

Tipton times

327

JUNE AND JULY

2025

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**OPEN GARDENS
TO ENJOY
IN TIPTON**

**VOSRA
AUCTION OF
PROMISES**

**FAMILY
FUN ON THE
PLAYING FIELD**

**SCOUTS
50TH
ANNIVERSARY**

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

VE Day Beacon

Photo: Colin Moore

We welcome letters and contributions but reserve the right to edit and amend such offerings. Views expressed within each article are the author's own.

Editorial

Welcome to the June/July edition of Tipton Times. By the time you've finished reading you'll be left in no doubt about the extent and range of activities going on in our community over the next two months. You can read about Tipton Open Gardens on 14th June, the VOSRA auction of gifts and promises on the 28th June, the Family Fun Day on 12th July and don't forget the Rail and River Run on 5th July (entries are open until the 28th June https://www.sientries.co.uk/event.php?event_id=15030).

A bonus addition to the Open Gardens event will be the showing of a short film of the Tipton Fete in 1986, which has been donated to the Ottery Heritage Society. It will be repeated during the afternoon so do come along and see who you can identify!

As ever, there are numerous ways to get involved in community activities. It's very good to see our Scout group growing and flourishing alongside other community initiatives like Eager Beavers (well done on the attempts to deal with Himalayan Balsam!) and Playing Field event organisation including the Rail and River Run.

We also hope you'll enjoy the accounts of the various events which took place in April and May. The opening match of the cricket season, featuring an invitation Golden Lion XI, was a wonderful community afternoon and certain to be repeated. Many thanks and congratulations are due to the Playing Field events team for their initiative in organising the very successful Easter Eggstravaganza and VE Day celebrations.

Alongside all the above, there are of course all our regular articles and features. Many thanks to all our contributors for your part in providing such a great insight into the life of our community.

Finally, in this issue, you will find an envelope through which you can contribute to the costs of running Tipton Times. All donations are gratefully received and vital in keeping our village magazine running.

The Editors

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Easter Egg-stravaganza: A cracking success!

Despite the grey skies and a last-minute venue change, our Easter Egg-stravaganza was an a fabulous success! The event took place at the Community Hall & school field, where children of all ages enjoyed a colourful Easter trail, egg-cellent prizes, and a lovely afternoon of laughter and fun.

We're thrilled to share that the day raised a brilliant sum for the Playing Field Fund, edging us closer to our dream of building a new village pavilion. But more importantly it brought the community together, created joy for the children, and reminded us just how special village life in Tipton St John really is.



It's not just about the fundraising...

Of course, the money raised will help towards the pavilion and supporting future groups - but that's not why we do it.

The real joy comes from:

- Seeing neighbours chatting and connecting
- Watching children explore, laugh, and make memories
- Creating a real sense of togetherness that lasts far longer than any raffle prize

We're so lucky to live in such a beautiful part of East Devon, surrounded by nature, history, and the most wonderful people.

Thank you to everyone who made it happen!

- Our Events Team - for setting up, packing down, and keeping everything running
- Tipton Primary School - for allowing us to use the outdoor space.
- All the families who came along with wellies, brollies, and smiles!

And a massive thank you to our kind prize sponsors:

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Jo Earlam

The Chickens at Angel custom wheels

Plus, a special shoutout to all the local residents who generously contributed baked goods, raffle items & entered our competitions!



Chiara Broom

Fancy joining the fun?

If you'd like to be part of our lovely (and growing) Events Planning Team, we'd love to have you on board. It's a friendly, informal group and a great way to get involved with the community.

Email: info@tiptonstjohn.co.uk to be added to the list and help shape future events.

VE Day Event: A village celebration

A sunny (chilly) evening on the Playing Field

We had a great turnout, with families and friends gathering in one corner of the playing field. Children played between the labyrinth, playing field, and the newly-installed boules pitch, which added to the relaxed and cheerful atmosphere.

Music, memories and cricket

A cricket match was underway on the far side of the field, while our VE Day playlist played classic songs across the site - thank you to Barney for coming to the rescue with a sound system! We loved seeing people get into the spirit of things, especially those who came dressed for the occasion.

Why we gather

Gary, our Playing Field Event Co-ordinator, opened the evening by reminding us why VE Day still matters - as a moment to reflect on those who served, and the freedoms we enjoy today.

“VE Day reminds us of the courage and sacrifice of those who fought, the value of peace and unity, and the power of coming together during dark times.”

Local performers and a shared sing-along

We were delighted to welcome **Ruth Merry**, a recent arrival to Tipton and lead singer in the band Hot Tin Ruth, who sang Dancing at Whitsun.



Ann Knight then read a short piece from her book Tipton Past & Present, sharing what the village was like during the war. Word sheets in hand, everyone joined together to sing We'll Meet Again and The White Cliffs of Dover - a simple but lovely way to mark the evening.

Beacon Lighting

After all the singing, we lit the VE Day beacon, built by Colin Dart and lit by his son, Luke, joining thousands of other beacons being lit across the UK in this national tribute.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who helped, performed, read and turned up to mark this special occasion. We're lucky to have

such a strong sense of community here in Tipton St John - and evenings like this make it all the more clear.

Chiara Broom



For both these articles and many more photos, visit the events pages on the new Tipton St John village website: <https://tiptonstjohn.co.uk/playing-field/news/> and for all the latest on village events, follow our new Facebook page: facebook.com/tiptonevents



Nature Notes

Well, what a wonderful spring we are having as far as the weather is concerned! Day to day, wall to wall sunshine and no second guessing what to wear for the next day! The ground, though, is very dry and all those plants that have gone in now need an almost daily watering. Some people are asking "Is this summer?" - "If it lasts until at least October, then, yes it is", I reply!

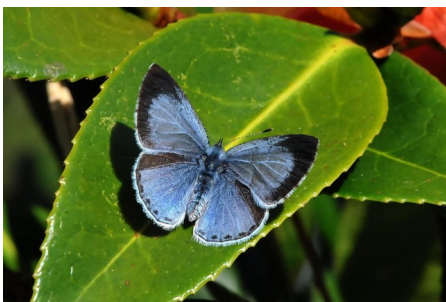
Swallows and martins are wheeling through the air and you know that time of year is upon us. The blossoms have really given a beautiful display this year. From the blackthorn of early spring to the hawthorn, or may blossom, of late spring and now the pink and white flower spikes of horse chestnut to the almost unnoticeable (until it gets into every crevice on your vehicle!) oak flowers. Camellias, lilacs, azaleas and now rhododendron, to name a few, have all been stunning too.

Also due to the warm, dry weather, aphids are plaguing gardeners this spring, with higher numbers of the rose-killing bugs expected to thrive in the UK as a result of climate breakdown. Additionally, they can be killed off by frost, and the change in weather patterns is making frost less regular.

There are more than 500 species of aphid found in UK gardens, and they are commonly known as blackfly, greenfly and plant lice. They can be red, yellow, black, green, brown or pink insects and feed by sucking sap from plants. They can significantly harm their host plants, causing death in some circumstances. Aphids, despite causing annoyance to many gardeners, are an important part of the garden food chain, and are fed on by birds, earwigs, ladybirds and other larger insects. However, when their population booms and there are not enough predators, they can get out of control and cause visible damage to plants. Aphids are born pregnant with the next generation, so their populations can bloom rapidly.

I have also been reading reports about the early emergence of butterflies, and it seems that midsummer butterflies are on the wing in early May after a sunny spring prompted one of the most advanced seasons for Britain's lepidoptera on record.

The Lulworth skipper - usually found in June and July - is flying at Lulworth Cove in Dorset, the chequered skipper emerged in April rather than mid-May in Scotland and the first swallowtail, which is most common in mid-June, was spotted in Norfolk on 1 May. While some species appear to be adapting their lifecycles to climatic changes, there are fears some early emerging insects may fall out of sync with pathogens, predators or the availability of food for their caterpillars.



Holly blue butterfly

Both the swallowtail and the Lulworth skipper sightings on 2nd May were the second-earliest recorded emergence over the past two decades, with only 2011 being a similarly early spring. In the 1980s, the Lulworth skipper emerged in early July. The marsh fritillary was first seen on 20th April this year - in Wiltshire - three weeks before its first sighting in 2024. The wood white also popped up three weeks earlier than last year, first spotted flying through Devon and Dorset woodlands on 9th April. The gatekeeper crossed the border into Scotland for the first time last summer while relatively recent arrivals in Scotland, including the white-letter hairstreak, comma and holly blue, continued their rapid march north. The holly blue has moved from Edinburgh to Aberdeen in recent seasons, while the comma has colonised the Highlands.

Last year was the second worst for common butterflies since scientific monitoring began 50 years ago and butterfly experts are hoping that the sunny spring enables populations to recover some of their numbers. It appears that butterflies are on the wing much longer and many species are moving north rapidly.

Things to look out for in the coming months - a walk along the river may well result in a flurry of wings of the beautiful demoiselles and banded demoiselles, as they take to the air. These damselflies emerge in early June, and will normally fly on and soon settle once again on another leaf. By mid-June all damselfly species will have emerged as adults. The nights are now warm and bats, badgers and moths are at the height of activity and are worth a watch. In many hedgerows traveller's joy, which is a relative of the garden clematis, grows prolifically. Where it takes hold it can seemingly smother the plants below. It is also called old man's beard from its woolly seed head that appears later in the year.

That's it ... 'til next time !

Geoff Pinn

gjppinn@tiscali.co.uk



Tipton St John Playing Field

Hello Tipton

It has been a busy spring here at the playing field.

In March we held our annual volunteer weekend, and managed to get lots of tasks completed including painting the pavilion, weeding around all the benches and we also managed to tidy up the community garden which is now ready for the season. So please feel free to water, weed and take full advantage of the garden - remember it's for the whole community.

In April we reinstated the annual cricket match between the Golden Lion and Tipton Cricket Club, competing for the Carol Weaver cup (David Birch will probably talk a bit more about it in his article). It was so lovely to see the village coming out in force to support the event.



The Golden Lion and Tipton CC teams gather after what we hope will be an annual match to compete for the Carol Weaver trophy

Also in April we held our 'Easter Eggstravaganza' at the Community Hall (thank you Brian). It was an amazingly fun morning and extremely well attended. It also raised an important amount of funds to increase the pot for the rebuilding of the pavilion.

Just last week (as I am writing this) we held our VE Day celebration picnic. Thank you to all who attended and helped out. It was a really special evening hopefully enjoyed by all. Ann Knight shared some stories from her book followed by a sing song session of songs from the past before Colin Dart and his son lit our beacon.

Some of you might have noticed our new petanque/boules area adjacent to the beacon. This was requested when we held our Q&A back in December - please use and enjoy. We have plans to revive the family rounder's evenings in June; this will probably be held on a Friday so do come along have a chat and have some fun. Please check on the playing field website for times and dates.

Our next big event is taking place on **Saturday 12th July - the Family Fun Day**. If you would like to help out or even hold a stall please do contact me at my email address below .

By the time of publication of this edition the PFA will have a new treasurer. Many thanks to Janice Aherne for taking up this position. On this note I would like to say a massive thank you to Neil Rutter for all the hard work and dedication he has put into the role in his tenure and into introducing us to the technology of the 21st century.

Until our next edition please keep using and enjoying this little piece of paradise.

Mark Rigden. Chairman rigden58@btinternet.com

Otter Rail and River Run Rail and River Run on Saturday, 5th July (entries open until the 28th June)
https://www.sientries.co.uk/event.php?event_id=15030).



1st Tipton St. John Scout Group



Letter from the Group Lead Volunteer, Alison Clatworthy

As we celebrate our 50th year of scouting in Tipton St. John, I just wanted to give you an update on the group.

Beaver Section We currently have 12 beavers on the register and 3 adult volunteer leaders. One of our beaver leaders will be leaving at the end of the summer term, so we really do need to recruit a couple more leaders! This term our beavers have been learning all about food including planning a healthy, balanced dinner and all about kitchen safety. They enjoyed a night walk in Tipton Playing Fields, learnt about Burns Night, used fruits to make a solar system (and enjoyed eating the fruits/planets at the end of the evening!), learning about constellations (creating them with chocolate) and learnt about the International Space Station to complete their Space Badge. They have a den building session, in the woods, planned soon - that sounds like fun!



Cubs Section We currently have 32 cubs on the register and 5 leaders. This term our cubs have been working on their Disability Awareness Badge, with a visit from two members of the Exeter Otters Wheelchair Basketball Club who kindly came and gave a talk to the cubs. The cubs also enjoyed a Hindu Festival evening and an engineering challenge - with marshmallows and spaghetti involved! They have completed their Emergency Aid 2 badge and started working towards their Scientist badge. All in all a busy and fun term!



Scout Section We currently have 26 scouts and 3 leaders. The term started with a sensory games evening. They were treated to a rendition of Robert Burns poem, *Address to a Haggis*, by Peter Roberts, one of our scout leaders who even donned a kilt for the evening! The scouts have been practicing their knots this term in preparation for the District Raft Race held in the summer at Lyme Regis. They have been making bird/dormice or bat boxes, organised by one of the parents who works for the RSPB. They have worked on their Emergency Aid badge this term and have the chance to try their skills on the dry ski slope in Exeter at the end of March!



Trustee Board Behind every charitable organisation, there is a Trustee Board. For the past few years, the Tipton Scout Group Trustee Board has been made up mainly of leaders from all the sections. To help progress our plans for the scout plot, we really need some help on our Trustee Board to drive our plans forward. We would love to be able to get electricity and/or water to the plot, but this is proving very difficult. We would also like to build a shelter on the field, so we can still use the field when its raining. Our hut is proving too small for us now and in the long term, we would love to rebuild/extend it but would need to raise a lot of funds to do so! If you have some spare time, just a few hours per year (4 meetings per year), please do consider helping on our Trustee Board. We do desperately need your help to keep our group running!

We're looking for people to help in all sorts of ways in our meeting place and behind the scenes. At the moment, we'd especially love some help with the specific roles and tasks listed below:

A new **Chairperson**, to take over from Andy Ritchie, who is coming up to 3 years in the role and whose last children left Scouts over a year ago.

Additional Trustee Board members

Beaver, Cub or Scout leaders

Support with development of the plot - Planning, Project Management, Construction and other related skills would be a huge bonus, but not essential.

Whether you want to support young people or if you're more comfortable planning an adventure from the sidelines, we've got a role for you. Scouts happens when a lot of us give a little. You're not signing up for a lifelong commitment - just to help out, when and where you can. And volunteering's a two-way street. Research shows that it improves your wellbeing and helps you build career-boosting skills. Let us know you're interested, and we'll give you any support and training you need to let your skills shine.

Tipton Fun Day on 12th July The Scout Group are planning to take part in the Fun Day with a **Scouting Activity Display**. Ann Knight is also working on a display to mark **50 years of Scouting in Tipton**. If you have any old scouting memorabilia or photos, newspaper cuttings, trophies or certificates gained, old uniforms or badges and any personal recollections, please let me know on the email address below or contact Ann Knight 01404 812040.

As you can see, all our three sections have been busy! I think Tipton has something here, with the Scout Group, to be really proud of! Let's keep Tipton Scout Group going and growing!!!

Many thanks for reading this and I hope that you will be able to help us out.

Alison Clatworthy, Group Lead Volunteer for 1st Tipton St. John Scout Group

tiptonstjohnscoutgroup@gmail.com



TIPPS

We are delighted to invite you to the Community Hall on **Saturday 5th July** and **Sunday 6th July** to enjoy some free entertainment. Our members will be performing sketches, songs, poems and more. Starting at **4pm**, the plan is to hold the event 'Al Fresco' in the garden at the back, weather permitting but we have the main hall as back up.

After a short break on the Saturday our AGM will follow at 6pm, which, of course, is open to members and non-members alike. We always try to make the meeting as short as possible and once all the formalities are out of the way everyone is invited to bring and share food for a supper to finish off the evening.

Everyone is more than welcome to stay for the AGM and supper. Apart from one person, everyone on the committee is up for re-election this year, including the officers, so if you would like to serve please come along and put yourself forward.

If there are any non-members out there who would like a slot at our Al Fresco performances we would love you to join us. Instrumentalists, bands, singers, actors, comedians, magicians or any other performers are all welcome! For more information and to book your slot please call Stephanie Kinson on 01395 568577 or email paul.kinson@yahoo.co.uk by 27th June.

At our recent committee meeting we discussed possible options for our usual spot in the Autumn. We have chosen a play by Michael Brett called 'The Full Treatment' which, I am delighted to say, will be produced and directed by Ann and Terry Knight. If you have any thoughts that you might like to give acting or a backstage role a try, now is your chance. Ann and Terry will be hosting a read through of the script on Thursday June 5th at 7.30pm at their home, St Georges, Venn Ottery Road, EX10 0AJ.

Yvonne Kellett

07875 867222 ykellett@gmail.com

West Hill Men's Supper Club

We meet on the second Monday of each month in Narthex Hall, which is attached to St Michael's Church in Bendarroch Road. We invite a wide variety of speakers with subjects encompassing science, the arts, history, sport and a range of life experiences.

Our evenings start at 6.45pm for drinks followed by a two-course dinner provided by a local caterer. The meal is then followed by a talk. The current charge is £25 per person which includes drinks, meal and speaker costs.

The talks arranged for the next three months:

9th June: Master Wheelwrights by Appointment to the King

Jul/Aug Summer Break

8th Sep Topic to be announced

Visitors or prospective members are welcome. If you are interested in coming for a taster evening or finding out more about us, please contact John Rowland at j.v.rowland@btinternet.com or 01404 813027.



Friends of St John and St Gregory Club

All existing members will be getting their renewal forms shortly. If you don't already subscribe and would like to help our two local Churches you would be most welcome. Joining forms are in both Churches or from me or the Church Wardens.

Our funds are a little depleted at present as we have just paid for the renewal of the sound system at St John and there is likely to be major expenditure if we want to keep St Gregory open.

Big changes to our banking arrangements this year. As Lloyds wanted to charge us considerably to operate the account we have changed to the Co-op which promises to be charge free. This means the account details for transfer payment have changed. The details on the new forms are the right ones. If you are able to make bank transfer payment please do so as it is so much easier for me with the shortage of branches to pay in cheques or cash but if that is your best method of payment don't be put off! We need your money!

If you would like more information please contact Ann or Terry Knight 01404 812040

Thought for the Times

A Vulnerable King

In a conversation I was having with someone a few weeks ago, we found ourselves talking about King Charles and his cancer. Back in April, the King had spoken quite openly about his experience of having cancer and receiving treatment.

At that time, the BBC reported:

'King Charles has sent a personal message to fellow cancer patients, speaking of the "daunting and at times frightening experience" for cancer sufferers and their loved ones.'

The report continued:

'In a heartfelt message to guests at a Buckingham Palace reception for cancer charities, the King spoke about becoming a cancer "statistic" - referencing the more than 1,000 new cases recorded in the UK every day.'

'He said his experience of living with cancer had shown that "the darkest moments of illness can be illuminated by the greatest compassion".'



As the leading member of the Royal Family, King Charles probably has access to the very best treatment available, but nevertheless,

cancer is no respecter of royal status.

In the conversation I was having, we agreed that the King's openness about his own illness and vulnerability made him more like the rest of us - more relatable (if you will forgive me that ugly word). We can probably relate to a man struggling with his health more easily than a crowned king enthroned in his palace.

If you have ever stood at the railings outside Buckingham Palace, looking up to see whether the Royal Standard is flying, you will know that the monarch in their palace seems a very remote figure. The railings stop us from getting anywhere near the palace building. And even though we can see the façade of the palace, we have no idea where the sovereign might be behind the rows and rows of windows.

If that is how it feels staring through the railings in London, how much more do we feel that sense of remoteness when we think of God? We cannot even find the railings around heaven let alone catch a glimpse of God's heavenly home. We may stare up into a blue sky and imagine, but we

know we are just looking at refracted sunlight. We may stare with wonder at a starry sky and get a sense of its vastness, but we know that we are looking at a big galaxy. God is very remote.

To use a more fancy term, he is transcendent.

King Charles' willingness to let his vulnerability show helps to build a bridge between his world and ours. A king with human frailty seems less remote. And in doing this, Charles has been very God-like.

God knew that he is too transcendent for us to ever reach him, so he came down to us. If he had come in his full awesome glory, it would have been too much for us - like getting too close to the sun. So not only did God step down from heaven, he came in a way that made him more accessible. He came in the person of Jesus Christ. Even Jesus could have presented himself as a glorious, powerful sovereign figure, but instead he willingly made himself completely vulnerable.

When Jesus was crucified, he was nailed to the cross. It is hard to imagine a more vulnerable scene than a person stripped naked and literally pinned to a piece of wood.

God chose to become a vulnerable, frail human-being because what he wanted more than anything is not to be remote but to be known by us and for us to be known by him. His willing vulnerability opens the way for us to have a relationship with him.



Mark

Rev Mark Ward 01404 814282
revmarkward@btinternet.com
www.facebook.com/revmarkward

Friends of St John and St Gregory Club

Result of the final draw for the year.

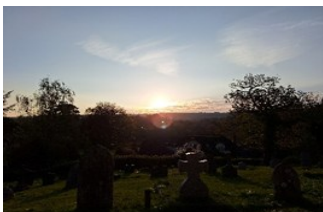
1st (51) Ann Knight £30

2nd (72) Shirley Hamilton £20

3rd (53) Pat Keeley £15

Church News

There wasn't any white smoke nor did the church bell ring out, but at our Annual Church Meeting at the end of March our prayers were well and truly answered as two churchwardens were appointed! After two years without any churchwardens at all this is fantastic news and a great source of encouragement to us all that the church has clear and capable leadership in place regarding the day-to-day oversight of our buildings and the work that we are able to do. Our new church wardens are Keith Poultney (top right), who picks up the warden's wand once again after a well-deserved break (keithpoultney@yahoo.co.uk) and Malcolm Hamilton (bottom right), who takes on the role for the first time (CWtiptonvennottery@gmail.com). We pray God's blessing on Keith and Malcolm as they take on this important responsibility and we seek to support them in caring for our churches and the parish we jointly serve.



Easter

We had a wonderful time celebrating Jesus' resurrection with three very different services on Easter Sunday morning. The day began with many of us gathered at Tipton Church just before dawn to worship together as the sun rose over East Hill - here was the scene at the beginning of what turned into a glorious day.

Venn Ottery Service

One of those Easter Day services was at Venn Ottery and there will be another of our occasional services there in June. On Sunday 1st June an Evening Service of Worship will take place at 6 pm at St Gregory's and we pray that the beautiful summer weather we're having right now will linger long enough to bring everyone out to praise God together.

Homegroup

After a break for our Lent Course the weekly Homegroup has now resumed with a study series entitled *Promises Kept* which takes us on a whistlestop tour through the whole Bible looking at some of God's great promises to us. All are welcome to join us - our meetings start at 7.30pm each Thursday evening at David and Becky's home, St Mary's, Hayne Close, except on 29th May - see below.

Thy Kingdom Come

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the global prayer initiative called *Thy Kingdom Come* - a phrase taken from the Lord's Prayer (thykingdomcome.global). We will once again be joining in prayer with millions of Christians around the world - do come and join us at 7.30pm on Thursday 29th May in Tipton Church as we seek God's blessing on all we do as a local, national and international church to take the good news of Jesus to everyone.

Café Church

Café Church continues to attract young and old with its informal style of worship in the village hall, making it much easier to access than our church on the hill. On 15th June we'll be thinking about how we can know God as three persons in One - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and on 20th July we'll be thinking about our priorities - how do we decide what is the right thing to do? Doors open for coffee, pastries and craft activities at 10.30am before our worship starts around 11am.

Mission Community Joint Service (ottervalechurches.org)

On 8th June all the churches in the Otter Vale Mission Community will be joining together at Ottery St Mary parish church at 10.30am for a family communion service suitable for all ages as we celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the worldwide church. You may not be aware that our parish of Tipton St John with Venn Ottery works in partnership with 9 other parishes under the umbrella of the Otter Vale Mission Community (OVMC). Those other parishes are: Alfington, Colaton Raleigh, Feniton with Escot, Harpford, Newton Poppleford, Ottery St Mary, Payhembury, West Hill & Wiggaton. The Mission Community is led by our Rector, Lydia, based at Ottery St Mary, our own vicar Mark, who lives in West Hill, and David Carrington, who lives in Feniton. Do come along and meet people from right across the Otter Vale - there will be the chance to make new friends at the BYO picnic lunch in the churchyard after the service. If you would like to come but don't have transport, just give me a call and I'll gladly organise a lift for you.

David Williamson, Licensed Lay Minister, Otter Vale Mission Community

St Mary's, Hayne Close, Tipton St John Tel. 01404 812493 email davidhwilliamson@btinternet.com

Tipton St John Cricket Club

The new season has got off to an excellent start with a great deal of enthusiasm from old and new players alike. We are so pleased with the early interest in playing cricket at Tipton, with as many as 24 players making themselves available so far. It is particularly refreshing to welcome a number of younger players to a team long dominated by senior players.



Luke Phillips in action v The Golden Lion

Instead of our usual start of the season practice match, we began with a match against an invitation Golden Lion eleven, thanks to Mark Rigden's initiative and enthusiasm. It was a thoroughly entertaining afternoon and a fitting way of re-establishing the Golden Lion's support for the cricket club. We have already benefited from the new Sunday opening routine and very much appreciate the post match chips Annie and her team are providing. The match was a great community event: at one point someone counted nearly 70 spectators watching. The result mattered less than the occasion: for the record the cricket club lifted the Carol Weaver memorial trophy and look forward to defending it next season.

The cricket matches so far have been competitive and largely played in an excellent spirit: a series of victories against long-standing opponents Newton Pop, The Met Office, Cavendish Cavaliers, Feniton, Exeter Erratics and Marldon has been tempered by defeats against Ottery, Broadclyst and Tedburn St Mary. John Buckland and Matt Davies have led the way with the bat, each with over 200 runs to their name already and averaging 38 and 51 respectively. Matt Davies also leads the wicket takers with 12 so far, closely followed by Phil Wright (11) and David Birch (10); Davies and Wright already have the distinction of taking 5 wickets in a single innings.

We have much to look forward to over the next few months. Our annual Cornish tour takes place over the first weekend in June and we will be hosting a number of touring sides later in the summer. The visits of Boffins, Incogniti, Ascott-under-Wychwood and Basingstoke and North Hants have become regular fixtures as well as Vancouver Islanders who we welcome on their UK tour every three years or so.

Please do come and support us: a list of our home fixtures in June and July is below and we will be delighted to see you on the boundary. Thanks are due too to our Vice Presidents and Sponsors for their generous support

Upcoming home matches:

June	Sun	1st	Blagdon Hill	1pm
	Tues	10th	Woodbury & N St Cyres	6pm
	Sun	15th	Bridford	1pm
	Wed	18th	Sunset	6pm
	Fri	20th	Kingswood	6pm
	Sun	22nd	Whimble	1pm
	Thurs	26th	Exwick Jokers	6pm
July	Sun	29th	Wednesday	1pm
	Sun	6th	Erratics	1pm
	Sun	20th	Bakers	1pm
	Wed	23rd	Vancouver Islanders	1pm
	Wed	30th	Broadclyst	6pm



Matt 'Tinks' Davies batting at Marldon

David Birch (Chair)

<https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/tiptonstjohn/>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057807483472>

<https://bsky.app/profile/tiptonstjohncc>

Community Hall

Your Community Hall is a very active hub of the village. Our bookings are up and there is barely a day when there isn't an activity of some sort taking place. Often both the Small Hall and the Main Hall are used simultaneously. Our booking system is working really well and we are delighted to be operating not quite paper-free but are using modern technology to further our profile and not hinder it. We have all experienced modern technology driving us to distraction!



We are very happy to have a new cleaner to take over from Geoff Pinn - who is stopping after 10 years of keeping the hall clean. Judith Taylor, who did the job before but quite a long time ago, is now the cleaner for the hall and we welcome her to the team. Judith is well known in the village as well as being very active in the Tipton Times team.

It is not too late to hand in your donation envelopes for the upkeep of the hall. Hand them in to the village shop or pay direct by BACS, sort code: 30-94-36 account number: 01299719 account name: Tipton St John Community Hall Trust.

The scaffolding has gone and, in spite of some heavy rain and an east wind at the same time, the work to stop the rain once and for all coming into the foyer has now been done. New leadwork has replaced the existing flashing (it sounds simple but it was quite a major undertaking) and the ceiling in the lobby was mould cleaned then stain blocked. It needs one more coat before painting but that doesn't affect any inside activities. Huge thanks to trustee Jon for his expertise in this matter.

We are holding our **Hall AGM** on **Wednesday, 25th June at 7pm** in the Main Hall. Please come along and find out more about our activities over the past year.

You may have noticed a whole back page announcement about Tipton Open Gardens on the back cover of the last issue of your Tipton Times. I have seen some gardens and they are fantastic. Puts mine to shame! Who knows that we have a garden behind the hall? I have a feeling that many of you have no idea that it is there. For the past year Alicia, who saw its potential, has been working on it and, although it can't yet be called an established garden, it is looking lovely. The garden can be hired along with the halls for different functions and the access is directly through French windows from the Small Hall. All weather garden furniture is on the top terrace for your comfort. So, on **Saturday 14th June from 12 noon until 5pm** our garden will also be open to the public. **Teas will be served** in the hall and if you are lucky you can take it out onto the terrace and sit in the sun. Fingers crossed for good weather. If you want to open your own garden you can contact Alicia, Jane and Alison at tiptonopengardens@gmail.com

Kyle Hayes

Tipton Fete 2025 - Bank Holiday Monday 25th August

For those of you who are new to the area or have not attended previously, our fete is a traditional, relaxed village event with a wide variety of stalls (homemade cakes and produce, books, toys and games, crafts, jewellery, bric-a-brac, plants etc.), games and refreshments, including delicious barbecue lunches and home-made cream teas, live music, games and entertainment for the children and the Grand Draw (watch out for tickets for this being sold in advance around the village).

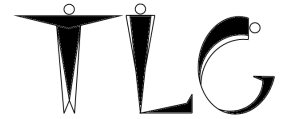
As well as the old favourites, we always try to introduce some new attractions each year, so please contact me if you would like to have a stall, put on a display or entertainment, run a game, promote a local charity or club, or to participate in any way, and we are always particularly keen to promote local organisations.

If you would like to help, there are always lots of jobs to be done, such as putting up signs and gazebos, assisting with stalls and games, supervising parking, serving refreshments, fetching and carrying, and (of course!) tidying up afterwards. Do please contact me - Mike Smith, telephone 01404 812542 - if you would like to get involved in any way and, in the next edition, we shall be inviting donations of prizes, plants, cakes, home produce, paperback books, good quality bric-a-brac and other items for our stalls.

We look forward to seeing you all on **Monday 25th August**.

Mike Smith, Fete Chairman

Tipton Ladies Group - Devon Air Ambulance (DAA)



After Easter we welcomed Mr Simon Card OBE to speak to us about Devon Air Ambulance. In 2011, Mr Card moved to Seaton with his wife for a lifestyle change taking over the running of a local Bed & Breakfast. It was here that he first spotted a Devon Air Ambulance collection tin on the communal dining table and having worked with charities in the past, Simon enquired about how he could get involved and begin to support Devon Air Ambulance.

In 1986, Ann Thomas' son Ceri was tragically killed in an accident in which he was knocked from his bike. When she asked what could have saved her son, she was told that the quicker a patient receives treatment the better their chance of survival. This stayed with Ann and she launched the 'Ceri Thomas Appeal' to raise funds to get an Air Ambulance in Devon.

Six years later, in 1992, after holding countless fundraising events, liaising with many council, health and aviation officials, and gaining the vital support of those in her local community and across Devon, Devon Air Ambulance (DAA) was launched. On 27 August 1992 Devon's Air Ambulance flew on its first mission, flying five days a week and extending to seven days five years later, in July 1997. Prior to this the crew and helicopter landed on Exeter's Cathedral Green for a blessing by the Bishop of Exeter.



In May 2005, a second aircraft was launched, based in North Devon.

In 2006 HRH Princess Anne opened a new airbase, shared with Devon and Cornwall Police air support team, at Exeter Airport and in January, the service celebrated the arrival of a purpose-built incubator. In June 2012, flying hours were extended during summer months - flying up to 14 hours a day.



Working in partnership with DAA, in 2015 Plymouth University launched a new **MSc Pre-hospital Critical Care/ Transport and Retrieval Master's Degree** for aircrew. In 2015 doctors flew on board for the first time, acting as mentors as part of the degree. In 2016 the first community landing site opened and in November, night flying started - flying up to midnight every day - with the flying hours extended to 2am in 2019. In 2020 the service was expanded with two Critical Care Cars which can attend incidents prior the arrival of the helicopter, further increasing patient safety.

Community landing sites had increased to 200 in 2024 - when two more Critical Care Cars were introduced to the fleet.

We were grateful to Simon Card for a very informative talk, the Devon Air Ambulance being a truly remarkable charity operating in a similar way to the RNLI, almost entirely dependent on public donations.

Ann Moore

In May, we held our **AGM and Social Evening**. The business was soon concluded with two members of the committee retiring - me, the Chair, replaced by Stephanie Kinson and Monica, the Treasurer, replaced by Eleanor. We were delighted to recruit Linda Kettle as a new committee member. The social and speaker secretaries gave accounts of our really interesting programme and activities including our Annual Dinner, Skittles Evening and Christmas craft making not to mention the very successful coffee morning raising £1,000 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. This was followed by a game of *guess who was who as a baby* and a fun quiz compiled for us by Mike Smith, all washed down with tea or coffee and brain food in the shape of delicious cakes made by committee members.

These days we hear much about mental health especially among the young and I can't help feeling this is partly due to our increasing lack of human contact. In these days of social media, emails and texts we don't even speak to each other on the phone. We shop online or self serve to pay at the supermarket so don't pass the time of day with the person on the checkout. Working from home can be a very solitary business, no one to chat to in the office, on the bus or in the cafe at lunch time. Tipton Ladies Group offers a real chance to get to know and talk to the people around you and maybe make new friends as well as enjoying interesting talks and activities (see village diary). Please, younger ladies, give us a try.

Ann Knight

Auction of Promises and items on Saturday, 28th June at 2pm at Tipton Community Hall



Do come and join us for an afternoon of fun, free refreshments, catching up with friends and family and the opportunity to bag a bargain.

Local residents and business have donated over thirty items and promises which will all be up for auction. There will also be a raffle of smaller items too.

Everyone attending will be entered in a free prize draw and one lucky attendee will win a free basket of fruit.

Do come along and join us from 2pm. The auction will start between 2.30pm and 3pm giving time to browse the lots, enjoy the strawberries and cream (while stocks last) and refreshments, buy some raffle tickets and catch up with neighbours and friends.

Funds raised will be split between Tipton Primary School (purchasing equipment for their Forest School) and VOSRA.

LADY'S BICYCLE

6 TICKETS FOR BICTON

SUNDIAL

BROAD OAK
£20 VOUCHER

LED LIGHT
FROM FIELDS

PET PORTRAIT

BIRD FEEDER

4 X SINGING
LESSONS

AUCTION LOTS

3 X MONTHLY
BUNCHES OF
FLOWERS

CREAM TEA FOR
2 AT JOSHUA'S

4 X SEASONAL CAKES

£50 VOUCHER
BOWHAYES
TREES

DUMPY BAG
OF WOOD

4 SEASONAL
PLANTERS

2 X BABY SITTING
SESSIONS

EXERCISE BIKE

£40 BOWD
MEAL VOUCHER

ROSEWOOD TABLE

ESCOT FAMILY FOOT
GOLF VOUCHER

GOLDEN LION
£25 VOUCHER

ROSE PRUNING

CREAM TEA FOR
2 AT OTTER
NURSERIES

PICNIC HAMPER

CAR CLEANING

3 X 1HOUR
GRASS CUTTING

CUT AND BLOW
DRY AT PRIDE HAIR

VINTAGE
CHAMPAGNE

3 X 2 HOUR IRONING



It will be a fantastic afternoon so do come along and celebrate Summer with some free refreshments, bid for an item (or two!), catch up with friends and, most importantly, raise money for two great causes! You might even walk away with a free basket of fruit!



What a difference a few months make!

A few months on and the daffodils, planted late last year on the verge in Venn Ottery, have now been in full bloom - spring is certainly with us!

We shall enjoy the hard work of the group of local residents who organised and planted the daffodils and wildlife hedging for many years to come!

Contacting VOSRA

If you wish to contact VOSRA, Jan or Andy will be happy to hear from you:

Jan Alden - Treasurer - mobile 07377 785809 - email address janicepalden@gmail.com

Andy Finch - Chair - mobile 07903 656235 - email address andy.finch1511@icloud.com



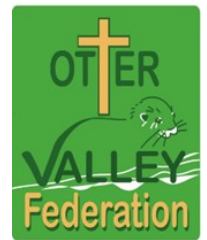
Denise, Jan. Andy, Chris, Herbie and Malcolm VOSRA Committee Members

The Otter Valley Federation is recruiting new School Governors

Ever thought about being a school governor? Do you have skills that you think could contribute to the strategic leadership of the Federation? Well now is your opportunity! Otter Valley Federation comprises of Tipton St John School and Feniton Primary School, both good Church of England, voluntary aided schools.

If you have an interest in education and would like to support your local schools please feel free to contact Sarah Walls, Chair of the Governing Board at sarah.walls@ottervalleyfederation.org.

Sarah can answer any questions you may have and give you more information about the vacancies and the roles available.



Tipton St John FC

We've now finished our season where we consolidated a 6th position in the league. Since the last edition of Tipton Times when we were placed 5th, we had some big games against teams around us where victories in these games would have boosted our promotion chances but unfortunately we came up short with defeats in close games, leaving us with another season in Devon & Exeter League Division 3. All in all though it has been a successful season where we have integrated the U18 players from West Hill Wasps into adult football with no concerns at all. All the players have adapted superbly and none of them looked out of place.



It has also come to light through football report newspaper archives that the football club was formed in May 1925. They joined the Otter St Mary District Football League but didn't get off to a great start, losing 10-0 to Newton Poppleford in a friendly and then in their first league match they lost again 10-0 to Escot Rovers! Thankfully results did improve throughout the season. The club have been playing football on the current pitch since at least the early 1960s when times were hard and they used sheep to keep the grass down (see photo, with sheep just about visible top left).

We now have a brand new John Deere ride-on tractor mower which we have bought together with the cricket club. This will make life a lot easier for both clubs throughout their

respective seasons. This along with more verti-draining, weed killing, fertiliser applications and seeding will ensure that come August, when the season starts again, the pitch will be in top condition.

Now it's time for a well earned break before we go again next season!

Kevin Sexton



Tipton Readers

Far from the Madding Crowd by Thomas Hardy

For some of us, picking up the novel 'Far from the Madding Crowd' took us back to our teenage study years, and it was a pleasant opportunity to revisit Hardy's work.

Written by Thomas Hardy and published in 1874 the novel is set in rural Wessex. Hardy colourfully sets his characters in the social

and economic environment of the time. It is a story about love, honour and betrayal, and centres upon the characters of Bathsheba Everdene, the faithful shepherd Gabriel Oak, the quiet wealthy farmer William Boldwood, and the faithless Sergeant Frank Troy. The theme of fate, or chance, runs through the book, as it does in many of his works.

The story begins with a detailed description of Gabriel Oak, a small-scale farmer quietly content with life, whose attention is caught by a young woman temporarily staying locally with her aunt. Love grows - on his side - very quickly, but she turns down his offer of marriage. Tragedy then strikes, and Gabriel loses his whole sheep flock when they are herded over a cliff by his over-enthusiastic young dog. His livelihood is lost and he is forced to relinquish his farm.

Forced into finding employment, he hires himself as a shepherd - to Bathsheba, who has recently inherited a considerable farmstead. She is now mistress, running her own farm and its operations now that she's dismissed the farm's roguish bailiff. As the story progresses, she comes to rely heavily on Gabriel, not just as a support in running the farm, but also as a friend and confidant. He continues to love her, despite her often random behaviour, but he does not pursue her.

One of Bathsheba's servants - Fanny Robin - disappears, and the rumour is that she has left to go after a soldier whose garrison is nearby. A search party is sent out, and it is confirmed that Fanny has run away. Her fate becomes clearer when the plan to marry her soldier - who is Sergeant Troy, he of a poor reputation in the locality - falls through due to a misunderstanding between them. They remain unmarried.

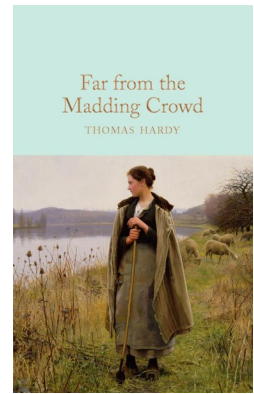
Meanwhile, Bathsheba engages in a silly prank concerning a valentine's message with the words 'marry me', which she unwisely sends to her neighbour Farmer Boldwood. The serious farmer receives it as if it were sent with sincerity, and thus begins the downward path to his humiliation, as he falls in love with Bathsheba, a love that is not reciprocated. He proposes and she reluctantly promises to consider the proposal for a few weeks. Then Bathsheba meets Sergeant Troy who sweeps her off her feet with flattery and deception which she fails to see through. She decides to turn down Boldwood's proposal, and instead follows Troy to Bath with the intention of ending their dalliance. Boldwood is mortified by the rejection, whilst Troy woos Bathsheba into a very quick marriage.

Troy begins to show his true colours, using Bathsheba's money to buy a discharge from the army, and to lose money on horse race gambling. He has no interest in the farm, and shows no respect or love for Bathsheba. She leans more heavily on Gabriel, who is the ever-present wise, strong support, coming to her rescue on the farm more than once.

Then Fanny returns to the scene, destitute and desperate. Having been seen by both Troy and Bathsheba, Fanny ends up at the Union (workhouse), where she sadly dies that night. An unfortunate series of events prevents her timely burial in the local churchyard, so Bathsheba takes the coffin into her house overnight. Now Bathsheba begins to suspect that Fanny was Troy's first love, which is confirmed when she opens the coffin to find not just Fanny but her unborn child. She confronts Troy, there's a dreadful argument during which Troy rejects Bathsheba for Fanny, whom he should have married, and Troy storms off. He returns later only briefly to see Fanny's grave.

Troy then disappears, apparently drowned in the sea where he has gone to swim in despair at his misfortune. Gabriel continues to quietly put roots down, assuming responsibility not just for Bathsheba's business but also that of Farmer Boldwood, who has lost all interest in securing his livelihood.

A year after Troy disappears Boldwood again reveals himself as a potential suitor for Bathsheba, pressing her to commit to marriage six years hence. But Troy, in a timely way, re-appears in the locality, now as part of a group of travelling artistes. Rumours begin to spread around the neighbourhood that Troy is alive, but Bathsheba is unaware that he's been seen. She is under increasingly obsessive pressure from Boldwood, and at a Christmas Eve party in her honour he presents her with an engagement ring.



Troy turns up at the party to reclaim his wife Bathsheba and his marital assets; there's a tussle, and Troy is shot dead by Boldwood. Boldwood hands himself in to the constabulary, and he faces a charge of murder and summary execution. However, a petition is raised and, at the last minute, he has a reprieve on the grounds of his diminished mental capacity and confined instead 'at Her Majesty's pleasure'.

Bathsheba is now free of two of her suitors, Troy and Boldwood, and it just leaves Gabriel Oak to claim her hand in marriage.

Interspersed throughout the story are wonderful characterisations of country folk and evocative descriptions of pastoral scenes. The literary style is rich, with lots of notations and references to archaic language. It's a persuasive and plausible story, with much gentle humour as well as a realistic portrayal of social deprivation and gender roles.

The group were almost unanimous in their appreciation of the book, and the average score was a solid 8.5 out of 10.

Caroline Poultney

Machines Like Me by Ian McEwan

The year is 1982, the British fleet dispatched to the Falklands has been defeated and Margaret Thatcher is fighting for political survival, shortly to be defeated by Tony Benn's Labour Party. In this alternative history the mathematical genius and father of artificial intelligence, Alan Turing, has not been hounded to suicide but is a national hero. With his help, computing and artificial intelligence have advanced decades earlier and a first batch of human-like robots have just been released for sale: 13 Adams and 12 Eves in a variety of ethnicities.

The book is narrated by AI nerd Charlie Friend who has spent his inheritance to buy an Adam – he wanted an Eve but they had already been snapped up. At the same time, Charlie is developing his relationship with his upstairs neighbour, Miranda, and together they choose some of Adam's character traits. Once Adam is fully booted up and awakened, one of his first actions is to warn Charlie about Miranda's secret past.

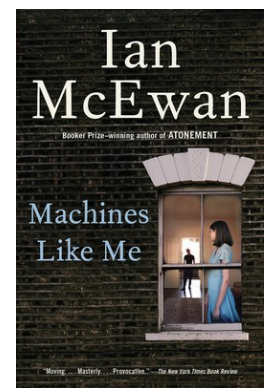
Adam's AI knowledge of the world and of literature is immense and he gradually learns to pass himself off in human society, engaging in deep philosophical discussions. It's not long before he learns how to prevent Charlie from operating his "off" switch. Physically realistic, he enjoys a night of passion with Miranda and declares himself in love with her, but promises Charlie never to sleep with her again.

The parallel story concerns Miranda's back story in which she has managed to get her best friend's attacker jailed, but only by framing him, and they fear he will come to exact revenge after his release. If Miranda's perjury comes to light it will put at risk her and Charlie's plan to adopt a young boy. In the end the limitations of Adam's intelligence come to the fore as his actions are driven by an uncompromising "do the right thing" with no empathy or consideration of the impact on others...you'll need to read the book to find out how!

This is a complex novel with several parallel threads and stimulated a lively discussion with widely differing views from book club readers. For myself, I loved the setting in a parallel world where history all turned out a bit differently but some members hated that. I also enjoyed the play on whether Adam could really feel emotions and love, but others who have read more science fiction than I have thought the same ideas have been done much better in other novels. Most people thought that Adam was the most compelling character in the book.

As a result, members scores varied widely, with extremes of 4 and 9 out of 10 and an average of 6.5. Interestingly the men in the group scored it notably higher with an average of 7.5 compared with the ladies at 5.9.

Ken Mylne





Eager Beavers have also been busy with a foraging workshop in April, (it is truly astounding just how much edible food there is right on our doorstep) and more recently, have been working with the Otter Valley Association to test the river Otter in a much more structured way. The notion is that several teams test the river on the same day at specific points from Honiton to Budleigh.

Unfortunately, our beautiful river is in a sorry state with it being formally placed **in the bottom 20% of the UK for water quality**. I am sure that I am not alone in feeling that this is not acceptable, hence the decision to join forces and collect a lot of data including ammonia and



Pulling up the Himalayan Balsam

Since my last article I am delighted to report that Ariadne's Thread, the new labyrinth on the North West corner of the playing field has been very well received; people have travelled from afar to walk its path which is truly wonderful. I have also seen individuals with learning disabilities dancing as they reached the centre, wheelchair users managing the whole circuit with ease and just the general public enjoying the labyrinth for what it is, somewhere to just 'be'.

We celebrated World Labyrinth Day on the 3rd May at 1pm, where the concept is that 'we walk as one at 1'. There are thousands of labyrinth throughout the world and by all walking at 1pm in our respective time zones we are able to send a wave of positivity across the globe. In fact, there were 402 global events involving 37 countries in 19 time zones registered, Tipton St John included ... how amazing is that? I hope that some of you have managed to go and see for yourself this lovely creation on the field, we have started a Facebook page (Tipton St John Labyrinth - Ariadne's Thread) so please post your photos and thoughts on there too. In the near future we hope to have a noticeboard alongside the bench explaining the concept of the labyrinth and its uses. I also envisage using the labyrinth for workshops in the coming months, so if there is anything that you would particularly like to see/do there, then please just let me know.



phosphate levels (which have been high). This data is then formally analysed to see if there are any trends or patterns, all of which is available on the Otter Valley Association website or Facebook page if you're interested. Please let me know if you'd like to get involved, my contact details are at the bottom of the page, we also have a WhatsApp and email group for those who would prefer not to use social media.

We are also trying to combat the never-ending issue with Himalayan Balsam which if any of you have been down in the *nature area* you will see is especially bad this year. By the time this article is published we will have run a couple of workshops already, but we will be running further sessions working alongside Clinton Devon Estates and the OVA to try and be more effective - look out for posters and/or notifications on Facebook.

The community garden is still flourishing behind the pavilion; we have continued with herbs again this year as they truly seem to love the location and are doing very well there. With that in mind, if you need to collect some mint for your Pimm's! Then maybe pop along to the community garden, get some fresh organic herbs and take them over to the labyrinth, have a lovely walk and then enjoy a cool drink in the evening as the sun sets. Enjoy !!

Lisette Johnston

l.f.johnston@hotmail.co.uk

07870 967 250

Garden news

At last I've managed to call on Sue at Little Barton to have a look at her garden as I've often been told it's one of the best in Tipton. I was not disappointed! The little brick wall at the front of the house gives an indication of how talented a gardener she is as there is always a succession of bulbs and annuals interspersed with some permanent planting such as an alpine rose and I always have a look when I go to get my paper.



As we went through to the back garden she tells me she is in the process of rearranging the patio so she is able to do most of her gardening at an easier level and nearer the back door. This will allow her to carry on doing what she loves best ... being in the garden.

Sue first began developing the garden 25 years ago - there were many mature shrubs and a dominant hedge which were either removed or severely pruned to open up the garden. The first idea was to build a pond and she decided on a pretty large one. What she didn't realise was that in the undergrowth alongside was a smaller pond which had been built by the previous owner. She has kept the two ponds and they look so natural

with all the planting surrounding them. She then began to create borders and this has been done in such a way that you are led to the end of the garden through a grassy gap. It is the essence of a good garden to not show it all off in one go if possible but to lead you to find hidden secrets. The borders are deep and enable a beautiful selection of plants to be planted. Here I might have told you some of the specimens I have seen but instead you can find out for yourself as Sue is opening her garden on the 14th June so I won't spoil the treat in store.



There is also a greenhouse and a fruit cage tucked at the bottom of the garden so it is productive as well. She has the help of a gardener who really keeps an eye on the main part of the garden. If you've read my other articles (and if not, why not!!) you will know I'm a bit fearful of pruning and Sue has a pruning story about a *Garrya elliptica* that she has in the garden. They can grow quite large and benefit from pruning, however, her gardener really went to town last year and she really was fearful of it not coming back but good news ... he knew what he was doing and it's back and looking very healthy. I had the most amazing tassels of flowers on mine this year after pruning so don't feel afraid of cutting this one back. While I was looking up the spelling of the *Garrya* I see it has many names, Coast tassel bush or Silk tassel bush, but I have my

own given to me by a friend who could never remember it - she and I call it Gary Lineker. It's been passed on as a friend down the road asks for Gary Lineker when she comes for foliage for the church! Nicknames are fun to have ... perhaps you have some that you'd like to pass on and I could write a whole article about them?

Many thanks to Sue for the visit and we welcome you to Sue's and all the gardens on June 14th.



Alison Stevens

Extra help required for watering the bridge and hanging baskets.

We have a few gaps in our rota (watering daily from a Sunday to the following Saturday).

Please contact Anne Sadler via tiptontimes2020@gmail.com

Jess Bailey Independent Devon County Councillor, Otter Valley Re-election to Devon County Council

I would like to thank the residents of Tipton St John for re-electing me to Devon County Council at the elections on 1st May 2025. I am delighted to have been re-elected and to have secured 2997 votes. Reform secured 983 votes, Conservatives 486 votes, Liberal Democrats 197 votes and Labour 70 votes.

The election has brought about significant change to the political make-up of Devon County Council, which had been led by the Conservative Group for more than a decade. Prior to the election on 1st May, thirty nine out of the sixty Councillors were Conservative giving them a sizeable majority. However, the largest political group is now the Liberal Democrats with twenty seven councillors. The Labour Party lost all their six seats. Reform has eighteen councillors, the Greens six and I am one of two Independents. For the purpose of committee seat allocations, I will be sitting with the Green Group, whilst of course remaining strongly independent.



At the time of writing, the Annual Meeting of Devon County Council has not yet taken place. It is at that meeting on 22nd May the Council will formally appoint the Leader (expected to be a Liberal Democrat) who then appoints his/her cabinet, and all the Chairs of Committees are appointed.

Tipton St John Primary School

A bid by Devon County Council to East Devon District Council for £600,000 from EDDC's Community Infrastructure Levy is being considered. This would fund feasibility studies required by the Department for Education in assessing three potential school sites in Tipton. East

Devon District Council officers are recommending refusal of the bid for a number of reasons including they consider the DfE requirements "excessive". I will be urging EDDC councillors to go against their officers' recommendation and support the bid or at the very least defer the decision to allow a meeting with DfE to take place to discuss their requirements. By the time you read this article EDDC will have made their decision and I will provide further update in the next edition of the Tipton Times.

Swift boxes now up at EDDC's HQ in Honiton

Last October I tabled a notice of motion that required EDDC to install swift boxes at its HQ at Blackdown House Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton. Swifts have seen a sharp decline in numbers in recent years which has been caused in part by the lack of nesting sites. I was delighted that last week ten swift boxes were installed by EDDC. I know that it can take some years for swifts to adopt new boxes and so EDDC have installed audio lures to alert swifts to the new boxes.

Cllr Jess Bailey
01404 814056
email jessica.bailey@devon.gov.uk



A little bit of Venn Ottery history

There will be a small display of "a little bit of Venn Ottery history" in the church at Venn Ottery from **Sunday 1st June**. The display will remain up for the following week. So if you are out and about in the area please call in and take a look. Read about some of the families who have lived in the village and stories of their everyday lives.

There will also be a service on Sunday, 1st June at 6pm to which everyone is welcome.

Janice Aherne
Ottery St Mary Town Councillor, Tipton St John Ward



Where does the time go! May saw some changes in our Councillors at Devon County Council and congratulations to our local Independent Councillor Jess Bailey on her re-election.

Tipton St John Primary School

DCC have submitted a bid to fund a feasibility and design study from the Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL], to confirm whether three sites identified within the village are deliverable, at the cost of £600,000, despite this not delivering any infrastructure or confirmed site. The Department of Education is aware of strong local support to keep the school within the village.

This went before East Devon District Scrutiny Meeting on Monday 19th May, with a recommendation to reject the bid. I attended the meeting and was allowed to speak before the Council, as a member of the public and resident of Tipton. I requested a decision be deferred, to allow for clarification of what the DfE exact requirements are.

Cllr Jess Bailey has contacted Richard Foord MP, to start discussions and [hopefully] move the building of a new school in Tipton forward!

The plan for a 20mph speed limit through the village, along with other local areas is/has been submitted to EDDC for consideration.

Listed below are a couple of upcoming temporary traffic restrictions:

THE COUNTY OF DEVON (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION)

(MILL STREET, OTTERY ST MARY) (NO. 2) NOTICE 2025 TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF PARKING

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL hereby give NOTICE that: From Until MONDAY 23 JUNE 2025 for a maximum of 5 days FRIDAY 27 JUNE 2025 (both dates inclusive) No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to park or wait on the sections of Affected Roads.

Roads affected - MILL STREET, OTTERY ST MARY, (OUTSIDE 62 TO 64) THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE ROUTE. This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - NEW GAS CONNECTION 8M PUBLIC O/S 73 PARKING SUSPENSION O/S 64 & 62. For additional information contact: WALES & WEST UTILITIES Telephone: 0800 9122999 Dated: MONDAY 23 JUNE 2025

THE COUNTY OF DEVON (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION)

(ROAD FROM PITT FARM TO HIND STREET, OTTERY ST MARY) ORDER 2025 TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC NOTICE is hereby given that Devon County Council has made the above titled order.

From Anticipated Finish MONDAY 7 JULY 2025 for a maximum of 18 months TUESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2025 No person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed on the sections of Affected Roads. Roads affected - ROAD FROM PITT FARM TO HIND STREET, OTTERY ST MARY The alternative, signed, route for vehicles will be via - FAIRMILE - PATTESON'S CROSS - GOSFORD ROAD - B3177 ALFINGTON ROAD - PATERNOSTER ROW - CORNHILL - GOLD STREET - B3174 MILL STREET B3174 HIND STREET - PROSPECT PLACE - GOLD STREET - SILVER STREET - CORNHILL - PATERNOSTER ROW - B3177 ALFINGTON ROAD - GOSFORD ROAD - PATTERSON'S CROSS - FAIRMILE - TALEWATER BRIDGE CLOSURE This temporary restriction is considered necessary to enable - STRENGTHENING WORKS TO TALEWATER BRIDGE For additional information contact: EDG - BETH LEWIS Telephone: 0345 155 1004 Dated: MONDAY 30 JUNE 2025

As always, if you have any issues or concerns you would like to discuss, please contact me as per my details below. Unfortunately, Matt Williamson is currently on sick leave.

Cllr Janice Aherne

Tel: 07508 308569

Email:

Janice.Aherne@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk



OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL

Report of Ottery St Mary Town Council 12th May 2025

Cllr Vicky Johns was elected as the Mayor.

Cllr John Green was re-elected as Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Dean Stewart was elected as the Councillor with special responsibility for Finance.

The Council agreed to have the following committees: Planning; Finance and Strategic Planning; Human Resources Management; Operations and Community Infrastructure. Meetings will be set up for these committees over the forthcoming weeks. Information regarding agendas and minutes will be available on the Council website.

The Council agreed to have the following Working Groups: Events; Emergency Plan Asset Management; Youth Engagement; Safe Cycle and Pedestrian Access and the Community Safety Group.

The Council agreed membership to the committees, working groups and representatives to outside bodies.

The Planning Committee, Environment, Local Development and Commerce Committee and Operations Committee have all met since the last meeting. Minutes from those meetings are available on the Council website.

The Council agreed that it will pay for the planters in the town to be maintained on an ad hoc basis for this year. The existing metal planters will be replanted.

The Council agreed a budget of £10,000 to develop the outside space at the Station Hub.

The application for the PlayZone has been successful and the next step will be to submit a planning application to EDDC.

Shop Front Grants were awarded to Otter Wishes; Turkish Barbers; Leah Marcs and Cold Harbour Farm.

It was noted that EDDC have decided to remove the payphone near Sainsburys despite the fact that the Council requested it remained. As the telephone will be removed the Council felt there was no benefit in keeping the box.

Future Full Council meeting dates:

Monday 2 nd June 2025	Council Offices
Monday 7 th July 2025	Council Offices
Monday 4 th August 2025	Council Offices

Useful dates:

Citizens Advice at Council Offices every Tuesday from 9.30am until 11.30am (subject to volunteer availability) or telephone 01395 265070

Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 27th May at 7pm at the Station Hub, Mill Street, EX11 1AH

The Town Council Offices are open from 10am until 1pm Monday to Friday. If you need to contact the Council, see our contact details below. You can keep up to date by following our Facebook page or looking at our website www.otterystmary-tc.gov.uk where you can view agendas and minutes for all Council and Committee Meetings, together with news and updates.

Kerry Kennell
Town Clerk

Ottery St Mary Town Council
8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary,
EX11 1BZ
Tel: 01404 812252
Email: admin@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk

Ottery Choral Society Easter Concert - Thank You!



We would like to say a huge Thank You to everyone who came to our concert on Saturday 12th April. We hope you enjoyed an evening of beautiful music.

We opened the programme, appropriately enough, with the "Easter Hymn" from Mascagni's popular opera "Cavalleria Rusticana". Our very own Pip Gascoigne-Pees led with the soprano solo, her voice soaring over the choir to bring this beautiful music's message of redemption and hope for the future. From this dramatic start we moved into "Voi Che Sapete" from Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro", sung by our guest soloist Alison Kettlewell. We were so lucky to have Alison with us, amid her busy professional schedule, to give us a stunning performance of this light-hearted song that pokes gentle fun at the intensity and confusion of adolescent love.

Not to be outdone, it was the lads' turn next. Our guests Leslie Baker (Tenor) and Philip Lancaster (Baritone) gave an incredible performance of the Pearl Fishers' Duet "Au Fond du Temple Saint" from Bizet's "The Pearl Fishers". This duet tells of the bond of friendship between two men who had fallen in love with the same beautiful priestess. This bond caused them both to renounce that love to preserve their lifelong brotherhood. Leslie and Philip's voices were perfectly matched as they built up to the final thrilling declaration of lifelong brotherly love.

We then opened our headline piece, the Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle. Pip Gascoigne-Pees, with our guest soloists, gave us the dazzling solos and duets that delivered Rossini's heartfelt and emotional meaning. This was an outwardly religious piece of music, perfect for Easter, but with a very operatic heart. The centrepiece of the work, a long building crescendo layered around the words of the Mass affirming the story of the resurrection, allowed the choir to open full throttle and fill the church with gorgeous bold harmonies. The echoes of the final stirring chord, a call to "Grant us peace", closed the concert.

We would like to thank our guest soloists Alison, Philip and Leslie for their time, generosity and hard work, and Pip for her incredible performance. Special mention must also go to our superb orchestra, made up of local musicians who give their time and talents to help us stage these events. We could not do this without you. To all those who've helped us or been to see us perform this year, thank you; your support is vital to us.

The choir goes quiet now until we start rehearsing our Christmas programme. If you would like to join us for this, you would be very welcome. We do not audition - all are welcome to sing with us. Our entry requirements are very straightforward: would you like to learn and sing some of the most beautiful choral music in the world? We meet at the United Reformed Church, Ottery St Mary, on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm. Our 2025-26 term starts on Wednesday September 3rd, 2025.

Peter Hudson

RSPB Aylesbeare Common

This month I wanted to divert a little from the norm, and to take inspiration from the

Countryside Code, as seen on the Eryri National park website (Snowdonia). I came across it the other day and thought that the ideas could well be worth a little personalised Aylesbeare take, and a good reminder to all. So here we are.



Keep dogs on a lead

Keeping your dog on a lead, especially when near livestock, is the best way to ensure the safety of you and your dog.

For us at the RSPB this is the most significant one on our reserves including Aylesbeare Common, Withycombe Raleigh Common in the south (near Exmouth) and Venn Ottery Common in the north. Yes this applies around livestock but most importantly it applies to give ground nesting birds the best chance of success in rearing young, during the breeding season. You'll see that all our access gates have signs on them at this time of year (from 1st March to 31st July) asking you to keep dogs on a lead. We are aware that the sign has been missing for a while at the Newton Poppleford entrance at Hunger Hill but we are printing new signs and apologise for any issues that the missing sign is having. It's a funny one because for one thing, we have many visitors who like to visit us because we have a 'dogs on leads' policy - because they prefer to watch wildlife knowing they will not have dogs running around, or because they are not comfortable around dogs. Thanks if you are already mindful of other people when walking your dogs on our reserves.

Give ground nesting birds the best chance of success in rearing young, during the breeding season



Take your litter home

Litter is damaging to the natural environment. You should take any food waste home with you.

This goes without saying and indeed we are fortunate that those who visit us seem to appreciate the environment enough not to spoil it. We rarely find litter. Thank you... If people do leave anything behind, bear in mind someone has to pick it up and that will probably be us, or perhaps good-willed visitors. Mostly our litter is beyond our control - to be found on the road verges. There is a dedicated, quiet pair who can sometimes be seen collecting the rubbish on our local verges, leaving it in white bags for the council team to collect. It's a fantastic thing that they do, without thanks; but we would like to thank them.

Respect plants and wildlife

Be careful not to damage and tread on plants or disturb nearby wildlife. Stay on the path where possible.

Like dogs, people too may disturb wildlife. If you hear birds alarm-calling, or agitated, you may be the cause so please move on quickly.

Follow signs and directions

This includes signs on gates and at entrances. We try to keep these up to date. Look for signs saying that livestock is present. On Aylesbeare and Harpford Commons, there are usually cattle or ponies present all year. There may be livestock on our reserves at any time.

Stay on the path

Staying on the path helps to minimise the effects of land erosion.

This is not just for mountains ... It is something that you may not think about - we think about it a lot, especially when it comes to driving around in the winter. Muddy paths and loss of vegetation from excess footfall cause erosion. In short, the more that a new 'path' is used, the more defined it becomes and the more obvious too, which increases its use. And if you're on a bike, please refrain from going off piste because tyres so quickly churn and rut the earth, and create new routes which open up access into the middle of the heath; this could easily deter birds from nesting there. Livestock create their own tracks, of course, but ideally we humans would stick to the paths, especially during the breeding season.

Leave gates as you found them

If you come across any open gates, leave them open. If you come across any closed gates, make sure you close them behind you.

Again, hopefully this is straightforward. I would like to add please don't block vehicle gates at any time of the year! Occasionally we have issues with this and it is not funny if you have an issue with animals and you can't drive in to access them. We are lucky that many of you are good at letting us know when there are issues with our gates not self-closing. Please check your gate has closed behind you.

Be considerate of other walkers

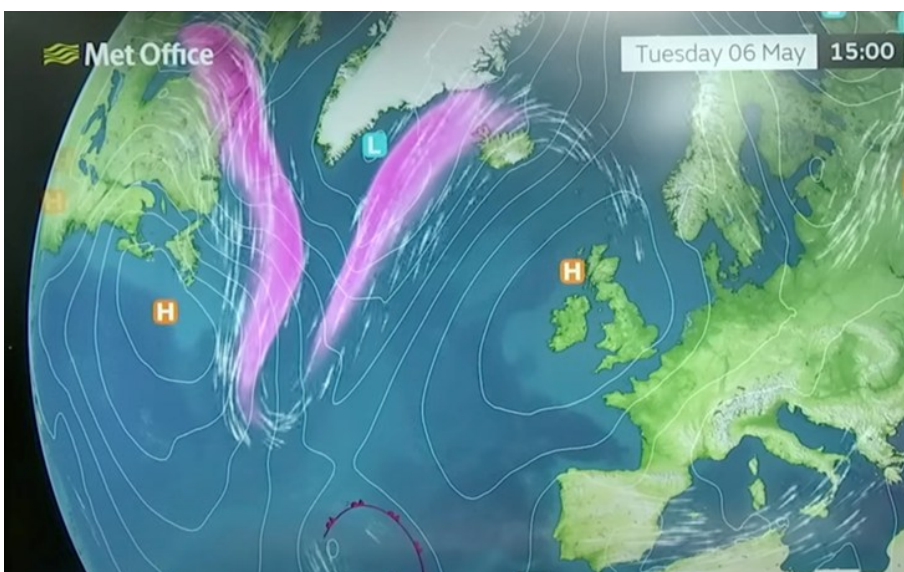
Always be considerate of others. Remember a friendly greeting always goes a long way.

A lovely one! And perhaps one of the most important ideas - because in following the countryside code, we are hoping to act in ways which preserve other people's enjoyment of the commons - this week, or this summer, or for many years to come.

Tipton Times Weather

The BBC news this evening reported on the prospects for a drought over the coming summer months, even though in recent articles I have been writing about miserable wet weather. In February I remember walking over Woodbury Common with lying water everywhere, but since then it has been extraordinarily dry. The Met Office has just announced that April was the sunniest on record for the UK, following a similar headline about March. It was also warm and dry. Here, in Tipton, April rainfall was actually near-normal or even slightly on the wet side, along with Devon and Cornwall, SW Wales and Northern Ireland, but everywhere else was exceptionally dry. Large parts of eastern England and Scotland had less than 20% of normal April rainfall. None of those famous April showers!

This unusual weather has been driven by persistent high pressure which has been with us for most of the time since late February. High pressure is not unusual, but this level of persistence is exceptional. Regular readers will know that I have written before about the jet stream, that ribbon of strong winds high in the atmosphere, and how it varies between a relatively straight flow which drives and steers weather systems across the Atlantic to us and a much more looped, waving flow which is more static. This spring the jet stream has been exceptionally “amplified” with large north-south loops, blocking the flow of storms and keeping the persistent high pressure over us. The picture below, taken from a Met Office YouTube video, illustrates this with the jet stream taking a deep plunge south and then north again over mid-Atlantic.



As I said, I have written about wavy jet-streams before in relation to other weather events, such as exceptional rains in Europe when they have been stuck in the low-pressure part of such systems. Historically, meteorologists have thought of the free-flowing westerly jet-stream as the norm, with occasional interludes of more blocked, wavy flow which can trigger more unusual events worth writing about - but in recent years these events have become much more frequent,

even the new norm. So why is this? The obvious question is whether it is related to human-driven climate change or natural variability. Climate change predictions have long been confident about warming temperatures and heavier rain globally (with some local variations) but have been ambivalent about any changes to patterns of the jet stream. As the poles warm more rapidly than equatorial regions the temperature gradient driving the jet stream reduces and that might suggest a weakening, but in reality it is much more complex than that and climate models have never given a consistent message about the jet stream. The question then is whether there is something missing in our climate models which we are now seeing happening?

I am a weather man but one of the privileges of working for the Met Office is knowing some of the world's top climate experts, and this question is stimulating much discussion amongst us. Climate change is seen through changes in the weather, after all! One theory is that the variations in the jet stream are actually driven by quite small-scale processes - things like thunderstorms. Climate models, because they have to be run over many years or decades, are run at much lower resolution than weather forecast models so they cannot resolve the details of these small-scale processes so well. This might explain why they didn't predict these changes, if indeed they are caused by climate change. We already use the weather models to try to add local detail to climate change projections, but now the interest is in whether we can run a few climate simulations at much higher resolution to understand better whether what we are seeing is caused by climate change, and whether this really is a new norm. Don't expect an answer in the next issue though - this will take years more research!

Ken Mylne

Tipton Past

To Bee or not to Bee?

We love having bees in our garden and do as much as we can to accommodate and encourage them so I was absolutely horrified to read that before the 1800s, when you kept bees, to harvest the honey the beekeeper would first kill all of the bees.

In England hive beekeeping has been around from pre Roman times, the Anglo-Saxons have reference to beeswax, honey and mead and honey could be used to pay towards rents and other dues. The bees then were kept in skeps which were typically made of coiled straw or willow resembling a domed basket with an entrance for the bees. The old custom was to burn the bees in the autumn so that the honey could be safely accessed. This was thankfully phased out from around 1850 and the new, more humane method of using the bar framed hive was introduced.

At the Ottery St Mary Cottage Garden Society in 1870 a local bee keeper claimed that it was nothing unusual to take 50 to 70 lb of surplus honey from the new one bar frame hive and still be able to leave enough for the bees to *winter on*. It was his opinion that cottagers would find it far more profitable to keep bees on this modern system. The danger of the sting he said was not half so great as was generally supposed, so there was no reason why bees should be killed in order that the honey may be obtained. And the honey would also be cleaner as it would not be contaminated with sulphur.

A lecture, by the Devon and Exeter Bee-keepers' Association, was held in the schoolroom at Tipton St John in 1882. There was a large and interested audience, hosted by the Rev Hunt who had taken an interest in apiculture. The lecturer pointed out to the Tipton villagers how profitable bee keeping could be as a cottager's industry. He described the wonderful construction of the honey bee, *apis mellifera*, and their relation to flowers and the advantage they offered to fruit growers. He described how the old-fashioned system of burning was not only cruel but a wasteful practice. Not only were the industrious insects thrown away but the owner rarely obtained more than 20 lb of very indifferent, tainted honey. Villagers were shown the workings of the new bar hives and the various appliances used in an apiary.

Honey was offered for sale not only from the cottage gardens but from many of the cider farms in our valley. As you can imagine the hives would have been situated amongst the orchards and the bees would have helped with the pollination and formation of the apples, and other fruits such as cherries, plums and damsons.

In 1887 hives belonging to John Chard of the Golden Lion, Tipton St John, were damaged and honey comb stolen. Frances Richard Gibbons, a mason by trade, was arrested and charged with the damage amounting to over £10. The man was caught after leaving footprints and a trail of honeycomb to his house at Metcombe. His claim was at first that it was not him but he later admitted to the crime and his excuse was that he was drunk at the time.

Growing up we used to watch from a safe distance, Mr Brown of Hayne Cottages tending to his hives in his full head to toe, white protective outfit. The suit looked almost alien like to us children. Mr Cross of Chesiholt Cottages at The Bowd was well known for the sales of his home-produced honey for many years. There are honeybees living within the wall of the tower at Venn Ottery church, they have been there for as long as I can remember. The workers are active even in January on a sunny day and quite often a swarm will break away from the main colony in the spring and regroup in branches within the churchyard.



Bees swarming outside
Venn Ottery church

There have been some accidents related indirectly to bees, one being of a lady from Sidmouth, in late 1800, who was in her donkey chair along with her sister when some bees that had been disturbed were infuriated and stung not only the ladies but also the donkey. In its pain the donkey spun around and around overturning the vehicle and the lady was thrown under the wheels. So serious were her injuries that she died two days later.

60-year-old Thomas Podbury, a farmer who lived at The Bowd, was stung on the lip whilst hiving a butt of bees and died later that day in his wife's arms. Even though he had kept bees for many years, it was presumed that the bee sting was the cause of his death.

Hives were even kept at some schools locally, Ottery St Mary won the Devon Schools beekeeping competition in 1940. This was to encourage practical instruction in as many rural practices as possible. There was also a resurgence in bee keeping during both wars, with no rationing on honey during WW2.

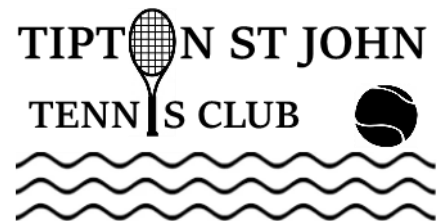
Today we realise more than ever the importance of the bees in our lives. Without bees (and thousands of other insect species that call the UK home), it wouldn't be long before our ecosystem collapsed. Bees pollinate our wild trees and wild flowers, which then support other insects, which then support birds, bats, mammals and everything up the food chain with food and shelter.

Bees pollinate one out of every three bites of food that we consume daily, without them we would be in serious trouble Albert Einstein

Judith Taylor



Spring marks the start of a new tennis year so there is never a better time to dust off the racquet and join Tipton Tennis Club. We offer tremendous value for money with full adult membership at only £85 for a year's unlimited use of our beautiful riverside courts, including floodlights. Junior and family memberships also available - see our website at <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/TiptonStJohnTennisClub> for full details and to join. Prospective members are always welcome at club nights on Wednesdays from 6pm or at Tuesday morning ladies' session from 10am to give us a try.



Last issue we reported on the Men's winter league team winning promotion to Division 1 for next winter, and said that the Mixed team had also done well but their final position was now down to other teams' results. Well, great news, they were also promoted, finishing second in their division, so altogether a great winter season. Well done all who played ... next winter will be a challenge! In the meantime, summer leagues have now started so best of luck to all three teams - look out for them on court, sporting the club's new blue shirts, complete with new club logo designed by our own Alison Stevens (as above).

Finally, we celebrate the continuing success of star player, Pete Clarke. For many years Pete was club coach, but a few years ago he stepped back from coaching to focus on his own playing career. Pete recently returned from an international tournament in Welwyn Garden City at which his rating rose to No 20 in the UK and 312 in the World in the Over 65's category - I asked Pete to tell us about it in his own words:

I recently entered the week-long ITF MT400 tournament in Welwyn Garden City in the over 65's Singles & Doubles. It is an international tournament although predominantly British players.

The draw was not kind to me, having to play the No.3 seed in the first round (a round of 32) on Monday. I had nothing to lose and played a decent game winning 6-4 6-1. My opponent was rated at No.12 in Great Britain at over 65's. On the Tuesday I won 6-4 6-2, and on the Wednesday I beat the No.7 seed 7-6 6-2. On Thursday I faced the chap who put out the No.2 seed and won 3-6 6-4 10-3. With my partner in the Mens Doubles on the same day, we faced the No.1 seeds and Great Britain players. We took the 1st set 6-4 and had a point for 5-2 in the 2nd, but lost it. We finally lost 4-6 6-4 10-4.

On the final day I lost to the England Captain, rated 8th in Great Britain, 6-2 6-1, although it was a good game and I had nothing to fear, just lots to learn from his consistency. With my success at the Welwyn tournament, I should have enough points to enable me to play at Wimbledon again in August in the Great Britain Seniors Closed event.

Ken Mylne, Chair

Church of St Gregory, Venn Ottery - Saved Again?

The church at Venn Ottery has had a pretty chequered history dating from at least the twelfth century. In Norman style with its red sandstone tower and medieval ring of three bells for some 726 years from 1205 to 1931 it was a 'chapel' for St Gregory, Harpford. The meagre records we have indicate it was built much as we see it except the nave and tower may both have been timbered and the nave thatched in Saxon times. It was reached from the Harpford mother church by foot by a narrow wooden bridge behind the present day Court House, once the Manor House, but the bridge was lost in the 1968 flood. Only in 1932 was Venn Ottery Incorporated into the parish of Tipton St John with a new (now The Old) vicarage built in Venn Ottery Road opposite the entrance to Green Lane.



The church in several sources is said to have been rebuilt in 1699. There is evidence that in about 1740 a fire destroyed the heart of the village - a cluster of thatched cottages, a smithy, an inn and part of the shippen at Venn Ottery Barton (then a farm) so it is likely that the thatched roof of the church was also lost at that time. Perhaps the church remained a ruin until 1832 when it was reportedly re-built and, according to Kelly's directory, restored. In 1905 the Bishop of Exeter granted a faculty authorising the erection of a reredos constructed from the old oak timber removed from the tower at the time of the 1900 restoration. There is a lovely old, hand-written, income and expenditure account for this dated 1901. It shows costs of £46-12s-8d covered by donations and gifts of materials. The window to the memory of Augustus Toplady author of the hymn 'Rock of Ages' and vicar of Harpford and Venn Ottery 1766 - 68 was installed in 1913.

In 1958 the Inspection of Churches Measure was introduced requiring all places of worship to be inspected every five years. Inspection at St Gregory showed plenty of work needed. So much that the Church had to be closed for six months while the chancel arch was completely re-built and numerous urgent repairs carried out in the tower and nave. The Western Times of 26th February 1960 reported that the Bishop of Crediton would preside at a thanksgiving service to reopen the church after which twice-weekly services would be resumed. Imagine!

In 1977 problems again, when an anonymous donor paid the cost of re-slatting the north side of the nave roof which, damaged by gales, had begun to leak. In 1981 Rentokil had to deal with extensive dry rot under the nave floorboards fortunately covered by insurance. Larry Shenfield, who ran a hotel at Venn Ottery Barton, was Church Warden from 1976 to 1989 taking a great interest in St Gregory's and doing a lot of research on the building and the bells.



So far I have been unable to locate records from 1977 to 1997 but as we moved to the area in 1970 I do have some personal recollection of monthly services of, I think, Matins at first then Family Communion and Evensong. In the 1970s all three bells were rung to give notice of these services. During that time Ken Field ran a choir of local Venn Ottery children to sing at the services. There was more than one wedding and several baptisms. I remember the Carol Service in 2001 when, with the Church decorated jointly for Christmas and my son's wedding on 22nd December, the carols were so well attended that the congregation was sitting on the steps in front of the choir stalls and there was standing room only at the back. The bells were rung at midnight on December 31st 1999 to herald in the new millennium.

The fabric of the building was of concern in the early 2000s with work needed on the roof, the tower, the porch, dry rot in the floor and one bell being taken out of service. Quotes for the floor work being £3900 - £6000 and the tower expected to be in the region of £15,000. The PCC suggested that as the old Church needed large sums spent on it the local community needed to be more aware of the cost implications and give greater support to justify keeping it open. Work was now also required on the East Gable and window. The East wall had moved and was likely to continue to do so but the structural engineer seemed happy with it. Grant applications were being formulated and VOSRA continuing to raise funds with Open Gardens and a Music Event on the Green. The repair work on the tower was finally started in March 2006 and certified finished in May. Roof repairs and pointing had been done. 'Tell-tales' were fixed on the crack over the East window to monitor movement. By 2011 it was reported not to be giving cause for concern.

Before Covid changed all our lives two services a month were being held at St Gregory- 9.30am Communion on 1st Sunday and 8.00am on the 2nd. However, the congregations for these had declined somewhat and mostly came from Tipton rather than Venn Ottery. In March 2020 all Churches were closed.

When other Churches re-opened again, St Gregory remained closed due to several factors. There is an increasing shortage of clergy to take services, the fabric was causing even more concern and the colony of bats had had a good time in the empty church.

However, local pressure prevailed and the Church opened its door again, first for a wedding then for a carol service in December 2023. Services, except Communion, can be led by other than ordained ministers and one of our licensed readers, Caroline Poultney, has offered to do this so we are now able to hold services at least four times year- as well as the occasional wedding or funeral. Fund raising to restore the bells has begun locally.

For as long as I can remember St Gregory has had a loving carer first Mrs Page, who lived at Wayside and rode her 'sit-up-and-beg' bicycle down to Tipton Post Office (as it was then) when she was well into her nineties. She was replaced by Judith Burrows from Eliots Farm, then Bob Manning, who, among other things made the beautiful wooden chair by the choir stalls. When he moved away Margaret Hembury took up the baton and in turn has been replaced by her daughter, Judith Taylor. Judith is mounting a display in Church for **1st June** which will expand and put some life into this history. **Please try to come along to that and the 6.00pm Service to support this lovely little village church that has survived so much.**

Ann Knight

Sleepless in Tipton

Dear Residents

If like us your sleep is constantly being interrupted because of the moaning/droning noise coming from the Fluxton and Ottery St Mary Sewage Treatment Works then please use these contact numbers to register your complaints as I and several others have already done.

South West Water: 0344 346 1010

EDDC Environmental Depot: 01395 517456

With South West Water register your complaint and take a note of the case number for future reference. With EDDC register it as a noise nuisance complaint.

If you do register a complaint with either or have complained already would you please email me at exrdsb@aol.com so we can get an idea of how many people are being affected by this awful noise?

The idea is to go forward with a collective complaint against South West Water. This has been ongoing for a year now and despite numerous complaints South West Water are not at all interested putting the noise down to "normal operating noise."

Regards, Barry Alcock, Sleepless In Tipton



Church Calendar for June and July 2025

Everyone is welcome to join us at any of our services or events

June

Sunday	1 st	10.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Evening Worship	N.Pop O.S.M. V.O.
Saturday	7 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
Sunday	8 th	10.30 am	Mission Community Service	O.S.M.
Sunday	15 th	10.30 am	Café Church	Community Hall
Sunday	22 nd	9.30 am	Holy Communion	T.S.J.
Sunday	29 th	11.00 am	Service of the Word	T.S.J.

July

Saturday	5 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
Sunday	6 th	10.00 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion	N.Pop O.S.M.
Sunday	13 th	11.00 am	Holy Communion	T.S.J.
Sunday	20 th	10.30 am	Café Church	Community Hall
Sunday	27 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion	T.S.J.

August

Saturday	2 nd	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
Sunday	3 rd	10.00 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion	N.Pop O.S.M.

Online Services

In addition to the live services and events listed above, an online Service of Worship takes place at 9.30 am on the following Sundays : **1st & 15th June and 6th & 20th July.**

For details of how to access it please contact our Vicar Mark Ward (revmarkward@btinternet.com) or the PCC Secretary Alison Stevens (tiptonpcc@gmail.com) who will be pleased to provide the link, which is also on the Mission Community website (ottervalechurches.org).

Diary Dates - June and July

June

9th June	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	
14th June	12 noon	Tipton Open Gardens	P14
16th June	7.30pm	TLG painting demonstration, Community Hall	P15
19th June	2pm	TLG cream tea at Blackbury Honey Farm, Southleigh	P15
23rd June	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	
25th June	7pm	Community Hall AGM	P14
28th June	2pm	VOSRA Auction of gifts and promises, Community Hall	P16

July

5th July	10.30am	Otter Rail & River Run	P7
5th July	4pm	TIPPS Al Fresco and AGM at 6pm	P10
6th July	4pm	TIPPS Al Fresco	P10
12th July		Family Fun Day, Playing Field	P7
14th July	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	
21st July	7.30pm	TLG talk about Seaton wetlands, Community Hall	P15
28th July	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	

August

25th Aug	12 noon	Tipton Village Fete	P14
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Recipe Corner

Low Carb Omelette Wraps

Whether you are trying to lose weight or just want an alternative to a sandwich, these amazing wraps will do the job at 200 calories per serving. Fill them with ham, cheese and herbs, hummus, carrot, spinach - or, our favourite, smoked salmon, cream cheese and rocket. Or just get creative!

INGREDIENTS - SERVES 1

1 large egg
½ tsp. olive or rapeseed oil

METHOD

Beat the egg in a small bowl until smooth. Season with ground black pepper

Brush a non-stick frying pan (base no larger than around 19 cm) with the oil and place over a medium heat.

Pour the egg into the pan and swirl so that it spreads around to completely cover the base. Cook for 1 - 2 minutes until set.

Loosen with a spatula then flip and cook for 10 seconds more. Turn out onto a board and leave to cool for a few minutes.

- * If you don't have a small frying pan, use a larger one and double the quantities. Cut the wrap in half to serve two people, or chill and save the second half for the next day.
- * If taking to work, roll your wrap tightly in foil and refrigerate in a lidded container.

Enjoy!



Jenny Pinn



Tipton Family Fun Day

Sat 12th July
Tipton Playing Field

Bar • Bands • BBQ
Kids Zone • Wellness Zone
Dog Show • Tug-of-War • Games
Displays ...and more!

Bring the family along for a day of fun,
laughter, and community spirit.

Whether you're here for the music, the food, the games or the
friendly village atmosphere
— there will be something for everyone.

Parking Available

For updates, visit: tiptonstjohn.co.uk/events
Follow us on  @tiptonevents



 **T.I.P.P.S. PRESENTS**

Al Fresco!

TWO AFTERNOONS OF OUTDOOR
ENTERTAINMENT IN THE GARDEN AT
TIPTON ST JOHN COMMUNITY HALL

Saturday 5th July - Sunday 6th July
2025 4pm

Our AGM will follow Saturday night's performance at
6pm followed by a "bring and share" supper.
Everyone is welcome to join us.

PERFORMANCES ARE FREE SO PLEASE JUST
TURN UP OR FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT STEPHANIE ON:

01395 568577 or paul.kinson@yahoo.co.uk



MEN'S HEALTH MATTERS



Join us at
Coleridge Medical Centre
Saturday 7th June
11 – 2pm

Guest speaker
Mr Crundwell,
Consultant Urologist
at 12 noon on all
things prostate
cancer

Find out advice & support on a
whole range of men's health topics
such as:

- Mental health
- General health & wellbeing
- Cardiovascular prevention
- Carers
- Low income / Debt / Benefits

This event has been brought to you by the 'Ottery & District
Health Matters' group



Otter St Mary Heritage Society and Museum

Our Museum is now open for the Summer
Season on Thursday, Friday and Saturday each
week until September.

Our monthly members' talks take place at **The
Institute, Yonder St., Ottery St Mary EX11 1HD**
on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Guests are
welcome at £3 payable at the door. Please check
our website for details or changes.
otteryheritage@gmail.com

Tuesday 17th June at 7.30pm
Fairlynch - the Making of a Museum by Trevor
Waddington.
A story of the Grade 2 listed Regency cottage
'Fairlynch' and how it became Budleigh
Salterton's museum in 1967.

Tuesday 15th July at 7.30pm
Romans in Britain by Bryan Short.

This talk covers the evolution of Roman Britain
over nearly 4 centuries from invasion to
withdrawal.

All enquiries, including annual membership
(£20 single, £27.50 joint), to
Lynda Murlewski, Hon. Secretary
otteryheritage@gmail.com