



Ducktown Echo



Summer 2020

The Aylburton Community Newsletter

Issue 40

Aylburton Parish Council

Chair: Cllr Stephanie Lord

Parish Clerk: Meg Humphries 07850 476235 aylburtonclerk@outlook.com www.aylburton.net



aylburtonpc

THANK YOU

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone in the parish for 'pulling together' over recent months. It has been really heartening how people have looked out for each other, checked on neighbours and considered whether anyone needs help.

Of course, the Coronavirus crisis is not over. There are still all kinds of limits to our activities and social distancing rules still need to be maintained. But we are gradually coming out of lockdown and hopefully enjoying a return to some normal freedoms and social connections.

If we, as a parish, ever need to return to a stricter lockdown we have a network of fantastic volunteers in place to be able to respond and manage any required isolation.

The NHS Test and Trace system might mean that individuals and households need to isolate for 14 days. Those who need to do this will again need support. Please ask for it if you need it.

For support during the Coronavirus crisis contact either:

Gloucestershire's Community Help Hub: 01452 583519

Or call Steph Lord: 01594 845561

or Mark Topping: 01594 840086

who can connect you with a parish volunteer.

Community Speedwatch needs volunteers!

Our Community Speedwatch group will monitor the speed of traffic through the village and report offenders to the police.

Several people have completed the initial online course and are waiting for police training in how to properly conduct speed monitoring events.

The more fully trained volunteers we have, the more often we can run speed checks, and the more effectively we will reduce the speed of traffic through the village.

If you are interested please contact our parish council clerk, Meg Humphries.

This is one of a number of measures we are working on to reduce traffic speed in the village and make it safer.

Road Safety Group

Thanks to the technological prowess of our Parish Clerk, and despite initial trepidation among a few, useful discussions and decisions regarding parish business took place (sometimes to the sound of kettles and little family voices) using Zoom.

The main points of interest from recent meetings were:
COVID-19 volunteers: An up-to-date list is being maintained and the system is working very well indeed. Expressions of thanks were given to the stalwart individuals who have come forward to help during this emergency.

Speeding: Concerns had been expressed regarding the increase in the speed of vehicles through the village during lockdown. The police were contacted by the Clerk and they carried out a speed check in June, with regular checks to follow. The Road Safety Group had four new recruits in June and some group members have now received their initial Community Speedwatch training and are keen to start speed checks.

Road Safety: The council intends to install a new flashing speed sign probably at the entry side from Chepstow. Other improvements are planned.

Flooding: Cllr Harrison drafted a letter to go to Lydney Park Estate suggesting a meeting to discuss flooding issues particularly the events of 16th February this year. The letter has now been sent.

Wildflower verges: Cllr Topping has this in hand and signage has been put in place to explain this one-year trial project. The majority of feedback so far has been positive. See page 2.

Parish Flower Tubs: This was initially to be carried out by Lydney Town Council, but due to pressure because of COVID-19 this was done by parishioner Martin Rice, his family and his coworker.

Community Plan Review: The plan, originally formed in 2009, is being reviewed with regard to any outstanding issues.

Stockwell Lane: Several issues here regarding potholes, poor drainage, mud/debris and blocked gullies. A site visit was undertaken by Glos. Highways and a promise has been made to rectify these issues. The potholes have since been filled.

Notice Boards: Three of the four have now been refurbished with the fourth in progress.

Aylburton's Trial Wildflower Vergé

To some people, Aylburton's Trial Wildflower Vergé looks like a lot of long grass and weeds. And I know what you mean! It's true – it's not a riot of colour and rare orchids. But it is extraordinary what is growing there after being allowed to grow for a few months more than usual. (And don't worry – it will be cut in August!)

The wildflower vergé is the one on the left as you leave the village heading for Taurus (where the young cherry trees are). If you get the chance please take a closer look.

I went along with my wife and daughter to see what there was. I expected a lot of grass (and there is!) and maybe some daisies and buttercups, but we were amazed at the number and variety of wildflowers we discovered.

There's creeping buttercup and daisy, but there's also smooth hawkbeard, meadow buttercup, bulbous buttercup, yarrow, common mallow, teasel, white clover, cut-leaved cranesbill, bristly ox tongue, wall lettuce, hogweed, field speedwell, common chickweed, dandelion, self-heal, hypericum, dark mullein, dove's foot cranesbill, mugwort, redleg, spear thistle, cow parsley, ground ivy, cat's ear and a lot more!



Red Mullein



Field Bindweed

Steph Lord

And as we looked, we were thrilled to hear and see grasshoppers, bees, butterflies and other insects throughout the vergé. We were struck by how alive it is; how even just one season of mowing the vergé later than usual can be so beneficial for wildflowers and wildlife.

Martin Rice who cuts the vergés in Aylburton for the Parish Council does a great job mowing around the wildflower vergé, keeping it tidy and showing that it hasn't been forgotten; it is being tended and deliberately allowed to grow for longer before it gets its first cut.

In August, when most of the wildflowers will have shed their seeds, the vergé will be mown, and the cuttings removed. It will look more like other vergés in the village again. Next year, because of the seeds from this year's

flowers, and because we will be removing the grass cuttings, it is hoped there will be less grass growing on the vergé, and more wildflowers.

So if you get the chance please take the time to take a closer look. To create the best conditions for more wildflowers to grow next year the grass cuttings need to be raked every time.

Volunteer rakers are needed (ideally with their own rakes) – please contact Mark Topping.

UPDATE: The Principal Ecologist for Gloucestershire County Council has surveyed the vergé and identified 46 different varieties of wildflowers and grasses. He says if the vergé is managed as we intend there should be less grass next year and more wildflowers and wildflower varieties.

In the UK we have lost more than 90% of our wildflower meadows since 1930. In recent years there has been a drastic loss of pollinators and flying insects in general, highlighted by the 2019 State of Nature report. The Forest of Dean District Council recently declared a Biodiversity Emergency, and the UK Government has made it a duty for every local authority in the country, including parish councils, to conserve biodiversity.

The Parish Council would appreciate receiving any feedback you have about the wildflower vergé. Please email the clerk.



Saskia Topping

Cllr Mark Topping



Saskia Topping

The Rakers

L to R: Cllr Mark Topping, Cllr Andrew Blamey, Cllr John Harrison, Cllr Stephanie Lord

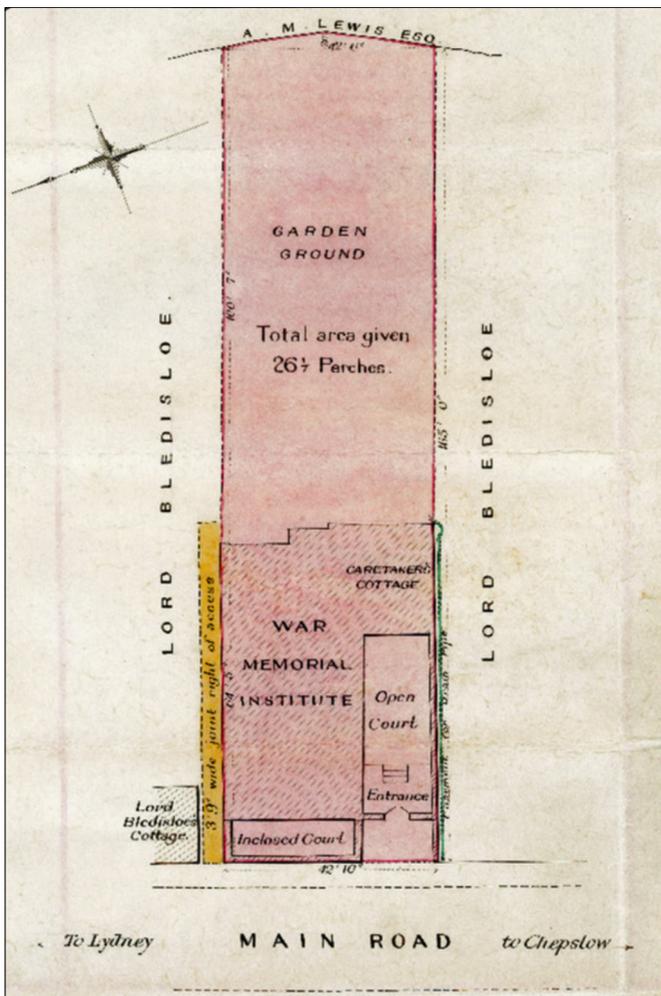
Aylburton Memorial Institute

For almost a century the Memorial Hall has been a vital centre for village activities. It was created as a result of charitable gifts from the community to honour the Fallen of the Great War. The site and buildings were paid for by public subscription and a generous donation by Charles Bathurst, 1st Viscount Bledisloe.

With the careful management by the Aylburton Village Club and strong support from residents, it has been developed over the years. In addition to generous gifts, long periods of service have been given to the Hall by many people. It owes relatively little to local or central government help although some grants have been received. This robust independence is part of the tradition of the village.



Foundation Stone below the main window



Site plan for the Memorial Institute

Timeline

1918

At the invitation of Lord Bledisloe a meeting was held in November at Lydney Park to discuss the form of a memorial to the fallen of the Great War. Richard Thomas & Co. offered £1,500, and Lord Bledisloe £1,000, to the Joint Lydney and Aylburton Memorial Scheme Fund.

1919

At the Aylburton Parish Meeting, it was resolved to establish an institute with caretaker's cottage attached as a permanent war memorial for Aylburton.

Lord Bledisloe offered a free site for the institute. A committee was formed to carry out the scheme. In the autumn, a house-to-house appeal for funds raised £212.

1920

In January, Aylburton decided to be independent of the Joint Scheme. A 'Thank-offering Week' raised over £61. The committee affiliated to the Village Clubs Association in April and in June building was commenced. On July 10th 1920, the Foundation Stone was laid by Lady Bledisloe.

Aylburton War Memorial.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE.

The inhabitants of Aylburton having decided that their war memorial should consist of village institute, set about the task of raising £2,000. Towards this Lydney Tinsplate Company gave £500 whilst Lord Bledisloe subscribes £300 and site. The foundation stone was laid on Saturday afternoon.

Lady Bledisloe performing the ceremony, after which Mr. W. E. English chairman of the Parish Council, in the name of the Building Committee, asked her ladyship to accept as a memento of the occasion the silver trowel and the mallet she had used. Her Ladyship accepted the gift as well as a present of a beautiful bouquet flowers.

Mr. Emery, the hon. secretary, stated that to date they had collected just under £1,500 and wanted to open the institute free of debt.

Lord Bledisloe responded to a vote of thanks to Lady Bledisloe.

The Rev. H. P. Parker and Mr. V. H. Lamb took shares in the religious service. Mixed choirs sang hymns, and after the National Anthem had been sung "Last Post" was sounded.

Lord Bledisloe announced his pleasure subscribing a further £100.

GLOUCESTER JOURNAL, SATURDAY, JULY 17, 1920.

© TRINITY MIRROR

Aylburton Methodist Church

Minister: Rev Michelle Ireland 01594 833247 www.aylburtonmethodistchurch.co.uk
Church Treasurer: Elizabeth Day 01594 840123
Community Room booking: Amy Reece 01594 369383 thecommunityroom-amc@outlook.com



Letter from Rev. Michelle Ireland

The last three months have both dragged on and sped by. They have been punctuated with challenges, sadness and great blessings. Through this time we have wept and we have laughed. We have been both giver and receiver of help and support. Community has taken on a different meaning, as neighbours have chatted and spent time with one another.

Businesses have suffered – and as I write, they are beginning to find their feet again, but it will be very much like a child learning to walk, steps will be small and hesitant. This will be similar for our organisations and our churches.

At Aylburton Methodist Church we are putting in place all the safeguards that we can, so that when the government announce that churches may re-open for worship, we will be able to consider doing so. Our aim is that by the end of July we will be worshipping together on a Sunday morning, while abiding by the rules that will be in place. Again, we will take small steps and will review the use of the community room at a later date.

Although we have not met physically, we have kept in touch and worshipped in a variety of ways in our own homes. We have also been encouraging one another with daily 'Thoughts for the Day'; we have been pleased to receive such a variety and they have certainly inspired us. You may have noticed the chapel door decorated with these thoughts. We hope that you have also enjoyed reading them, and we thank Liz and Chris Day for placing them there each day.



For now as we wait, we realise how much we know at this time and how much we do not know, we recall this beautiful verse:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” Proverbs 3. 5-6
God Bless

Taurus Crafts

01594 844841 enquire@tauruscrafts.co.uk www.tauruscrafts.co.uk

Taurus Crafts is part of
The Camphill Village Trust Ltd

Taurus Crafts is now open and welcomes back our valued local visitors.

We hope that everyone has been OK and the lockdown hasn't been too difficult. We have all had to make such large changes to our lives but are relieved to see some elements of normal lifestyles returning.

At time of press we have our garden café open for takeaways, serving drinks and ice creams, and we hope to add to this offer as soon as the government advice changes. Our shops are open selling a range of fair trade summer clothes, interesting and unique gifts and cards, and eco-products.

Our Independent Craft and Artisan business are starting to reopen but their opening times may vary, please contact in advance to plan your visit.

Please be assured we are adhering to government guidance and have safety measures in place to minimise risk, including social distancing, card payments only, increased cleaning rota, staff protective equipment.

Please keep an eye on our website and social media, or give us a ring to find out the latest information.

Thank you very much for all your support during lockdown.



'We are going to play to our strengths and use all our outdoor areas including covered seating areas for our customers rather than serving in the barn buildings' - says centre manager Wendy Firkin. She explains this will be all at safe distances to minimise risk, with table service and card payments only. The seasonal menu on offer will include lite-bites, snacks, ice creams, cakes and slices and of course hot and cold drinks.'

Wendy Firkin - Centre Manager Taurus Crafts

Aylburton WI

Secretary: Sandra Rickards 01594 841041

During the past weeks we have all managed to stay in touch, with many members using FaceTime, Zoom and other technology available. Thankfully all members are well and upbeat. The monthly newsletter, which is enjoyed by all, has been informative and amusing.

Denise Voyce had an idea to write a book, which has proved to be quite popular, as volunteers have come forward to put pen to paper. To date there are seven completed chapters with more on the way. Each writer reads the previous chapters and continues with their own ideas. We'll have to see if it ever becomes a best seller!

Another member Margaret Aldus has recently joined the Knit and Natter group at the Methodist Church and with the others she has knitted teddy bears, bags and cardigans. They support a former Minister and his wife (Margaret and Colin Gardner) in the work they do for the Bethel Nursery School in Banjul, The Gambia.

Gloucester Hospital will also be receiving her knitted baby hats for the maternity wards and cannula sleeves for premature babies, who are undergoing IV treatment. We are very proud of the all the effort she puts towards those who need support.

After being postponed at Easter the *yarn bombing* event has finally been completed. The members were very busy knitting flowers, pompoms and rainbows during the lockdown. Huge thanks to all the ladies who donated items to make this such a success and, of course, all the help received to make it look amazing.

We do hope while you are passing by, walking or driving, it brings a little smile to your face. We truly felt it was the right time to lift spirits and spread a some joy and happiness.

We are now waiting for the all clear to get back to meetings and a good chat.



Vinny O'Donnell

Peace Promise and a Bridge to the Future

The Cross has been yarn bombed

L to R: Iris Gregory, Carol Brain, Sandra Rickards, Jane Tovey and Denise Goode



Sandra Rickards



Chris Ridley

COVID-19 UPDATE

Parish Council

Parishioners can get in touch with us at any time via email or phone to raise any concerns, questions or comments. Council meetings are held at 7pm on the second Tuesday of each month except in January and August. They now take place remotely with as much information as possible available online.



Meeting online using Zoom
Top L to R: Cllr Stephanie Lord (Chair), Meg Humphries (Clerk), Cllr Colin Newman
Bottom: Cllr John Harrison, Cllr Mark Topping

You can view all available meeting documents as soon as they are finalised on our Agenda and Minutes pages at www.aylburton.net. Future meetings will be on

Tuesday 14th July 2020

Tuesday 8th September 2020

Tuesday 13th October 2020

The best way to stay updated day-to-day on council news is to follow www.facebook.com/aylburtonpc for the latest news on the council and parish-level activity during the pandemic.

Current community helpers for the challenges presented by the COVID-19 outbreak are:

Mark Topping: mark.topping@fdean.gov.uk 01594 840086

Stephanie Lord: steph@molyneuxassociates.com 01594 845561

and parishioners can also get support from Mary Court on 01594 843651

St. Mary's Church

Parish Priest

Rev David Gardiner 01594 730484 admin@lydneyparish.org.uk

Churchwardens

Aylburton – Mary Court 01594 843651

Aylburton Common Mission Church – Jane Hale 01594 843917,

Alvington – Sue Rickards 01594 529581, Woolaston – Alan Robinson 01594 529551

Please contact any of the above named if you need help or support during the coming months

Weddings and funerals can be arranged with Rev David

Whilst normal services are not being held, Churches in the Parish are open as follows for quiet prayer and reflection:

St. Andrew's Alvington – Fridays 10am to 12noon

St. Andrew's Woolaston – Mondays 2pm to 4pm

Rev David is streaming services on weekdays, except Fridays, at 9am, 5:30pm and 9pm

www.facebook.com/parishoflydney Details of the daily services are on the Church of England web pages

Sunday Services are being held on Zoom at 10:30am – please contact Mary Court for the link if you wish to participate

Methodist Church

The church is now closed for worship and all other activities during this extremely challenging time. Rev Michelle produces *Thoughts for the Day* from members and these are delivered by email or by hand.

A live service is streamed from Wesley's Chapel in London on Wednesday 12:45pm, Thursday 12:45pm and Sunday at 9:45am and 11am.

Six of the Church members have formed a phone support group and we have made sure that our Chapel members (and many others too) have been phoned and chatted to throughout these past weeks. It's been a very good way of communicating, especially for those who live alone. Jane 01594 843883 and Liz 01594 840123 are always available on the phone if any of you feel like a chat and catch up.

Ducktown Echo

Editor: Virginia Ridley 01594 841294 ducktownecho@gmail.com

Published by the Aylburton Parish Council

Copy deadline for the Autumn edition is Sunday 16th September 2020

Please keep sending in items of interest or photos both old and new.

In this difficult time it is not possible to print and circulate the latest edition of The Ducktown Echo so we must rely on the Parish Council's Facebook page www.facebook.com/aylburtonpc to keep you up-to-date with what has been going on in Aylburton.

SOME USEFUL NUMBERS

District Councillor

Cllr Mark Topping

01594 840086

mark.topping@fdean.gov.uk

Glos. County Councillor

Cllr Alan Preest:

01594 564668

alan.preest@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

Mark Harper

01594 823482

mark.harper.mp@parliament.uk

Glos County Council

01452 425000

FOD District Council

Planning, waste, recycling, nuisance, licences, street wardens, dog warden

01594 810000

Local Police Team

01452 753800

Non-Emergency 101

GCC Highways

08000 514514

Neighbourhood Watch

FoD Chrissie Parkes

01452 753784

Snow Warden

Colin Newman

01594 842532

Community Wellbeing Agent

(formerly Village Agent)

Richard Skinner

01594 812447 or 812399

07927 051328

richard.skinner@fdean.gov.uk

Lydney Doctors

Severnbanks Surgery

01594 845715

The Lydney Practice

01594 842167

Hospitals

Lydney

0300 4218722

The Dilke

0300 421 8640

Gloucestershire Royal

0300 4222222

Pharmacists

Lloyds Lydney

01594 842847

Lydney Co-op

01594 843443

NHS Dentists

0300 330 1348

All Emergency Services

Western Power (enquiries)

0800 404090

Western Power (power cuts)

105

Severn Trent Water

0800 783 4444

Dial-A-Ride

01594 843809

Cinemas

Coleford - Studio

01594 833331

Cinderford - The Palace

1594 822555

Leisure Centre, Lydney

01594 842383

Libraries

Lydney 01594 842769

Chepstow 01291 635730

NHS Direct

111

National Rail Enquiries

03457 484950

Travel Line

08712 002233

Airports

Bristol 0871 3344444

Cardiff 01446 711111

Gatwick 0344 8920322

Heathrow 08443 351801

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Aylburton