

Honeybourne Village News



Info : Local : News

March 2026



See page 18 to read about Corporal Dilks and Cobra

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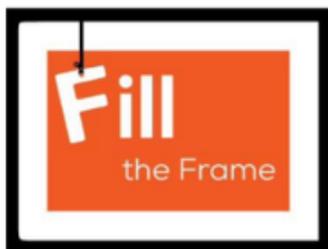
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Hello, March! The first few months of the year always get a pretty bad reputation for being cold, wet and slow after the excitements of December. 2026, however, has started with particularly grey weather, with storms and floods engulfing the UK and worrying news from abroad, particularly the USA. But we are now heading into spring and brighter days. With this in mind, we thought it best to start this month's edition with some GOOD NEWS to lift the spirits!

For the eco-conscious - It was confirmed that, in 2025, renewable power sources provided more electricity than fossil fuels to the EU for the first time in history. This is a huge milestone for clean energy use across Europe. The UK looks to follow suit by generating more power from wind farms and hopes to be 95% clean energy-powered by 2030.

For tech-enthusiasts - a team of students from Eindhoven University in Holland have built 'a modular electric city car that you can repair yourself.' The team announced last month their electric car will come with a built-in toolbox and components that can be easily repaired or replaced without specialist knowledge.

For history lovers - an excavation in Broadway was featured on Digging For Britain on 21st Jan (watch on BBC iPlayer). Over 8,000 years of human activity was detected at the site, but the most exciting discovery was a carved bone box which archaeologists say is unlike anything they have ever found before. Other recent discoveries in the UK include an enormous Roman villa beneath a park in Port Talbot, Wales.

Something fun - Nicola Dickinson has won a house in the Lake District worth over £4million in a charity draw, after her husband moaned to her that buying a ticket would be a waste of time. She bought her winning entry for £25 from Omaze, and Nicola is a regular supporter. She told reporters "this is precisely why I never listen to my husband". Good advice?

Village News Team

Contact details for the HBVN:

Comments & contributions e.g. photo's around the village or area, jokes or puzzles , ideas for the Spotlight On... feature, articles, letters to the editor. editor.hbvn@gmail.com

ALL ARTICLES OR ARTWORK MUST BE PROVIDED READY FOR INCLUSION AND PRINT USE

A5 WORD, JPEG, PNG OR PREFERABLY POST INFO DIRECTLY INTO EMAIL

Deadline date for inclusions in 2026 is the 17:00hrs on 17th of the month

BINGO

4



1

FRIENDS OF HONEYBOURNE SCHOOL

PRIZE BINGO!

Join us for an exciting night of Prize Bingo & raffle
with friends and family.

£10 a book if booked in advanced.

£12 a book on the night (subject to availability.)

Children £3 each (includes a goody bag)

Refreshments and snacks available to purchase,
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Bottles of prosecco available for preorder only.

21 MARCH 2026

Doors open 6pm

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3



5

LADIES WALKING GROUP!

Walking Keeps You Fit. Join our walking group and make new friends. We do a two-mile walk on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. For more information, call Ann on **01386 830517**



We look forward to seeing you.

Mobile Library Timetable

The **Mobile Library** on the 4th Friday in the month as follows:
12.05-12.20 Grove Avenue **12.25-12.40** Perrie Drive **13.15-13.30** Village Hall
Enquiries: **01905 822722** or emailing mobilelibraries@worcestershire.gov.uk

Honeybee's W.I February Meeting

This evening our speakers were from the Environmental Agency, Jenny and Jacob came to talk to us about flooding in our area. The work of the Environmental Agency includes building and maintaining flood defences, clearing blockages, and issuing flood warnings. Local rivers include the Severn, Avon, Stour, Theme and Arrow.

17% of all properties in England are at risk of flooding. Grants are available for households to apply for, to build flood barriers. Farmers are encouraged to help with the drainage of their land. As flooding is likely to increase with climate change, Jenny and Jacob said we should all adapt to deal with it.

It was a very interesting and informative meeting, giving us food for thought. Our evening concluded as usual with raffle and refreshments. Anyone interested in joining us will be very welcome. Check our Facebook page, or call 01386830517



Wednesday over 60s Club

On the 4th of February, the Wednesday Club had their Annual (Christmas) Lunch. We visited and dined at the Stratford Garden Centre in Clifford Chambers, where we tucked into a lovely meal and exchanged gifts. It was a great to catch up and chat with friends in a relaxed setting.

The Club meet on the first Wednesday of the month, our next meeting is our AGM and will be on 4th March, at the Village Hall @ 2.00pm.

New members are always welcome, so why not pop along, meet and make new friends, we would love to see you.

Parish Council News

After all the recent rain, here's hoping spring brings drier weather! As we move into March, I would like to draw your attention to two important consultations. Your voice really matters.

Honeybourne Neighbourhood Plan Review Survey

Enclosed with this newsletter is our community survey for the Neighbourhood Plan Review. Our current plan was adopted in 2020, and since then the village has continued to change and new issues have emerged. We also need to align with the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan and the new National Planning Policy Framework. This is your opportunity to shape Honeybourne's future. The survey asks for your views on protecting our green spaces and rural landscape, addressing flooding and drainage problems, improving community facilities and transport connectivity, tackling traffic and parking issues, and preserving our local heritage and village identity.

With national housing requirements affecting all parishes, the neighbourhood plan gives us the strongest possible say in protecting what matters most to Honeybourne – our green spaces, rural character, and village identity – while ensuring any development happens in the right places on our terms, not developers' terms.

The survey runs from 9th to 31st March 2026. Please complete and return your survey to any of these locations:

Honeybourne Village Hall, Harvest Close (letterbox on front of building, left-hand side)

One Stop Shop, 40 Stratford Road (survey box in store)

Thatched Tavern, 12 High Street (survey box in pub)

Local Government Reorganisation

You may have heard that Worcestershire's council structure is being reviewed. The Government is consulting on replacing our current two-tier system (County and District Councils) with either one county-wide unitary council, or two unitary councils (North and South Worcestershire – Honeybourne would be in South Worcestershire). While parish councils aren't affected, this will change how we work with our principal council. Both residents and the Parish Council can respond to this consultation by 26th March at:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-worcestershire

The Parish Council will also be submitting a response to the Government.

Both consultations need your input. Please make your views count.

Cllr Heath Jobs Chair – Honeybourne Parish Council

Members of Honeybourne Parish Council

Heath Jobs (Chair) 07375085116

Balbir Dubb (Vice-Chair) 07795670707

Andrew Attridge	01386 830744	Amy Mathias	07956076271
Graham Clelland	01386 832500	Stephen Sidwell	07815311432
Colin Clear	07702105737	Sandra Walsh	07714237336
Judith Mellor	07770983522	-	

Clerk contact details: Mobile: 07951 429652 clerk@honeybourne-pc.gov.uk

HONEYBOURNE RAILWAY STATION - PRESERVING OUR LOCAL HISTORY

Do you have any photographs or memories of Honeybourne Railway Station?

A local history enthusiast is working to preserve the story of our historic railway station for future generations. We're looking for:

- Old photographs of the station, platforms, buildings, or trains
- Memories and stories from those who worked at or used the station
- Documents, tickets, timetables, or other railway memorabilia
- Any historical information about the station's role in the community

If you have anything you'd be willing to share (originals can be copied and returned), please get in touch with **Doug Rushton**.

Mobile : 07539541166

Email: douglas.henry76@yahoo.com

Pet Portraits by Ella



Beautiful pencil drawings to capture your beloved fur baby. Whether its for a gift or for yourself, it's a wonderful way to cherish a pet forever. Perhaps it's a memory of a long-lost friend, a loyal companion or a recent new addition to your family. What ever the occasion let us help you to remember them always. For more information:

Email: carolegraves@btinternet.com **Tel**: 07733 045103

HONEYBOURNE COFFEE MORNING WITH CAMPDEN HOME NURSING

The local charity giving hospice care in people's own homes,
bereavement support to adults and children and wellbeing services

THURSDAY 26 MARCH
HONEYBOURNE VILLAGE HALL
10 AM - NOON

- FREE - ENTRY, HOMEMADE CAKE, COFFEE AND TEA - DONATIONS WELCOME
- CHAT TO HIGHLY SKILLED, KNOWLEDGABLE NURSES
- FIND OUT HOW WE SUPPORT HONEYBOURNE & THE SURROUNDING AREA
- LEARN ABOUT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AND WAYS YOU CAN HELP US TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY



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Registered charity: 1178423



Honey Tots
Baby & Toddler
Group

Honey Tots Baby & Toddler Group



**THURSDAYS, 9.30-11.30AM
HONEYBOURNE VILLAGE HALL**

Stay, play & weigh!

**Bring your little one and their red
book and get baby weighed.**

Thursday 12th March





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Gardening Tips for March, Signs of Spring

March is a hopeful month in the garden. Days are getting longer, birds are busy nesting, and the first signs of new growth are appearing. Although the weather can still be unpredictable, it's one of the most important months for setting the garden up for the season ahead.

Flowers and Borders

Remove weeds before they establish and lightly hoe the soil on dry days. Cut back any remaining dead stems, take care not to damage new shoots emerging at the base of plants. Early March is ideal for pruning bush and shrub roses. Cut back to an outward-facing bud to encourage an open shape and good air circulation.

If clumps of perennials are overcrowded, lift and divide them now. This helps keep plants vigorous and gives you extra plants to use elsewhere in the garden.

Lilies and other summer-flowering bulbs can be planted for a display later in the year.

The Vegetable Plot

Hardy vegetables such as broad beans, spinach, carrots and peas can be sown outdoors if soil conditions are suitable. Tender crops like tomatoes and peppers are best started indoors on a bright windowsill or in a greenhouse.

Plant onion sets and shallots, these are straightforward crops and can be planted directly into well-prepared soil.

Place seed potatoes in a cool, light place to encourage sturdy shoots before planting in April. Add compost or well-rotted manure to beds as the soil dries out. Avoid digging or walking on very wet ground, as this can damage soil structure.

Trees, Shrubs and Lawn Care

Apply a layer of compost or bark mulch around plants to retain moisture and suppress weeds. Cut back ornamental grasses before new growth appears, trim back last year's stems.

Give the lawn its first light mow of the season on a dry day, keeping the blades set high. Rake out moss and debris if necessary.

Early March is usually the last time to plant bare-root stock before the growing season begins.

Encouraging Wildlife

Keep bird feeders topped up and provide fresh water. Leave some areas undisturbed for insects emerging from winter hibernation.

A Final Note

March weather can change quickly. Keep horticultural fleece handy to protect from late frosts.

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MARCH 2026



Mother's Day

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Sunday 15th March

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Easter Weekend

3rd April-6th April

Join us for live music, Spring specials & family
fun!

Easter Sunday we will be offering an extended
lunch service & dog-friendly tables



Quiz Night

Sunday 29th March
7:30pm



6 Nations

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5th February

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6 Nations Burger!



Live Music

Friday 20th March
8pm



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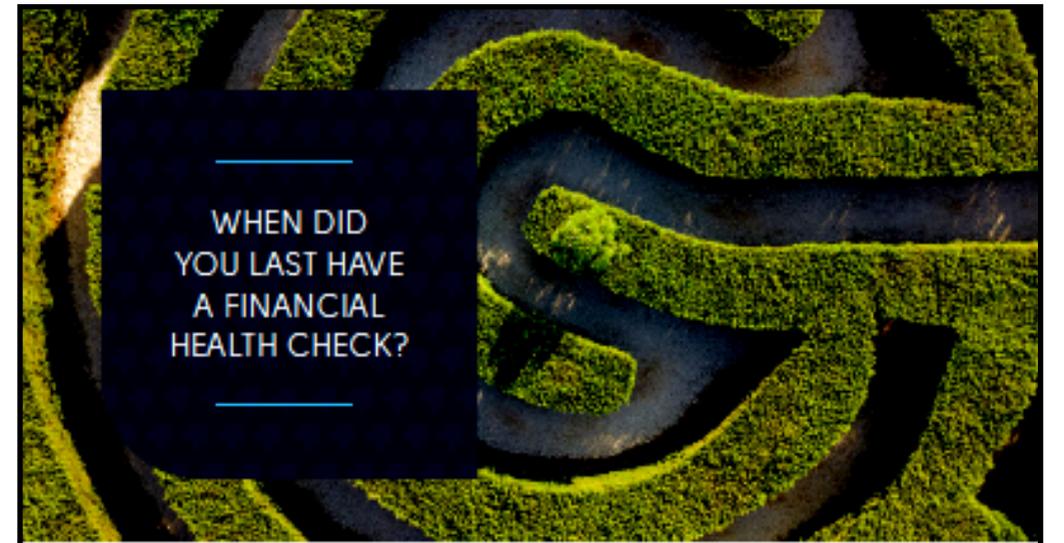


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I'm happy to have initial discussions on the phone, via video call or face to face.

Karl Thorpe BA(Hons), DipPFS
Independent Financial Adviser

m. 07879 466385

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FUTURE EVENTS

Easter Flowering Arrangement Class – 31st Mar @ 7:30pm

**Movie Night – Wicked – For Good

18th Apr @ 7:30pm**

Gin Tasting Event – Date to be confirmed ☺

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Pilates with Nicky 9am – 10 am ~ Fitness with Jae 10:30am – 11:30am	Yoga with Jae 10am – 11am	Pilates with Nicky 8:45am – 9:45am ~ Art Group 10am – 12:30pm	Coffee morning 9:30am-12:00pm ~ Embroidery Club 9:30 – 13:30 12 th Mar ~ Toddler Group 9:30am – 11:30am	Gentle Yoga 9:45am – 10:45	Zumba with Lesley 9.30am-10.30am	
		Wed Club 2pm – 4pm 4 th Mar	Senior Stretch Class 1pm- 3pm			
Kids Theatre Group 3:45pm – 5:45pm				Healthy Worcestershire 2pm – 4pm		
WI – 16 th Mar 7pm-10:00pm	Pilates with Nicky 6pm- 7pm	Men's Pilates with Nicky 7.00pm - 8.00pm	Pilates with Nicky 6:30pm – 7:30pm Life Drawing 19 th Mar 7:45pm – 10pm	Short Mat Bowls Group 7.30pm-9.30pm		

All classes require booking to attend.



**EASTER FLOWER
ARRANGEMENT**
*Workshop (container and
flowers included)*

Tues 31st Mar 2026 at 7:30pm

Honeybourne Village Hall
£55 incl refreshments and nibbles.
Book your place now via our website:
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Spotlight on.....

We have a fantastic spotlight for this month, Honeybourne Resident, and RAF Dog Handler Corporal Jack Dilks.



1. Were you brought up in the Honeybourne area? Or what brought you to live here?

I was brought up in Alcester but when my fiancé, Emma, and I bought our first home, we chose Honeybourne because of the beautiful surrounding countryside and the slower pace of life a village brings. Since moving here, my parents have come to Honeybourne as well.

2. When did you join the RAF? Did you join as a Dog Handler?

I joined the Royal Air Force Police in July 2020 with the intention of specialising as a Military Working Dog Handler. I was lucky enough to be placed onto my initial dog course as a Patrol dog handler almost straight out of Phase 2 training.

3. Which was your favourite posting?

My favourite posting was RAF Odiham where the Chinook Helicopters are based. I made friends for life there and it is where I had most of my career highlights.

4. What roles does your dog have?

In the RAF police we have 5 dog classifications. Patrol, Police, Arms & Explosives search, Vehicle Search and Drugs Detection. We all start out on patrol and if you prove yourself you get selected for progression to a specialised dog. I was selected to be a Police Dog Handler. Police dogs are used very similarly to those used by the UK civilian police forces. They are trained to bite when necessary but we can terminate the bite if the individual stops being a threat. They can track missing persons/ suspects for miles; can search areas off the lead for evidence and indicate the presence of evidence to the handler, and they can search buildings independently for intruders.

5. I have watched the military dogs display at Crufts. Have you ever taken part?

We have a bespoke team that cover these kinds of events, and my roles have always been operational. Although I was lucky enough to be part of a demo at the Rhydly Air show.

6. Which RAF base are you working at now?

I am currently at RAF Waddington.

7. Tell us about the dogs you have worked with.

Cobra – My first dog, she is a Dutch Herder and was a patrol dog. Cobra is now retired and has lived at home with me since Dec 2024. Cobra is a goofy girl with plenty of love to give and loves food, my bed, and a sofa. She is fiercely loyal and kept me safe for 3 years working at RAF Odiham so now we get to give that back to her. She has a hell of a nose on her and was able to detect people up to a mile away and she now lets me know when the foxes are on The Leys. Cobra used to have two armchairs in her kennel, and it was very common to find her upside down and snoring in them. She had a strong dislike of agility training because she found it boring and would just pretend you were not there when she'd had enough.

Sky- German Shepherd – my second dog who I had for a short amount of time. I took him on when he was brand new to the RAF, so I got to train him up to standard for operational life. We mistook Sky 'biting' people when we left his kennel until we realised he was just trying to stop us from leaving.

Wax- German Shepherd—my third dog (current). I got Wax after completing my Police handler course. Wax is one of the liveliest dogs I have ever met. He is like a springer spaniel. He is a clever, lively boy that likes to play rough and will body check you when you are not looking. Wax recently decided that to make his life easier (so he gets his toy faster) that when doing evidence searches he would pick up the evidence and carry it back to the handler, because we were taking to long to come over and see what he had found- not something he is suppose to do.

Kira – Belgian Malinois- I never handled Kira when she was operational, but I have taken her on as a retiree looking for a her forever home and I spend time training her to adapt to civilian life. She is sweet and loving.

8. I guess you and your dog have to be assessed periodically, is that a nerve-wracking experience? Where do you have to go for that?

Yes, so once every year each RAF dog section is assessed by our commanders to test our operational capability, this is scored on all facets of our role from threat scenarios to basic obedience. At this level you compete against your local colleagues and get an overall winner as well as winners of different categories.

I won this once overall, won best operations twice, best bite work twice and also received the Handler's Handler award voted by my peers for being most supportive to my colleagues.

9. It must be a difficult time when your dog retires. How do you choose a replacement and how do you bond with the new dog?

It can be hard absolutely, but I was lucky enough to rehome Cobra almost immediately after she was retired. It's not always the case that former handlers can home a retiree. We are assigned dogs that are free, e.g. handler is on a deployment/ has moved to another role. But play is the key, 9/10 times the biggest motivator for the dog is playing with their toy with you. Do that in the right way and you build up the start of the bond quickly. After that, it is much like having a dog in the home, they begin to trust you as their care giver.

10. Where do you like to exercise your dog locally?

I have Cobra my retired working dog and Leo our Cockapoo. We love using the Leys field as it suits our needs the best. It means Cobra who doesn't need quite as much now at her age can go somewhere with lots of smells and Leo can still run around and burn off his energy.

11. What is the proudest moment in your career?

One highlight would be when Cobra and I were deployed for security for both Queen Elizabeth's repatriation from Scotland to London and the Coronation for King Charles. This earned us the Coronation medal which is normally only handed to service personnel with 5 years' service (I had not done 5 at this point).

We look forward to meeting out and about in Honeybourne. Thank you, Jack.

Church Services - March 2026

	Pebworth	Dorsington	Honeybourne	Willersey
1st March Lent 2			9.00 am Holy Communion (Traditional language)	10.00 am Morning Prayer (Modern language)
8th March Lent 3	11.00 am Holy Communion (Modern language)		11.00 am Family Morning Praise	9.00 am Holy Communion (Traditional language)
				4.00 pm Prayer & Praise
15th March Mothering Sunday	11.00 am Mothering Sunday Service	10.00 am Mothering Sunday Service	11.00 am Holy Communion for Mothering Sunday	11.00 am All Age Service
22nd March Passion Sunday/Lent 5	11.00 am Family Service			10.00 am Morning Prayer (Modern language)
29th March Palm Sunday	11.00 am Palm Sunday Benefice Service at Willersey			

Sidesmen, readers and intercessors at Honeybourne:

	1st March	8th March	15th March
Sidesman	Lesley O'Connell Edwards	Sylvia Matthews	Anne Jones
Reader	Lawrence Schroeder	Teresa Banks	Lesley O'Connell Edwards
Intercessor	Minister	Mike Edwards	Anne Magee

U is for Utensil

The items the church uses when Holy Communion is celebrated are called 'utensils' and like all churches, Honeybourne has a full set. These consist of a chalice, a paten and cruets; and it also has a small box in which the wafers of bread are held. These are not on display in the church, but only come out when there is a Communion service. Honeybourne's cruets and wafer box were acquired as donations in memory of Miss Churchill, Mrs de Ville and Mrs Jelfs in the early 1990s.

The chalice is a large cup that sits upon a long stem, which is often a similar depth to the cup itself. In early Christianity these were often glass, but nowadays they are usually precious metal. Some very ornate ones exist in cathedrals and museums that are heavily jewelled. A paten is now a small flat dish on which the bread is placed, but in early centuries this could be large enough to take a whole loaf. Cruet are small jugs in which the water and the wine are brought to the altar: they can be either glass or precious metal.

In 1553 some of the utensils in the churches of the Vale of Evesham were collected by Walter Blunt under an edict of Edward VI. Honeybourne is recorded as having one paten and one cruet, and it also had a broken chalice: the total value of these was £10.

A church is expected to have the relevant utensils for Communion, but this was not the case in late seventeenth century Honeybourne. Presentments to the Bishop of Worcester made in the 1670s and 1690s noted that Honeybourne had neither chalice nor cruet. The diocese lost patience in 1698 and ordered that the parish must obtain these, but it was not until 1720 that the Vicar reported this had been done. (The parish now comes under the diocese of Gloucester.)

With thanks to Lesley O'Connell Edwards

Vicar's Letter March 2026 – 'God's will for us'

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus says: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me".

How does this sound to you? Heavy? Scary? Liberating? Whatever your feelings, there can often seem like there is a conflict between what we want for ourselves and what God wants for us.

This conflict can 'bubble to the surface' at this time of year, with our attempts at self-denial or self-improvement during Lent. We see how difficult changing our behaviours can be. We may find progress slow, or we may even buckle and give in and end up back where we started, only feeling worse, feeling that we've failed.

"Let them deny themselves" doesn't mean demeaning ourselves though, but rather seeking to keep our priorities in harmony with what Jesus told us in the two "great commandments" – to love God and love our neighbour.

A few years ago I decided that I would give up watching television for Lent and devote the time I saved to prayer and scripture. Hardly a massive act of self-denial, but it helped me on my spiritual journey and altered my behaviour.

God doesn't see any move by us towards him as failure, no matter how small. No turning to him is ever in vain and he smiles at every step we take in his direction.

There can be a tendency in our society nowadays to go to extremes, to deny ourselves something, only to later binge on it. That is not what God wants from us. He asks us to deny ourselves in order to bring ourselves and our lives into balance. It is not about abstaining from pleasures, but about balancing our activities within a God centred life.

The writer Margaret Silf imagines that, rather than God having a fixed path for each of us to travel down, he has a dream for each of his children - rather like we may have a dream for our own children.

In this dream God wishes for each of us to live a life touched by love and, by doing so, to help his overall dream for mankind come to fruition.

She doesn't see this as being some wishy-washy dream, but more like a vision (akin to Martin Luther King) – a dream that it is pressing and urgent for us to engage with and which doesn't come cheap.

Jesus came to bring fulfilment of God's dream, and we need to consider if we diminish or add to his work in our daily lives.

So, a quick challenge. Each morning during Lent, as our wishes and hopes for the day come upon us, can we push these thoughts away to allow the larger and quieter voice of God to permeate us?

Can we think of ourselves less, and focus more on the divine will? Maybe by contemplating the words "Your kingdom come, your will be done" as we pray. If we can then we are opening ourselves more fully to God's saving grace.



Honeybourne Bereavement Café

An opportunity to meet others in a similar situation offering mutual support and friendship within a safe place.

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Time: 9.30am-11.30am

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Honeybourne Welcomes newest members of Wellbeing in Wychavon Community Scheme

Honeybourne is proud to celebrate a group of local residents who have recently volunteered their time and commitment to become part of the Wellbeing in Wychavon Community Scheme Wellbeing. These individuals have completed dedicated training to help support wellbeing conversations within our community, and their willingness to step forward reflects the caring and connected spirit that Honeybourne is known for.

Wellbeing in Wychavon are everyday people who want to make a positive difference. They come from all walks of life and have chosen to give their time to help others feel heard, supported, and less alone. While they are not counsellors or therapists, they are trained to listen without judgement, recognise when someone may need extra support, and help signpost people towards appropriate local services or sources of help.

In simple terms, Wellbeing in Wychavon looks out for others. This might be through a conversation at a community event, a quiet chat with a neighbour, colleague, or customer at work, or simply being a friendly and reassuring presence. Sometimes, knowing that someone is willing to listen can make all the difference.

Recently, the volunteers were recognised at a certificate presentation ceremony, marking the completion of their training and their commitment to supporting wellbeing in the community.

Balbir Dubb, Mandy Wigget-Jones, Jamie Owen, Alice Kearsley, Sally Perkins, Charlotte Summerton, Sue Henson, Sally Williams, Louise Bilboe

Hopefully you may recognise a few names here! As this is a Wychavon-wide scheme, not all of our champions will live in Honeybourne, but all will work or live within the district of Wychavon and we are proud to be the first village in Wychavon to roll out this scheme.

Honeybourne has always been a village where people look out for one another, whether it's checking in on a neighbour, lending a hand, or sharing a kind word. The Wellbeing in Wychavon scheme builds on this strong foundation, helping to ensure that conversations about mental health and wellbeing feel normal, safe, and supported.



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The Nightmare Shop by Martin`s Mum

"Very few three year old boys enjoy shopping with Mum - especially when she needs new clothes; I quite understand that but I had little choice.

I parked at the bottom of the High Street, intending to visit several shops in my search for a new dress and my first port of call was Littlewoods (yes, I am that old). They had quite a good selection of dresses so I chose a couple and sat Martin on the floor of the cubicle while I got changed. **BIG MISTAKE NO: 1** Just as I was pulling the first one over my head I became aware of an indignant voice in the next cubicle. Martin had gone. He'd managed to slide under my cubicle door and, to my horror, was led on his back under the next one watching the poor woman get changed. I hastily apologised, changed back into my own clothes and dragged Martin out of the shop. So, feeling rather flustered, I decided that the little boutique just up the road was a better bet and I simply wouldn't bother trying anything on!

BIG MISTAKE NO: 2 I found a really nice royal blue dress and turned towards the pay desk. **SHOCK, HORROR.** Martin was delightedly watching the window display sway drunkenly from side to side. I legged it, leaving the dress behind, dragging a giggling Martin behind me. So.... what to do next.

My instinct was to turn around and go back home but I'd come all the way into town and really didn't want to go home empty handed. After reading the Riot Act to Martin, I thought that maybe M&S would be OK. The window display was a long way from ladies clothes so I could at least look in relative safety.

BIG MISTAKE NO: 3 In those days M&S had free-standing mirrors that you could adjust the angle of. What I didn't appreciate was by how much you could alter the angle. By the time I caught sight of it, the mirror was horizontal to the frame and still moving! He'd struck again!

Within seconds I was marching back down the High Street, Martin clutched under one arm, kicking and screaming.

Nowadays, Martin quite enjoys shopping but steers clear of dress shops!"

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Thu 5 March, 8pm - Fleecey Folk: Alden Patterson, £16

Thu 5 – Sat 7 March, dinner service from 5pm for Pre-Theatre dining

Sun 8 March, 7pm – Cheltenham Preview Night, £15

Mon 9 & Tue 10 March, 8pm - Fleecey Folk: Blazin' Fiddles, £25

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Thu 12 March, 7.30pm – Mad March Ceilidh, £10 (£5)

Sun 15 March - Mothering Sunday

Sun 15 March, 8pm - Fleecey Folk: Emily Portman & Friends, £18

Tues 17 March, 8.30pm – St Patricks Day Folk Session

Sun 22 March, 10am to 3pm – Craft Fayre

Mon 23 March, 6.15pm - Flavour of the Fleece Taste & Tour, £38

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Flying Barometers and the Return of a Grumpy Old Favourite by Honey Wildbourne

I'm pretty sure I'm not the only person who, through the last few weeks, has wondered if it will ever stop raining. The negative effects of this relentless wet weather on our local wildlife are many and various, including inundated burrows, perpetually sodden plumage and the drowning of overwintering invertebrates. During my daily walks, I have noticed lots of wriggling earthworms on pavements and roads, presumably trying to escape the extremely wet, clay soil of the grassy verges.

However, as in most areas of life, where there are losers there are also those that benefit. The fields around our village, over the last few weeks, have been dotted with the bright white and grey flying barometers, also known as Herring Gulls. These noisy, gregarious birds have come inland to make the most of the easy feast of worms, grubs and other invertebrates fleeing certain drowning!

Remarkably, the Herring Gull has a sensory adaptation that enables them to feel changes in atmospheric pressure using a mechanism, likely located in their inner ears or air sacs connected to their lungs. They can "feel" a change in weather – an approaching storm or severe rainfall – hours or even days before it arrives at our shores. Forewarned, they can then fly inland, ahead of the worst of the storm, ready to take advantage of the "buffet" forced to the surface by saturated soil.

Twenty years ago, large groups of squabbling Greenfinches were a common sight on my garden feeders. Sadly, due to an epidemic of the infectious parasite *Trichomonas gallinae*, we in the UK have witnessed a reduction in Greenfinches of around 70% in the last two decades. According to the BTO and RSPB, the best way to help, given that the infection can be passed around at crowded feeding stations, is to keep our garden feeders clean with a regular dip in a mild bleach solution.

I haven't spotted a Greenfinch in several years... until yesterday! Looking plump, sleek and very healthy, a pair of these finches settled on the mixed seed feeder and proceeded to throw, unceremoniously, all but the sunflower seeds to the ground. One of the things I

have always loved about Greenfinches, starting from my earliest childhood delight in back garden birdwatching, is the expression on their faces. Not to anthropomorphise them too much, but the dark eye flash and large conical "seed-splitting" beak seems to me to give them a very grumpy aspect. I was glad to see those frowny faces back.



Sad News from Honeybourne Railway Club

Honeybourne Railway (Social) Club. Sadly a decision has been taken by our landlords to close the club and sell the land. We were given notice last September, and will officially close this coming April 30th, the club has been here for over 80 years and was initially built for the railway workers at Honeybourne station by the then British railway... A few years ago hundreds of clubs nationwide were given the opportunity to buy these clubs from British Railway or close, Honeybourne decided to buy this club and land to continue ongoing by the members, Sadly declining over the years it was decided to sell the club on to new owners this giving a lease of life for the members to continue at a peppercorn rent, but ongoing lack of support and rising cost, and so many members passing on ,took its toll.. It must be pointed out that our landlords which is Charity Run were and still are very kind and helpful as they were when they took over some 20 plus years ago, but due to their concerns the decision was made and it was accepted with regret from both parties.... Over so many years it has been a part of the Village and some very great nights had by many, I myself have been at the helm of the club since may 2003, when it was in danger of closing as no one wanted to take over and being born and Honeybourne bred I felt it was a correct thing to do. and thanks for the members of the committee for their sticking with me over the years, along with all helpers along the way . We have to accept the owners decision as a mark of respect and gratitude for their part in buying the club with the land and makings welcome to continue for as long as we possibly could. As far as I am aware and informed the club and land will be up for Auction online when we leave April 30th.what ever on goes with the owner's will be their own concern there After .. I would make it clear that there are no debts outstanding, and confirmation letters from our billings will be shown if required. Thank you everyone for your support, and help over the years, and remember those great times shared, and those we lost along the way.

Many thanks
Sam Boulter
(secretary).





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