



THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

November 2025

Issue 484



SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2025

10:AM TO 2:00PM

HEYFORD VILLAGE HALL



CRAFT STALLS – including Christmas Cards
& decorations



HANDMADE GIFTS – Jewellery, Bags & much more

3D PRINTING – Including demonstration

CAKE STALL



And why not enjoy a delicious
BACON ROLL, with a **TEA or COFFEE**
Provided by Heyford W.I.



The Prattler

The Prattler is run by a voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Vicki Hamblin, Mary Rice, Jez Wilson and Mick Watts. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch with us by email or leave a message in Heyford Meats. Articles can also be dropped through the door at Sunrise Cottage, 15 The Green.

The Newspaper is supported by donations from the Parish Council, the Parish Church, the Baptist Church, Heyford W.I., Heyford Singers, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall and Heyford Picturedrome as well as the advertisers.

Thanks are also due to the volunteers who distribute it every month. It is all very much appreciated.

If you would like to get involved, please email:

heyford_prattler@yahoo.co.uk

You would be most welcome.

Sue (Prattler Ed)


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The October 2025 meeting took place on the 6th of October at the Baptist Church Rooms.

WNC Road Sweeping Schedule

WNC have attached a copy of the current schedule that we are working on up to the end of the calendar year. This schedule is subject to change at any time to meet service needs. It is Nether Heyford's turn between Nov 17th and 21st. If you park your vehicle on a section of road that needs clearing please bear these dates in mind.

West Northants Councillor report

Cllr PB referred to the closure of the road to Upper Heyford between Oct 10th – 22nd. Traffic lights to be put in. Some signage and road markings have been added to the "road to Nowhere" on the A4500 near Harpole. He then referred to the introduction of booking at the tips in the area. This is to ease the flow. PB was unsure about change of use at Heyford Hills farm, where a café relocating from the Depot at Weedon intended to open.

Concerns were expressed about the number of lorries going up Furnace Lane attempting to access a new distribution depot at the former Wickes site. PB would investigate. AW would go to their office.

Public Participation

A resident complained about the condition of a front garden facing the green. AW stated that the PC has no powers regarding residents' gardens. He then complained that the dog waste bin on the Weedon Road, was on the ground and that the bins were often overfilled. He complained that a gate at the allotments was faulty. He then complained that there were problems with vehicles passing each other on the Pound when there were events at the Village Hall. It was felt that this was only an occasional issue, and not one that Council had any powers over.

It was Resolved to accept the External Audit. Resolved. To accept the findings of the External Auditors. There were no recommendations, but a weakness was identified in that the review of the Asset Register had not been minuted.

WNC Parish Conference – to choose delegates. 23rd October

Resolved. Chair and Clerk to attend, with clerk to be paid appropriate overtime. KSM to attend if there was a place.

Gayton Road bridge

Bugbrooke PC had asked for assistance in lobbying WNC regarding the closed road between Bugbrooke and Gayton. Clerk to write to Highways pointing out the inconvenience of the detours this closure causes.

Church Clock

Resolved. To pay half of the cost of the clock repairs. Council routinely pays for the maintenance of the church clock, as it has the power to do so, and it is felt to be in the interests of residents regardless of which religion, if any, that they follow. This is not to be seen as a precedent.

Precept for 26/27

Clerk distributed copies of a document showing expenditure for the year so far set against the budget. This showed that expenditure was generally on track and within the limits set.

Flooding Issues

Disaster Relief Plan/Emergency Plan was progressing. Sand and bags had been donated by Paul Isgar and Beck Aggregates of Weedon. Council thanked them and all those involved in the filling of the bags. There was discussion about how items should be purchased, and a budget was awaited.

NCALC Conference report

Clerk reported that this had been an useful networking and information gathering event. The keynote lecture had been about the move towards ever bigger council units taking them further away from the people, and making parish and town councils even more important, with the theme that "Bigger isn't necessarily better". Both WNC and NNC Council leaders admitted that their planning departments were "experiencing difficulties".

Community Health Champions

KSM reported that she had completed the MECC "Making every conversation count" course. She will receive and cascade information from the county health services and is already posting on Facebook.

Communications

KSM felt that communications should be formalised so that funding opportunities were not missed. A lengthy discussion ensued as to how best to disseminate the information.

Planning - Gravel

AW reported that he was waiting to hear about the initiation of a liaison group and recommended applying for funding from the Mick George Community Fund.

Parish Council meetings in 2025 will normally be on the first Monday of each month, (unless a Bank Holiday) and would start at 19.30.

Reporting Canal Issues can be done by phoning **0303 040 4040** during normal office hours.

Reporting Highway and Footpath Issues. The Clerk will report issues that Council is made aware of, but Council would encourage residents to use the Fixmystreet service to report issues themselves as there will then be no time lag; and first-hand reports are almost always better than 2nd or 3rd hand reports. The service can be found here

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

It is easy to use; you can have your own account and can check up on any issues you have reported.

Streetlights within the village can be reported to the Clerk, who will report them to the maintenance company. **Please do not report to Balfour Beatty** as they deal only with major Highway lights – i.e., motorway, A5 and A45.

Roadworks locally & nationally can be seen on this site

<http://streetworks.org.uk/live-traffic-works-map/>

Food Bank

Don't go hungry – if you are in need of help, please contact Towcester Food Bank 07724 832043 (24 hours). www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk Leave a message and they will phone you back. They can issue vouchers for food as well as a delivery or collection service.

Alternatively if you wish to help, please leave donations for the food bank in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street or the One Stop Shop where they are delivered to the bank once a week. Thank you.

Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.	
Linda Hall linda.hall.netherheyford@outlook.com	Chair, Website, Finance
Mrs L. Dilkes. 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JF e-mail thedilkesfamily@outlook.com 07967 753216	Finance, Youth Club
Mrs L. Eales – 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 e-mail lyndaeales@aol.com	Allotments, Youth Club
Louise Isgar. louiseisgar@gmail.com	Village Hall Rep.
D. Musson. 16 Rolfe Crescent, Nether Heyford NN7 3NG Tel: 01327 344461 davemusson073@gmail.com	Footpaths. Tree Warden
Ian Parris, 1 Winston Close, NN7 3JX 07909 514916 ianparris@ianparris.com	Councillor
Karen Rivett. 12 Watery Lane, Nether Heyford. NN7 3LN yartahk@gmail.com 07711 312069	Councillor. Finance.
A. Williams 26 Church St, Nether Heyford, NN7 3LH anthony.k.williams@talk21.com	Vice Chair, Chair of Planning, Finance, Council rep to School Trustees
K. Sanders-Moody. 07702 701862	Councillor
C. Leggett chriseurolog@outlook.com	Councillor
J. Leggett justineeurolog@outlook.com	Play Area rep.
Councillor Phil Bignell - West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD. 07969 919779 phil.bignell@westnorthants.gov.uk	Strategic Planning Committee (Chair)
Councillor Debra King. West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD.	

Clerk. Guy Ravine, Tel:07935 931787.

E-mail: netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com

Next Meetings: Monday Nov. 3rd & Dec. 1st at the Baptist Church rooms.



Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

Services for November 2025

Sunday 2 nd	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	11:00 am	United First Sunday at Flore Church
	11:15 am	Harvest Celebration at Brockhall Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer at Heyford Church
Sunday 9 th	10:15 am	Service for Remembrance Sunday at Heyford Church
	10:45 am	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Heyford
	10:55 am	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Church Stowe
	2:15 pm	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Flore
	2:30 pm	Remembrance Sunday Service in the Millennium Hall
Sunday 16 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Heyford Church
	10:00 am	Partnership Service at Flore Chapel
	3:00 pm	Thanksgiving for a Life Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Holy Communion at Upper Stowe
Sunday 23 rd	10:00 am	Holy Communion and Gift Service at Flore Church
	10:00 am	Morning Worship at Flore Chapel
	11:15 am	Gift Service at Upper Stowe
	4:00 pm	Café Church and Gift Service at Heyford Church
Sunday 30 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Heyford Church
	10:00 am	Morning Worship at Flore Chapel
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer at Church Stowe

Midweek Services:

Thursday	10:00am	Holy Communion at Flore Church
	2:30pm – 3:30pm	Flore Church open for private prayer
Friday	9:00am.	Morning Prayer via Zoom
		Please contact the Rector for an invitation

Dear Friends,

[God] will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.

They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore...

(Micah 4:3)

Last month, I led a service of commemoration at Brockhall church, where we unveiled a plaque remembering those people from twelve different nations who trained with the Special Operations Executive (SOE) at Brockhall during the Second World War. The service was attended by representatives from the embassies of Thailand, France and the USA, whose nationals were among the SOE trainees over 80 years ago.

That commemoration seems especially appropriate this year, as we mark eighty years since the end of the war in Europe and the Far East, recognising that the sometimes-fragile peace we enjoy across Western Europe today is founded on the courage and sacrifice of many, many people. Among them, are those people we honoured at Brockhall last month, many of them from the occupied territories of Europe and the Far East including Denmark, the Netherlands, Thailand, Czechoslovakia, France, Austria, Norway and Hungary. Men and women who trained at Brockhall in preparation for dangerous missions behind enemy lines as saboteurs and spies, radio operators, raiders and resistance fighters.

Eighty years ago, their courage, commitment and sacrifice helped bring victory against the Axis powers. Joy and celebration burst out across the country to mark the end of the war, first in Europe and then in the Far East. But even then, as now, the kind of lasting peace foreseen by the prophet Micah (above) was a long way off, a peace that is more than the absence of war, a peace that is about wholeness and wellbeing and justice for all. Over the last eighty years, great things have been achieved through dialogue, through shared effort, through international co-operation, and the efforts of former enemies to seek reconciliation and common purpose. Yet the hard-won peace for which the Brockhall trainees strived seems more fragile than it has since the end of the Cold War. In the aftermath of the recent global pandemic, war again blights the continent of Europe and the wider world, the menace of tyranny, and the growth of right-wing sentiment all create new challenges to peace.

In the face of such challenges, I hope that we will be inspired by the incredible bravery of the Brockhall volunteers, and I pray that Micah's vision will spur us on in our efforts to secure a lasting peace and a kinder, simpler world - in our homes and communities, in our nation and beyond.

With every blessing,

Rev Stephen (Tel 01327 344436)



Nether Heyford Baptist Church

November 2nd	10:30	Morning service led by John Perkins
November 9 th	10:30	Morning service led by Pastor Lee
	04:00	Songs of Praise (with tea and cakes) led by Martin Buckby
November 16 th	10:30	Service with pre-recorded Message from Pastor Lee.
November 23 rd	10:30	Morning service led by Clive Leakey
November 30 th	10:30	Morning service led by Tony Brown and will include communion

Coffee now served every week after the service

Events

Saturday November 8th 10am to 12md Coffee Morning

In aid of The Reach for Health Centre in Daventry

Monday November 10th 11am -1pm "Winter warmers"

Come and join us for free soup and a roll.

Wednesday November 19th 10 -11am Prayer and bible study.

Friday November 28th 10-12md Book sale and coffee.

As we approach Remembrance Sunday, we gather to honour the courage and sacrifice of those who gave their lives in service to others. It is a solemn moment for our village to pause, reflect, and give thanks.

In Scripture, we are reminded: "*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends*" (John 15:13). These words echo through generations, reminding us of the cost of peace and the depth of love shown in selfless service. Our Remembrance Service will be held at NHBC on Sunday 9th November, and I warmly invite everyone in our community, whether you've attended before or are simply curious, to join us. It's a time for quiet reflection, shared memory, and hopeful prayer.

Whether you come to remember a loved one, to give thanks, or simply to stand in solidarity, you will be most welcome.

With every blessing,

Pastor Lee

Nether Heyford Parish Church

invites you to join it in the church for a

Christmas Afternoon Sing-Along

2pm-4pm, Saturday 6th December 2025

welcoming singer

Kyle Newman

Listen and sing to the best Christmas hits

Christmas refreshments, games stall, raffle and lucky dip

Entry is free, but donations welcome



touching hearts, changing lives

New Venue - The Baptist Church rooms

A warm welcome awaits you from 7.00 o'clock. We'll start group at 7.30. Come along and experience 'operation joy'.

You'll find real support and real results through eating real food. You need never be hungry with Slimming World.

If you would like more information, please give me a call text on 07703 386941

Vera

Upper Heyford Parish Meeting

Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7:30pm

Hipwells (along from Totebox), Upper Heyford

Agenda to include; Planning Applications, AOB, next meeting

All Upper Heyford Residents welcome

Items for AOB please email me Mrs Sian Slater (Chair) to: UHparish@gmail.com or drop me a note through the door.

Mrs Sian Slater
UHPM Chair



Heyford Scouts Christmas Card Delivery Service

Heyford Scouts are pleased to announce that we will be again running our Christmas Card delivery service this year. Donations are still 20p per card, for collection and delivery in Heyford. We will do a single house to house collection, which will be on the evening of Monday 1st December.

We also plan to have postboxes available at Heyford Meats and One Stop Shop. Further details will also be in the December Prattler.

The Scouts, Cubs and Beavers groups will again be attending Remembrance Sunday parade and service this year. There will also be two Scouts teams entering the District Star Trek competition this year, aiming to go one better than last year's excellent second place!

We currently have some space for boys or girls in our Beaver and Cub groups. Age groups are Beavers 6-8, and Cubs 8-10½, both groups meet on Tuesday evenings. For more info message the Heyford Scout Group Facebook page, speak to one of the Leaders or ring 07919 447117

Astronomy on the Green

This year has been a poor year for amateur astrophotographers. A combination of clouds and during the heatwave's high altitude cloud. The second type of cloud is more frustrating as the sky may appear clear to the eye, but after setting up your telescope it's obvious that you won't be able to image anything. For this reason, I look at the sky through binoculars to see if there is any haze. However, we set up telescopes in the daylight (for both ease and safety [I had a black eye for a while by altering my setup in the dark]).

Still, I'm hopeful of getting going again now that the darker, colder nights are with us. Some of the best imaging is done in the early hours, as astronomical darkness is reached around two hours after sunset. Even then, a drop in temperature is very handy as it takes moisture out of the atmosphere. Yep, we want to be in the cold and dark until we have our system set up and imaging (normally for several hours; at that point, a warm room and coffee are essential).

Imaging for that long a period needs specialist mounts for our telescopes. If you use a standard 'camera' type of tripod, which moves only up/down and left/right, you would limit your work. Because of the rotation of the Earth, stars sweep across the sky in a delicate arc. The Earth rotates at a speed of around 646 mph at our latitude. In 15 to 30 seconds, the star trails will be obvious. This also means that the subject will rotate slowly as it crosses the sky from east to west.

In the early days of astronomy, these adjustments had to be made by hand, and this limited the exposure time for which images were captured. Computerised mounts now automate the process and take care of crossing the meridian. The meridian is an imaginary line at 90 degrees where east becomes west. If this is not dealt with, the telescope will eventually hit the mount. Again, this was done manually, but now the software counts down to where it crosses the line and automatically reverses the position of the telescope. Most of us will go outside to ensure this completes without a hitch, and that imaging has restarted.

With this level of automation, we can easily expose for 90 seconds, or, with a good polar alignment, we can go up to 5 minutes. When imaging a nebula or galaxy, we will take 200 to 300 images to enhance the image. We then 'stack' all the images to reveal the composite result. Then, like all photographers, we play with the image in software until it is finally complete. Some objects are so distant and dim that we run captures for several consecutive nights to get the best data we can.

So, the question is – are we nerds?

Yes, to a man – we are.

Clear skies.

Tony Boutle



Heyford Picturedrome

NEXT FILM

THE DIG

Drama/history based on a true story

**Cast includes Ralph Fiennes, Carey Mulligan
and Lily James**

NETHER HEYFORD VILLAGE HALL

THURSDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2025

7.00pm for 7.30pm

ADMISSION: £6.00

**In the late 1930s wealthy landowner Edith Pretty hires
amateur archaeologist Basil Brown to investigate the
mounds on her property in England.**

What do they find?

TEA, COFFEE, BAR



Nether Heyford Village Hall

Registered Charity, No. 304256

www.netherheyfordvillagehall.org nhvhevents@gmail.com

View from the Chair

At our last meeting we had a very interesting and informative chat with our flood warden Steve Corcoran about the continued work to site a storage shed at the hall to house essential supplies for the village in the event of flood. His working parties have been filling sand bags and preparing the area for the impending shed. The work he is doing will help to keep people and property in the village safe in the event of flood. We are also looking at making the hall available for anyone impacted by a flood event as a temporary safe haven.

There are many planned events at the village hall in the run up to Christmas, the first of which is the Heyford Feast. The feast is a not for profit community event which gives parishioner the opportunity to get together before winter sets in and have a delightful meal in good company.

If you haven't been in the hall for a while we are sporting a fresh coat of paint and new curtains and will be refreshing our Christmas decorations for these events. If you visit the hall take a look at the montage of this years fete and see if you can spot yourself. Many thanks to Tom Dodd for all his hard work putting this together. Please also keep an eye on our Facebook page where we will be highlighting up and coming events, not the least of which will be our pantomime between Christmas and New Year. Keep the date for your diary Sunday 28 December at 2pm. The Laugh out Loud theatre company will be presenting "Sinbad the Sailor". Tickets will be available to buy at the Craft Fayre in the hall on 22 November hosted by the Crafty Club, or directly from myself or through any of our trustees.

Finally, on a housekeeping note, please remember that our car park is for the convenience of hall users and whilst we are fairly relaxed about this, vehicles are parked at own risk and should not impact legitimate hall patrons. Also, our bins are trade waste and as such we have to pay for them. Recently they have been filled (and I mean rammed) with household items, boxes from new household items and packing. This is not the first time. It is expensive and inconvenient for the hall and less than community spirited. The hall Trustees would be very grateful if this did not happen again.

Carol Tuckley

Chair of the Trustees



INTRODUCING YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM



TO REPORT AN INCIDENT OR CRIME PLEASE USE THE 101 NON EMERGENCY NUMBER OR 999 IN AN EMERGENCY - do not contact the team directly.

All reports must go via the Northants Police Control Room for an incident log to be created.

PC Chris Partridge – Chris.Partridge@northants.police.uk

PCSO Emma Teagles – Emma.Teagles@northants.police.uk

If you have any events you would like us to attend or wish to discuss a particular issue, provide information or meet a member of the Neighbourhood Policing Team then please contact us via:
neighbourhoodteamsouthnorthants-towcester@northants.police.uk

Facebook: **'Daventry and South Northants Neighbourhood Policing Team'**

Emma Teagles C7155

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)

South Northants Neighbourhood Police Team

Telephone: 101 ext 343029/07866933412

Email: emma.teagles@northants.police.uk

Address: C/O Wootton Hall police headquarters



Heyford Bowls Club

We had a good turnout for the Mixed Pairs on Saturday 11th October resulting in The Benco Shield being won by Bob Bates and Jo King, runners-up were Val Smith & Geoff Groom in a gripping game. Our next Short Mat competition is Men vs Women on Saturday 15th November at 1 o'clock sharp, so come on girls, let's show 'em whose boss. No more competitions this year but we continue to meet every Wednesday at 2 o'clock and 7 o'clock to which you are all welcome.

The Outdoor section have put the green to bed for the winter, thanks to all the volunteers who worked so hard. When we don't have a social function we shall meet on a Friday evening at 6 o'clock for a roll-up on a mat in the clubhouse. It's only a bit of fun and we can have a drink and a chat. Pop in and check us out.

Social functions for your diary are Presentation Evening on Saturday 8th November with a Fish & Chip Supper; Christmas Quiz on Saturday 6th December and Christmas Party on Saturday 20th, both a lot of fun.

Shirley Collins
shirleybcollins@hotmail.com
01327 342287

U3A

Monthly meetings take place in Bugbrooke Sports & Community Centre, Camp Close, Bugbrooke NN7 3RW.

They are usually on the **third Monday afternoon of the month**, starting at 2 pm.

Monday 17th November – When terror came to Parliament by Fay Tennet

Fay was Deputy Director of Security Operations of the Houses of Parliament. She was on duty on the day of the Westminster terror attack when 6 people died and 29 were injured. She tells the story of the day and the aftermath of the day's terrible events.

Guests welcome at the monthly meetings – to learn more, visit our website

www.u3asites.org.uk/upper-nene

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Nether Heyford Village Hall



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In Nether Heyford

As I have got older, and am now retired, I find that the beginning of a new month takes me by surprise every time. You would think that by this stage of life that one would have got used to the way a year ticks by... but no, I feel a sense of surprise as the calendar turns.

There is also though, a warming sense of continuity as the seasons change. Seeing the fair on the green made me smile, and sparked memories of the children's eager anticipation for a Saturday night spending pocket money. What I don't remember though, is Halloween filling the whole of October. Another creeping influence from America, which is scary in itself.

At last month's WI meeting, we listened to Carl Whitmore telling us about the history of chocolate. Thank goodness that those intrepid peoples of South America persevered in collecting the fruits of the cacao tree and transforming it into a delicious concoction which travelled to Europe to become the luxury drink of the wealthy in the 18th century. Later, in the 19th century machines were developed to separate the bitter cocoa fat, to add milk and sugar and make a solid bar.

The Quaker families in England were looking to develop businesses to make chocolate available to all, and so companies like Cadbury's became established. Carl took us through the Cadbury history, the development of Bourneville village, and finally we watched adverts that we thought we had forgotten, but could all sing along to..." Everyone's a fruit and nut case ".

Our next meeting, on Thursday November 6th at 7.30 in the village hall, also focuses on food, but this time it is food made in Northamptonshire. Steve Reid from Friars Farm will tell us about "the life of chutney including cheese making and charcuterie making". They have won many awards for their jams, chutneys, marmalades, sauces, pickles, etc. The products are made from locally sourced produce and do not contain artificial ingredients. After his talk there will be an opportunity to try and buy. Dare I say it?... get some Christmas presents.

Just a reminder the WI will be providing refreshments at the Craft Fair on Saturday November 22nd.

Jane Wareing

01327 340875

netherheyfordwi1930@gmail.com

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Faye Brassett and
Darren Willers

”





THE BLISS CHARITY SCHOOL

RECEPTION PLACES
SEPTEMBER 2026



Welcome to our school!

We are a close-knit, welcoming village primary school, proud to offer a caring environment with high aspirations for every child. At The Bliss Charity School, each pupil is encouraged to grow with confidence, curiosity, and a love of learning.

We would be delighted to show you what makes our school so special – book a tour to meet our amazing children and dedicated staff team!

The Green, Nether Heyford,
Northamptonshire, NN7 3LE

Instagram: [theblisscharityschool](https://www.instagram.com/theblisscharityschool)

Please contact us for a tour of the school at a mutually convenient time. Your child is welcome to come with you.

Telephone: 01327 340758 email: office@bliss.northants.sch.uk

www.bliss.northants.sch.uk



Heyford Allotments

Community Flower Patch

In our last article we discussed ways in which to garden with a changing climate. It is something we are all going to have to learn to do. With this in mind, we are planning to reduce the amount of annual bedding we plant in the community flower patch, in favour of herbaceous perennials i.e. plants that die back every winter but regrow and flower again in the summer.

Perennials have the advantage of deeper roots and can therefore better withstand periods of drought. As they age, they form larger clumps that can be divided in the autumn or early spring and thereby provide free plants. This process of division is also an important feature of garden care as it reinvigorates plants and makes for better growth in subsequent years.

If you have any surplus perennial plants and would like to find a good home for them, we'd be only too happy to take them off your hands. Plants like Achillea (Yarrow), Alstromeria (Peruvian Lilly), Japanese Anemone, Aster (Michaelmas Daisy), Helenium (Sneezewort), Phlox, Penstemon and Rudbeckia would be perfect. If you can be of help, we would be immensely grateful. Either put the plants in the cut flower area in the coming weeks or drop me a line and we will come and collect them from you. It is interesting to note that more and more florists, keen to use more locally sourced plants, are turning to locally grown perennials.

Harvest Festival

The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul held their annual Harvest Festival on the allotments on Sunday 28th September. It was well attended and the weather was kind. We welcome these events. It is good to see the Community area being so well used.

Keeping the Allotment Safe

Considering the allotments in Heyford are an "open site" and, unlike other towns and villages, we do not resort to high fences or locked gates, we suffer from very few incidents of vandalism or theft. That is an indication of good community spirit and the pride shown by people in our village. That philosophy was one that the late (and much missed) Geoff Thorneycroft was so keen to promote when he set about developing the playing fields and encouraging more people to use that space. If we all keep an eye on places like the playing field and the allotments, they will be safer, more welcoming spaces for everyone.

A quiet word to the younger members of our community from parents and carers about this subject is very welcome and never goes amiss. If you or your children use our community areas all we ask is that you treat them with respect; clear up any litter, put chairs and tables back where you found them and remember that allotment plots are not for public use. Please don't trespass on them. If you like them that much, get in touch and rent an allotment of your own!

Hedge and Gate Maintenance

Hedge cutting will take place during the late autumn and early winter. Every effort will be made to avoid debris falling onto pathways that border the hedge. We also plan to repair the heavy gate by the Watery Lane entrance so that access to the allotments and playing field is easier.

Community Morning

We will be holding our next Community Morning on Saturday 1st November between 10.00.am and 12 noon. If any villagers would like to help with some basic maintenance tasks for a couple of hours, that would be really appreciated. We always seem to get so much done in such a short space of time. Help us keep the allotments looking good.

Give it a go

If you fancy rising to the challenge of “growing your own”, we currently have just one vacant plot on the allotment site (complete with several mature fruit bushes). It has been strimmed and covered with landscape fabric so taking on the plot should be less demanding. Slowly peeling back the covering and cultivating just what can be managed at any one time is a good way to come to terms with an allotment, especially if you are new to allotmenting.

Remember, new plots do become available throughout the year, so if you are interested later on, do get in touch with Lynda Eales from the Parish Council and she will appraise you of the current situation.

Contacts:

Mrs Lynda Eales, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford tel. 01327 341707 email: lyndaeales@aol.com

Mike and Jill Langrish, 28 Manor Park, Nether Heyford tel. 07879777802 email: langrish_heyford@hotmail.com

Mike Langrish

Heyford Picturedrome – Christmas Event

Tickets for our annual film and supper evening on 18th December will be on sale at our November meeting.

The film will be ‘The Thursday Murder Club’ starring Helen Mirren, Pierce Brosnan, Ben Kingsley and Celia Imrie.

For further information, please contact Alwyne on 01327 340803.

View from The Nature Reserve

Over the last 2 years, I have been experimenting with “rewilding” at home by letting our 2 front lawns grow without being mown over the summer months. After some evaluation I can now say that I have mixed feelings about the process. The plan that I followed was to begin with an early mow in March, with the cutter set at 75mm whilst removing all cuttings. Then not mowing again till September. By then, the grass should have stopped growing and most grassland wildlife ceased activity. However, by the end of the September of 2024 I found that Garden Grass Moths, (*Chrysoteuchia culmella*) and Common Meadow Grasshoppers, (*Corthippus brunneus*) were still feeding and flying. We also had Yellow Meadow Ants (*Lasius flavus*) - These are tiny ants that live in anthills, mostly on grassland. They were accompanied by the tiny eyeless, white “Ant Woodlouse” (*Platiarthrus hoffmanseggii*). These little woodlice are said to live with most ant species, but I find them mostly in Meadow Ants nests. In 2024 I found that both ants and woodlice were still active well into the last week of September so deferred mowing till the middle of October.

This year lawns were mown to 75mm again, taking off all of the mowings that could otherwise suffocate the new growth. During Summer 2025 I found no more invertebrate species than in the previous year and I was disappointed that there were no ants of any species present. Later in the year, Grass Moths and Field Grasshoppers were present in about the same number as the previous summer. The project has been successful in increasing biodiversity as neither species would have been there if I mowed the grass as in the previous 10 years. Also, the results were somewhat skewed as much plant growth was cut off in early summer by the drought that seems to have affected the whole of the UK. I have just returned from 2 weeks in the North Scottish Highlands where large areas of black ground testify to the wildfires of Summer 2025. These would not have happened had the vegetation not dried out. We will review the situation with our lawns at home and take advice, but I expect to leave most of the grass uncut again throughout next Summer.

At the time of writing we still need to do the late mow on the Nature Reserve. All of the long vegetation, including the tall Knapweed will soon be cut off to 75/80 mm and the cuttings removed and put in a large pile that will then rot down. When we first began the practice of putting vegetation in heaps, some of us had dreams of Grass Snakes hibernating in the rotting vegetation. They also use the same heat source to incubate their eggs. Last July, I was overjoyed to come across a large female Grass Snake sunning herself on the reserve close to one of the heaps.

It is good to see the plant species list increasing year on year. Our aim is to increase biodiversity there.

The fence around the Reserve is now getting worse for wear. Mostly this is due to the wooden posts rotting underground. We will soon be putting in some bigger corner posts with supports that will retain the tension on the main fence. This will reduce the tension on the small stakes, making them less susceptible to breaking.

Dave Musson

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Guns and Roses

***Christmas Concert
Friday December 12th
Saturday December 13th***

See Advertisement for details of our Concert in this Prattler

Having now been back in the swing of rehearsals for quite a while now, we are in the throes of our Christmas music which includes some old favourites. *Christmas Tide* by Janet Lewis (lyrics) and Bob Chilcott (music), *Carols from the Faber Carol Book* and *Christmas Shopping Blues* (words and music Ruth Morris Gray) performed by the ladies, not to mention *The Little Drummer Boy* (lots of h'rum-pum'ing which is not easy!) and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*. Added to the familiar tunes, *Somewhere in My Memory* is a lovely song with words, *Candles in the window, shadows painting the ceiling, gazing at the fire glow, feeling that 'ginger bread' feeling...* evoke past times which we all sit back and remember at this time of the year. *Christmas Is* - again a beautiful tune spelling out the meaning of Christmas along with *What a Heavenly Night* which, with its sub-title *Mary Had a Baby*, has a bright, gospel feel to it.

So, plenty to look forward to when we perform at the Village Hall in December. With choir members changing due to age or illness, we are so pleased that our younger members are involving themselves with the day to day running of our organisation which is no mean feat. And because the choir is constantly evolving the pieces we sing have to be carefully chosen by our Musical Director to provide a good range for the few Bass singers we have, the getting-fewer Tenors, Altos, Sopranos and Second Sopranos. With the ladies out-numbering the men by far, the sopranos have to rein the songs in in order for the rest to be heard as there really are some joyous notes that the other sections sing. A combination of notes can have the most spine-tingling effect. It is so nice that we have two new members this year (one Tenor and one second Soprano) and they are enjoying the challenge of harmony and being part of the family of singers.

As we all know, singing has many functions. One of the most well loved organisations is the Alzheimer's Society 'Singing for the Brain' which brings people with dementia and their carers together to sing which improves brain activity, wellbeing, mood and supports the memory and energy. There is an increasing amount of evidence that singing releases endorphins, serotonin and dopamine – the 'happy' chemicals that boost your mood and make you feel good about yourself.

And now new Mums who are suffering with the debilitating Post Natal depression are encouraged to attend a singing group. Scientists believe that's one of the reasons why people report being on a high during choir sessions and continue to feel positive, uplifted and motivated afterwards. It also counts as an aerobic activity as it introduces more oxygen into the blood so give up your gym classes and sing in the Village Hall instead! We often take our lungs for granted but most of us rarely use them to their full capacity (unless you do Pilates or other such specialised activities) but singing requires you to sing in a controlled way which helps increase lung capacity. So please think about all the reasons you should be singing and join us in January when we start rehearsing for the Spring Concert. And in the meantime book your tickets for Christmas.

JRA

Flore Arts Events

Neil Richardson entertains - The West End to Broadway: Saturday December 6th 7.30pm (doors open 7pm). Millennium Hall, Flore. If you came to Neil's show in 2023 you'll know that we can expect familiar songs performed by a consummate professional. Neil is an experienced entertainer who will be bringing us a programme of favourites from the West End and Broadway Musical Theatre repertoire including *Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Jersey Boys*.

We think this will be a great way to get your Christmas season off to a cheery start in a convivial bistro-style setting. We're including your first drink and a selection of cheese with your ticket. Box office now open: tickets £15. Call Rosemary Read on 01327 341026 (between 9am and 6pm).

Poetry Please: Sunday November 16th. Falling a week after Remembrance Sunday the theme on this occasion will be "War and conflict". As usual feel free to bring along any poem you would like to share, not necessarily related to the theme. Or just come and listen. Meet at the White Hart in Flore, 6.30pm to 8.00pm.

Please keep watching this space for details - or keep up to date with our plans on our website at www.floreartsevents.com and our Flore Arts Events Facebook page. We hope to see you soon.



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THE PRATTLER

NEXT EDITION

Submission date: 15th of November for emailed articles
20th of November for written articles

Publication date: 1st of December 2025

e-mail: heyford_prattler@yahoo.co.uk

Or drop off at Heyford Meats or Sunrise Cottage, 15
The Green.



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We welcome Prattler contributions, please send these to the Editor. Please include your name and full contact details. We prefer items by e-mail & all images should be JPEG files.

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The Prattler is printed by



Design to Print Limited

46 Daventry Road

Norton Daventry

NN11 2ND

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