



THE POULTON EYE

COMMUNITY - NEWS - INFORMATION



Driving along a Devon lane on an August evening we were struck by the brightness and colour of the moon. Not only was it huge, but it was gold and radiating a red glow. With the car windows open to enjoy a balmy breeze it was a stunning sight and a magical moment.

IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION:

Reptilian Cunning

**The Whys and Whiffaws of
Muck-Spreading**

An Amazing Angel

**In a Good Cause - 24 hour
walk for Cancer Research**

Suddenly we felt very small sitting in our car and yet part of a bigger world. Who knew what (or who!) might at that very moment be on that moon looking down and wondering at the earth in turn?

I looked it up and discovered that the August full moon is called the Sturgeon Moon, named after the fish that Native Americans would catch at that time of year. It is also called the grain moon and the red moon, referring respectively to the time of year at which it appears and the reddish hue it radiates. Technically it only lasts in full form for an instant, to the naked human eye it can appear full for up to three days.

So now I am looking forward to the next full moon (they appear every 29.5 days) - September's Harvest Moon, named because it gives light to farmers working late to gather in their crops. It is the moon closest to the Autumn Equinox and because of this we will be able to enjoy it for several evenings in a row from 10th September. Because it sits just on the horizon it has a special warm glow.

If it's anything like the August version, it will be worth a look...

As ever, we hope that you find something to interest you, and we welcome contributions from all.

Rosie and Lizzy

Editors, Poulton Eye
poultoneye@gmail.com



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MESSAGE FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friends

September tends to be the time we traditionally celebrate Harvest and to remember the gift of food; and we shall indeed be doing that once again this year. It's been a difficult year for our farmers and market-gardeners, and will continue to be so over the autumn and winter - particularly for those with livestock to feed. Changes in weather patterns are causing us new challenges that we all need to respond to.

We all have a part to play in helping to ease pressure on our climate – but sometimes knowing what contribution we can make can be difficult. There is an initiative called 'Eco-Church' which invites churches of all denominations to think about what we can do locally as a church – our buildings, our land (churchyards in our case), and our church community.

I've started looking at what we might do at Ampney Crucis Church – encouraged by a young person in our village, who is doing some research into Eco-Church for us as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Actually, I was surprised by how much we are already doing, but also recognised there is a lot more for us to do. One idea that I am very attracted to is the idea of bat boxes in the churchyard – to encourage wildlife AND (yes, I know it's a forlorn hope) that some of the bats in church might prefer a home outside of the building! The Bishop did suggest that if I were to baptise the bats, I'd never see them again

We could do with some bird boxes; install some water butts; make some bug hotels; and hedgehog homes – might you be up for helping with that? Or doing a wildlife survey perhaps?

If you would like to help us work on making our local church buildings and churchyards more eco-friendly, I'd love to hear from you. The local church buildings and their surroundings belong to us all and our local community. We all are welcome to take a part in preserving our heritage; enjoy the present; and work to hand on a better world to future generations. If you have a little time to spare and would enjoy helping your community – let me know. Thank you!

Yours as ever - John



The Rectory, Ampney Crucis, Cirencester, GL7 5RY | 01285 851309 | ampneyrector@gmail.com | www.ampneychurches.info

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e-mail: tonyrosstssf468@gmail.com

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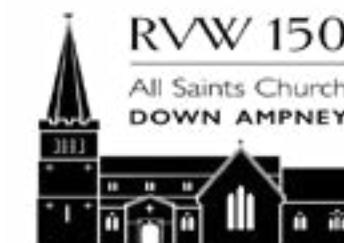
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CHURCH DATES IN AUGUST

Sunday 4th September <i>12th Sunday after Trinity</i>	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Service of the Word Evensong	Ampney Crucis Down Ampney Harnhill Ampney St Mary
Tuesday 6th September	12pm	Mediatation and Communion	Poulton
Sunday 11th September <i>13th Sunday after Trinity</i>	8am 10am 10am 11am	Holy Communion Parish Communion Service of the Word The Arnhem Service	Poulton Driffield Harnhill Down Ampney
Sunday 18th September <i>14th Sunday after Trinity</i>	8am 10am 10am 3pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Service of the Word The Maggini Quartet RVW Concert	Ampney St Peter Ampney Crucis Harnhill Down Ampney
Sunday 25th September <i>15th Sunday after Trinity</i>	8am 10am 10am 3pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Service of the Word Choral Evensong with Merton College Choir	Harnhill Poulton Harnhill Down Ampney

PARISH REGISTER

Weddings	Anna-Lena Elkington & James Hynard Victoria Hall & Thomas Dyson	14th August 27th August	Holy Rood Church, Ampney Crucis St Peter's Church, Ampney St Peter
Funerals	Mrs Lynda Northam (late of Poulton) Mr Peter Payne of Ampney St Mary	4th August 30th August	Kingsdown Crematorium, Swindon Cheltenham Crematorium
Interment of Ashes	Mrs Nicholas Lillian West (last of the Flying Nightingales)	21st August	Down Ampney



The Maggini Quartet will perform music by RVW and John Ireland
On Sunday 18th September at 3pm

This Quartet is of international renown, and well worth coming to see and hear: 'Amongst the most vivid, intelligent, witty and, on occasion, musically risk-taking live performances of classical quartets I have ever heard.'
Keith Potter, The Independent

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CHAMBERLAIN WINES

Hello. My name is Mark Chamberlain, and I have lived in Poulton with my family for more than ten years. If we haven't met, you may have seen me walking the dogs around the village!



I am an Independent Wine Merchant. I have almost twenty years' experience in the Wine Trade, including living and working in Saint-Emilion. I have run my own Wine Merchant's business for more than a decade.

I list wines from all over the World, and in a wide range of styles: crisp, dry whites; richer, fuller bodied whites; pale and refreshing Provençal rosés; light, supple reds; full-bodied fruity reds; luscious pudding wines; an array of sparkling wines including some excellent Grower Champagnes; a selection of ports and sherries; classic Clarets, Burgundies, Riojas and Barolos; lots of interesting wines from off the beaten track. In essence, anything that I like and I think represents good quality and good value for its type and origin. I don't list anything I wouldn't drink. And I always try to be amongst the most competitively priced for the wines I list.

I don't have a shop, but I do offer a range of traditional Wine Merchant services – expert advice, naturally; free local home delivery (or I can send wine anywhere in the country using a reliable courier service); glass loan for events; gift boxes. If I don't stock a wine or style you're looking for, I will do my best to find it for you. In short, all you could want from a Wine Merchant, on your doorstep!

As I live in the village, Poulton residents get 10% off the list price of any order.

If you want to see a list of the wines I have currently, join my local email list, or have any other questions, please do get in touch: mark@chamberlainwines.co.uk or on the mobile, 07894 528 580.

All the best!

REFLECTIONS FROM STONEY POOL

It's been one of those weeks!

Last Wednesday morning at 4am, I was awoken by our dog, Paolo, being sick. It turns out it was the start of a very long day, with lots more episodes of sickness, two visits to the vets and an urgent referral to a veterinary hospital in Swindon for emergency surgery to remove a very large stone that he had eaten, which had effectively given him an intestinal blockage.

Paolo is 15 months old, but I've never been sure how much I've bonded with him. It has been a challenge given my old dog, Alfons, was the love of my life. But in that moment - seeing him looking so very ill, handing him over to strangers, leaving him confused and frightened - I knew how much I loved him. I think I can now class myself as a true dog lover.

Now, you may or not be a dog person (and Poulton is full of dogs so most of you probably are) but let me give you these nuggets of information: having a dog leads to lower stress, improved sociability, lower blood pressure, higher levels of happiness and generally improved physical and mental health. Not only that, but for those of us who are hybrid working, put a dog in an office environment and you'll improve employee wellbeing, boost morale and amplify productivity!

It can't have passed you by that dogs are no longer confined to the home in everyday life; they are also appearing in increasing numbers in hospitals, care homes, schools, and yes – workplaces. Did you know, there is a designated "Bring your Dog to Work" day on 24th June each year? And companies such as Google, Amazon and Etsy allow employees to bring their dogs to work at any time! I loved to read that at the Seattle headquarters of Amazon, they have dog-sized water fountains, containers of dog treats at reception desks and waste-bag dispensers outside along the paths between buildings!

Research suggests that one potential benefit of dogs in the workplace is that they provide an additional source of social support – which is associated with lower levels of depression and better job performance. One particular study looked at the effects of dogs in the workplace on employees' self-reported stress. Employees who did and did not bring dogs to work completed a perceived stress survey several times throughout the day. It emerged that employees who did not bring dogs to work had significantly higher perceived stress levels than employees who did. And I suspect that their actual stress levels were higher too! Imagine a day in the office where: - You absolutely have to get away from your desk and go outside in the fresh air, because you need to walk the dog - It feels more like home from home, breaking down those work/home barriers - You bond with colleagues as they come over to meet your dog - You feel happier, more relaxed, and less stressed. Of course, animal-friendly offices are not for everyone; there are allergies and cleanliness and a myriad of health & safety issues to be considered – but would it be worth overcoming the logistics involved, in order to reap the mental health and work-life balance benefits?

There is another option of course. One which I prefer. Pack them off to doggy day care, breath a huge sigh of relief, and enjoy a blissful day of uninterrupted peace!

Nathalie Baird-Clarke

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As the hot, dry summer continues, harvesting is almost over and muck-spreading begins. This month we are having a master class in the whys and wherefores of the ancient art of muck-spreading from our resident farming expert, Charles Horton.

At this time of year, as the crops come off the land, we start spreading the muck which was saved from last winter so it can work its way into the ground and start to feed the soil which worked so hard to produce the last crops. The purpose of muck spreading is to provide nutrition, feed the bugs and reduce the need for adding artificial fertiliser to the soil so that it is replenished for the next sowing. Muck spreading solves a waste disposal problem and benefits the soil, improving its organic content as well as its structure.

There are different categories of farmyard manure, including:

1. Manure produced by cattle and mixed with straw. A solid manure, this is spread using a muck spreader. You will have seen quite a lot of this in Poulton over the last few weeks.
2. Slurry produced by cattle. No straw, just liquid materials, it is pumped onto the land from a tanker. Particularly used by dairy farmers for obvious reasons. When you see big tankers going up and down the fields, that's what's happening.
3. Chicken manure collected when a batch of chickens is ready for sale. The sheds are cleaned out and the manure is collected and sold as a soil fertiliser. This has the consistency and look of sawdust. This is used quite a lot in this part of the world – and you will recognise when it is used because as you walk past the high ammonia content will catch in the back of your throat.
4. Digestate which comes out of anaerobic digesters when they have finished fermenting. There are no digesters in Poulton itself but there are local ones at Hatherop and Castle Eaton.

Using manure is great for farmers but not necessarily for villagers, because of the smell.

Most complaints in Poulton are about pig slurry which comes from the piggery at Sunhill Farm. That slurry gets pumped onto Poulton fields at the start of the late August Bank Holiday and again in Cheltenham week in the spring. Although we said earlier that you muck spread after the crops have been harvested, you can put pig slurry onto newly planted oil seed rape.

Although it smells awful, the aroma doesn't last too long. How long it does last depends on the weather but if spreading takes 10 to 14 days, the smell will disappear a couple of days after that. The good news is that using slurry reduces the purchase of phosphate or potash. These products usually come from South America, with the environmental impact and costs associated with long-haul transportation.

Just as gardeners recycle waste in compost heaps for later use as a garden soil improver, farmers use slurry and muck to improve agricultural soil – just on a bigger scale.

Now that fertiliser prices are so high, we are likely to see an increase in farmers using muck and slurry as fertilisers in order to reduce the cost of crop (and ultimately food) production. There are also obvious environmental benefits. Charles is trying to adapt his own growing systems to increase the use of organic fertilisers and minimise reliance on artificial fertiliser for both reasons. Already he reports that the spelt that he grows receives only pig slurry, so no artificial fertiliser at all, while his bean crops produce their own nitrogen and thus require no fertiliser at all.

So there it is. We've all wondered (complained?) about the nasty niffs we endure for a few weeks each year – now we know what the smell is and why it is being used. Perhaps this year when those slurry scents with top notes of pig or chicken waft over the village, we will not mind quite so much.

Before we let Charles go, we had to ask what the hot and dry weather so many of us have enjoyed over this summer spell means for farmers...

He told us that in general, dry weather is a help to farmers when it comes to harvest time, when too much rain is often the problem. However, the length of this year's dry spell has meant that crops have had very little rain from April onwards, which means that yields are down. Potato growers in particular will suffer, and unless they have irrigation, harvests will be much smaller than usual.

The other impact of the long dry spell relates to its effect on animals. Charles has few concerns about his sheep but is worried about his cattle for 2 reasons:

- Firstly, dairy cows need to feed on grass in order to produce milk. Without rain, the grass has not been growing and so their normal grass diet has to be supplemented or replaced by feed which was being saved for the winter months. He hopes that he won't run out of winter feed later in the year.
- The second, and surprising, side effect of the hot weather is that bulls (particularly the older ones) can become infertile. We don't know why it happens, but it does.

After a hot spell three years ago, Charles found that only half his cows were in calf. You can't tell until 6 to 9 weeks after mating whether the cow is in calf, so it's too early yet to assess whether infertility or lower fertility will affect the herd this season, but he watches on anxiously.

The rising temperature of the planet is causing alarm for farmers.

Rosie Arkwright in conversation with Charles Horton

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Ingredients

Pastry

800g cooking apples
225g fresh blackberries
1 tablespoon lemon juice
100g caster sugar
2 tablespoons cornflower
2 tablespoons butter
1 large egg
1 tablespoon of milk

For the pastry glaze:

Cinnamon to taste
175 g sugar

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180 C. Melt the butter in a saucepan. When melted, add the sugar and the apples. Cover and simmer for 12 minutes.
2. Add the blackberries and stir well. Cook for a further 5 minutes.
3. Take the pastry out of the fridge and dust your work surface with flour. Divide the pastry into 2 portions and roll one out until it's about 1cm thick. Butter the pie dish and line with the rolled pastry. Trim excess edges with a sharp knife.
4. Fill the lined pie dish with the blackberry and apple mixture.
5. Roll out the second portion of pastry as before and lay on top of the filled pie dish and crimp the edges with your fingers.
6. Beat the egg and brush the pastry before dusting with sugar and cinnamon to taste. Make a few slashes in the pastry.
7. Place on a baking tray and bake for 55 to 60 minutes until golden brown.
8. Serve warm with cream or ice cream.

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NATURE NOTES

Reptilian cunning

Imagine my surprise one summer morning when I was inspecting my newly planted cabbages and found a large grass snake entangled in the plastic netting which I had placed over the greens to protect them against the ever greedy pigeons. You can see several important features of this magnificent reptile in the picture below:



Natrix helvetica is actually a ringed snake, as you can see by its dark markings along the side. In the picture, the snake is upside down so you can also clearly see that it has a pale underside. This is characteristic of predators which swim, because it means that any prey swimming beneath them will find it hard to distinguish the colour of the snake from the colour of the sky above. Really this snake is a water snake and is called such in many parts of Eurasia. Ditches, streams and ponds are the grass snake's natural habitat, since its main prey are frogs, newts and toads. Being poikilothermic (meaning it allows its body temperature to fluctuate with the environment) means it needs very little energy to survive. It hibernates from October to April, which significantly reduces its annual energy requirements, and during its active months, will warm itself by basking in sunshine as needed. As a result of this, it needs to feed just 3-4 times per year.

As a predator, the grass snake can therefore take its time in hunting, waiting for unsuspecting prey to get close enough for it to catch it in its mouth. Its jaws have rows of small backward facing teeth which anchor the catch and ensure that its struggling prey can only move in one direction - towards the snake's stomach. They are not venomous and rely on swallowing their prey alive and killing it by suffocation or digestion. These are very shy snakes and are rarely seen as they mostly move at dawn or dusk and will avoid humans. The most likely reason for trying to bite a human is if they are trodden on or inadvertently picked up.

Well this snake was going nowhere. At first I thought it was dead, so I put on some thick gardening gloves and picked it up by the head and tail. We soon realised that it was only feigning death. Having decided to save it as it was such a splendid specimen (about a metre long), I held it while Sue carefully cut the netting. While we did this it was motionless, though it did emit a foul stench of rotting meat. When it was free, I placed it carefully on the ground and stood well back. It lay there with its jaw dislocated and its tongue hanging out, so again I thought it was dead. Suddenly it looked up at us, decided we were not going to do anything terrible and swiftly headed off towards our pond, soon becoming invisible amongst the weeds.

Apparently grass snakes can hold their breath for up to 20 minutes so it probably stayed underwater. We never saw it again so I still don't know if it really did survive, though reading the books it seems that this trick of appearing dead is quite common with snakes. They are actually quite vulnerable to badgers, foxes, cats, hawks and of course cars and like most of our wild life (except pigeons!) their numbers have fallen drastically in recent years.

Grass snakes are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, meaning that it is illegal to injure or kill them, but the main reason for their decline is loss of suitable habitat. The female is much larger than the male and lays 10-40 eggs every other year. They like warm rotting vegetation like a heap of grass cuttings or a neglected compost heap. The baby snakes are about 10-15 cm long and are readily taken by birds of prey as well as weasels and stoats. They need either a disused burrow (there should be plenty in the fields around Poulton) or a compost heap to hibernate in come the autumn.

Just another example of how not tidying your garden too much in the autumn has many varied and valid excuses...

Robin Spiller



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Further to last month's piece about my overused and much appreciated Angel, who came to my rescue in the guise of NHS 111, I thought she deserved an honourable mention for the three previous occasions when she intervened and basically saved my life.

The first time my Angel was deployed, was when I was just 10 years old, at school and on a nature ramble. A school friend and I discovered an attractive bushy plant and thought that the seeds looked tasty, sort of like berries in fact. It wasn't long before we were tucking into several pods of laburnum seeds. Toxic, fatal laburnum seeds. At this point, my school friend decided to offer some to the teacher, whereupon we were hastily frogmarched back to school to await an ambulance to take us to hospital. We returned to school some time later, having had our stomachs pumped.

Nice.

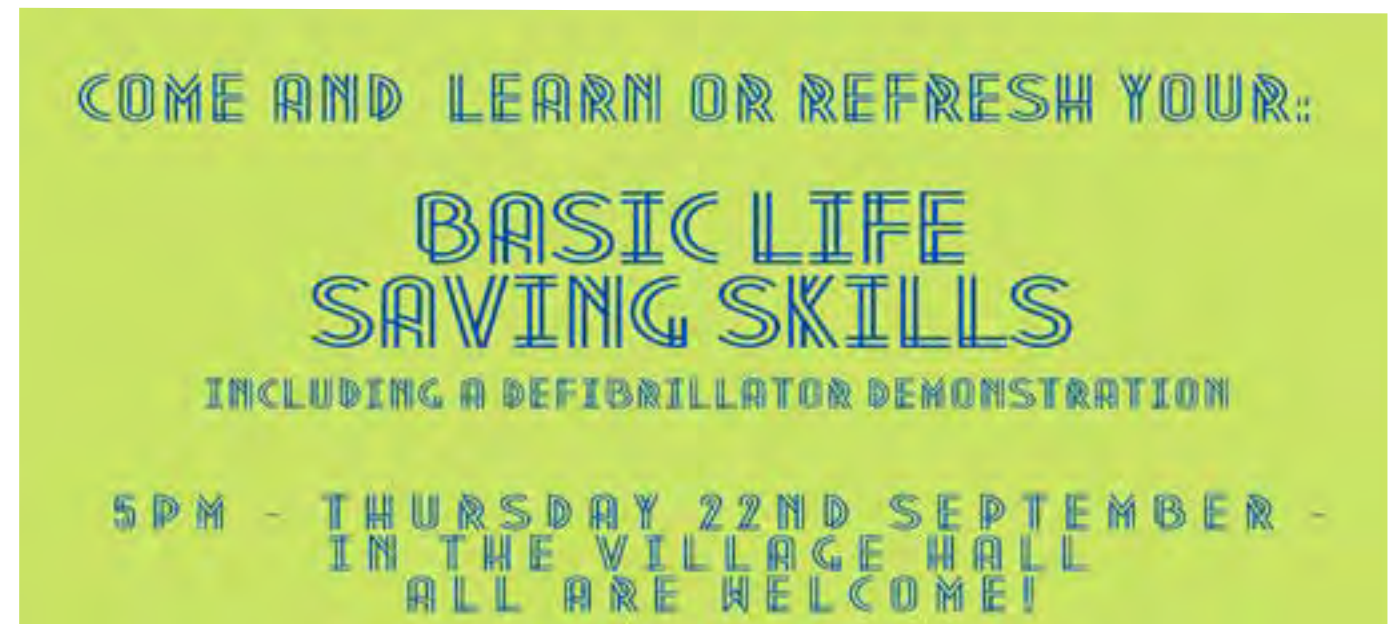
The second occasion my angel swooped in to save me was when I was living in Los Angeles, back in 1984. I was driving on a freeway when I was smashed into by an uninsured, untaxed, unlicensed driver. My car was a right-off but somehow I managed to scramble out unscathed...

The third time that I thanked my lucky angel was some years later, in 1996, while I was at home in Surrey. The doorbell rang and I opened the door with baby Lucy on my hip and engaged with him for a few minutes before saying goodbye and shutting the door. It was only months later, when I received a letter from him which was written while he was on remand for another offence that I realised that I had met not just a fan, but someone who was a stalker and, quite probably, a madman. His letter disclosed that he had visited me on that day not just with vile intentions but also armed, and it spelled out in graphic detail his plans for that day. He had, in fact, left my house and gone on to commit aggravated sexual assault.

He was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

So that is why my father always used to say I had an angel on my shoulder. That invisible form of protection that would always look after me, take care of me and shield me from harm. After my recent brush with anaphylactic shock, I hope that my angel will have a nice long rest, and won't be needed for a while. A good, long while.

Fiona Fullerton



BOOKS, BICCIES AND BEVERAGES

Plenty of "new-in" books on sale – paperbacks 50p, Children's Books 20p or you can donate any unwanted books (good condition only please!)

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FROM THE VILLAGE HALL



CAN WE INTEREST YOU IN JOINING THE TEAM?

The Village Hall Team would like to extend its' ranks and open up our activities to include more, maybe younger, members of the village – if you might be interested, please do come forward and let us know.

We look after the hall and arrange events but it doesn't mean an onerous time commitment for anyone and it's not heavy on committee meetings or formality, if that's not your thing!

If you'd like to know more, do have a chat with anyone of the team at a BBB morning or other event, or if you prefer, drop a mail to poultonvillagehall@gmail.com and one of us will get in touch.

We hope to hear from you.....

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN SEPTEMBER



Each Tuesday afternoon – 1.30 to 3.30 pm – Post Office & Pantry

Outreach Post Office run by Matthew each week. Take advantage of this local service for your postal and banking needs. Stop for a while longer and enjoy a pot of tea/coffee and a home-made slice of cake at The Pantry in the Courtyard when weather permits.



Saturday 3rd September – BBB (Books, Biccies and Beverages) 10.30am to 12.30pm

The regular monthly Village Coffee Morning, where drinks and homemade treats are available along with high quality pre-loved books on sale. (You can also donate any good condition books you no longer require)



Film Nights – Are due to resume in September on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. If you'd like to subscribe to the mailing list to be notified of the film details each week, then just drop a mail to poultonone&nines@gmail.com and we'll add you to the group.

And Finally...

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PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council has continued to operate during the recent month though at slightly reduced capacity with Councillors on holiday etc;.

Planning applications, large and small, have been received and given due consideration – with the main concerns generally relating to location and or appearance, whether it is within or adjacent to the conservation area. The other main concern is potential sewerage or flooding impact. Poulton planning applications are always available for public viewing on the Cotswold District Council web-site.

The PC continues with actions regarding Traffic/Speeding and the Cemetery.

The Playground

The PCC Chair - in an effort to both redeem his soul and lose weight - has weeded the barked areas with just one patch of tiresome deep-rooted grass still to be dealt with.

New bark will shortly be put down so the area will be smartened up. If you are able to help with this small job, please contact me on 01285 851984.

Thank you to the few villagers who offered to help with weeding the area. It would be nice if parents, grandparents and family members of children who use the playground would get involved with this ongoing project and help to keep the playground looking attractive and inviting. We would also welcome volunteers from those of you who own Airbnbs in the village. Your guests may well enjoy using the facility, which is very much a part of the village, and a feature that may attract people to stay in your properties. Keeping it that way takes time and money, it doesn't look after itself!

The PC are still investigating various local CDC/GCC and Central Government funding schemes towards the considerable cost of new and fun playground equipment. Mums, Dads and Grandparents please ask for any ideas from the young on what they want and feed them back to me ASAP. The current broad plan is to replace the "condemned" OXO Tower on the same site plus put up a basketball net and "bouncy" approach area.

Another offer has been received from a local resident's employer as part of its CSR (Corporate and Social Responsibility) work. This will also go into the Playground Equipment Fund. If anyone else has access to their firm's charitable donations/CSR please let me know.

Without wishing to sound overly prissy – and with very little regular local Council work/cleaning in rural villages - it would be great if all Poulton's residents managed to maintain the immediate areas outside their houses as far as weeding and rubbish is concerned.

If we all put in 10/15 minutes "tidying" a month the overall appearance of the "communal" areas of the village will continue to reflect the love and care that we put into our own private gardens and homes.

And finally a reminder to all Poulton's dog-owners – please pick-up your dog's poo (including on field-paths, where it is more often left than picked up). And please keep your dog under control at all times. If it is not reliably obedient, it should be kept on a lead. Several dog behavioural incidents have been recently reported, either verbally on in community social media groups.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 10th October @ 7pm @ the Village Hall when all members of the public are welcome to attend and contribute.

Simon Collyer-Bristow – Chair



Poulton Hill
VINEYARD

Think Local, Drink Local

Tours & Tastings at Poulton Hill

Even though you live locally, and many of you already come to the Cellar Door, why not book yourself in for a Tour & Tasting and get the full Poulton Hill experience. A great thing to do when friends are visiting!



www.poultonhillestate.co.uk

Summer opening times

The Cellar Door is now open on Mondays from 09:00 – 16:00, and from 09:00 – 17:00 on Tuesday to Friday. If you wish to visit outside of these hours, it may be possible by appointment. Please call 01285 850257. Please visit the website for more details on our Tours & Tastings.

FROM THE CELLAR DOOR

How to know when to harvest - Poulton Hill Vineyard's Natalie Barker explains the key signs that it is time to start picking the grapes

September should be a very exciting month for us at Poulton Hill Vineyard. While some years our harvest has not taken place until mid to late October, the signs are looking good for an earlier harvest this year. What are these early signs and how do we know precisely when we need to start to pick our grapes?

Weather

During July and August we had several heatwaves and very little rain. This weather means that we are able to strip back the leaves to expose the grapes to the sun to help them to ripen and sweeten. Stripping back the leaves also allows air into the canopy. At the same time, we do have to be careful as we do not want the grapes to be scorched. There has been very little rain this summer, which can be problematic, but our clay soil is able to retain moisture better than chalky soils. While there have been cracks in the earth, the real sign of lack of water in the soil is when our vine leaves start to curl up (cupping).

Changes to the grapes

During August we start to see our grapes undergo what is known as veraison. It is the point in the lifecycle of the vine when energy is put into ripening and sweetening the grapes so their acidity level decreases. We spotted the first signs of veraison in the Rondo and Regent grapes during our vineyard check on Monday 1st August. Last year we did not see the first signs of veraison until 10th August. From the point of veraison, it will be anywhere between 30 and 70 days until the grapes are ready to harvest. On the whole, the earlier the veraison, the earlier the harvest, particularly if the weather continues to be warm and sunny. After veraison we continue with the leaf stripping to expose the grapes to encourage further ripening.

Changes to the leaves

When the grapes are ripening, they start to take energy out of the leaves. The leaves will begin to turn red and orange, but retain nice green veins. The vineyard might begin to see an increase in the number of birds or insects visiting, looking for a tasty treat. This is why, once we have finished with leaf stripping, we bring down the nets to stop all our sweet grapes being eaten by the local wildlife!

Step-by-step guide to checking the sugar levels in the grapes

Once we can see that the grapes are looking really ripe, we need to take a more scientific approach. This is when we start to check the sugar levels in each of the grape varieties. Some grapes will ripen earlier than others. Here is how we go about it:

- Ensure the golf buggy is fully charged, ready to whizz up and down the vines
- Collect 25 random samples of each variety (eyes closed so as not to pick the biggest)
- Calibrate the refractometer and set to Oechsle (a scale measuring the density of our grape must, which indicates the grape ripeness and sugar content)
- Tear the tops off our Yorkshire Tea bags (and empty out the tea) to use as a filter
- Crush up the grapes
- Pour must into open tea bags and allow to filter through, covering the whole of the prism on the refractometer. (We have to cover the sample with a hand so as not to allow light in, which can affect the reading)
- Note down the reading and repeat three times for each variety, then calculate the average
- Repeat the process for each grape variety
- Pop out for more much-needed tea bags!

When we get the right sugar and acidity levels, it is all systems go for harvest. The harvest itself is one of our favourite times at the vineyard. **We are always keen to welcome more of our neighbours in the village to come to help out.** We supply clippers, tea, coffee, snacks and a harvest lunch (along with a glass of Poulton Hill wine of course!). No experience is necessary, as we will offer training, but the ability to be on your feet for a few hours, and a strong back (as you will likely have to bend down to snip off the bunches) are required. We work in pairs either side of the vine, and it is a great way to catch up with friends or make some new ones.

If you would like to know more about helping out at harvest, or if you would like to be contacted to help out, please email us at info@poultonhillestate.co.uk.



Relaxed dining and a friendly atmosphere...



Drop in and enjoy your local!

ALL IN A GOOD CAUSE! MY 24-HOUR WALK FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Why on earth did I do it?!?!

Early one morning last month, luckily not on one of the very hot days, I made a decision. A rash decision, but a decision all the same. I decided to join that day's charity non-stop 24-hour walk around a 300 metre grass track at Cirencester RFC to raise money for Cancer Research.

I really should have pulled together a team of 8. 10 or 12 like-minded individuals months in advance so we could have split the hours between us but I had totally not learnt from last Summer's Relay when I also did all 12 hours on my own!! So that morning, armed with a small bag of fresh socks, Vaseline, a towel, toothbrush and toothpaste plus a large bag of peanuts and several bottles of water I arrived at the rugby club.

I watched enviously as other teams put up luxurious sleeping tents and loaded heaving tables with food and drink. I on the other hand popped my carrier bag at the back of the First Aid tent and set out for the starting line. At 10am we were off and the first lap was a very emotional Survivors' lap.

After that I focused on getting into a steady walking rhythm of about 4.5mph and trying not to look too often at my watch. Throughout the morning I was joined by the odd friend who I had alerted at the last minute - and what a blessing that was. Dave Smith from The Falcon did an hour before his shift, along with a few others who had survived cancer or liked the absurdity of it all. The morning soon stretched into the afternoon and my first proper break came at about 7pm with a freshly cooked pizza and a pint. Golly did they taste good. Meantime some live music had started which kept the tempo going and provided a distraction. My speed was now 4mph.

The music finished at 11pm following a very moving candle-lit ceremony for those lost to cancer and so started what can only be described as a long, silent and arduous 8 hours walking in the dark through a by-then constant drizzle. The tedium and tiredness were only alleviated by a second visit by Dave, who chattered away (as he does) plus an old rugby playing mate called Taz who appeared out of the gloom at the very odd hour of 3.30am and walked alongside me for 4 hours!! Those 2 "angels" plus several cups of very strong black coffee with plenty of added sugar kept me going until my second proper break for a massive breakfast bap fresh from the grill. Pace nearer 3mph.

I'd like to say it was all downhill from then but my blisters were by then getting quite sore, my hips ached and I was thoroughly bored of the same old 300 metre track. I slogged on. Walking speed now 2 mph.

Thankfully 10 o'clock finally arrived, along with Alison and, from sheer emotional tiredness, my tears.

Home, a long shower and sleep beckoned, plus the comfort that I had done my bit...



If you would like make a donation please contact me on scb@crfc.co.uk and I will provide you with the relevant link.

Simon Collier-Bristow

WELCOME TO MARTIN & MANIFOLD VETS CIRENCESTER

Martin & Manifold is the new small animal vet practice in Cirencester, owned and run by vets Alice Martin and Lizzie Threadingham.

Based in Querns Business Centre in central Cirencester (just up by Waitrose) we offer a full range of veterinary services including:

- Consultations
- Vaccinations
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We have state-of-the-art facilities, including an in-house lab, digital x-ray and fully equipped operating theatre.

We welcome, and have experience of working with, the full range of small animal patients - not just cats and dogs but pet chickens and ducks, bearded dragons and tortoises to name but a few!

Please feel free to come in - have a look round and meet the team.



Martin & Manifold Vets Ltd, 6 Querns Business Centre, Cirencester GL7 1RT
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POULTON CRICKET CLUB

The 2022 cricket season is drawing to a close and as a result, this is the time of year when we are asked by the England & Wales Cricket board to do a 'kick the tyres' process on how the season has gone and alter our Club Development Plan accordingly. The cricket club has two major challenges. The first is responding to massive growth in the girls & womens game and the second remains trying to fill the void left by Wayne Tinson, These require the support of everyone from the PFAC trustees to immediate neighbours & the wider village so even though we are in the earliest of stages here, we felt it is the right time to start local engagement and give everyone an opportunity to voice opinions.

To cater equally for our ladies, we hope to add a changing room onto the existing pavilion so that our female members can change at Englands. Already across the county, mixed gender cricket is the norm but very few clubs offer this given what is now a very historical gender profile. The Pavilion is a wonderful building but it was not built with this demand in mind. Membership of the club is now over 200 for the first season and just under 30% of this is female with more than half of that percentage in the youth section. Our girls section alone has grown from five at the start of the 2022 season to nearly 20 so as these players grow into the sport and senior teams, they need to feel welcome and equal in the club with proper changing facilities dedicated to them. We are currently looking at the financial feasibility of this plan but we wanted to open a dialogue with the village on this at the earliest possible stage given the implication of an expansion of the pavilion.

This leads to the pavilion in general. As things stand at the club, we have outgrown the clubhouse and still use the same three repurposed garden tables indoors for sitting at. This leads to spilling out onto the grassy area after games for a post match drink. We have a blanket ban on music in the pavilion out of consideration for our neighbours but we are aware that drinking outside around the pavilion on a Saturday evening is not ideal for those who might be enjoying their gardens. An idea we have had is to extend out the front, a covered wooden veranda with new seating. This would enable us to address the imbalance of the Kitchen and Bar area internally but also cap more of the noise. Our plan here is to adjust the internal layout more and upgrade our furniture.

While both of these plans are serious and longer term, there is one that we will work on for the Englands Management Committee rather than the cricket club as soon as the season closes. The license for the pavilion is currently a premises licence and the pavilion needs a qualified premises supervisor to run this and be responsible for the bar. This is an issue in itself as it requires an individual to obtain and maintain that qualification. Wayne did this on behalf of both both the current clubs using the Pavilion. At the end of the cricket season we would like to move the alcohol license to something that reflects our status as a club and this is a Club premises certificate which restricts the sale of alcohol to those who are club members. We would like to offer annual social membership to members of the village and will likely price this at £5 for 2023. If there are any concerns or comments at all about this, please do put them in writing to PoultonTreasurer@gmail.com. Our revised club Development plan will be considered and voted on at the our October AGM.

Back in the present, Our second XI had opened a large gap at the top of their league to Lechlade but have since decided that this is unexciting and lost last weekend to Oakridge. It will be a nervy final few games chasing the league title and promotion spot. The first XI has been hit by summer holiday availability issues and are on a losing streak they need to snap while the Women's team have ended their League season third in their table but would have won the post-season after the top six clubs separated to play each other, if the points reset. We have several youth, girls and boys, heading to winter county trials and it has been a great season on the field for our youth but there are always things to improve on the coaching side of things and the committee over the next few months will be looking at launching a new Under 7 and Under 9 coaching option to local children.

Will Bathurst

KINGSBRIDGE
MORTGAGE ADVICE

Natasha Hughes
Mortgage and Protection Advisor
07596 568336
natasha@kingsbridgemortgages.co.uk

ROUND & ABOUT

September Events

Wednesday 7th September	2.30pm	Mothers Union Joan Townsend "30 Years of Shoeboxes and No Shoes"	Watermoor Parish Hall, Ampney Crucis
Wednesday 14th September	1pm	Members Day - bring your own lunch, drinks will be available	St Phillip & St James Church, Hucclecote
Thursday 22nd September	10.30am	Service followed by coffee	Holy Trinity Church, Watermoor
Thursday 15th September	7pm	Ampney Crucis Gardening Club A talk and demonstration by Andy Pedrick on "Winter Containers & Heathers"	Ampney Crucis Village Hall
Thursday 22nd September	7pm for 7.30pm	Ampney Crucis WI "Being a Magistrate" – talk by Michelle Eccles. Competition: A vegetable man.	Ampney Crucis Village Hall
Wednesday 27th September	7pm for 7.30pm	Ampney Crucis Rural Cinema: Downton Abbey: A New Era. Starring Hugh Bonneville and Maggie Smith. Seats £3.	Ampney Crucis Village Hall

Regular Events

1st Saturday monthly	10.30 - 12.30	BBBs - Books, Biccies and Beverages	Poulton Village Hall
Tuesdays	1.30 - 3.30	Post Office and Pantry	Poulton Village Hall
Tuesdays	6.30 - 7.30 7.30 - 8.30	JIG Dance & Pilates Pilates Adult Ballet	Ampney Crucis Village Hall
Tuesdays	9.30 - 11.00	Ampney Crucis Playgroup	Ampney Crucis Village Hall
1st Thursday monthly	7.30pm	Ampney Crucis Bridge Club	Ampney Crucis Village Hall
Wednesdays	4pm	Ampney Crucis Petanque Club - newly refurbished and ready to go! Please turn up or contact Liz Anderson - 07891525166	

Planning a local event?
Have a story you would like to share?

Email details to: poultoneye@gmail.com

DIRECTORY

Poulton Eye Newsletter	Poultoneye@gmail.com Editors: Rosie Arkwright , rosie.arkwright@icloud.com ; Lizzy Roughton pryorlizzy@gmail.com
Poulton Village Website	www.poultonvillage.co.uk
Poulton Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/groups/959278000806216/?multi_perma-links=4503302606403720
Poulton WhatsApp Group	Please contact Rachel Hutchinson to be added to group; 07557 006623
St Michaels and All Angels Church, Poulton	Vicar: The Rev'd Canon John Swanton 01285 – 851309; john@swanton.plus.net Church Wardens: Simon Collyer-Bristow scb@crfc.co.uk rosie.arkwright@icloud.com
Village Hall	Available to hire for parties, wedding breakfasts, clubs or meetings - kjclapton@gmail.com
Playing Field & Allotment Charity (PFAC)	pfacrustees@gmail.com
Post Office	In the Village Hall. Tuesday 1.30 – 3.30
Parish Council	Chairman: Simon Collyer-Bristow scb@crfc.co.uk Clerk: Heather Harris poultonclerk@gmail.com
District Councillor	Lisa Spivey: lisaspivey4@gmail.com
Poulton Action Group (solar farm)	poultonactiongroup@gmail.com .
Fix My Street	Report issues within Poulton: potholes, fly tipping, etc. www.fixmystreet.com
Refuse Collections	Food bin weekly Friday 7am. All other bins & bags on alternate Fridays.
Gloucestershire Police	The Forum, Cirencester GL7 2QY Mon-Sat 8am-8pm www.gloucestershire.police.uk
Poulton Sports Club	David Knight: knightd@hotmail.co.uk
Poulton Football Club	www.poultonfootballclub.co.uk
Poulton Cricket Club	Club Secretary: Will Bathurst w.m.bathurst@gmail.com www.poultoncricketclub.co.uk/
Heart & Soul Yoga Class	Becky Barry
Ampney Crucis WI	Anne Bridges 652471
Poulton One and Nines	Films in the village hall every 1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of the month. Contact poultononeandnines@gmail.com
Books Bikkies & Beverages	Village get-together 1 st Saturday of each month, 10.30 – 12.30 Poulton Village Hall Judith – 01285 851230
Ampney Crucis Mothers Union	Rosemary Franklin 01285 654282
Ampney Crucis Playgroup	Meet Tuesdays during term-time 9.30 – 11.00 Ampney Crucis Village Hall. £2 per family. Ella Milligan – daniellaceliarmorris@yahoo.co.uk – 07815502463 or Sofia Richie – sofia.kluge@hotmail.com – 07540198151
The Falcon Inn	www.falconinnpoulton.co.uk email: bookings@falconinnpoulton.co.uk 01285 850878
Ampney Crucis C of E Primary School	Head Teacher Tana Wood – 01285 851440 www.ampneycrucis.glous.sch.uk

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