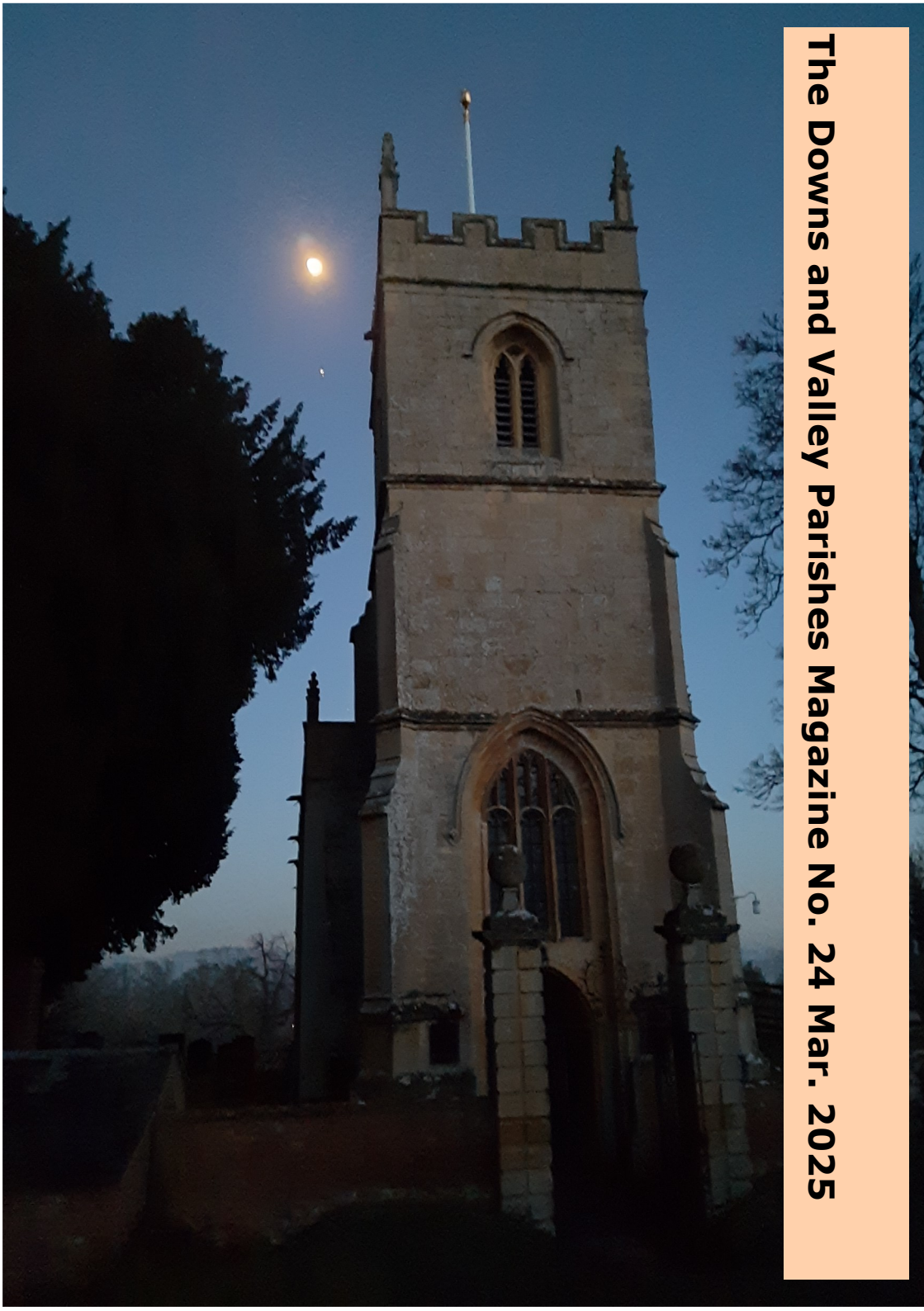


**The Downs and Valley Parishes Magazine No. 24 Mar. 2025**



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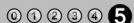
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MORE THINGS IN  
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## The Downs and Valley Parishes Service Rota

March 2025	St George's Darlingscott	St Mary's Ilmington	St Mary's Preston-on-Stour	St Peter's Stretton-on-Fosse	St Gregory's Tredington	St Mary's Whitchurch
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday before Lent</b>		11.00am Holy Communion with Baptism	6.00pm Evensong ( <i>1662</i> )	No Service	11.00am Morning Worship	
<b>Ash Wednesday</b>					7.00pm Holy Communion with Ashes	
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Lent 1</b>		11.00am Morning Worship	9.30am Holy Communion ( <i>1662</i> )		11.00am Holy Communion	
<b>16<sup>th</sup> Lent 2</b>		11.00am Holy Communion		9.30am Holy Communion	11.00am Morning Worship	
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Lent 3</b>	11.00am Morning Worship	6.00pm Evensong ( <i>1662</i> )	11.00am Morning Worship		11.00am Holy Communion	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Mothering Sunday CLOCKS CHANGE!</b>	4.00pm Evening Worship ( <i>1662</i> )	11.00am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion		11.00am Morning Worship	4.00pm Mothering Sunday Worship

**Church web-pages** - For further information, please search for the Church name and click on the relevant 'A Church Near You' page. (This is more effective than searching 'A Church Near You' directly.)

### Ministers:

Rector: The Revd Canon Dr Richard Cooke 07952 544820 (mobile)  
or 01608 544821 (landline) or [Richard.Cooke.Jlmington@Outlook.com](mailto:Richard.Cooke.Jlmington@Outlook.com)  
Hon. Assistant Minister: The Revd Dr Tim Seller 01608 682244 (landline)  
Reader: Ros Wakefield 01608 682146 (landline)  
Reader Emeritus: Malcolm Davies 01789 450793 (landline)

### Churchwards:

Tredington *Posts vacant – contact the Rector*  
Darlingscott Doreen McCarroll 01608 682949 (landline)  
Ilmington Jane Downie 01608 682720 (landline) Helen Patrick  
Preston-on-Stour Andrew Holman- West 07712 193773 (mobile)  
Stretton-on-Fosse *Posts vacant – contact the Rector*  
Whitchurch Carol Rutter 01789 450795 (landline)

Richard Cooke, the Rector, writes

### **'Talkative little Christianity'?**

Lent begins on Wednesday 5 March, and of course it's often a time when people give something up for the forty days or so that take us to the great festival of Easter. Giving things up for a while has become quite fashionable recently – think of 'dry January' for instance. The motive is really the same as it was originally for Lent: to learn to control our appetites and desires so that they do not (at best) distract or (at worst) control us. At heart it's about learning to be disciplined and to live simpler, perhaps less cluttered lives, a stripping back of the self to the essentials.

I find that many people have that kind of yearning, and express it through all sorts of activities, such as yoga or tai chi, or mindfulness. These kinds of disciplines are often derived from eastern religions and I know many people find them helpful. I'm glad that they do, but also just a little sad that some of the riches of the Christian tradition can get overlooked. I can understand why. In the novel *A Passage to India*, EM Forster has one of his characters speak about 'talkative little Christianity', and that phrase sums up well how the Christian faith has often been practised, with too many words making faith complicated. Yet there is also a deep tradition running back to earliest Christian times that values stillness and silence in the face of God, and encourages us to set aside the busy, talkativeness of daily life and to pray, if only for a few minutes.

But prayer too often also gets caught up in a sea of words, and Christian prayer can too easily become a 'shopping list' of things we would like to see changed in the world. The Christian contemplative tradition begins with silence and stillness, becoming aware of the presence of God around us and beside us. It's about stopping and paying attention to the present and is often without words, though some people find it helpful to repeat a single, simple phrase such as the Eastern Orthodox 'Jesus Prayer': 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner' in the stillness.

The Church of England especially has not come well out of the last few months, and perhaps a time of silence might be the best response for a while. I hope it would not be an empty silence, though, because I have a feeling that in the silence there might be a deeper awareness of the presence of God. If you think of giving up something for Lent, why not try giving up words for a few minutes each day? And sit, quietly, with open hands, and perhaps becoming aware of the presence of God that is beyond words.

### **Lent and Easter with Handel's Messiah**

During Lent this year we'll be listening in some of our Church services to parts of Handel's *Messiah* – details available in each church, and on the relevant 'A Church Near You' web-pages.

### **Church Electoral Rolls**

Every six years the Church Electoral Rolls for each parish have to be prepared anew. Even if you have been on the Church Electoral Roll for

Many years, you have to register again by completing a simple form. Paper copies will be available in each church through March and early April, or to download from the Church websites. Applications can be posted to the Rectory or emailed to [Rich-ard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com](mailto:Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com). Alternatively, you can join the Downs and Valley Churches' email list, details also available in the churches or on the websites.

### **From the Registers**

#### **Banns of Marriage**

At St Mary's, Ilmington on 30 March, Will Taylor and Lizzie Solleveld, of the parish of St Swithin, Quinton with Admington, for the first time of asking (marriage to take place at Ilmington, 17 May 2025).

#### **Funerals**

At St Mary's, Ilmington on 18 February, Maurice Bott, aged 98 (followed by burial).

At St Peter's, Stretton-on-Fosse on 24 February, Eric Castle, aged 94 (graveside service and burial).

At St Mary's, Ilmington on 26 February, Jean Orsman of Tiddington, formerly of Ilmington, aged 94 (followed by cremation).

### **Editor's Note**

The *deadline for copy for the April issue* **Saturday 15 March**. Send copy to Susan Brock, Editor, E. s.brock9@btinternet.com, Daisy Cottage, Front St., Ilmington, CV36 4LA. Please note that the limit for editorial articles is 150 words. Enquiries about advertising to Tim Seller: E. Tim.Seller@outlook.com, Long Barn, Back St., Ilmington, CV36 4LJ. The image on the cover is St Mary's Preston with the moon and Jupiter alongside taken by Phil Shepherd.

*Susan Brock, Editor*

### **Nature Notes for March**

As the clocks spring forward at the end of March, the longer daylight hours and milder temperatures make exploring the outdoors more enticing. So what can we look out or listen for? March marks the start of the dawn chorus. Over the coming months, birds will sing to stake out territory and attract a mate. Our residents will soon be accompanied by early arriving summer visitors. Warblers from Africa, although some have chosen to stay here, Chiffchaffs, Blackcaps and Willow Warblers. Then Sand Martins from their overwintering grounds south of the Sahara, skimming over bodies of water, to catch insects on the wing. It is just so amazing how these small birds fly all that distance! It was something that God commanded should happen "and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." Genesis 1:20. Their return promises warmer weather to come!

*Gill*

### **Call for Donations**

WANTED Clean books and paperbacks, plus complete jigsaw puzzles to sell as I am involved in a charity stall for the Lifeboats. I can collect if that helps. Thank you.

*John Plenderleith*

Fairfield Cotswold Close Tredington CV364NR

## OUTSIDE THE PARISHES

### **A Ladies' Breakfast at the Halford Bridge Inn, Halford** **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 9.00am for 9.15am**

Our Spring speaker will be Sue Wright, who comes from Ladbroke, near Southam, and has a heart for the rural churches where she lives. She is a member of the ministry team at the Well Christian Healing Centre in Leamington and she is one of the leaders for the Rest and Receive sessions. All women are welcome at these breakfasts. We'd love to see you! For more details contact Liz Harvey on [ma\\_harvey@hotmail.com](mailto:ma_harvey@hotmail.com) or 07914026451. The cost is £9 on the day, and places do need to be reserved please.

*Liz Harvey*

### **Shakespeare in Music Festival May 2 to May 5, 2025**

The inaugural festival will take place in several historic venues in Stratford-upon-Avon. It brings together music inspired by Shakespeare's works, featuring performances from renowned artists and ensembles. Highlights include renditions of *Venus and Adonis* with Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*, Elizabethan madrigals, and Shakespearean opera. The event will also showcase talks and illustrated lectures on Shakespeare's influence on music, with contributions from Dame Jane Glover, Dr Katy Hamilton and Professor Michael Dobson. The festival encompasses a diverse range of performances celebrating Shakespeare's musical legacy. It's a must-attend for Shakespeare and music lovers! For more information visit <https://www.shakespeareinmusic.org/> or contact: [info@shakespeareinmusic.org](mailto:info@shakespeareinmusic.org).

*Christie Carson, Festival Manager*

## WHITCHURCH

### **Notes from a Small Church in the Field: Our Missing Minister (con't)**

Apparently, Thomas Marriott's threats against 'Mr Winter' didn't prevail and the puritan-leaning Winter entered into the incumbency of St Mary's Whitchurch in 1650. For awhile peace reigned. But Winter might have wished himself elsewhere, for in 1653 the south wall of the nave of the church collapsed. Nothing was done about this for several years. Services continued in the Chancel. We can only imagine how the faithful carried on. Meanwhile several farmers, 'Samuel Winter clerk and John Underhill gent. of Whitchurch' were presented at Warwick Quarter Sessions for selling ale without a licence. Not very puritan, you might say. They were fined and 'the rest discharged in Trinity sessions 1654 upon their traverse'. In other words, 'do not come before us again'. Within a few years, though, St Mary's would face even more devastation — this time, from a storm.

*Robert Howe (with CCR)*

## **PRESTON ON STOUR**

### **Table Tennis at the Village Hall: Tuesdays 4th and 18th 5pm to 7pm**

This is a relatively new venture and we welcome all comers whether you played in your youth or just fancy having a go; it's a sociable active evening. No advance booking needed.

### **'Three Men in a Boat' 7.30 pm Friday 7th March**

There is still time to book your seats for Giles Shenton's show based on Jerome K. Jerome's classic tale of his boating escapades. Click on the link to buy tickets <https://buyticketsat/gilesshentonproductions>.

### **Film Night 7 pm for 7.30 Friday 28th March**

This month we will be showing 'The Trouble with Jessica'. London couple Sarah and Tom are in deep financial trouble, and their situation takes a terrifying nosedive with the shocking behaviour of an uninvited dinner guest. An intriguing comedy drama.

### **May Day 5th May 2025**

We are looking forward to celebrating longer and sunny days and Preston's main village event is our herald of summer. There will be all the usual stalls, games and fun for all. We are now open for May Queen nominations so if you are aged 8 on or before May this year, please contact Margaret Brocklehurst [e.prestonbrocks@gmail.com](mailto:e.prestonbrocks@gmail.com) or t:01789 450710 by 4th April.

### **Preston Environmental Group Annual Talk 7.30 pm Saturday 22nd March: Gardening for the Planet by Brigit Strawbridge**

Brigit is a wildlife gardener, amateur naturalist and tireless campaigner for bees and pollinators. Her talk will inspire us to appreciate the importance of all types of bees and how to encourage them into our gardens. Tickets are £10 from <https://GardeningforthePlanet.eventbrite.co.uk> or direct from Ron Hoe [e:ronhoe@me.com](mailto:e:ronhoe@me.com) or Margaret Brocklehurst [e:prestonbrocks@gmail.com](mailto:e:prestonbrocks@gmail.com).

## **STRETTON ON FOSSE**

### **Soup lunches**

Fortnightly Soup Lunches are up and running again at the Village Hall on Wednesdays at 12.30pm: March 5th, March 19th, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. We continue to provide a choice of 3 soups at each session and guarantee that at least one will be vegetarian. Plenty of friendly companionship so don't feel anxious about coming on your own. If you need transport to get down to the hall, please contact Geri Hunting in advance and I will arrange a lift for you 07968 338848  
*Geri Hunting*



# **TREDINGTON WITH BLACKWELL AND DARLINGS SCOTT**

## **Blackwell Village Hall AGM**

Notice of Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Village Hall, Blackwell, CV36 4PE on Tuesday 8 April 2025 at 7.30 pm. All are welcome and drinks/nibbles will be provided.

Blackwell Village Hall is a Charity. Whilst the hall is situated in Blackwell it is for the use of Blackwell, Armscote and Darlingscott villages – please support your village hall.

*Cathryn Noon*

## **Tredington Easter Village Lunch Sunday 6 April 2025 at 12.30**

Please join us for a lovely roast lunch on Sunday 6 April in the WI Hall, Tredington. The roast joint plus a selection of vegetables will be followed by tempting puddings, cheese and biscuits, tea/coffee. Bring your own wine, but soft drinks and glasses provided. Cost £20, any profit will be given to the Stroke Association. This terrible illness can strike at any time regardless of age. Welcome everybody but please sign the form inside the church to notify us of numbers. Vegetarian options are available. Come along and have a great time, new residents especially welcome. If you would like to come but have difficulty getting to the hall we can help with transport. Enquiries Sarah Taylor 662782, Marilyn Payne 666206, Jenny Plenderleith 664278.

*Jenny Plenderleith*

## **Tredington & District Garden Club**

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm at the W.I. Hall. This will be the AGM and will be followed by a quiz. As usual, doors open at 7pm with a bar available before the meeting commences. For more information please see the club website:

<https://tredingtongardenclub.weebly.com/news.html>.

*Marian White, Chair*

## **Newbold and Tredington C of E Primary School.**

This half term the children at Newbold and Tredington C of E Primary School have participated in some fantastic events, organised by our wonderful PTFA. The children danced at the friendship disco, had a wonderful tea party with someone special to them, gave gifts as appreciation and celebrated World Book Day. Inspired by Roald Dahl's book, 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory', the children were given the opportunity to win a class prize by receiving a golden ticket in a chocolate bar, as part of this special day. A brilliant term, full of magnificent events and enjoyment was shared by all involved. We wish you a lovely Easter!

*With love from the staff and children at Newbold and Tredington C of E Primary School*

## **Tredington & Blackwell WI**

The next WI meeting is on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March, starting with lunch at 1pm in the WI Hall. Our speaker is from Silvertime Legal, sharing

useful financial information about inheritance tax, care provision, wills and gifts. The meeting is open to all - including men! (Guests £5)

*Gill Goodlad, Treasurer/Hall Secretary*

### **Craft & Chatter**

March meetings are at 2pm on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> and Monday 17<sup>th</sup> in the WI Hall. This is a social group, with plenty of conversation, tea & cake, whilst craft is optional. £1 per person, no membership required. For more information contact Vanessa on 07818 599353 or [vanessa@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk](mailto:vanessa@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk)

*Vanessa Ward, Secretary*

### **Tuesday Morning Qigong**

These classes continue on Tuesdays 8.00 - 8.45am in the WI Hall. Qigong is an antient practice that harmonises body and mind, leaving you refreshed, focused and sets a positive tone for the rest of the day. £7 per person (cash/card on the day or via <https://breath-therapy.uk/events>). Classes are taught by Alissa Powell:

[alissa@breath-therapy.uk](mailto:alissa@breath-therapy.uk)

*Gill Goodlad, Hall Secretary*

### **Dates for your Diary**

#### **Community Film Night**

The next film (cert 12) is on **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April**. Bar from 7pm, film from 7.30pm with interval. For film details contact Gill: [gillgoodlad@hotmail.com](mailto:gillgoodlad@hotmail.com)

*Gill Goodlad, Treasurer/Hall Secretary*

#### **WI Spring Fair**

The Spring Fair will be held in the WI Hall on **Saturday**

**5<sup>th</sup> April** 10.30 - 12.30. More information in the April magazine.

*Gill Goodlad, Hall Secretary*

### **New Events in the WI Hall**

Shipston U3A Art Appreciation Group: first Wednesday, monthly, 10.am - 12.00

Shipston Literary Society: last Wednesday, monthly, 7pm - 9pm

For more information, contact Gill: [gillgoodlad@hotmail.com](mailto:gillgoodlad@hotmail.com)

*Gill Goodlad, Hall Secretary*

## **ILMINGTON**

### **Screen-on-the-Green: The Critic (rated 15)**

On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March we are showing **The Critic**, starring Ian McKellen, Gemma Arterton, Mark Strong and Lesley Manville. In this dark thriller set in 1930s London, Jimmy Erskine, the most feared theatre critic of the day, strikes a sinister pact with a struggling actress after finding his career is suddenly on the line.

"McKellen's Jimmy Erskine is a vicious delight" (*Times Literary Sup-*

plement).

Doors open 7pm for a 7.30pm start at Ilmington Village Hall. Tickets £4 from the Village Shop, plus some available on the door. Licensed bar, teas/coffees, interval ice-creams and raffle.

*Lis Ribbans, Ilmington Cinema Group*

### **Ilmington Show - Volunteers**

Last year's show saw **record attendance and a phenomenal £14k** of disbursements made; £6k to our named charities, but crucially £8k to twelve good causes, clubs and organisations within Ilmington Parish. There's no better way to showcase our village, raise much needed funds for a range of great causes and create fun-filled memories for people of all ages. But nothing would happen without our committee and team of volunteers! Please get in touch if you'd like to be involved in the Show this year; whether you've just moved to the area or lived here forever, you'll be very welcome.

Specifically, we need help to run our social media accounts, and also help managing entertainment both before and/or during the show. But there's plenty else to do if you don't fancy that! Please contact Kathryn Mann, Show Secretary on 07708 020

169 [kfmann77@gmail.com](mailto:kfmann77@gmail.com) or pop to our next meeting on Weds 26th Feb, 8pm at The Howard Arms.

*Kathryn Mann*

### **Wednesday Club's next meeting** **5th March at 2pm, Village Hall**

A big thank you goes to Tim and Yve Harvard- Brown for entertaining us with some lovely romantic songs. Thank you both. Next month we have an antique dealer called Tarragon who is happy to impart her knowledge of antiques. This should be an interesting meeting with an 'Antique Roadshow' game and a chance for you to have one of your antiques valued freely. As usual, this is open to everyone and all visitors are welcome. Please note the **earlier than usual date for this meeting** as the Village Hall was booked for our usual mid month date. We have just one birthday in March on the 23rd for Stephen Wright. Although bed ridden, Stephen still enjoys life and company. Have a lovely birthday Stephen!

*Carole Clifford; chairperson.*

### **Wellbeing and Other Regular Events at the Village Hall**

- Mondays at 09:30 - Tai Chi
  - Tuesdays at 10:45 - Exercise for those with Parkinson's Disease
  - Second Wednesdays of the month at 14:00 - Wednesday Club
  - Wednesdays 20:00 - Ilmington Traditional Morris Dancers
  - Thursdays at 14:30 - Indoor Curling
  - Alternate Thursdays at 18:00 and Tuesdays at 14:00 Table Tennis
  - Last Friday of the month - Cinema Group
  - Saturdays at 09:30 - Drama Classes for Children
- Contact details for the organisers of these events can be found here <https://ilmington-villagehall.com/regular-activities>.

*Bryan Clifford, Chair, Village Hall Committee*

## **Changes to Metering, Heating and Key Access at the Village Hall**

The old coin meters have been replaced with a single meter using online payments. **Just scan to QR code and select the amount you wish to pay directly from your smart phone.** Both the meter control and the main hall heating switching are now located outside of the electrical equipment cupboard to make them easier and safer to use. We have also installed additional heating to the main hall in the form of a high powered air curtain. The additional heating can be controlled locally and is intended to provide a quick warm up at the commencement of any hiring and until occupants are comfortable just using the main heating system. To improve security at the village hall, we have changed the key safe located at the main entrance. At the time of hiring a unique code will be issued which can be keyed in or transferred via blue tooth and the key safe app. Regular users will continue to be allocated a key and a key will be held at the shop for emergency use.

*Bryan Clifford, Chair, Village Hall Committee*

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# **SPRING FLOWER SHOW**

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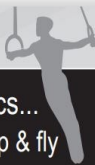
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01608 696555

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