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May 2023

# Eastcombe, Bussage & Brownshill Newsletter

Welcome to the May issue of the newsletter. To receive it FREE on email every month, contact [eastcombebandednews@gmail.com](mailto:eastcombebandednews@gmail.com) to join the circulation list. You can also read the newsletter online at [www.chalford-glos.gov.uk/Newsletters](http://www.chalford-glos.gov.uk/Newsletters) 34865.aspx & [www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/eastcombe/](http://www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/eastcombe/).

Printed copies 60p each from **Eastcombe Stores, Eastcombe Post Office, Frith Community Café & Chalford Parish Centre**. The newsletter is also available to customers of **Head First & The Lamb Inn**. Please send items for the June issue to [eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com](mailto:eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com) by **NOON on 20th MAY**.

## EASTCOMBE CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

**Sunday 7th May 12-5pm!**

**JOIN IN THE FUN AT EASTCOMBE GREEN!**

Enjoy **ENTERTAINMENT** provided by the prize winning **Chalford Band, Ballyhoo Dance, the Ragged & Old Morris Dancers, the Hilltop Band & 'Third Cousin' shanty singers!**

**FOR THE CHILDREN**, there will be a **face painter, soft play** (under 5s), the chance to bring/make & **wear a crown** (prizes for the best!) and a **Coronation Trail** will be available across the weekend.

**FOOD & DRINKS** will be on offer at **The Lamb Inn** (barbecue and Sunday lunch—please book Sunday lunch in advance) and **Eastcombe Stores** - or bring a picnic. Enjoy ice creams from the **Cotswold Ice Cream Co.** and the **bring & buy cake stall** (please donate cakes!) in aid of Stroud Food Bank. Roads at the Green will be closed, with tables & chairs in Dr Crouch's Road.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to help decorate the Green (Friday 10am), to set up on Sunday morning (from 9.30am), and to clear up on Sunday afternoon.

**Please donate cakes** and sweet treats for the **charity cake stall**—bring them along on the day.

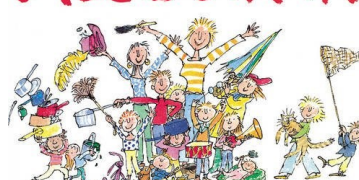
**SEE YOU ON SUNDAY 7TH MAY!**



**EASTCOMBE WI marks its 90th birthday this month.**

Find out more about its history on **PAGE 8**.

**ALL JOIN IN**



**MAY MEANS MANY EVENTS: SEE POSTERS BELOW.** More details inside...

**NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME**  
Gardens Open For Charity

**Eastcombe and Bussage Gardens**

Eastcombe, Stroud, GL6 7EB

1 Jasmine Cottage • 1 The Laurels • 12 Hidcote Close • 17 Farmcote Close • 20 Farmcote Close • 21 Farmcote Close • Cadsonbury • Hawkey Cottage • Highlands • Redwood • White House • Woodview Cottage • Yew Tree Cottage

**Sunday 30 April**  
**Monday 1 May**  
**1.30 - 5.30pm**

Combined entry £8 Children free

Tickets and Maps from Eastcombe Village Hall GL6 7EB and Redwood GL6 8AZ

**The Eastcombe Coronation Celebrations**  
**May 7th 2023**  
**12 - 5pm.**  
Dr. Crouch's Road • Village Green  
The Lamb Inn and Surroundings

**What's on.....**

**Chalford Band**  
**Ballyhoo Dance Group**  
**Shanty Singers**  
**Ragged and Old Morris**  
**Soft Play** (in Primary School)  
**Face painting** (until 3pm)  
**Coronation Trail** around Eastcombe  
**Parade of Children** from School  
**Hilltop Band**  
**Cake Stall**  
**Lamb's** • **barbecue** • **BBQ** • **Drinks**  
**Yummy Yummy** • **Ice cream**

**Bring a Picnic**

**HEDGEHOG AWARENESS WEEK** 30th April - 6th May 2017  
#hedgehogweek

**NATIONAL CIRCUS**

Sunday 7th May  
Bussage Primary School

Shows at: 1pm, 2.30pm and 4pm

Tickets £5 (child) and £6 (adult) available online:  
<https://bussage-primary-school-ptu.sumup.link/>

Registered charity no: 1132166



## BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS: MAY 2023

<https://bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/>

**Eastcombe Allotments:** A short survey has been distributed to all allotment holders and interested parties to get views on how the deer problem on the allotments should be resolved. By the time you read this the date for returning the survey will have passed, so we would like to thank all the people who responded and assure them that their views will be taken into consideration when any decision on remedial action is taken.

**Damage to the Wall at the Allotment Crossroads:** I suspect many of you will have noticed the recent damage to the stone wall bounding the allotments adjacent to the crossroads caused by a vehicle collision. The Parish Council are undertaking repairs to the wall and it is hoped that we will be able to reclaim the costs from the car driver's insurance.

**King Charles' Coronation:** The Parish Council is actively and financially supporting the Eastcombe Village Group with its celebration of the coronation of King Charles III. Hopefully this event will be well supported and prove to be as popular as last year's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

**Next Meeting:** Bisley Village Hall on Wednesday May 3rd at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

### EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

The Eastcombe Village Hall A.G.M. will be held on Monday 22nd May at 7.30pm in the Village Hall extension, with a cordial welcome for anyone who wishes to attend. The Committee hopes that all users enjoy the facilities available. The A.G.M. offers an opportunity for comments or constructive criticism, so please come along and air your views.

### BUSSAGE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE NEWS

Bussage Village Hall was gifted to the Parish in 1926, 'for the education and mental improvement, recreation and general benefit of the inhabitants.' Since then, it has been run by a small Management Committee, all volunteering time and energy to ensure the continued use of the hall as a community space.

At the end of last year, two long standing members of the committee stood down. Diana Rosenberg joined the Committee of the Hall back in 2001. The then Management Committee of the Hall had all resigned and the Parish Council was asked to call an emergency meeting. The outcome was a new Committee and Diana agreed to serve as Bookings Officer, later filling a vacant position of Trustee. In Diana's words, 'I thought that a Village Hall provided a needed facility for the well-being of the community and should be supported. My father was also the treasurer during the 60s and 70s.'

Simon Green for many years oversaw renovations and maintenance of the Hall, and joined as a trustee in 2007. He says: 'I felt it was important to keep the tradition of the village hall going. Particularly as I understand the hall was originally funded by a gift from local residents in the 1930's.'

The current Committee would like to thank both Diana and Simon for their many years of work and commitment to the running of the Hall. Last year, Chalford Parish Council became the holding trustee of the Hall and the Management Committee continues to work to ensure the future of the Hall.

**If you are interested in becoming a member of this Committee and have skills to share, please contact: [sally@rufflebrothers.com](mailto:sally@rufflebrothers.com)**

#### INTERESTED IN LOCAL HISTORY?

Join the **Eastcombe & Bismore Local History Group** on Facebook.



### EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL: MAY UPDATE:

At Eastcombe Primary we are always looking for creative ways to deliver our curriculum. Here is a small flavour of our recent learning.



Owl class have been learning about the Mayans, with a visit to Cadbury's World where they had a great day reinforcing their knowledge and tasting chocolate! In English, the children studied 'Holes' by Louis Sachar, using the text to write creatively. In Science, the class learned about living things and habitats, conducting an experiment by taking cuttings from a geranium plant.

Hedgehog class had a virtual tour of a local Cheltenham synagogue for RE. They listened carefully and asked lots of interesting questions. Their History topic was Romans and they enjoyed a visit to the Roman Baths where they learnt lots and had a lovely day out. In ICT lessons, the children have been learning how to touch type, a skill they will use throughout life.



Squirrel class enjoyed their Geography topic, Island Adventures, studying aerial photographs and maps. The whole class created a 3D map of Eastcombe and Bussage - a fun and shared learning experience. In PSHE, the children listened to the story 'Incredible Me' and celebrated their own unique strengths and talents.



To find out more about our small and friendly village school, ring 01452 770227 and come and look around. We have spaces available in all year groups.

**GO GREENER!**

*To make May a bit greener:*

**PLEASE don't trim**

(unless essential)

**Untrimmed verges create 'green corridors,' encouraging wildlife & promoting biodiversity.**

**Let the flowers bloom-& seed!**

Supported by  
Bisley-with-  
Lypiatt Parish  
Council  
Verges Policy

**THANK YOU!**

Supported by  
BisCAN  
(Bisley, Eastcombe & Oakridge  
Climate Action Network)

## CHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL: MAY 2023

01453 887204; [info@chalford-glos.gov.uk](mailto:info@chalford-glos.gov.uk) [www.chalford-glos.gov.uk](http://www.chalford-glos.gov.uk) [Facebook](#).



**It's all change at the Parish Council** - the Chair, **Cllr Paul Lilly**, is stepping down as Chair and Councillor at the beginning of May. We would like to thank Paul for his commitment and dedication to the residents of this parish during his 8 plus years of service.

Our **Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer, Christine Prince**, is retiring at the end of May after 21 years of service. A big thank you to Christine for the many years of assistance to residents and councillors. **Kate Arnold** will be replacing Christine as Clerk and **Lesley Sellars** as Deputy Clerk/RFO. We have yet to recruit an **Assistant Clerk**. **If you are interested in applying, please forward a copy of your CV.**

**Stagecoach** - District Cllr Tricia Watson has arranged a follow up meeting with both GCC and Stagecoach (date to be confirmed) to discuss the cuts to the 67 service and the need to look at more efficient bus routes within the Parish. We are collating information and would value your feedback. How have the cuts to the service affected you? Please get in touch: [info@chalford-glos.gov.uk](mailto:info@chalford-glos.gov.uk).

**Potholes** - We continue to work with both our County Cllr Chloe Turner and Highways to ensure that repairs are carried out in many areas, such as Old Neighbourhood, High Street, The Frith, Dark Lane, Toadsmoor Road and Middle Hill. You can report concerns to Highways by telephoning 08000 514514 or online at [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk) - report a highway issue.

**King Charles' Coronation** - We will be holding a tea party on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May at The Parish Centre (Gerald's Way) from midday until 3pm. Please pop along to have a slice of cake and a tea or coffee. We will also be replacing the seat that was stolen from the area outside Frithwood Surgery with a Coronation seat.

**Silver Street Car Park** - The Parish Council has taken on the ownership of this car park from Stroud District Council, and the area has been cleaned and the parking bays re-painted. We plan to hold a consultation with residents later this year to discuss a mutually agreed plan for the management of the car park.

**Frithwood Surgery Health Walks** will run every other week, starting at the surgery and ending at The Parish Centre for tea or coffee, and biscuits. A lovely way to get outside and meet new people.

**Speeding** - we receive numerous concerns regarding speeding in the Parish. If you would like to join our community speed watch group, please get in touch.

**The Old Neighbourhood Inn** - the current owners are finding it difficult to find someone to run the Inn and have put the pub back on the market. It needs some investment, but losing it would be a loss to the community. To form a working group to explore ideas to save the pub, please get in touch.

**Footpaths - accessibility and safety** - Parish Council Footpath Volunteers are working on the entrances to Bussage and France Lynch playing fields, improving access for those with disabilities, and improving safety - particularly for children. It will be a few months before we complete everything.

**Why not Come Along to a Meeting?** - Our next Full Council Meeting will be Thursday 4 May 2023 at 7pm. Please contact the Clerk beforehand to find out where the meeting will be held if you would like to attend, particularly if you wish to speak, so that she can make time for your issue on the agenda.

## BUSSAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL UPDATE:



We are very proud of the three Whole School winners of our Oracy Competition, who went forward to compete in their age groups in the Stroud Schools heat. All three were fantastic, speaking clearly, confidently and with great expression which really engaged the audience and judg-

es. Special congratulations to Eloisa Pockett who won the heat for her age group and will now compete against Gloucestershire schools. Well done to all three participants for their bravery and enthusiasm - fantastic representatives of Bussage C of E Primary School!

Over the Easter break, the PTA, in association with Renishaw, installed a new bicycle rack to encourage children out of cars for a "greener" way of travelling to school. Members of the Eco Committee were involved in the planning of the installation. Thanks to Rich Howe and Mathew Lupton of the PTA for making this happen.



**DON'T FORGET:** The PTA have arranged a **Circus on Sunday 7th May**, the Coronation Weekend.

There will be 3 shows: 1pm, 2.30pm and 4pm. Tickets are £6 for adults, £5 for children and available online:

<https://bussage-primary-school-pta.sumupstore.com/product/national-festival-circus-tickets-sunday-07-05-2023>

Finally, our new school year starts in September and we have places in several year groups. If you are looking for a place, or know anyone moving to the area, we would be delighted to show you around our school. Please contact us on 01453 883 205.

## FRITH COMMUNITY CAFÉ NEEDS YOU!

The Frith Community Cafe will close at the end of May - unless we can find a person or group of people who can organise this much-loved and very popular weekly event.

The Cafe takes place every Wednesday morning at Frith Youth Centre in Brownhill between 10.15am and 12 noon. We have an established group of volunteers who run it on a rota basis and bring provisions to sell. All our profits go to the Frith Youth Centre to help their excellent work. Coordinating the organisation of the Café is a very rewarding role and may suit a group of people working together - see what's involved below.

If you can help, please contact Carol on 07791 219876 or Bev Rosen (Youth Centre Administrator) at [frithyouthcentre@hotmail.com](mailto:frithyouthcentre@hotmail.com).

### WHAT'S INVOLVED?

**1. Wednesday mornings:** practical help setting up the furniture and the kitchen from around 9.30am, alongside the volunteers running the Cafe that week, and again from around 11.45am to clear away the furniture and lock up Frith Youth Centre.

**2. Weekly:** Complete the log book and take the profits to Chalford Parish Centre (Gerald's Way, Bussage). Re-stock supplies, as necessary.

**3. Every 7 weeks:** Make a rota by telephone. Send out the completed rota by email. Remind volunteers by email a few days before their duty.





## Eastcombe Baptist Church

A service is held every Sunday morning, at 10:30am, at the church in Dr Crouch's Road, Eastcombe.

### DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NOTES: MAY

Some of the ways in which Stroud District Council are working to make the district carbon-neutral by 2030:

**Council home energy efficiency:** SDC is using a Government grant of £1.7million to cut tenants' energy bills and carbon emissions, including insulation and window replacements, reducing annual bills by £200 and saving 200 tonnes of carbon emissions at the same time. The aim is that all council housing achieves EPC rating C by 2030.

**Heat pumps will replace ageing boilers** at Stratford Park Leisure Centre, the Museum in the Park, and The Pulse Leisure Centre in Dursley.

**£500,000 will go to walking and cycling schemes.**

**Electric vehicle charging points will be installed** in SDC owned car parks.

Where possible, SDC will **replace retiring recycling and waste diesel vehicles** with electric. Where technology does not yet permit, Ubico will use palm-oil-free Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil fuel, to lower carbon emissions.

The new **Strategic Lead Officer for Nature Recovery & Biodiversity** will help to develop the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Biodiversity Net Gain policy.

Following consultation, a new policy will encourage long-term phasing out of higher polluting **taxi and private hire vehicles** in the district. From 1st April 2025, renewal applications must be Euro 6 compliant (unless ultra-low emission vehicles or electric vehicles) with wheelchair accessible vehicles remaining exempt.

**Housing for Refugees:** 15 homes currently housing refugees will eventually become part of SDC housing stock.

A **Bicycle Mayor** will champion all things cycling in the district, liaising with residents and industry, sharing best practice.

**EVENT: Big Bike Ride:** A family-friendly ride from the Bike Drop at Brimscombe Mills to Stroud Farmers Market takes place every 1st Saturday of the month, from 10am.

As always, please do contact me about anything District Council-related:

Martin Brown, Green Party District Councillor:  
01452 770878 or [cllr.martin.brown@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.martin.brown@stroud.gov.uk)

## St Michael's & All Angels, Bussage

Visitors are always welcome. **Services for this month are:**

- **May 14th - Holy Communion at 9.30am**
- **May 21st - Morning Prayer at 9.30am\***
- **May 21st - Hilltop Cafe Church, 2.30pm (at Eastcombe Village Hall) - see poster**

\*Morning Prayer is a simpler, shorter service

On other Sundays there are services in different parts of the Benefice. For details visit

[www.bisleybenefice.org.uk](http://www.bisleybenefice.org.uk) or sign up to our mailing list: [pewslipsbisley@hotmail.com](mailto:pewslipsbisley@hotmail.com).

For weddings, funerals & baptisms, contact Revd Sue Murray: [vicar@bisleybenefice.org.uk](mailto:vicar@bisleybenefice.org.uk)



### CELEBRATING THE KING'S CORONATION at FRITH COMMUNITY CAFÉ

The Community Cafe will celebrate the Coronation of King Charles on Wednesday 3rd May at Frith Youth Centre, from 10.15am.

We will be supported by Connect, a local group of Christian neighbours who often help us to celebrate important events in a meaningful, informal and happy way.



There will be a quiz featuring King Charles, an opportunity to reflect and remember our monarch and what that means to us, plus the chance to enjoy celebratory cakes, a hot drink, and to toast King Charles. We will sing 'God Save the King' to conclude a patriotic and nostalgic event.



All welcome.

Carol and Team.

## CHALCAN UPDATE: MAY 2023

# ChalCAN

There was a good turn-out at the Pond Making Workshop at Eastcombe Village Hall in March. If you missed it, have a look at [www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-pond](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-pond).

Our next **Community Walk** is on **Saturday 20th May, 10am from Chalford Sports and Social Club**, followed by coffee and cakes. Children, and dogs on leads, welcome. Check our [Facebook](#) page for details nearer the time.

The ChalCAN Biodiversity Group is planning a '**Nature Street**' event at **Sycamore Grove**, in Middle Hill, to encourage residents just establishing their gardens to incorporate nature friendly features.

Those interested in restarting a **Food and Waste Group** recently met and will be initially focussing on establishing a composting scheme in the area. If you are interested, please get in touch.

The **Energy Group** continue their surveys to identify where improvements to insulation might help increase energy efficiency. Recent attention focussed on the Frith Youth Centre.

**A big thank you** to the donor who left four healthy young oak trees at the Parish Council offices recently for us to replant in a suitable spot. More donations welcome - all trees will be planted locally.

If you are part of a local community group and wish to get involved in the **Great Big Green Week (10-18th June)** do get in touch. It's an opportunity to engage with sustainability issues and, where possible, put these on show. ChalCAN will be running events, but we'd love local groups and schools to also join in.

A welcome to ChalCAN's **new Administrator** – Gill Thomas.

Sharing the countryside with our dogs: do check out the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust [Canine Code](#)

**To get involved with ChalCAN please contact us: [info@chalcan.org.uk](mailto:info@chalcan.org.uk), visit [chalcan.org.uk/](http://chalcan.org.uk/) or our [Facebook](#) page.**

## EASTCOMBE WI: APRIL MEETING:



Pauline welcomed 20 members including one returning member. Business included local and County events, an interesting report from Beryl on the County ACM, and we voted on the year's Resolution on Water Quality. Also prominent was the plan for our 90th birthday in May.

Our speaker was Mr. Paul Evans, whose programme was "Humorous Poems", and he lived up to that. Included were poems of unrequited love, and various tales, including 'When I', which struck a chord with the audience, and Alan Titchmarsh's tale about a Yorkshire man's take on the *Messiah*, was a triumph. It was an evening of much laughter and he was thanked by Marg.

Our next meeting is a closed one for our 90th Anniversary and we will welcome visitors again in June.

Eastcombe WI are a very friendly group of women who enjoy friendships, good speakers and outings. Most meetings are open to visitors for a small fee and new members are always welcome. Meetings take place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.15pm at Eastcombe Village Hall, and usually include some form of entertainment.

For more information please contact the Secretary, Glenys Sharpe, on 01453 886298

## SCREEN ON THE GREEN

presents

## LIVING

**Director:** Oliver Hermanus

**Starring:** Bill Nighy, Aimee Lou Wood, Alex Sharp

Overwhelmed at work and lonely at home, a bureaucrat's life is turned upside down when he is diagnosed with a terminal illness. Influenced by a local decadent and a vibrant woman, he searches for meaning until a simple revelation helps him to create a legacy for the next generation.

**Venue:** Eastcombe Village Hall

**Date:** Saturday 20th May

**Time:** Doors open 7pm,  
Film starts 7.30pm

**Admission:** £4 per person

**Ice Creams** £2 each

**All welcome!**

## BisCAN (Bisley, Eastcombe & Oakridge Climate Action Network)

### GARDENING FOR NATURE

Let's make our part of the Cotswolds a haven for wildlife! Even in a small garden, we can garden for nature, creating mini nature reserves and wildlife corridors for insects, birds, mammals and all the amazing micro-organisms that live in our soil, plants and trees.

#### Here are some ideas:

- **Don't use pesticides or slug pellets**—poisons that kill not only the pests, but also many other organisms. The Parish Council has already banned pesticides (including herbicides) on land it owns and manages.
- **Use peat-free compost:** Peat is a major store of carbon and a vital habitat for innumerable living organisms. Make your own compost, get it from Bisley Community Compost Scheme, or buy only peat-free brands.
- **Give your lawnmower a break:** Mow a bit less and see daisies, dandelions, clover, cowslips and trefoils appear, bringing colour to the garden and providing nectar for visiting insects.
- **Leave areas uncut and undisturbed:** We humans like a well-cut lawn or field, but wildlife thrives in the untidy corners. Untidy is good!
- **Create a pond:** This will attract wildlife into your garden, including amphibians, dragonflies and all manner of other creatures, as well as providing a water source and bathing area for wild birds and mammals.
- **Create a pile** in a corner of the garden—logs or stones to create habitat for reptiles, insects and small mammals. Leave dead wood alone.

BisCAN, together with ChalCAN and Sheepscombe wildlife groups, are hoping to create a **map of all the things, great and small, we do to help wildlife.** Please tell us what you are doing: [bisleyeastcombeoakridgecan@gmail.com](mailto:bisleyeastcombeoakridgecan@gmail.com).



## Canal Spring Festival 13<sup>th</sup>-14th May:

Take **The Lock Challenge on Saturday May 13th**, exploring the canals and seeing history in the making. Choose a 10 mile, 5 mile or 5 km run/walk, a 3-4 km route suitable for wheelchairs or a 3 mile kayak/paddleboard time trial.

Please book in advance ([www.letsdothis.com/gb/e/tlc-193303](http://www.letsdothis.com/gb/e/tlc-193303)) with profits to the canal restoration.

**Sunday 14th May is a free, family day along the canal**, with stalls, activities and food and drink.



## RIDGEWAY PLAYGROUP

At Ridgeway we have all had a very busy few weeks. We have been thinking a lot about keeping active and healthy and have added an 'Active Hour' into our weekly planning. The children love these extra active times and we change what we do each week to surprise them.

Supastrikers also visit us once a term to teach ball skills, coordination, team work and much more - Coach Donna and Coach Lily teach us so much.

We have also enjoyed local walks in the spring sunshine and staff have been super proud of how well the children behave whilst we are out and about. We are looking forward to some lovely sunny days so that we can enjoy our beautiful garden and our local area too.



## HILLTOP CAFE CHURCH

Christian Worship for those of all faiths and none.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May

2.30PM

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL



## KEEP IT LOCAL!

Looking for holiday accommodation? This one bedroom holiday home in Brownshill is now available to let through AirBnB:

Click [HERE](#) or search

**Cotswold Dog Friendly Home**, in Brownshill



Introducing 'Bloom In May', a local business offering floristry for weddings, events and special occasions.

I also have a range of beautiful décor for hire to add those perfect finishing touches.

Call 07739 036287 or email

[tanya@bloominmay.co.uk](mailto:tanya@bloominmay.co.uk)

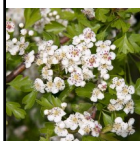
Instagram- #bloominmayevents

If you run a local business or organisation and would like a (free) mention in the newsletter one month, get in touch: [EMAIL THE NEWSLETTER](#)

## HAWTHORN: The May Tree

Hawthorn is a pagan symbol of fertility and has ancient associations with May Day.

Hawthorn blossom, also called 'May blossom' marks the point at which spring turns into summer.



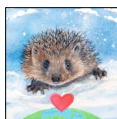
The old saying 'Cast ne'er a clout 'ere May is out' almost certainly refers to the opening of hawthorn flowers in May, not the end of the month!



## FRITH YOUTH CENTRE

Money raised by a raffle at February's showing of Eastcombe Screen on the Green was recently gratefully received by Frith Youth Centre, an important place for young people on the hill top.

**Watch out for more details about the Centre in the June issue of the newsletter.**



## HEDGEHOG AWARENESS WEEK: 30TH APRIL-6TH MAY 2023

Hedgehog Awareness Week is run by the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and aims to highlight the problems hedgehogs face - and how we can help.

### Why do we need Hedgehog Awareness Week?

Sadly, hedgehog population numbers are in decline, with numbers falling by up to 50% since 2000. This is partly due to shrinking habitats, but may also be due to the use of pesticides such as slug pellets and other environmental factors, such as climate change.

Hedgehogs play an important role in maintaining biodiversity in our ecosystems, controlling pests like slugs and snails which can damage garden plants and crops.

### How can we help hedgehogs?

- Create a hedgehog highway to allow hedgehogs in and out of your garden
- Cover drains and deep holes and ensure there's an easy route out of ponds.
- Check areas thoroughly before mowing or strimming.
- Build a hedgehog home.
- Avoid using pesticides and poisons.
- Pick up litter, so that wildlife does not get trapped or injured.
- Drive carefully, especially at night when hedgehogs are out & about

### Hedgehog Facts:

- Hedgehogs are so-called because they root through hedges in search of small creatures to eat, making a grunting sound similar to that of a pig.
- Their eyesight isn't very good. Instead, they hunt using hearing and smell.
- Hedgehogs have over 5000 spikes.
- There are 15 species of hedgehog, but the UK only has one native species, the European Hedgehog.
- A group of hedgehogs is called an array, but it's rare to see them together.
- Hedgehogs can swim—and can even climb trees!

## HILLTOP GARDENING CLUB HAPPENINGS...

A sunny evening brought a good number to the first talk of the spring season at Eastcombe Village Hall—'Allotments- soils and care' by Robert Bryant, warden for Eastcombe allotments, and Lesley Evans, nee Greene, warden of Bisley Chestergate allotments and stalwart of the Bisley Community Composting Scheme. Between them, they have vast experience - Robert designing gardens with flowers at their heart, and Lesley vegetable growing and as an ambassador for soil enrichment.

Eastcombe has 56 plots, most in cultivation. Bisley allotment is an open space, with large plots surrounded by hedgerows and a community orchard at one end. There are currently plots available at both sites.

Robert began with photographs of his 'journey' at Eastcombe since 2018, before a discussion on pests and how to care for plots organically. Lesley spoke out for no-dig gardening (Charles Dowding), composting and avoiding rotavation, which breaks up couch grass and damages the texture of the soil. She explained that gardeners will not be able to use peat based compost from next year.

A pond encourages wildlife, whether a small bowl or a larger pond, introducing toads which remove slugs without any need for poisons! It's essential to ensure that animals, e.g. hedgehogs, can drink but be able to climb out.

Both allotment sites have wild flower meadows - Robert transformed a dumping ground in one corner to a flowery meadow - buying seed wholesale allowed a greater area to be sown (perhaps plot holders can share?) Pernicious weeds need to be cleared first and seed must touch the soil for germination. Some Bisley allotment holders have wild flora on their plots, which encourages pollinators, who then aid fruiting. Plot holders swap plants and give excess fruit and vegetables to the Stroud Food Bank.

**Next Meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> May: 'Hilltop Team Gardening Tips':** sowing, and planting a wild flower meadow.

**Meetings are at Eastcombe Village Hall, 7.15pm (coffee), with talks starting at 7.45pm.**

Members free, visitors £3. Membership £15 a year.

**Our programme is on the website:**

[www.hilltopgardeningclub.org.uk](http://www.hilltopgardeningclub.org.uk)



**Saturday 13 May 10.30am-12pm: Plants/pre-loved tool sale, The Lamb Inn garden.**

Jenny Exley



"A 13cm square gap in the bottom of your fence or wall will help hedgehogs, who travel around a mile a night."

# CAROL'S COOKERY CORNER: CORONATION CUPCAKES

## INGREDIENTS:

- 120g softened butter
- 120g caster sugar
- 150g self raising flour
- Pinch of baking powder (add to flour)
- 2 eggs
- 12 paper cup cases
- Red & blue colouring
- Cake decoration sprinkles: edible silver balls, strands etc

## METHOD:

1. Heat the oven to 170 degrees/ gas mark 5 (fan 160 degrees).
2. Cream together the butter and caster sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Add the beaten egg alternately with the flour until all is incorporated, then give a final beat.
4. Place the paper cake cases in a 12 hole patty tin and 3/4 fill them with mixture.
5. Bake 20+ minutes until golden brown, firm and springy to the touch.
6. Allow to cool.



## LEMON ICING

(lemon gives extra flavour)

## INGREDIENTS:

- 200g icing sugar (approx)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (approx)

## METHOD:

1. Put the icing sugar into a bowl and add enough lemon juice to make a fairly thick paste.
2. Divide into 3 portions. Colour one red, one blue and leave the 3rd.
3. Spread onto the cakes & decorate with sprinkles - enjoy using your creative talents!



**Eastcombe Coronation Celebration**

**CAKES NEEDED!**

**BRING & BUY CAKE STALL**

on Eastcombe Village Green

Please bring along donations of cakes & sweet treats

between 12-5pm on

**Sunday, 7th May**

**Thank You!**

IN AID OF STROUD FOODBANK

## A MAN OF EASTCOMBE: REMEMBERING BILL BEER ...

William Beer, known as Bill, was born in 1933, one of 10 children, in Cardiff, opposite Cardiff Arms Park, by the River Taff. His father, also William, was a blacksmith and worked at Cardiff Docks, while mother Florence came from Mountain Ash.

Money was tight, so Bill worked weekends on a greengrocer's stall. The greengrocer, Mr Crab, told him that he could eat an apple when minding the stall. One day, Mr Crab found a huge pile of apple cores - he didn't realise that, when you come from a large family, the chance of extra food was too good to miss.

In WWII, the family had a lucky escape when a parachute bomb floated past, destroying 30 houses nearby, killing many. Bill's father built bunks in the cellar as an air raid shelter. Three of Bill's brothers and one sister served in the war - his brother Stanley's ship was torpedoed on convoy duty and he was believed lost, but he turned up months later.

After leaving school, Bill worked as a telegram boy in Cardiff before joining the RAF, posted to Oxfordshire, then Aston Down. He worked on many different aircraft, including Lancaster bombers, Spitfires, the first jets and the Canberra. One day, one of the Canberra mechanics knocked a lever which dropped the whole aircraft undercarriage onto the ground - this accident saw new safety measures added to all Canberras.

Bill met Patricia Webb at a dance at Chalford, where she lived with her father, the village postman, and her mother, Annie, originally from Aberystwyth, at Westcot (now Barley Cottage) in Randall's Green. Bill would walk to Chalford from Aston Down via Gypsy Lane; one day, he heard heavy coughing as he walked - worried he was being followed, he was relieved when the coughing turned to mooing and he realised it was a cow!



Bracelands, then a cul de sac

Bill & Patricia married in 1954 at the Congregation Chapel, Chalford Hill, and were one of the first to move into Bracelands, Eastcombe, where Bill was to stay for over 60 years. In those days, Bracelands was a cul-de-sac; the sketch, left, is painted from the field (now covered by houses) between the tin church hall (destroyed by fire in 1962) and St Mary's. The new houses of Bracelands seemed very modern with inside toilets, bathrooms and coal boilers - Westcot, where Pat had grown up, had no inside toilet or bathroom and just a cold water tap. However, the garden was stony, so, every spring, Bill would take delivery of a mountain of manure, which he would spend days moving by wheelbarrow and spreading across the garden.

Each month Bill would use the red phone box below the Green to ring friends and family in Cardiff. In those days, Gerald Gardiner's coal yard lay where The Lamb Inn car park is now. Bill never forgot his Welsh roots and liked to sing *Calon Lan* in Welsh to his children. At weekends, he would walk to Higgins Garage (a hut then, now Fourways garage) and buy chocolate bars, which he would chop up so that they all got a bit each.

Pat was involved in village events and she and Bill had many friends, including Ernest Gaston, the McKees, Townsends, Shaylors, Youngs, Martins, Braggs, Pritchards, Holbrows, the Davis family and many more.

After leaving the RAF, Bill worked for Hawker Sidney, Rolls Royce and Bensons. He loved tinkering with motorcycles and was a familiar sight in the 1960s in his distinctive red and white striped helmet, always stopping to give villagers a lift if he saw them out walking. After retirement, Bill spent a lot of time in his garden, and was often to be seen at the dry stone wall chatting to friends and passers by.

Pat passed away in 2010 and Bill in 2023. Teresa, Paul and Debra would like thank all who came to Bill's funeral on 1st March, at Bisley.





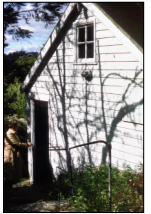
# VILLAGE HISTORIES: EASTCOMBE WI—90 YEARS of CAKE & COMRADESHIP!

Eastcombe WI celebrates its 90th birthday in May 2023. Founded in 1915 to revitalise rural communities and encourage women to get involved in food production during WWI, the WI's aims have broadened in the years since. It is now the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK.

Eastcombe WI's first meeting took place in the church rooms in 1933, the year it was affiliated in its own right. Later, the WI hut, in Wells Road, Eastcombe, was built, with a very small kitchen and an outside loo. In the 1980s, Eastcombe WI moved to Eastcombe Village Hall and the hut was sold.

Every year, the WI held a garden party at The Triangle, in Dr Crouch's Road, opened by a local celebrity. Stalls included a plant and vegetable stall run by the Andrews and Perkins families. Joy Vizor organised races and Dr Crouch judged children's paintings, which were hung in the garage.

Members of the WI are busy people, helping with many village events and activities over the years, including delivering newsletters, Friday Club, Scouts and Guides, Open Gardens, Frithwood Community Café, Meals on Wheels and, of course, baking cakes for fetes and jubilees.



The WI Hut



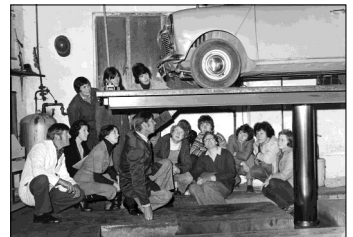
The WI Drama Group

In the 1960s and 70s Eastcombe was known for its carnival, with each village organisation entering a float. The procession paraded around the village led by the Chalford Silver Band, ending with a fête on the playing field. Around this time, Eastcombe WI also had a very successful Drama Group, which performed in the village and at festivals in Cheltenham and Bristol, winning prizes, including £100 in 1981. An annual pantomime was also written and produced by a member and her husband, Margaret and James Kershaw, with 3 evening performances and one Saturday matinee at Manor School (now Thomas Keble). In the 1970s, Eastcombe WI also formed a choir, which, at Christmas, would sing outside the houses of the village - usually ending up at The Triangle, home of the Dr Crouches, to enjoy a Christmas drink.



Until recently, Eastcombe WI was part of the Bisley Group, which included Bisley, Bussage, Oakridge, Miserden, Brimscombe and Thrupp and France Lynch. Each took turns to organise the year's events, including the Summer Group Meeting, with a speaker, refreshments and entertainment. At the annual Carol Concert in early December, each WI sang a carol or read a Christmas poem, beginning the Christmas festivities.

Members have enjoyed many classes over the years, including flower arranging, photography, local history and car mechanics, with an annual bursary for one member to attend a course of their choice at the WI national college, Denman, now run online. Currently, members enjoy a monthly Craft and Scrabble Afternoon (4th Tuesday of the month) at the Scout/Guide HQ in Eastcombe, with tea and biscuits and a friendly chat, and we attend National and County meetings, as well as County walks and holidays. There is also an annual outing to Weston Super Mare.



Car mechanics course, c.1960s

**Looking forward...** Eastcombe WI would welcome new members, bringing new ideas. We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7.15pm until approximately 9pm, at Eastcombe Village Hall. **Why not join us? All welcome.**

With thanks to Beryl Freebury & Olive Turner

## CHALFORD MARKET

CSSC  
Chalford Sports & Social Club

CRAFTY & DELICIOUS @ CHALFORD

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May**  
10am – 1pm

**NEXT MARKET:**  
Save the Date  
**Sunday 14th June**

**FOOD, DRINK, PLANTS, GIFTS & CRAFTS**

## Dream Garden

formerly known as DreamGate

**PSYCHIC FAYRE**  
Chalford Hill Sports And Social Club, Highfield Way, France Lynch, Stroud GL6 8LZ, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023.  
From 11am to 6pm

Psychics  
Mediums  
Crafts & Jewellery  
Therapeutic Massage  
Tarot  
Palmistry  
Healing

Mobile number: 07580 957 437  
Email address: janetandjohncepoke@gmail.com

**COULD YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER?**

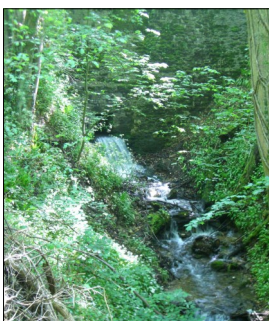
- An upcoming event?
- An article on local history?

**Please send contributions to:**  
[eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com](mailto:eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com)  
**by noon on 20<sup>th</sup> MAY.**

## WHAT'S ON in MAY?

**30 Apr-1 May:** NGS Open Gardens, 1.30-5.30pm  
**30 Apr-6 May:** Hedgehog Awareness Week  
**2 May:** Hilltop Gardening Club meeting, 7.15pm (7.45pm), Eastcombe Village Hall  
**3 May:** B-w-L PC meeting, 7.30pm, Bisley Village Hall/Frith Café Coronation Celebration, 10.15am-12pm, Frith Youth Centre  
**4 May:** Chalford PC meeting, 7pm  
**7 May:** Eastcombe Coronation Celebrations, 12-5pm/Bussage Primary School Circus, from 1pm.  
**13 May:** Plant & Pre-Loved Tool Sale, The Lamb Inn garden, 10.30am-12pm  
**13-14 May:** Canal Spring Festival  
**14 May:** Chalford Market, 10am-1pm, CSSC  
**20 May:** Eastcombe Screen on the Green, 7pm (7.30pm), Eastcombe Village Hall/ChalCAN Community Walk, CSSC, 10am  
**20 MAY: DEADLINE FOR JUNE NEWSLETTER**  
**21 May:** Hilltop Café Church, 2.30pm, Eastcombe Village Hall/Dream Garden Psychic Fayre, CSSC, 11am-6pm  
**22 May:** Eastcombe Village Hall AGM, 7.30pm, Eastcombe Village Hall annex.

## NAME THAT VIEW! How well do you know our villages?



April's photo was Spring Hill, in Eastcombe, the steep path which links The Street to Wells Road.

May's photo is once again taken in or around the 3 villages.

### Can you identify its location?

The answer will be revealed in the June issue.