Cannon: secretarytutshillwi@gmail.com / 07795 424694

Fact
gatherings...

When is the summer solstice?
The summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere typically occurs on June 21st, though it can sometimes fall on June 20th or June 22nd. This day marks the longest period of daylight in the year and the official beginning of astronomical summer



tidenham historical group

Evening meetings from September to April are usually held monthly on the last Tuesday at 7.30 in Sedbury Village Hall, King Alfred's Road, Sedbury NP16 7AQ. Visitors are always welcome. For more information contact Liz on 07804 744614, Carol on 01291 623736/07712 574471 or e-mail tidenhamhistorygroup@gmail.com

OUR SERIES OF MONTHLY EVENING MEETINGS AT THE VILLAGE HALL HAS ENDED NOW AND WILL START AGAIN ON SEPTEMBER 29TH 2026.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Saturday
20th June 2026
1.30—5.00pm

We are hosting a Gloucester Local History Association event at Tidenham. There is a choice of 4 opportunities to learn more about:

- 1) the Wye Valley railway;
- 2) the Severn Princess ferry including access onto the ship;
- 3) the fascinating history of the church and some of the characters associated with the parish;
- 4) the history of Tutshill village including an exclusive tour of a private garden with spectacular views of the Wye.

The Friends of Tidenham Church who are co-hosting the event are providing a delicious afternoon tea at 4 pm. If you would like to attend or need more information please contact Carol on 07712574471 or carolclammer@googlemail.com.

July/August

We are planning a guided walk around Gloucester Docks led by Tony Conder who gave us an excellent talk entitled "Gloucester and its Tall Ships from home trade to Hollywood".

Officially opened in April 1827, the Gloucester Docks and the associated Gloucester and Sharpness Canal allowed sea-going vessels to reach the city, making it the most inland port in the UK. Many sailing vessels could be seen passing Beachley as they slowly made their way up to the canal entrance at Sharpness. The harbour at Gloucester has many of the old buildings still in use as well as an excellent canal museum.

Details will be sent out to members when the date is confirmed.



Where are we now?

Austerity gave way to years of political turmoil, with Brexit, populism, Trump and China confusing the old narrative.

The world wasn't turning out to be as secular or as stable as some had predicted. This wasn't necessarily good news.

Indeed, in many cases – as 'strongman' politicians maneuvered into power and the global democratic deficit deepened – it was distinctly bad news. But it did provoke some big questions: 'What made the West what it is? Why have and why should we value the principles of political freedom and representative democracy?' These questions invited big answers. Some of those answers were theological, as our volume *The Evolution of the West: how Christianity shaped our values* claimed. Whether you agreed with our arguments or not, it was clear that the script was changing.

And then, if this wasn't enough, there was a pandemic which, quite apart from bringing uncertainty, fear and loss to millions of people, seemingly caused many to ask big questions about themselves. Research presented in Bible Society's [*The Quiet Revival one year on*](#) seems to confirm that young people are asking big spiritual questions and increasingly finding answers to them in the pages of the Bible, the welcome of local churches, and the life of Jesus Christ.

Both sets of questions – 'who are we as a society/civilisation?' and 'who am I as a person?' – remain large and urgent today. If someone had told us when we were launched that Theos' big projects for 2026 would be an exploration of the rise in interest in Christianity among young people in England, and a detailed study of the rise of Christian politics worldwide, I'm not sure we would have believed them.

But 20 years is a long time, and what seems like destiny in the windscreen can sometimes look like a mere smudge in the rear-view mirror. This radically changed landscape – not to mention the rise of AI and the question of what it means to be human, the challenges around immigration and the mandate to 'love the alien', and the need for religious education in and beyond the classroom: just three of Theos' current projects – underlines quite how much we need Theos today.

Here's to the next 20 years!



Christian News
Our Faith in Today's World



Nearly 6,000 victims Chibok, Borno State, north-eastern Nigeria received food supplied by Barnabas Aid supporters Of violent persecution in Nigeria

➤ **Persecution in Nigeria:** “We are blessed by our brethren from abroad. This is Christianity.” These were the words of a Nigerian believer, one of nearly 6,000 in Chibok, Borno State, who received food aid funded by Barnabas Aid’s supporters.

Each beneficiary received enough food to last for three months. “People have seen God at work because they never expected to get this help,” said our project partner. “God has provided.”

➤ **Egypt grants registration for another 191 churches:**

Licenses have been approved by the Egyptian government for another 191 churches and church-affiliated buildings. The go-ahead for the 30th batch of applications was given on 16 April 2026 by the licensing committee, headed by Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly. It brings the number of registrations approved to 3,804 out of a new total of 5,415 applications. Tens of thousands of churches still await legal recognition. Some have applied, but it is not clear whether their applications are under consideration; others have been unable to apply due to various bureaucratic reasons.





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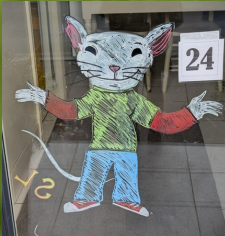
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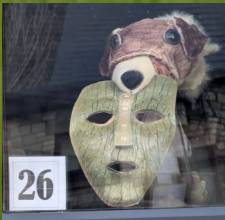
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