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August 2019

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Michelle Morris Photography

**In this month's issue**

**Eastham Fête and Flower Show • Flowers • Cakes**

**Artists at work • Trains**

**and all your parish news**

LOCAL FOOD & ALES



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# TemeTalk

EASTHAM • ROCHFORD • STOKE BLISS & KYRE • THE HANLEYS • STANFORD

*A community going forward with God*

## August 2019

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Teme Valley South Group  
*and delivered free to every household*

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Items for inclusion should be  
sent to Sandra Griffiths  
by the 18th of the preceding month  
and will be included subject to space

## Dear Villagers

As July drifts into August and the combine harvesters make short work of the barley and wheat crops in the Teme Valley, if we are to believe the old adage we can look forward to 40 days of good weather – St Swithin's Day (15th July) being fine and dry this year. Whatever the weather, many of us experience a different rhythm of life this month. Parents and grandparents don't need to worry about the school run. Child care still needs sorting for the long days but there is a different kind of busy and a noticeably changed time scale for a few weeks.

I quite enjoy a change of pace every now and then and can see great wisdom in the concept of 'Sabbath' time. A deeply Biblical idea, Sabbath has been reclaimed to a certain extent recently by Christians. Over the years, Sunday was called the 'day of rest', but Sabbath actually was meant to be a day of drawing closer to God. Although nowadays it is not always possible to keep Sabbath as a Sunday rest, many Christians are now regularly setting some time aside to intentionally seek God. For some this is a day without mobile phones or iPads, for others doing something creative or sporting. I try and have some time each week walking in the countryside – whilst the hills around here are hard work to climb for my Norfolk legs, somehow the exercise gives me more not less energy. Even if we are not seeking God, actively doing something different in this way, can help give us energy for the usual daily routine.

I hope you get to enjoy a bit of 'Sabbath' time this August and maybe find the experience worth repeating as the summer fades. Before it does though, don't forget the Eastham Summer Fête and Flower Show – our last fête in Teme Valley South this year!

*Rev'd Julia Curtis*

## Ballroom Dance Classes

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or [naomihart26@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:naomihart26@yahoo.co.uk)

## Teme Valley South Contacts

**Priest-in-charge:** Julia Curtis 01886 853286

**Associate Priest:** Sally Jones 01584 781526

**Reader:** Pete Thorp 07917 783159

### Churchwardens

**Eastham:** Celia Adams 01584 781258

**Rochford:** Ann Prosser 01584 781317

Jennifer Gledhill 01584 812500

### Stoke Bliss and Kyre:

**Hanleys:** Ed Yarnold 07930 882728

**Stanford:** Robin Dean 01886 853295

### Pastoral Team

**Stanford:** Lesley Dean 01886 853295

**Hanleys:** Peter Thorneycroft 01885 410484

### Stoke Bliss:

**Rochford:** Ann Prosser 01584 781317

Jenny Barbé 01584 781298

**Eastham:** Helen Matravers 01584 781510

**Parish Safeguarding Officer:** Sue Softly  
01584 881342

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## Village Hall Bookings

### Stoke Bliss & Kyre

Janet Powell, 01885 410598

[stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com)

**Rochford** – Ann Prosser, 01584 781317

**Eastham** – Helen Matravers, 01584 781510

**Hanley** – Judy Bayliss, 01886 853813

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# Parish news

## Thank you for coming ...

Thanks to all who supported the Parish Party and Rural Mission Sunday in July – so great to be able to get together and enjoy good company and our countryside setting.

## FFF – Extra Helpings

We will not meet in August, but will be back together on 6th September at 7 for 7.30pm.

## Weekly Prayers and Refections

Our weekly Prayers and Reflections on Wednesdays at Kyre Church are taking a break in August and will start again in September.

## From the registers

Many congratulations to our July baptism families. It was wonderful to be able to celebrate this important step in their Christian lives with Robyn Pound (14th July at Stoke Bliss), Hugh Yarnold (20th July at Hanley Childe) and Ava Cropp (21st July also at Hanley Childe).

On 3rd July it was with sadness that we said goodbye to Geoffrey Gwilt whose funeral service was at St Peter's, Stoke Bliss. He was laid to rest afterwards with his wife Joy in the churchyard. Our prayers and sympathy go to Geoff's family. May he rest in peace.

*Rev'd Julia Curtis*

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## Sue and Jen are confirmed in Upton

Four of us from Teme Valley South headed off to Upton on Severn on 23rd June to join in the confirmation service led by Bishop Anthony Priddis. It was a lovely time, as you can tell from pictures of Sue Softly and Jen Jones, who affirmed their adult faith and received communion for the first time that morning.

We will having a small celebration to congratulate them on 4th August after our 10am service at Stanford and all are welcome to join us for worship and the subsequent festivities.

*Our photographs show Sue Softly (below left) and Jen Jones (below right) with Bishop Anthony Priddis. Above right are (left to right) Sue Softly, Rev'd Julia Curtis, Jen Jones and Rev'd Sally Jones.*



# Rochford 49 Club

## Congratulations

to this month's £25 winners:

### Wednesday winners

June 19th No 35 Gary Burns  
June 26th No 38 Rod Ricketts  
July 3rd No 57 Not sold  
July 10th No 6 Not sold

### Saturday winners

June 22nd No 11 John Cole  
June 29th No 27 Simon Ayres  
July 6th No 9 Val Rabbit  
July 13th No 12 Jennifer Gledhill  
July 17th No 23 Kate Smith

There are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw and the profits are split between Rochford church and the village hall – plus you get two chances each week to win £25!

Remember, you must be in it to win it!

Ring Gill Smith on  
**07815 030050**

# Teme Valley Tote

July's prize draw of the Tote, the third in this series, was decided when Rev Robert Barlow rolled the dice on 2nd July to select the set of random numbers. Prize winners are:

£50 – **Mr and Mrs Rob Scriven** of Pensax  
(No 367)

£30 – **Carol Bridges** of Lindridge (No 151)

£20 – **David Evington** of Stanford (No 573)

If you have not entered and wish to join please contact Robin Dean on 01886 853295 or email robin.c.dean@gmail.com or your local coordinator.

## Is this you?

Do you bank with Cater Allen?

If so you successfully set up a standing order for the Teme Valley Tote but did not include your name in the reference. Please could you phone Robin on 01886 853295 or email him at robin.c.dean@gmail.com with your name and area so that he can contact you should you win?

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# News from Rochford

## Rochford's big weekend

What a weekend that was! Rochford rocked to the music of The Rock Shack Band and Sean Jeffery. The weather tried to spoil it, but the food, music, drink and dance carried on and a terrific time was had by all.

The following day, in beautiful sunshine, was the Fête and Dog Show. Thanks to all the vintage car owners for bringing their vehicles, what a super selection from years gone by.

There are so many people to thank for all their hard work over the weekend but special thanks to Andrew and Jennie for organising and Ann for her cooking. A huge thank you to George and Louise Bennett for letting us hold these events in their grounds.

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## Dates for your diary

14th September – whist drive

22nd November – quiz

Look out for more details later.

## Neighbourhood lunch

August's neighbourhood lunch is on Wednesday 28th August at 12.30 for 1pm in the village hall. Please let Ann know on 01584 781317 if you would like to come.

## Flowers for August

Ann Prosser

*Jennifer Gledhill*

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# Stoke Bliss and Kyre

## Find us at Tenbury Show

As part of our fundraising for the St Peter's church restoration projects we will have a stall at Tenbury Show on 3rd August. Please come and visit us. There will be a tombola and books, plants, bric-a-brac and lots more.

If you are having a clear out at home and find anything suitable, all donations will be gratefully received. Phone Andy Ellis on 01885 410604.

## Neighbourhood Lunch

On the second Thursday of each month we hold our Neighbourhood Lunch at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall.

Please join us from 12.30 for lunch at 1pm. We try to cater for most dietary requirements and for only £6 per head we include a welcome sherry, a two-course homemade meal with a glass of wine followed by fresh coffee and a tasty mint.

If you would like to join us, please telephone Hazel Cumming on 01885 410222 on the Monday before each lunch as we can only accept guests who have made a booking.



## Coffee Morning

Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall  
Monday 5th August at 10.30am



## Neighbourhood Lunch

Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall  
Thursday 8th August  
Thursday 12th September  
Welcome at 12.30pm  
Please telephone 01885 410222  
if you would like to come

## Pub Night



Friday 30th August  
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# Eastham Jottings

## Get ready for the fête!

Eastham Fête, on Sunday 18th August starting at 1pm, is nearly here!

With 71 chances to win a prize and 14 freshly polished cups to win, you just need to enter to prove how good you are at growing, cooking or craft skills. If you need a schedule to check what you can enter please contact David Clarke on 01584 781505.

Don't forget to water your vegetables, pamper your flowers and hone your cooking skills – the prizes could be yours. And if the produce show is not for you, why not polish the dog and bring it down to try your luck in one of ten fun classes.

We are still short of china for smashing, bottles for the tombola, cakes for the cake stall and tea tent, things for the bric-a-brac and helpers. So if you think you can provide anything or help on the day please let us know on the number above.

Join us at Eastham Court Farm and the church and make it a day to remember.

*David Clarke*

## Raffle tickets for the fête

Please get in touch for tickets and get all counterfoils back as soon as possible for the cash prizes – £100, £50 and £25!

## Church service

On 18th August there will be no 10am service at Eastham. Instead there will be a service at the end of the fête when the Malvern Chase Brass Band will be playing some rousing hymns to conclude the afternoon's events.

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## Eastham Coffee Morning

The rota for August and September is:

Wednesday 7th August – Jane Yarnold

Wednesday 4th September – Diana Clarke

Remember to call in for a quick coffee and chat on the first Wednesday of each month. All are welcome from Eastham and villages beyond.

## Cleaning and flowers

August – Diane Clarke

September – Alison Brookes

*Celia Adams*

## Eastham Memorial Hall

### Pub Night



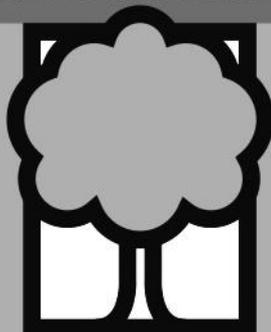
Friday 16th August  
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# Hanley Happenings

## Use your village hall

Almost 50% of Britons suffer from lack of human interaction, socialising with family and friends only once a month or less. According to a well-known supermarket's Living Well index, this lack of human interaction with close associates is causing the nation's sense of well-being to dwindle.

Hanley Village Hall gives a great sense of community with regular activities – table tennis on Monday evenings, pilates on Tuesdays, art on Wednesdays and the Friday Market.

This sense of community is in decline, the unintended consequences of social media. The survey found that more time was spent socialising online using sites such as Facebook and Twitter than in person! Redress the balance and use our village hall.

## Downside Up

On Saturday 7th September Hanley Village Hall will be entertained by Corinne Frost, cellist, and Stephen Warner with double bass, guitar and ukulele. They perform as Downside Up and will start at 7.30pm with drinks and nibbles. Booking is essential with Trace on 07972 183164.

## Pilates

On Tuesdays from 1 to 2pm at Hanley Village Hall (except during school holidays). please contact Sue on 07974 343609 or email sue579@icloud.com.

## Art Classes

Art classes are on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8.30 pm at Hanley Village Hall. The class is ever-growing; new artists are always welcome.

## Table tennis



Table tennis at Hanley Village Hall is going well and we have a friendly and fit team of regular players. Well done to them! They are pleased to welcome new faces and with three tables everyone has an opportunity to play at least one game of doubles or singles.

If you would like to join in the fun come along on a Monday evening at 7pm, bats and balls are provided. Your first taster session is free. At £3 per evening there isn't a better way to make new friends and keep fit.

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# Stanford • Stanford • Stanford

## Our regular monthly service

The August service (communion with hymns) will be on 4th August at 10am. This will be a special service as we will be celebrating the recent confirmations of Sue and Jen. Please try to attend. There will be refreshments after the service. The next service at St Mary's will be on 1st September.

## Dog Show

We will hold a Dog Show at Stanford Village Hall on Sunday 8th September from 2pm. More details will appear in September's TemeTalk – if you have a dog, please note the date in your diary.

## Village Hall meals

The team leaders of Stanford Village Hall Meals Club are holding an extra meal this year on 16th November for anyone interested in buying tickets for this very popular event. We will provide tables of 6 and spaces will be very limited – the cost of a three course meal and coffee will be £14 per head (BYOB). In order that people who have not had a regular opportunity in the past to try out this very successful hall fundraising event, we respectfully ask those people already currently involved in the meals not to purchase tickets please – it will be first come first served! Enquires and bookings to Sue Softly on 01584 881342 or Tina Lane on 01886 853677.

## Volunteers please

People have recently joined both the Church Committee and the Village Hall Committee but we would welcome some more. Robin (01886 853295) is happy to explain what is involved and you are welcome to one of our meetings so that you can see what it is like. We need people to organise events and assist.

Several people have expressed an interest in becoming treasurer for St Mary's – thank you to them. Tracey Dewis has agreed to take on the role, so many thanks to her!

## Dates for your diary

Friday 5th October – **Harvest Service** at 6pm at St Mary's and **Supper** at 7pm in the village hall.

Saturday 2nd November – **Knitwear Party**, your chance to buy early Christmas presents for your nearest and dearest!

Sunday 10th November – **Remembrance Service**. Do you want it at Stanford or a parish-wide service at one of our TVS churches?

Saturday 16th November – Extra **Village Hall meal** (as above)

Saturday and Sunday 7th and 8th December – **Christmas Tree Festival** and competition. You are invited to help organise this.

*Robin Dean*

*See page 10 for Brian Mills' report on the Volante Strings concert on 12th July*

The logo for Total Computer Solutions (tcs) features the lowercase letters 'tcs' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 't' is significantly larger than the 'c' and 's', and has a small square dot above its top bar.

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## News from Stanford

Continued from page 9

### Volante Strings concert

*This report on the Volante Strings concert at St Mary's church on 12th July was written by Brian Mills – a very big thank you to him for all his work in organising the event and supplying the delicious wine.*

An audience of about fifty enjoyed the concert, which raised £508 to be shared equally between Volante Strings and St. Mary's Church. Thanks were given to John, May and Joe for organising the parking, to Alexandra, Lesley, Pat, Liz, Janet and Chris for maintaining the high standard of food and, of course, to Volante Strings. It is always a pleasure to see them in St Mary's and always a delight to hear their music.

*Calling All Workers* brought back memories of Music While you Work and *The Sleepy Lagoon* recalled Desert Island Discs. A selection of music by Elgar was included and the evening was brought to an end with John Strauss's *Radetsky March*. Was it the glass of wine during

the interval that encouraged the audience to clap to the beat?

Saturday morning I awoke at 4.20 and – horror of horrors! – I had forgotten to thank our churchwarden Robin for his help putting up the frame of the tent, taking the entrance money, being assistant barman and dismantling the tent afterwards.

We didn't put the roof on the tent. It was a warm, sunny evening but a bit windy at the church (that is an English understatement – it was blowing a gale) and I had visions of the tent sailing majestically down the valley like a hot air balloon, though in reality it would have wrapped itself around an oak tree and been a blot on the landscape for years to come.

What a wonderful evening's entertainment from Volante Strings.

Brian Mills

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# Open door to open studios

Local artist Peter Lloyd, at The Pigsty Studio in Abberley, will be throwing open the doors of his studio this August bank holiday weekend as part of Worcestershire Open Studios.

From Friday 23rd to Monday 26th August you'll be able to pop in and talk to Peter about his creative processes and see his work and where it is created.

Peter said, " I am really looking forward to meeting everyone, chatting, sharing my work and encouraging those who are interested to have a go. I've been working hard to prepare for Worcestershire Open Studios and I'm really excited to take part for the first time this year."

Peter has been working as a calligrapher and illustrator for more than thirty years and creates pieces using a broad range of styles and subjects including gold leaf illumination, Celtic knotwork and nature studies to combine with poems, prose and quotations.

"I've always had a passion for nature and lettering," he said, "and I'm lucky to combine



both through my hand illustrated calligraphy, inspired by the beautiful Abberley hills around my home."

Worcestershire Open Studios is a free, artist-led initiative with over 180 artists taking part at 83 locations across the county, including painters, photographers, textile artists, printmakers, jewellers and ceramicists. You can pick up a full guide to all the artists and their locations at Abberley and Great Witley post offices, Great Witley petrol station, the Garden Tearoom at Witley

Court and Tenbury Library, or go to [worcestershireopenstudios.org.uk](http://worcestershireopenstudios.org.uk).

*Peter Lloyd is at The Pigsty Studio, Stockton Road, Abberley WR6 6AS, on the A443 Worcester to Tenbury road.*

*Open Friday 7 to 9pm, Saturday, Sunday and Monday 10.30am to 7pm.*

*Telephone 01299 896797 or go to [www.thepigsty-studio.co.uk](http://www.thepigsty-studio.co.uk).*



## Worcestershire Open Studios



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## Brexit through my eyes

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But our pompous MPs just cannot agree,  
With the majority of voters who have asked to  
be free.

Nearly three years later, have my views began  
to falter?

Absolutely not, there is nothing to alter.

We've had our vote, and had our say,  
Choosing to leave, not to stay.

A second referendum could now be in sight,  
You may agree but it cannot be right.

Argument and division, friends torn apart,  
But with our democracy at stake, I go with  
my heart.

Are we going to leave, be free one day?  
I very much doubt it, the minority will get  
their way.

So to all of my friends still speaking to me,  
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*The Amateur  
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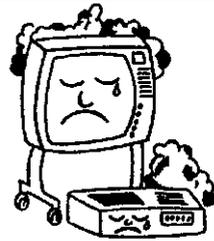
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# Local farmers contribute to Open Farm Sunday success

On Sunday 9th June farms all over the country opened their gates for LEAF Open Farm Sunday. In Stanford, two farms on the Brockhill Estate joined forces to give visitors an experience of the variety of farming in the Teme valley, from lambs and calves, hops and apples to a brewery and 'pop-up' bar.

In the morning at Noverton Farm, David and Michelle Evington hosted around 150 visitors. There were sheep dog and sheep shearing demonstrations and fun photo opportunities on the vintage tractors. Michelle said, "The children loved bottle feeding the lambs and feeling the sheep's wool. The tea and cakes contributed by local ladies went down a treat."

The day continued at Orleton Court, a traditional hop and cider apple farm where Tom and Amber Spilsbury have diversified into brewing their single estate craft lager Tom Jones and run the White Pheasant pop-up cellar bar. Tom walked around 300 visitors round the hop-yards, where hops are grown for Timothy Taylor's Landlord, and the orchards where apples are grown for Robinson's cider.

Amber said, "Lots of people came on from visiting Noverton in the morning and it was great to welcome so many fresh faces, in addition to friends, family and White Pheasant supporters. We were really impressed with the calibre and quantity of questions and the enthusiasm for craft production. They could touch and feel the raw materials, see the brewing process and taste the end result. We'll definitely be doing it again."

National organisers LEAF – Linking Environment and Farming – reported over 230,000 visitors to working farms nationwide and their event manager Annabel Shackleton said, "Many visitors commented on how much they appreciated being welcomed onto farms and the space and freedom to enjoy the countryside. It's inspiring to see so many taking an active interest in how their food is produced and choosing to connect with farmers."

*This month's cover photograph: Open Farm Sunday at Noverton by Michelle Morris Photography.*

*from lambs and calves,  
hops and apples  
to a brewery and a bar*



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# Shut those gates!

Careless people in certain parts of Eastham are leaving gates open behind them causing distress to stock owners. Animals have been found wandering dangerously close to roads where not only could they be injured but their presence could cause a serious accident on our narrow, twisty country lanes.

The government's Countryside Code has everything newcomers – walkers, riders or residents – need to know about living in the country. For example: leave gates as you find them and take all your litter, including dog mess, with you to bin at home.

Obviously gates are always closed if animals

are grazing but sometimes gates between fields are left open for a reason – access to more pasture or water. If a footpath you use regularly has a difficult gate either avoid it or bring string to tie it securely. Then, if you know the landowners, contact them and ask if it could be improved. Or you could contact your parish path warden (in Eastham, Jen Jones jonesjengem@yahoo.co.uk) or the public rights of way officer at Worcestershire County Council.

So to all who walk or ride through our parishes – **please shut those gates!**

“Remember, your actions can affect people's lives and livelihoods.” *Countryside Code*

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# Sue cooks up a storm at the Matrimony Awards

Sue Field Mason of Sue's Bespoke Cakes is well known to regulars at Hanley Friday Market where she sells fabulous cakes and tray bakes every week. But she also makes amazing celebration cakes, like the wedding cake shown here, and her talent has been recognised by Matrimony Magazine UK. She is a finalist for the Dan Marshall Award for Creativity, representing Worcestershire at the Matrimony Awards 2020.



2013 and include Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

The Dan Marshall Creativity Award is given each year to those businesses who are creative in making their items (dresses, hats, accessories, chocolates, flowers ...) from beginning to end, from concept to design to end product.

Sue has to wait until October for the judging panel to make its decision, so we wish her the best of luck in winning this prestigious award!

The Matrimony Awards (formerly the Three Counties Wedding Awards) were founded in



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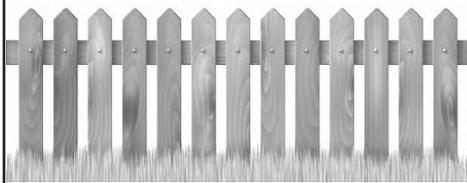
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## Another car with a mind of its own

Following my article in April you may still be wondering how we're getting on with my wife's new car. You might remember that she was determined to replace her elderly Audi Cabriolet with something more modern – blue, automatic and petrol with satnav and a reversing camera. We found one in April and although just two years old it comes with three more years of warranty so shouldn't let her down. But what has surprised me is the number of gadgets and toys it has and how much has changed since we bought her last car in 2003. We worried that the old car had a mind of its own – the new one definitely has!

There are cameras all round to avoid bumping into things. The lights come on by themselves and shine to the left or right on corners. The headlights dip automatically

Satnav tells you where you are and where you want to go. And beeps tell you when you cross a white line without indicating (we had

to turn that one off).

The radio connects to the mobile phone and the dashboard tells you the tyre pressure in each wheel.

The digital radio has too many stations to mention.

I was driving through Rochford and found a paddle thing attached to the back of the steering wheel. I flipped it and the car hiccuped. I flipped it again and the car stuttered. We slowed to nearly walking pace and I realised that this was racing car design and we were in bottom gear.

There is a paddle on the other side to change up again – but I abandoned this feature and left the car to decide for itself when to change gear.

And finally if you spot an attractive blonde in an Audi with the roof down and the wind in her hair it could just be the lucky lady with Sandra's old car.

*Brian Griffiths*

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**Question:** I recently joined a dating website. I was contacted by a lovely man and we started to exchange messages. We now email every day, although we haven't met in person yet. We had arranged to go for a meal but he cancelled because he needs to concentrate on fundraising for his daughter - the medicines she needs aren't available on the NHS.

He's asked me to contribute, his daughter needs treatment urgently. He's given me details of a bank account to pay into. I want to help but I'm unsure because I've only known him a short time.

**Answer:** You're right to be cautious. Unfortunately dating sites are increasingly being targeted by unscrupulous people. It can be difficult to accept that someone you've developed feelings for is trying to swindle you, but scammers can be highly skilled at using emotional triggers to persuade people to part with money or with personal information that might make victims vulnerable to identity theft.

Your friend may be completely genuine but try to find out if he's really who he says he is. A reluctance to call you or Skype, or profile information such as educational achievements not matching the content of his messages, could be a strong indication that this is a scam.

Other things to look out for include expressing strong emotions for a short period of time,

moving the conversation away from the dating site and onto a private channel such as email or instant messaging and asking lots of personal questions, but giving away very little in return.

Trust your instincts and if in any doubt, don't part with your money. For further help on identifying possible scams contact your local Citizens Advice or call the Citizens Advice consumer service on 0345 040506. Scams can also be reported to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040, [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk).

For further information and advice contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or see [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk).

*Tenbury Wells CAB, The Library, 24 Teme Street, Tenbury Wells, Worcs WR15 8AA*

*Open Door and Telephone Advice: Thursdays 9.30am to 3pm, telephone 01584 563611, email enquiries.malvern@citizensadvicew.org.uk*

CAB also has a team of Community Liaison Volunteers (CLVs) acting as a first point of contact and link to CAB advice services and can be contacted as follows:

- Lesley Dean (Stanford Bridge) 01886 853295 [les2dean@googlemail.com](mailto:les2dean@googlemail.com)
- Margaret Watkins (Lindridge) 01299 270073 [brianwatkins552@gmail.com](mailto:brianwatkins552@gmail.com)



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# Teme Valley Wildlife

Back in February I enjoyed a circular walk up and around the Brown Cleve hill. At 540 metres above sea-level, this is the highest point in the whole of the Midlands. It was a gloriously sunny day and, approaching from Abdon on the north side of the summit, the walk was a particularly fine one. Along the way small birds kept surprising me by streaking into the air, like tiny Harrier jump-jets. The birds were skylarks. After shooting vertically upwards, nearly out of sight, they sang, hovered a short while and then plummeted back to earth. Each time I spotted one, I seized my camera, but they were way too quick for me. They seemed close at hand to start with, but after a series of sky-only photographs, a picture of a sheep on Abdon



Burf accompanies this article, instead of an avian portrait.

I love listening to larks singing and I enjoy craning my neck to find the black dot in the sky which is the source of the liquid notes. I'm not the only one. The composer Ralph Vaughan Williams was in-

spired to write "A Lark Ascending", which is said to be Britain's favourite piece of classical music. Poets, too, loved skylarks and wrote in their praise. Wordsworth called them "ethereal minstrels" and Shelley had them "showering the earth in a rain of melody".

Skylarks can sing for up to five minutes without pausing for breath. They can even carry on singing at heights of over 1,000 feet, so can sometimes be heard but not seen. The skylark is the only bird that can sing on the ascent, whilst hovering, and also as it comes back down to earth again. It is only the males that sing, and they do so to defend a territory or to attract a mate. Prime song-time runs from late January to early July. Their voices are then rested in August and September and the birds sing only sporadically until the start of the next breeding season.

Although skylarks are widespread across Britain, they have suffered a decline in numbers over the last forty years. Of 1,400 farmers taking part in a recent farmland bird survey, 30% found them to be present on their farms on the day of the survey. The birds nest on the ground, traditionally choosing a place in spring-grown crops. The hen birds build a nest of grass, which is sometimes lined with hair, and then lay three or four brown-speckled eggs inside. Because nests on the ground are at high risk from predators, up to three clutches of eggs may be laid during a single breeding season. Fifty per cent of skylarks are thought

*Continued on page 24*



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Continued from page 23

to nest on arable ground but since the increase in the planting of winter-sown cereal crops, these nests have been less successful in raising chicks than in the past.

For some years farmers have been encouraged to create small patches of bare ground within their crops and this practice has been shown to be successful in significantly increasing successful skylark breeding. The method is endorsed by the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, and is in practice locally, so thankfully I shall be able to look forward to the enchantment of lark-song for many years to come.

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group is on Thursday 8th August when we have a fishy theme and welcome Catherine Gutmann Roberts whose talk is en-

titled "The Invasive Barbel". Do join us at 7.30pm at Stoke Bliss and Kyre village hall, WR15 8RR. It is just £2 on the door and everybody is most welcome.

Stephanie Mocroft

For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, bird survey and archive photographs are available on our website [www.temevalleywildlife.co.uk](http://www.temevalleywildlife.co.uk) We normally holds meetings on the second Thursday of the month. All are welcome. Contact us by telephone on 01584 881397 or by email at [towg@outlook.com](mailto:towg@outlook.com)

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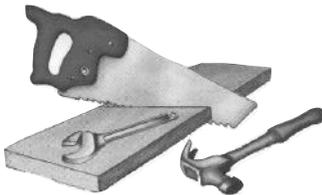
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# What's on in Teme Valley South

## August

5th	Monday	Coffee Morning, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 10.30am
7th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
8th	Thursday	Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 12.30pm
10th	Saturday	Kyre Valley Railway, The Hyde, Stoke Bliss, 2pm
18th	Sunday	Eastham Fête and Flower Show, Eastham Church, 1pm
30th	Friday	Pub Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.30 to 10pm
31st	Saturday	Tenbury High and St Michael's WI Cake Stall, Regal Steps, 9.30am

## September

2nd	Monday	Coffee Morning, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 10.30am
4th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
6th	Friday	FFF – Extra Helpings, Rochford Village Hall, 7 for 7.30pm
7th	Saturday	Downside Up, Hanley Village Hall, 7.30pm
8th	Sunday	Dog Show, Stanford Village Hall, 2pm
12th	Thursday	Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 12.30pm
14th	Saturday	Whist Drive, Rochford Village Hall
21st	Saturday	Film Night at Hanley Village Hall, <i>Bohemian Rhapsody</i> , 6.30pm
27th	Friday	Pub Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.30 to 10pm
28th	Saturday	Stoke Bliss Ploughing Match, Underhill Farm, Collington, 10am

## October

2nd	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
5th	Friday	Harvest Service followed by supper, St Mary's Stanford, 6pm
7th	Monday	Coffee Morning, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 10.30am
10th	Thursday	Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 12.30pm
25th	Friday	Pub Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.30 to 10pm

## November

2nd	Saturday	Knitwear Party, Stanford Village Hall
4th	Monday	Coffee Morning, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 10.30am
6th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
10th	Sunday	Remembrance Service
14th	Thursday	Neighbourhood Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 12.30pm
16th	Saturday	Stanford Village Hall Meals Club Extra Meal
22nd	Friday	Quiz, Rochford
29th	Friday	Pub Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 7.30 to 10pm

Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the month  
telephone 01568 750665 or email [ronsmum@btconnect.com](mailto:ronsmum@btconnect.com)

# Services

## August/September 2019

### Sunday 4th August

10.00am     Stanford                    Communion with hymns  
6.30pm       Stoke Bliss                    Evening Prayer

### Sunday 11th August

10.00am     Hanley William                Holy Communion  
6.30pm       Rochford                        Evening Worship

### Sunday 18th August

10.00am     Hanley Childe                 Holy Communion  
from 1pm     Eastham                         Summer Fête and Flower Show, followed by  
4.45pm       Eastham                         Open Air Songs of Praise

### Sunday 25th August

10.00am     Rochford                        All Age Service followed by Communion  
6.30pm       Kyre                                Celtic Evening Prayer

### Sunday 1st September

10.00am     Stanford                        Communion with hymns  
6.30pm       Stoke Bliss                    Evening Prayer

*Prayer and Reflection will be taking a break during August*

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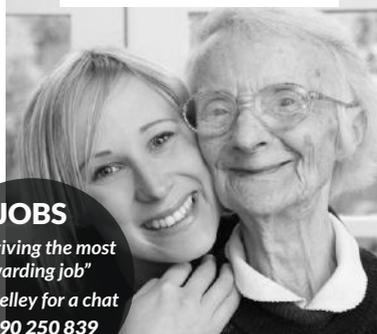
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