

Local Talk Back

APRIL 2025

<http://actonturville.info/talkback/>

ISSUE 558



ACTON TURVILLE. PRETTY AS A PICTURE
Photo by Simon Long



A MAGAZINE WITH NEWS, VIEWS AND REPORTS FOR THE RESIDENTS
OF ACTON TURVILLE, BADMINTON AND LITTLE BADMINTON

EDITORIAL APRIL 2025

In this month's centre pages you can read all about the party thrown at the Compass Inn at Tormarton to mark the retirement of Steve Hamilton, who had been delivering the mail to the villagers of Acton Turville, Tormarton and parts of Badminton for 36 years. It was a fitting send-off for someone who had become a valued and popular member of the community, and it was only right that people were given the opportunity to show how much they appreciated his contribution to village life over so many years.

I find it amazing that, in the 36 years Steve worked for the Post Office, there was never a reorganisation, a restructuring, a cost cutting initiative or a new way of working that resulted in his round being changed. The organisation that I used to work for was constantly evolving. The first sign of an impending reorganisation was the arrival of a team of smartly dressed individuals armed with clipboards and ballpoint pens, who would hang on your every word as you answered their banal questions. They would thank you profusely for your time, assure you that the information you provided was invaluable, then omit all of it from the reports they presented to senior management, probably because those reports had been written before they even set foot in your office. Common outputs were a new name for the organisation, a new letterhead and a charter which emphasised how much they valued their employees. Then there'd be a statement which said the combined effects of the new name, letterhead and charter would magically increase productivity so much that they could cut staff by 20%. I distinctly remember one new initiative which was based around 'empowering' people. There was a big presentation put on in the lecture theatre where senior management stood alongside the aforementioned team of smartly dressed individuals to launch their vision of the future, after which there was an opportunity for people to ask questions. A gentle hum broke out across the auditorium as people muttered expletives under their breath, then to my horror, my friend who was sitting next to me put his hand up and asked a question which I've never forgotten. "In my experience, the term empowerment is usually used when management plan to give you more work without giving you any additional resources or powers. If things go well, management take all the credit, if it goes wrong, it's the fault of the individual. Can you tell me how things will be different this time?" I think he ended up as one of the 20% being let go, but he went down in a blaze of glory, and his words turned out to sum up exactly what did happen. He was a visionary. Or maybe he was just old and cynical and had been through too many of the previous reorganisations.

Two other valued and popular members of the community will have left us by the time this edition of Talk Back hits the streets. Lesley and Wayne Rees ran Drewett's Stores and Post Office in Badminton for 33 years, and in that time became part of village life, particularly during Horse Trials week when the Post Office would be working overtime to handle all the extra mail. It is sad to read on the Facebook page that their retirement plans have been thrown into disarray by factors outside of their control, and disappointing to think that their overwhelmingly happy memories of running Drewett's Stores have been tarnished by recent developments. We wish them all the very best for the future, express our gratitude for all the support they gave Talk Back over so many years, and thank them for being such an integral part of the local community.

Moving on from, well, moving on, the arrival of April means we can look forward to lighter evenings, a burgeoning events calendar and (hopefully) plenty of great weather. Something we're definitely looking forward to is the first of the Badminton House Open Gardens events which takes place on Sunday the 27th April. Once again it's the tulip displays that take centre stage, but there's always so much to admire around the gardens that make it an essential day out. Of course, in May we have the Badminton Horse Trials. The fences and the grandstands are all but complete, and work is well underway on all the other aspects which see the park transformed into the venue for one of the world's top equestrian events. It's sometimes hard to believe such a wonderful spectacle is on our doorsteps. In June, we're delighted to see the return of something slightly lower key but one that we thought had been confined to the archives – the St Mary's Church flower festival and open gardens in Acton Turville. This always used to be a mainstay of the calendar and represented everything that made for a perfect village church fete so it's great to see it back on the calendar. And then at the beginning of July, there's the ever-popular fundraiser for Ukraine featuring, once again, the Winterbourne Wind Band, who will be entertaining everyone with their varied and eclectic selection of musical arrangements. To the organisers of these and all the other events that will be taking place locally, we wish you every success and hope your efforts are rewarded with plenty of glorious summer weather. I've got a good feeling about 2025.

Until the next time

IAN CARTER

Items for Local Talk Back email to: localtalkback1975@gmail.com Tel: 01454 218267

To advertise in Local Talk Back, please email Pauline on: LocalTalkBackAds@gmail.com

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MAY EDITION OF LOCAL TALK BACK BY 15TH APRIL 2025.
THANK YOU.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

April 2025

Thurs 3rd Badminton Youth Club,
 Fri 4th Acton Turville Social Coffee Morning, Fox & Hounds
 Sun 6th Parochial Church Council AGM, St Mary's Church, 6.45pm
 Wed 9th Luncheon Club, Fox & Hounds
 Fri 11th Didmarton Film Club, Didmarton Village Hall
 Sat 12th Acton Turville Spring Clean, 10am, Fox & Hounds Car Park
 Sun 13th Castle Combe Circuit Car Boot Sale, 9am – 2pm
 Mon 14th Acton Turville Parish Council Meeting, Trinity School, 7pm
 Thurs 24th Badminton Youth Club
 Sun 27th Badminton House Open Gardens, 10am

May 2025

Wed 7th – Badminton Horse Trials
 Sun 11th Castle Combe Circuit Car Boot Sale, 9am – 2pm
 Sat 17th The Bolt 5k & 10k Races, Badminton Estate

*****Please check with venues before setting off*****

Please let Local Talk Back know if you're planning an event and we'll add it to our dates for the diary.

DONATIONS RECEIVED THIS MONTH

We have received the following donations this month for which we are most grateful:

Sheila Carter

Evelyn Ponting

In addition, £55 was generously donated in the shop collection boxes.

Thank you, we really do appreciate all donations as it helps to keep the Local Talk Back being delivered to your doors. There are Local Talk Back collection boxes in Acton Turville Stores and the new Badminton shop.

*To donate by cheque, please make payable to
LOCAL TALK BACK
 and send to:*

*The Treasurer, Local Talk Back,
 6 Hollybush Close, Acton Turville,
 Badminton, South Glos, GL9 1JJ*

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ACTON TURVILLE

100 Club

WINNERS FOR MARCH 2025

Gordon and Patti Shand
 Philippa Burton
 Tess Daly

Congratulations!

New Shop for Badminton Village

A new shop will offer fresh local produce, essentials, and newspapers in the heart of the village, focusing on quality and convenience.

There are also plans to open a charming café soon, where visitors can relax and enjoy tea and cake.

The shop is planning to open its doors on **Tuesday, 1st April**, inviting everyone to support this new local venture and help make it a village staple.

Location: Currently near the Estate Office, with plans to move back to the High Street soon.

Opening Hours:

- Monday–Friday: 9 AM – 3 PM
- Saturday: 9 AM – 12 Noon
- Sunday: Closed

Hours will be adjusted during the Badminton Horse Trials to accommodate visitors.

Local Talk Back is printed by

SPRINT PRINT, 22 STATION ROAD, YATE, BS37 4PS

Tel: 01454 852255 or email: info@sprint-print.co.uk

NEWS NEWS NEWS



BADMINTON HOUSE OPEN GARDENS — SUNDAY 27TH APRIL 2025

Explore the private gardens of the historic Badminton House, the home of the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort, at this, the first of three garden open days to be held in 2025.

BADMINTON HORSE TRIALS SPECIAL OFFER!!

Local residents can enjoy late shopping at the Badminton Horse Trials on Thursday 8th May and/or Friday 9th May 2025, at a special rate of £10.00 per person. Entry is between 4pm and 6pm, via Charcoal Clump or Lambing Pen gates. Accompanying children 12 years and under have free admission. Contact the box office for more information!

SEE [HTTPS://WWW.BADMINTONESTATE.COM/EVENTS/](https://www.badmintonestate.com/events/)
FOR FULL DETAILS

THE 2025 ACTON TURVILLE SPRING CLEAN

THE ANNUAL ACTON TURVILLE SPRING CLEAN & LITTER PICK WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY 12TH APRIL 2025.

CAN YOU HELP KEEP OUR LOVELY VILLAGE LOOKING CLEAN, GREEN, NEAT AND TIDY? IF YOU CAN, JOIN US AT THE FOX & HOUNDS CAR PARK BETWEEN 10AM AND 11AM.

BAGS, GLOVES AND PICKERS WILL BE PROVIDED TO HELP WITH LITTER CLEARING, OR BRING YOUR GARDENING TOOLS IF YOU FANCY HELPING TO TIDY UP THE PLANTED AREAS.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

ANY QUESTIONS?
CONTACT ACTONTURVILLEPC@AOL.COM

Latest News from the Badminton Youth Club

**Come to
BADMINTON YOUTH CLUB!**

Tuck available

£2 each week

Come along and have a say in how your Youth Club evolves.

Play badminton in Badminton!

LEGO CORNER

Fun Crafting Activities

THURSDAYS
6:30pm - 8pm
Badminton Memorial Hall

Dates for April;
Thurs 3rd
Thurs 24th

Parents or Carers will need to sign a consent form

Our Youth Club Leader is Fully DBS Checked!

Help make it what you would like it to be!

Are you in Years 4 - 8 at school? Then why not spend your Thursday evenings at Badminton Youth Club! After receiving a warm welcome from the other children, and having a chance to run around in the hall, we enjoy a proper game of badminton before settling down to a themed craft activity, where you will have a chance to chat and get to make new friends whilst making something to take home. We round off the evening with a fun game before your parents arrive to collect you, hopefully to come again the following week!"

Working Towards a Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Badminton Youth Club relies on a dedicated team of helpers to provide a safe and enjoyable evening for everyone who attends. One of those helpers is Naomi Bailey, who has made a really significant contribution to the club since joining the team. Naomi is working towards her Duke of Edinburgh award. Here, she explains how her time with the club has helped her in that endeavour:

"I am doing my DofE Silver Award at the Badminton Youth Club as I wanted to be more challenged by making more of an impact on the local community. They have all been very beneficial and encouraging to help me complete my award and it has been a great experience. I have managed to advance my skills, helping and working with young people. The Youth Club is a very calm, nurturing environment that helps children advance their social skills and make new friends in the village. We encourage them to use their creative ideas and work together to figure things out. Overall the Youth Club has been a great place to complete my DofE Award and I can't wait to see it grow."

Local Talk Back joins in wishing Naomi all the best as she works to achieve her award.

WHAT'S ON



DIDMARTON FILM CLUB

Didmarton Village Hall, Friday 11th April 2025

To receive full details of the films being shown each month by the Didmarton Film Club, simply join the club by filling in a form which will be available on film nights – membership is free, just provide your name, email address and mobile number to join.

Members are allowed to bring guests to the film shows, which will continue to be held on the 2nd Friday of each month at the Didmarton Village Hall. Whilst there is no charge for entry, all those attending are expected to make a donation (suggested amount £5).

The bar will run as usual.

Non-members may contact the organiser, Jenny Body, for the title of this month's film.

Doors open at 6.30pm, film starts 7.30pm

Please let us know in advance if you intend attending so we can ensure that sufficient seating is available

jenny.body1@gmail.com

FOX

& HOUNDS INN

Acton Turville, nr Badminton
GL9 1HW

01454 218224

Fox & Hounds Luncheon Club

Wednesday 9th April

Tea/Coffee on arrival

Two Course Lunch (main course + dessert)

£13.00 per head

Everyone welcome!

*The Fox & Hounds Luncheon Club meets the
2nd Wednesday of every month.*



St Mary's Church Flower Festival & Open Gardens, 21st and 22nd June 2025



It wasn't so long ago that summers in Acton Turville wouldn't be complete without the St Mary's church fete and open gardens event. Leafing back through old issues of Talk Back, you find descriptions of events that capture the very essence of rural life, such as 1986 when, on a warm and sunny afternoon, "the teas were excellent, the stalls were laden with gifts collected in the village and from friends, there were raffles, skittles and games of skill, and everybody enjoyed themselves." It may not have been warm and sunny every year, but without fail, everybody enjoyed themselves and valuable funds were raised for the church. It's therefore fantastic to hear that the tradition is to be revived on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd of June, when the St Mary's Church Flower Festival & Open Gardens Event 2025 will take place at various venues across the village.

The flower festival will be focused on St Mary's Church, which will be decorated with floral arrangements including a special display created by the children from Trinity School.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy tea, coffee and cakes, before heading out to admire the numerous gardens which villagers will be opening specially for the occasion. The organising team, inspired whilst creating the Church's Christmas floral displays last year, explained why they wanted to revive the event.

"St Mary's is such a lovely, historic church that has been at the centre of the village life for centuries. We really wanted to create an event that celebrated the church, but also brought together the community at something with a real family focus. Many people had very fond memories of the open garden events so we decided to see how much support there would be for one this year. The response has been amazing and many villagers have already agreed to take part. It's very special to have the school involved too and we very much look forward to working with the children."

There'll be more information in next month's Local Talk Back but in the meantime, if anyone wants to open their garden to the public, help by volunteering on the day, or bake some goodies to accompany the teas, please contact Eileen Whittock at eileenwhittock@btinternet.com.

Thank You!



Badminton Beat

In November 1979, Gloucestershire and Avon Life published an article by novelist Dan Lees. Dan was best known for his novels 'Our Man in Episcopi' and 'Mayhem in Episcopi' which featured the fictional village policeman James Craig. In the article, the novelist visited a real-life village bobby – Constable Mike Earl, who at the time was based in Acton Turville. The article makes for a fascinating read.

When I first thought of writing a crime story set in a West Country village, I decided, with an eye to the American market, that the hero would be an American journalist who had rented a castle in the village of Morton Episcopi. He would be assisted by a village policeman who would act as a lowly Watson to his brilliant Holmes.

No sooner had I begun to write, however, than the village copper – Police Constable James Craig – emerged as the dominant character, an engaging and unusual policeman who demanded his own series.

When this was confirmed by my publishers, who bought another James Craig book and commissioned a third, I decided it was high time to compare Constable Craig with a real live village copper – which is how I came to be driving to Acton Turville with Inspector Gerry Hodder of Chipping Sodbury to meet Police Constable Mike Earl.

“Police Constable Earl,” said the inspector, “covers a predominately rural area of roughly seven thousand acres and thirty road miles, bounded by the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire border”

“He’s the epitome of tact and diplomacy and of course you have to realise that with a country policeman it isn’t the eight hours a day he spends on duty that is important – it’s the sixteen hours a day that he’s in the district when he’s not on duty.”

The police station at Acton Turville turned out to be a pleasant stone-built house with gardens back and front which would make an estate agent’s mouth water should it ever come on the market. Inside there’s a tiny office but most of the ground floor is taken up by a spacious kitchen and through lounge-dining room which are the unofficial meeting place for the village Brownie pack, village fete organisers and the like.

Mike Earl himself is a stocky, quietly spoken man who gives the impression of being what the Irish call “happy in his skin” and, like my hero, he was born not far away from his present station. Again, like Craig, he is fiercely independent with very definite ideas as to how his job differs from that of a town policeman and how it should be done.

“You deal with a greater range of problems here: you deal with things which are not strictly police matters but it’s simpler to get on with it than to involve other departments in something which they couldn’t follow up as I can anyway. It’s a personal responsibility – it’s my district. Calling in the specialists is fine: they come and do their stuff but I live here and I’ve got more time to make enquiries or to go round and see people.

I’d much prefer to work my own hours, not this ‘availability’ business where if I’m on duty I’m available and if I’m not on duty I’m not available. Life’s not like that. People don’t commit crimes to a time table or have accidents to a time table.”

Mike Earl joined the police force in 1954 and soon learned the special value of the village policeman. During a post mortem of a murder victim the pathologist told the Constable-in-Charge of the district: “Kids. You’re looking for kids”. Whereupon the constable pin-pointed three suspects, one of whom turned out to be the killer.

Mike was posted to Stroud where he discovered among other things that there was just enough room in a Ford 8 van with the passenger seat removed to carry a coffin – which “left the obvious place for the constable to sit.”



Cont'd over

Badminton Beat (cont'd)

Mike is understandably reticent about affairs on his present patch but he tells a good story, like the one about finding three of Stroud's biggest roughnecks behaving noisily on a street corner. "I ordered them home and was surprised when they didn't move off. I asked them again and finally said 'please' but they still wouldn't go and I remember how grateful I was when a bedroom window opened and a woman shouted 'Clear off, all of you!' We all went."

The life of the wealthy, aristocratic policemen of Morton Episcopi is full of incident, up to and including murder and a whiff of espionage, but his real-life counterpart, as Mike Earl explained, can spend every night of a week sitting in a church waiting for burglars and his most frightening experience of the week could easily be the moment when he steps on the tail of a stray cat just before midnight.

By contrast, it's the real life policeman who sees the heart-rending side of police work, like the time Constable Earl went to the scene of an accident at Slimbridge where he found a pathetic blanket-wrapped bundle at the side of the road. It was the body of a small boy who had run from behind his father's car and as PC Earl went to examine the body he heard a little girl calling to him from the car: "Please don't blame the lorry driver, sir. It wasn't his fault."

Constable Craig gets around Morton Episcopi in a Panda car but he also has an MG as well as an ancient police bicycle he bought at auction. Constable Earl drives a saloon car as well as his official Panda but for him the "county camel", as the heavy push bikes were called, is just a fond memory. On the day I visited Acton Turville, we toured the area in the Panda, and it was soon obvious that Mike Earl knew everyone on his patch and everyone knew him.

Mike has been in the village for five and a half years, in which time his title has changed from Officer-in-Charge to Community Constable and again to Detached Beat Officer - but his duties have remained the same. Unlike James Craig, who is very much fancy free - he was engaged but he now has to be free to pursue a new heroine in each book - Constable Earl is married, which gives the police force what amounts to an auxiliary Police Woman at no extra cost.

Jean Earl, as Mike is first to admit, is "almost a second officer" and deals with or passes on all of the problems which arise in his absence. "She races me to answer the phone and she knows that my duty takes precedence over all other matters. She has got used to me not turning up for meals on time and she no longer worries when I'm late off patrol at night time."

Mike is secretary to the local branch of the British Legion and team captain and fixtures secretary of the local cribbage league, while his wife is Brown Owl of the village Brownie pack. As he puts it: "It's impossible to know where police work ends and social life starts and if people didn't talk to me about their problems when I was out socially I should fear that I wasn't doing my job properly."



Like the fictional James Craig, Constable Earl deserves and gets a great deal of help from the people on his patch; people like retired soldier, seventy-four-year-old Bill Barratt who lives directly across the road from the police station and who acts as auxiliary policeman when Mike isn't available, whether it's a case of passing on a message or directing lost motorists.

Mike's other neighbour is John Hickson, the landlord of the Fox & Hounds - coincidentally the pub in Morton Episcopi is the Fox - where the policeman meets many of the people on his patch socially.

It was over an off-duty pint there that Mike told me that he had enjoyed reading "Our Man in Morton Episcopi" which pleased me a lot because, like Constable James Craig, "Our Man in Acton Turville" is a rather special sort of policeman.



The Tales Behind the Headstones

RICHARD LONG

In a time when we hear a lot about people wanting to work from home, or not wanting to work at all, it was interesting to find this story of the working life of a Badminton Estate employee in a newspaper from the 1800's.

It was over 260 years ago when His Grace the Duke of Beaufort pensioned off some of his elderly workmen. Amongst them was Richard Long, a stonemason who was born in Great Badminton and, at the time of his retirement, was in his 84th year.

In the employment of the Beaufort family, Richard was greatly respected for his integrity and uprightness of conduct. He had begun his trade when he was nine years of age, retiring in 1858 after 74 years of continuous employment. In that time, he had worked for four Dukes of Beaufort under the supervision of six land stewards and six foremen. In all that time he had not been absent from work for one day due to illness or any other cause.



Richard was the son of George Long and Elizabeth Porter. He had married Hester Hill, also from Badminton, in 1795, and from the records it appears there were at least eleven children with two not surviving the first year.

Hester died in 1853 and Richard in January 1859, less than a year after his retirement. It is said that, from the time he commenced his trade at the early age of nine until two weeks prior to his death, he had not experienced a single day's illness.

In Little Badminton Churchyard there is a gravestone naming, first, his wife Hester, two of his sons, James and Albert Richard and then Richard. The gravestone is now virtually unreadable, but luckily there is an older photo of the gravestone showing all the names.

SARAH LITTLE

Also in the village of Badminton in the same month, after two days of illness, Mrs Sarah Little died on 16th January 1859, in the 103rd year of her age. With exception of slight deafness, "the mental powers of the deceased were vigorous and unimpaired to the close of life".

CLAUDE TICKELL

In St Mary's churchyard in Acton Turville, there is a grave with no names, just the initials SCT and EJT. SCT was Sydney Claude Tickell who died in 1949 at the age of 82. Tickell, who shares the grave with his wife Edith Julia, was the eccentric former vicar of Latton in Wiltshire who apparently had an overwhelming fear of premature death. No doubt it was this fear that prompted him to establish the Society for the Prevention of Premature Burial or Cremation, and to insist that he would only bury people whose heart had been pierced with a needle to ensure they were indeed dead. However, it doesn't fully explain another bizarre episode when he held a full-scale funeral for his pet donkey, which he buried in the vicarage garden at Latton, in a donkey-sized coffin. It's also unclear why he was buried in Acton Turville as he had no apparent connection with the village. Can anybody throw some light on that? Thanks to Jacquie Drew for bringing this strange but true tale to our attention!

Paul Jones - Village Agent Update

Help, support, and advice for residents of the Cotswold Edge area, which embraces the villages of Acton Turville, Badminton, Little Badminton, Hawkesbury Upton, Wickwar, Horton and Little Sodbury.

Hi, as some of you will know, after two years in the Village Agent role I have decided to retire. It's been a difficult decision because I have enjoyed the last two years immensely. The good news is that I am being replaced, and I will be around to ensure there is a seamless handover. It would be great for someone local to take on the role. If you know anyone who might be interested, you can find more information at: <https://www.wern.org.uk/villageagentvacancy>, or if anyone would like to have a chat informally before applying, then please give me a ring on 07795442272. Paul



Please note the closing date for applications is the 7th April.

Then and Now - Postcards of Badminton

Last month we printed two postcards showing the area around the top of the High Street in Badminton, complete with children playing on deserted streets. We were very grateful when two local photographers accepted a challenge to take pictures from as close as possible to the spot chosen by the original photographer, to show how the view had changed

The picture on the first postcard is taken from The Limes, looking up towards Kennel Drive. The house on the immediate left is The Old Vicarage. As Simon Long's photograph shows, the boundary is now marked by hedges in place of the original picket fence, but the house itself looks remarkably unchanged, as does the next property, The Cottage. The main change comes on the corner opposite, where the wooden structure depicted on the original postcard has been replaced by the imposing Kennel Lodge



The picture on the second postcard was taken roughly mid-way along the High Street, between the Horse Trials office and Drewett's Stores. On first glance, the scene captured by Lee Butcher shows a complete transformation of the High Street, but look beyond the cars and vans and you'll see that the buildings are once again remarkably unchanged. The main change comes from the removal of the large yew tree that dominates the view on the left of the postcard, but it's perhaps sad to see how much the motor car has been allowed to dominate our lives.

Thankfully the explosion of street furniture such as road signs, traffic islands and modern street lights that we see in other villages has not been inflicted in Badminton.

Thanks once again to Lee Butcher and Simon Long for recreating the views.

It's (Beach) Party Time!!

It's taken a long time to talk Yvonne Nettles into letting us see these pictures of the infamous Fox & Hounds Beach Party but she finally relented on the strict proviso that we didn't print the one of her husband Pat trying to make sand castles with a wine glass (see bottom left). Back in the 1980s, the Fox & Hounds was going through its Bistro phase with dark paint and darker furniture. In the winter months it probably needed something to brighten it up, so chefs Nick and Cristoff, who were running the place, hit upon the great idea of holding a beach party. Down went several large sheets of polythene, and on top of that went several tons of sand. Parasols, deck chairs, loungers and beach umbrellas completed the scene, et voila – Acton Turville's very own beach party. We can spot a few familiar faces – do you recognise anyone? Rumour has it that the polythene sheeting was less than successful and the cleaners at the Fox & Hounds still can't understand why their vacuum cleaners pick up so much sand...



The Last Post

It was the end of an era when long-serving postman Steve Hamilton hung up his postbag for the very last time before a well-earned retirement. Prior to working for the Post Office, Steve served in the British Army, a career which took him all around the world. The Post Office sent him to the sorting office in Tetbury, from where he would set off on his rounds to Acton Turville, Tormarton and parts of Badminton for the next 36 years. In that time, Steve became very much part of the community, so it was only right that he should be given a fitting send-off by local residents. Led by Alastair Gilbert from Acton Turville, a plan was hatched for a surprise party, to be held at the Compass Inn at Tormarton.

"We'd had a collection for Steve but didn't know how to present it to him", explained Alastair. "When Rupert Monyard from The Compass Inn pointed out that the final delivery on Steve's round was always to The Compass, everything fell into place and we started to arrange the surprise party. Local residents made cakes and sandwiches and The Compass put on the coffee. The Post Office were very supportive, even arranging for someone to collect Steve's van so he could have a celebratory drink or two. We just needed to keep our fingers crossed that there'd be some post for the Compass on that day, otherwise we risked watching as he sailed past in his van!"

Thankfully everything went to plan and a shocked Steve walked into the function room to be confronted with over 200 villagers for his surprise party. Entertainment was provided by the fantastic D-Day Dollies who delighted everyone with a great selection of songs, before a still-shocked Steve was presented with his cheque. "We've been amazingly lucky to have such a great postman for more than 30 years serving our villages, so we wanted to show Steve how much we appreciated him, and to wish him all the very best for his retirement," said Alastair. "I'd like to thank The Compass for providing the venue, all the villagers who made some fantastic cakes, and everyone who contributed to Steve's collection. Our new postman has definitely got a hard act to follow!"

It's only fitting that the last word goes to Steve. "A huge thank you to everyone who attended my retirement celebration at the Compass Inn on Friday 28th February. It was a very special occasion for my wife Shirley and I. Many thanks to the villagers of Acton Turville, Tormarton and Badminton who have made my working life over the last 36 years a pure joy."

Clockwise from the right:

Cards were presented to Steve, filled with messages from well-wishers.

Steve is shocked when he realises how much DIY he'll be expected to do with the cheque presented to him by Anne Beasley from Acton Turville.

Over 200 villagers ensured Steve had a fitting send-off.

Thank you to Simon Long for the photos.



Residents of Acton Turville decorated the well to mark Steve's retirement, complete with a life-size mannequin of the popular postie. That's the real Steve on the left (we think...)





Trinity School Update

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Message from Danielle Townsend, Chair of Governors

As part of our commitment to ensuring Trinity CE Primary School's vision and identity truly reflect who we are and what we stand for, we are seeking input from parents, carers, staff, and the wider community- including past pupils and families.

We would greatly appreciate your thoughts on what makes Trinity CE Primary School special, what values you believe should be reflected in its future direction, and how we can ensure our school continues to serve its community in the best possible way. Your feedback will also help guide the development of a new school logo that reflects our ethos and values. Please send any thoughts, questions or suggestions to the school at:

trinityprimary.school@gmail.org.uk

Thank you.

Out and About with Trinity School

Willow Class Walk Around Acton Turville.

Willow class had an informative and sunny walk around the village of Acton Turville as part of their 'People and Places' enquiry this term. This included a visit to the Old School House; St. Mary's church; the shop and the park. It was a fantastic morning and the children really enjoyed learning about where we live.



Ash Class Trip to the Post Office

Ash Class have been learning about letter writing, why letters are important and the features of letters. They found out that lots of different people send letters for lots of different reasons. As part of this, they each wrote a letter to a peer from Ash class as well as a letter to be delivered to 'Ash Class' at Trinity School. On Tuesday, they visited the post office in Acton Turville Stores to learn how to post a letter and they were very excited to receive the letters they posted!

Beech Class visit Sevington Victorian School

Beech Class visited Sevington Victorian School Room and House for an immersive experience to learn about what a school day was like in Victorian times. The pupils experienced Victorian mathematics using slates, writing with pen and ink, the boys gardened and made beeswax candles whilst the girls made lavender bags and visited the wash-house. The day was enjoyed by all and the experience made the learning come to life.



Church Matters

April 2025 Letter from the Vicar

Dear all

The tendency to think that bad things happen to bad people, and that we are safe because we are good is a tempting mistake to make.

There may well be a link between how good we are and our good fortune, but that is different from assuming that we are good. And therefore, we are safe. We are all in need of forgiveness, none of us are perfect. Repentance is a key aspect of the Christian faith. It does not mean that we should continually be beating ourselves up, but it does mean that we turn around from those things which are harmful to ourselves or others.

The Greek word for repentance is 'Metanoia', to 'turn around'. You might argue that most people need to 'turn around', because most of us are inherently self-centered.

It is true as a contemporary spiritual writer called Richard Rohr says, that what many of us are in love with, is not God, or someone else, but ourselves.

Today we remember that in this season of Lent, Christians are called to repentance. So I leave this question with you, for what do you need to turn around from? What reveals most spectacularly your lack of love for God, or for others?

With my best wishes,

Rev Richard Thomson

Priest in charge, Badminton Benefice website: www.badmintonbenefice.com

Email: revrichardthomson@gmail.com

Home: 01454 219236/ Mob: 07717791858

Church Services for April 2025

Date	Time	Parish	Service	Minister
6 th April 5 th Sunday of Lent	9.30am	Lasborough	Matins	Churchwarden Led
	10.00am	Hawkesbury	Morning Prayer	Rev R Thomson
	11.15am	Didmarton	Matins	Rev R Thomson
	6.00pm	Acton Turville	Holy Communion BCP + APCM	Rev R Thomson
13 th April Palm Sunday	9.30am	Lasborough	Holy Communion BCP	P Cheeseman
	9.30am	Leighterton	Holy Communion 1928	Rev R Thomson
	11.15am	Little Badminton	Matins	Rev R Thomson
	4.00pm	Hawkesbury	Meet at the pond for procession to church and Choral Eucharist	Rev R Thomson
18 th April Good Friday	12 noon	Little Badminton	Good Friday Liturgy	Rev R Thomson
	1.45pm	Hawkesbury	Readings and Music	Rev R Thomson
	2.30pm	Hawkesbury	Walk up the knoll to the Cross	Rev R Thomson
20 th April Easter Day	9.00am	Didmarton	Holy Communion BCP	Rev R Thomson
	9.30am	Lasborough	Holy Communion CW	Rev Steve Abbott
	10.00am	Hawkesbury	Sung Eucharist	Rev R Thomson
	11.00am	Leighterton	Family Service	Robert Bryant-Pearson
	11.15am	Sopworth	Matins + HC	Rev R Thomson
	6.00pm	Acton Turville	Evening Prayer	Matthew Butler
27 th April 2 nd Sunday of Easter	9.30am	Lasborough	HC CW	Rev R Thomson
	11.15am	Little Badminton	Matins with HC	Rev R Thomson
	6.00pm	Hawkesbury	Evensong	tbc

See Benefice website for readings: badmintonbenefice.com

Sudoku

April's challenge set by Neil Fozard.

To solve the puzzle, each row, column and 3x3 box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9.

EASY !!

				2	5	1		
	8	3						
		5		4	8			
5			2	6	3		8	
2			4					
9			7	8	6		5	
		2		9	7			
	9	1						
				7	1	5		

NOT SO EASY !!

		8			2	4		
		9	8			6	2	
6				3				7
		1	5					6
								5
		4	7					8
8				1				2
		6	2			9	8	
		2			4	3		

Answers to the March quizzes:

'Easy'

7	2	4	3	8	1	6	9	5
6	3	9	2	4	5	1	8	7
1	5	8	6	7	9	3	2	4
2	8	1	7	9	6	4	5	3
3	9	7	1	5	4	8	6	2
4	6	5	8	2	3	9	7	1
8	4	6	5	1	7	2	3	9
5	1	3	9	6	2	7	4	8
9	7	2	4	3	8	5	1	6

'Not so Easy'

7	5	8	2	3	4	6	1	9
2	3	1	7	9	6	5	4	8
4	6	9	8	1	5	7	2	3
9	1	3	6	5	8	4	7	2
8	2	6	4	7	9	1	3	5
5	4	7	1	2	3	8	9	6
6	8	2	3	4	7	9	5	1
3	9	4	5	8	1	2	6	7
1	7	5	9	6	2	3	8	4

ACTON TURVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

New Councillor. The Parish Council are very pleased to welcome Melanie Greggain to the team, filling the vacancy left after the departure of Claire Broomsgrove who resigned in February. It's great to have Mel on board and we all look forward to working with her.

Police Support. It was good to see our PCSO Cheryl Dibble and her colleagues visiting the village on the 20th March when they were available to talk to villagers from the Police van parked in the Fox & Hounds car park. This is something the Parish Council have been trying to arrange for some time in an attempt to raise the profile of the local Police team, so it was slightly disappointing that the number of people who stopped to chat with the team was not greater. Future visits will be publicised via the usual means.

Parish Council Facebook Page. The Parish Council has a new Facebook page. Put together by our new recruit Mel Greggain, it will provide another means for villagers to contact the Parish Council with any concerns or questions, and help us communicate important information and updates quickly and effectively. Why not take a look?

Village Spring Clean. The next Spring Clean is planned for Saturday the 12th April, meeting in the Fox & Hounds car park from 10am. Come along and help keep Acton Turville looking smart and tidy with a spot of litter picking, or get the planted areas ready for spring with some pruning and weeding. Gloves, bin bags, litter pickers and gardening tools will all be provided, all you need to do is turn up and get stuck in. We'd love to see you!

Date of next meeting: Monday 14th April 2025 @ 7.00pm

Venue: Trinity School, Acton Turville.

Contact details for Parish Councillors are as follow:

Chair: Sybil Haddrell 218772, Vice Chair: Ian Carter 07789 057168,
Sally Smith 218510, Mark Studden 07885 791314, Melanie Greggain
Parish Clerk: Sue Radford-Hancock Tel: 01249 650052

Email: actonturvillepc@aol.com Website: www.actonturvilleparishcouncil.org

CARERS AVAILABLE

Julie Williams (formerly Mildon) & Steve Williams
Experienced carers living in Badminton
We are able to offer a range of caring services:

Daytime visits & overnight care
Short term cover for holidays, etc
Experience working with the elderly and those
suffering from dementia

Fully DBS checked - references available

To discuss your needs, please contact:

07890 312114 or 07432 874049
julieedp65@gmail.com

To advertise your business or club,
please email:
localtalkbackads@gmail.com



FOX
The
& HOUNDS INN

Acton Turville, nr Badminton
GL9 1HW

01454 218224

OPEN MONDAY-SUNDAY
INDOOR & OUTDOOR EATING/DRINKING

TAKEAWAYS lunchtimes/evenings

Good Home Cooked Food
Covered Beer Garden
Large Car Park

Luncheon Club

2nd Wednesday of every month
Tea/coffee on arrival, 2 course Lunch
(main course + dessert)
£13.00 per head - everyone welcome



HOME COMPUTER PLAYING UP? NEED SOME HELP? DON'T DESPAIR!

For help with:

- Windows 7, 8, 10, 11 and Tablets
- Wireless Router, Mobile, SmartTV setup
- Hardware Upgrades and Repairs
- PC's Custom Built to order

No problem too small or large!

Contact: Lloyd Buckingham
Tel: 07940 155064
Email: lb_cs@hotmail.com

LB Computer Services

YOUR LOCAL, LOW COST,
HOME COMPUTER REPAIRER



Qigong Classes

with Emily King

**Clear away stress, increase your energy
and connect with an inner state of
calm and wellbeing**

Qigong is simple, easy to learn and can be
enjoyed by everyone, at any age and fitness level

Qigong combines the physical benefits of exercise with the
calming qualities of meditation, leading to the full nourishment
of both body and mind

Come join me for your
FREE TASTER CLASS
and discover the benefits for yourself

Classes currently being held at **Badminton Memorial Hall**
every Wednesday evening 6 pm-7 pm

Please contact Emily:

07867 755772

emily@qigongwithemilyking.com

*for further information and to book in
for your free taster class*



Old Sodbury
Tree and Plant Nursery
(formerly Landcare - same owners!)

Your local independent nursery with over 10,000 trees and plants in stock.

- Ornamental trees
- Fruit trees and shrubs
- Shrubs
- Hedging
- Herbaceous perennials
- Wildflowers
- Bare-root Dec to Mar



**Open to trade and public
Mon to Sat 8:30-16:00**

Chapel Lane, Old Sodbury
S.Glos, BS37 6SJ
01454 310664

www.oldsodburytrees.co.uk

DEL HEALTHCARE RECRUITMENT LTD. **24/7 SERVICES**

YOUR HEALTH, OUR PRIORITY !

Welcome to Del Healthcare Recruitment Ltd where health matters in the comfort of your own home.

We are a private care provider based in Bristol. We offer a range of healthcare services to suit individuals, families and healthcare organisations, private and public health across Somerset. Serving individuals above 65+

At Del Healthcare, High quality care is our number one priority with a team of exceptional and conscientious Nurses and Care staff's.

Our staffs are highly trained professionals who are able to deliver the best care at home or in the community.

Our services are regulated by CQC.



SERVICES

Personal Care

Palliative Care

Live In Care

Respite Care

Companionship

Night Sitter

Hospital Discharge

MORE INFORMATION

07949205409

Delhealthcare@yahoo.com

www.delhealthcare.com

DEL HEALTHCARE RECRUITMENT LTD.

We promote Innovation by constantly improving the system for planning and service delivery. Our Quality Assurance is based on continuous improvement principles for quality services being shouldered by all our employees.

To advertise your business or club, please email:
localtalkbackads@gmail.com



BADMINTON CURTAINS & BLINDS

Made-to-measure Bespoke Curtains and Roman Blinds

Also suppliers of:
Roller Blinds
Venetian Blinds
Vertical
Perfect Fit
Bifold Blinds

Free Quote & Measure

www.badmintonblinds.co.uk

07977 234193

Powered Up Access
HIRE, SALES & SERVICE

Powered Up Access Ltd have been providing the highest quality of access equipment and plant across multiple industries in the UK since 2010. We have a huge fleet of different models and types of machines, including

CHERRY PICKERS, BOOMS, SCISSOR LIFTS

..... and more

All available to hire or buy



Please contact us for more information:

0845 601770

info@poweredupaccess.co.uk

www.poweredupaccess.co.uk



MATTHEW BUTLER BOOKS

Old Garage House, Acton Turville

butler.books@btinternet.com

01454 218036

Good quality and antiquarian books valued, bought and sold. Specialities: Architectural History, Archaeology and Art History. Browsing by appointment



EAR WAX REMOVAL



- Using latest micro suction techniques
- Treatments carried out by EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS
- Very competitive prices

Clinic based in Brimsham Park, Yate
Parking available directly outside the clinic

✉ hayley@hjtherapies.co.uk
☎ 07846 452 000 / 01454 314 460
🌐 www.hjtherapies.co.uk



Spaces available for September 2025

We welcome children aged 2 years to 4 years for friendship, fun and play-based education

All year childcare 8am-6pm available

15- & 30-hours funding for 2 and 3-year-olds available
Fully Qualified Staff

Based in Luckington, Nr Chippenham, Wiltshire

Contact:

info@cherryblossompreschool.co.uk

07392 363224

www.cherryblossompreschool.co.uk



07707154914

Foxtailfootcare@gmail.com



Foxtail FOOTCARE



DOMICILIARY SERVICE

Based in Badminton



Nail trimming & thinning

Corn & callus removal



dry/cracked skin treatment



Pressure relief interventions



Professional Footcare in your own home



PRICES £25-£40



PJD Home Improvements
Painting and Decorating /
Property Maintenance

Check out my Facebook
and Instagram pages  

Paul Davidson
07766 680161
paul.davidson123@btinternet.com




M & M Builders and Carpentry

Mike Brazier
General Building, Listed Property,
Stone Walling, Carpentry
mikebrazier50@gmail.com
07779944773 or 01454
218765

Foxley Plumbing & Heating

Oil boiler installation, servicing & repairs
Oil tank replacement
Heating installation & repairs
Bathroom installations
Unvented cylinder systems
No job too small

Tim Hibberd
Malmesbury (01666) 822863
Mobile: 07966 462202
Email: foxleyph@btinternet.com



To advertise your business or club, please email:
localtalkbackads@gmail.com



PRIOR & COMPANY
Building on a great reputation!

Experts in all building works,
renovations, conversions, decorating,
kitchens and bathrooms for your
home or business

Tel 01249 782898
enquiries@priorandcompany.com
The Courtyard, Bath Road, Shaw,
Melksham SN12 8EP



www.priorandcompany.com



MARDEN ROOFING
Taking Service & Quality to new heights!

Specialists in all roofing, Upvc
fascias, soffits and guttering, leadwork,
chimneys and sundry works for your
home or business

Tel 01249 814204
enquiries@mardenroofing.co.uk
The Courtyard, Bath Road, Shaw,
Melksham SN12 8EP



www.mardenroofing.co.uk

FRENCHAY CHIMNEY SWEEP

All sweeps certificated
for house insurance purposes
and landlord
Local, professional no mess service

Contact Paul on
07832 995391



Free auction valuations
Regular fine art & antiques sales
Insurance & probate valuations

01452 344499
enquiries@chorleys.com
www.chorleys.com

PRINKNASH ABBEY PARK
GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL4 8EU

D. J. Mayhead

ELECTRICAL SERVICES

DOMESTIC * INDUSTRIAL * COMMERCIAL

- Wiring, Re-wiring & Upgrading of existing system
- Periodic Inspection, Testing & Certification
- Electric Boilers, Showers & Heating
- Consumer Unit Upgrades
- Internal & External Lighting
- Electric Car Charge Outlet
- 3 Phase Installations
- CCTV, Entry & Alarm Systems

** SOLAR PANEL FITTING **

Benefits of investing in PV Solar Panels:

- Cut your carbon footprint
- Reduce your electricity bills
- Protect against future energy price increases



We will:

- Offer you our best honest advice
- Fit top quality guaranteed panels
- Ensure you receive the best value for your money
- Treat your property with the care and respect it deserves



We operate with full insurance
and all work is guaranteed!

Please contact us for a FREE no obligation quote...

D.J. Mayhead Electrical Services Ltd, Oxlip Barn, Christian Malford, SN15 4DF
T: 01249 890582 M: 07971 684524 E: info@djmayheadelectrical.co.uk
www.djmayheadelectrical.co.uk

CLAPCOTE FORESTRY

Established 1981

CLAPCOTE SAWMILL

Specialising in
OAK, LARCH,
DOUGLAS FIR and
ALL NATIVE HARD
& SOFT WOODS
for beams, lintels
planks (inc. air dried)
& fencing materials

Suppliers of best quality
hardwood logs, cut and
split to your requirements



KINDLING

ENGLISH LUMPWOOD
BARBECUE CHARCOAL

SWEET CHESTNUT
FENCING STAKES

WOOD CHIP

Telephone : Norman and Diane Matthews
YARD & OFFICE **01666 837230**
or visit our yard between Grittleton and Hullavington
to discuss your requirements



Village Link

Volunteers transporting the Community

Do you know anyone who might
benefit from our services?
or consider joining our volunteers?
Please ask them to call one of our
coordinators on

07590 720836

Disclaimer

The articles in this magazine reflect the personal opinions of the writers and not those of the Editorial Team. Furthermore, the Editorial Team are not responsible for any errors of fact printed in the magazine. Advertising is accepted in good faith. The LTB cannot be held responsible for loss, damage or injury arising out of goods and services sold through any adverts in this magazine. The appearance of an advert in the magazine does not imply any endorsement by the Editorial Team of either the company or its services, nor does it constitute a recommendation.

All articles written and submitted should have a contact name and telephone or email information, please. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior consent of the publisher.

From the Archives

Last month, our "From the Archives" feature included a couple of pictures taken in Badminton. This month's it's the turn of Acton Turville where we have two very different views for you. The first one shows the Ebenezer Baptist Chapel which sits on the Luckington Road. Built in 1838, the chapel was subsequently used for many years as a storehouse and workshop by the builder Fred Ayliffe. When the company ceased trading in the 1970s, the chapel lay empty for some time before being sympathetically converted into a residential dwelling, retaining many of the distinctive features seen in the photograph here. Houses have now been built on the land to either side of the chapel, but in a nod to the building's significance, an adjacent road has been named Chapel Lane. Several people have suggested there was a graveyard adjacent to the chapel, but we've been unable to verify this claim. Can anyone shed any light on this aspect of the building's history?



The second picture came from Claire Broomsgrove and was taken by her father John when the houses in Hollybush Close were still under construction in the mid-1980s. They look quite stark in the pictures, surrounded as they are with scaffolding and piles of rubble, but the area has matured nicely in the 40 years since they were built, and the large amount of greenery definitely helps blend the houses into their surroundings. It's also interesting to see how the houses have lost their uniformity over the years, with extensions and bay windows all adding variety.

We always enjoy seeing old pictures of our villages and surrounding areas. If you have any that you'd be prepared to share, please get in touch at the usual address: : localtalkback1975@gmail.com



LB HOME & GARDEN

M: 07471 771 217 E: leebutcher54@hotmail.co.uk

MOW - BUILD - PAINT - MEND - CLEAR

GARDEN TOO MUCH?

- Grass Cutting
- Trimming / Strimming
- Hedge Cutting
- Handy Man
- Waste Removal
- Garden Clearance
- Ivy Removal
- Fencing & Gate Repairs
- Driveway Weed Control
- Fence Treating / Painting
- House Clearance
- General Maintenance



FREE NO OBLIGATION
QUOTE