

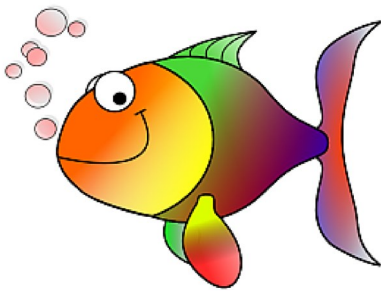
Voice

of the villages

Hunningham, Offchurch, Weston, Wappenbury, Eathorpe

Newsletter

APRIL 2024



POISSON D'AVRIL.

In France, April Fools' Day is known as "Poisson d'Avril", (April Fish.) The tradition involves the exchange of small fish-shaped paper cutouts among friends and family. These fish are often attached to the victim's back without their knowledge, and the goal is to see how long it takes for them to discover the prank. The French look forward to the playful atmosphere and creativity that surround Poisson d'Avril each year.

Editor: David Wray (wraydj@gmail.com)

The VOICE website

www.villagevoice.org.uk



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244



APRIL FOOLS' DAY

The exact origins of April Fools' Day are uncertain, and there are several theories about how the tradition began. One popular belief is that it dates back to 16th-century France when the country switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, as called for by the Council of Trent in 1563. In the Julian



calendar, New Year's Day fell around the end of March or early April. However, with the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, New Year's Day was moved to January 1st. According to the legend, some people either refused to accept the new date for New Year's Day or remained unaware of the change. Others would mockingly

exchange gifts and play pranks on those who celebrated the New Year in the spring. Over time, this evolved into a tradition of playing practical jokes on friends and family.

Another theory suggests that April Fools' Day has roots in ancient celebrations of spring, where people engaged in playful and mischievous behaviour as a way to welcome the arrival of the new season.

Regardless of its precise origin, April Fools' Day has become a widely recognized and celebrated day for pranks and jokes in many countries around the world. People play practical jokes on each other, media outlets publish fake news stories, and businesses sometimes participate in the fun by promoting humorous products or services. It's a day that encourages lightheartedness and laughter, with participants often saying

"April Fools!" after revealing their pranks.

One of the most famous April Fools' prank involved San Serriffe - a fictional island nation invented for April Fools' Day 1977, by *The Guardian* newspaper. It was featured in a seven-page hoax supplement, published in the style of contemporary reviews of foreign countries, commemorating the tenth anniversary of the island's independence, complete with themed advertisements from major companies. The supplement provided an elaborate description of the nation as a tourist destination and developing economy, but most of its place names and characters were puns and plays on words relating to printing (such as "sans-serif" and the names of common fonts - the capital city was Bodoni). The original idea was to place the island in the Atlantic Ocean near Tenerife, but because of the ground collision of two planes there a few days before publication it was moved to the Indian Ocean, near the Seychelles islands. The authors made San Serriffe semi-colon shaped and a *moving* island – a combination of coastal erosion on its west side and deposition on the east causing it to move towards Sri Lanka, with which it would eventually collide, at about 1.4 kilometres per year.

San Serriffe was one of the most famous and successful hoaxes of recent decades; it has become part of the common cultural heritage of literary humour, and a secondary body of literature has been derived from it.



WESTON BABIES and TODDLERS WEEKLY GROUP

EVERY FRIDAY 9.45am -11.15am

We are taking a BREAK from Friday 22nd March, and will be back:
Friday 12th April.

VENUE: Weston Village Hall

Come and let the little ones have lots of fun and meet other
Mums, Dads, Grandparents, and Carers.



Further information contact Hazel Taylor 01926 632428

TRIBUTE TO JOYCE WOODRUFFE APRIL 2024

Sadly Joyce Woodruffe of Leigh Terrace, Hunningham died on 13th April after a bad fall at a Care Home and a short stay in Warwick Hospital. She was just short of her 90th Birthday.

Her funeral is being held at Hunningham Church on 10th April at 11.00am.

Joyce lived in Hunningham since she married Ray in the 1950's. Sadly both Ray and her son, Brian died in the 1980's. She is survived by her daughter, Julie, who is in our thoughts and prayers at this time. Joyce will be remembered cycling round Hunningham "doing" for many of the households in Hunningham during her long life. She was conscientious, kind hearted and caring.

Joyce never seemed to complain, had a warm smile and a wicked sense of humour. She has been a regular worshipper at Hunningham Church, and subsequently with The Offchurch Group. We all have "funny" stories that Joyce has told us about her early years in Daventry. We will miss her.

TECHNOLOGY PAGE

‘Digital Switchover’ Update

Since writing the article last month on BT’s changeover to their ‘Digital Voice’ service, I visited their event at the Shire Hall, Warwick on 26 February. Actually ‘event’ turned out to be a bit of a misnomer; rather it was two BT representatives sitting at two desks in the foyer of the Shire Hall. There were no signs or leaflets – but at least there was no queue either!

I did discover one fact that I feel isn’t obvious from BT’s website. The Digital Voice upgrade will take place using the existing copper wire infrastructure in areas that have not yet been upgraded to optical fibres. I guess this is necessary because the replacement optical fibre system will not be country-wide by the end of 2025



when the Digital Voice changeover is due to be completed.

I felt reassured that BT will provide all the support and

equipment necessary at no cost to us to ensure the new service is as safe and reliable as the existing service, and with better quality of sound and hopefully fewer nuisance calls.

For further details go to <https://www.bt.com/help/landline/what-is-digital-voice-and-how-can-i-get-it->

Richard Seaton

Some Smart, But Simple, Technology Tips

Technology can seem very complex and daunting, but there are actually some very simple things you can do to make it work for you. Here are a few tips that I've learnt (sometimes the hard way) from over 30 years of having to work with technology of various kinds.

1. Before buying any new technology, think about what you need to do now but also what you might need to do in the future

The first PC I ever bought had 128 kilobytes of memory. I could have bought one with 256k but that cost a fair bit more. Within two months I was regretting that decision. What I learnt was that it is much better to spend a little more research time and/or money to find a device you can "grow into" than have to replace an inadequate device later. Save time and money by doing a bit of forward planning.

2. Use Keyboard Shortcuts

It's essential to learn some keyboard shortcuts! They can drastically increase your productivity by reducing the time you spend on common tasks. Most people know that, on a PC, you can use Ctrl + C to copy material and Ctrl + V to paste it somewhere else. But did you know that Ctrl + A selects all the material on a screen/page? Or that Ctrl + Z undoes an action and Ctrl + Y does it again? [There is a long list of shortcuts like this on this web page.](#)

3. Use A Password Manager

I cannot stress this enough: Use a password manager! As a human, you cannot create randomness, and you cannot remember randomness. So, instead of trying to remember a lot of different passwords, create one very strong password to protect all of your other machine-generated passwords. The variety of passwords will limit the impact of any one data breach.

4. Be Selective When Installing Software Apps

Excessive unused apps and background services can negatively impact your device's performance and battery life. There are some wonderful apps around but, if you don't regularly use a particular app, then it's just taking up precious device space, and slowing everything down.



5. Keep Up With Storage Management

Regularly clean up and optimize your device's storage by uninstalling unused apps, deleting old files and clearing cache and temporary data. This can improve your device's performance and help you avoid storage-related issues.

6. Backup! Backup! Backup!

Backing up to cloud storage such as Dropbox, Google Drive or OneDrive not only helps to keep your devices uncluttered, but also ensures your data is safe and accessible from anywhere. Cloud services are great, but having a local backup of your important files can be a lifesaver. A couple of years ago my computer was attacked by a ransomware hacker and it became impossible to regain access to ALL of my files! But I had a recent backup on an external drive and it took about an hour to delete all the hacked and corrupted files, and replace them with their backed up equivalents. Disaster averted!

8. Shut Devices Down Regularly

There are a lot of apps that run in the background and take up memory, slowing your device and shortening battery life. You can stop all those processes by simply shutting a device down and restarting occasionally. Sometimes also a piece of software can get "stuck" and the whole device stops responding. Turning the device off and on again can usually fix this.

THE OFFCHURCH GROUP OF CHURCHES PREPARATION OF THE PARISH PROFILE INVITATION TO THE COMMUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE

As you may be aware The Offchurch Group is "in vacancy" which means that we are without a priest at present. The process of advertising for a new vicar requires a Parish Profile to be written. This "sets out our stall" as a Parish and provides potential candidates with information about the churches, the communities and the geographical area. Spiritually, it aims to reflect where we are as a church community and how we see ourselves growing and progressing. In the course of preparing this document, it has been suggested that the voice of the villages is vital as much as that of the church congregations. To this end, this is an open invitation to all in the communities of Offchurch, Hunningham, Eathorpe, Wappenbury and Weston to send in your views, comments and suggestions to inform the writing of the profile. It would be wonderful to receive constructive suggestions, reflections on what you value about the churches in our villages, services, outreach, events and the role of the church in village life, and in your lives. We would like to hear from everyone, including children and young people whether directly or via their parents. As much as any positives, we certainly want to hear about where you feel that more could be done, or done better, or differently - and how you think that might impact positively on you, your family or your community.

We would like to make it as easy as possible for you to comment, so please choose from the following methods:

- From 1st April, in each church, there will be a small box (clearly marked Parish Profile) with some slips of paper for you to write on and post into the box
- You can email me, Vicky Donajgrodzki, at v.donajgrodzka@btinternet.com or telephone me on 07721 628650 if you prefer to discuss your thoughts.
- Let your views be known to anyone who you know to be a PCC member, in any format that suits you.

We will need to gather views by **15th April 2024.**

Thank you very much in advance!

THE OFFCHURCH GROUP

Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Tuesday 14 May 2024

7.30pm – Offchurch Village Hall

Vestry Meeting

This meeting is open to:

- * all persons whose names are entered on the Electoral Roll of The Offchurch Group Parish
- * all persons resident in the Parish whose names are entered on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence

Agenda

1. Welcome and prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the last Annual Vestry Meeting (2023)
4. To elect two Churchwardens to serve for a period of one year
5. Any other business

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

At this meeting, the Annual Report of The Offchurch Group will be presented along with a financial statement.

Everyone is welcome at the APCM. However, only those on the Electoral Roll of The Offchurch Group Parish are entitled to vote, should a vote be necessary.

We do hope you will be able to join us as we look back over the past year of The Offchurch Group. Nibbles and wine will welcome you from 7.00pm.

The Offchurch PCC

**ONE CHURCH FELLOWSHIP RECEIVING AND SHARING
GOD'S GIFTS IN CHRIST
ACROSS OUR FIVE VILLAGES**

CHURCH SERVICES APRIL 2024

Sunday 7th	11.00am – COME2WORSHIP + Zoom	St Margaret's (Hunningham)
Sunday 14th	10.00am – Holy Communion + Zoom	St Gregory's (Offchurch)
Sunday 14th	6.00pm - Evensong	St Michael's (Weston)
Sunday 21st	10.00am – Sunday Worship + Zoom	St Gregory's (Offchurch)
Sunday 28th	10.00am – Holy Communion + Zoom	St Gregory's (Offchurch)

Church warden details are as follows:

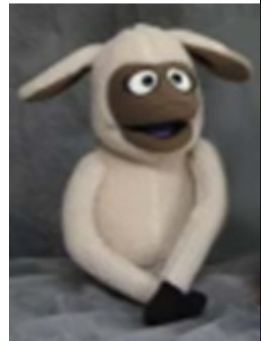
Graham Douglass 07754 350614
 grahamdouglass@Hotmail.com
 Mandy Lewis 07864 359988 amanda.e.lewis@btinternet.com

THE PILGRIM PUPPETS

FUTURE EVENTS

Sunday 7th April COME 2 WORSHIP service at
 HUNNINGHAM Church 11.00am
 Monday 22nd April CARE HOME tba

For information about the Pilgrim Puppets,
 please have a look at [their web page](https://www.villagevoice.org.uk/?page_id=1069).
[https://www.villagevoice.org.uk/?
 page_id=1069](https://www.villagevoice.org.uk/?page_id=1069)



Ring Hazel Taylor 01926 632428 if you are interested in our
 Puppets being part of your events.

THE BELLCOTE AT ST MARGARET'S CHURCH, HUNNINGHAM



As you can see from the photograph, work has finally been completed on the bellcote at Hunningham Church.

The saga of the bellcote started in August 2022 with the five yearly inspection of the church by the Diocesan Architect. This inspection noted that there were at least four weatherboards on the south and east slopes that needed replacement. However, when scaffolding was put in place at the beginning of 2023, a closer inspection revealed that a large number of the horizontal planks in tanalised soft wood were rotten beyond repair.

M&G Roofing, a trusted local contractor, who had re-built the Bell Tower in Compton Verney the previous year, were instructed initially to remove all the cladding for a proper inspection of the structure itself under the guidance of Stephen Evans, who is

responsible for the fabric of each of the four churches in The Offchurch Group, and our appointed Architect Stephen Oliver.

It transpired that the whole framework of the tower had dropped on the east side, and was lacking proper support from the very substantial medieval oak framework. The Architect was so concerned that we sought the advice of a Structural Engineer.

Due to the effect of rainwater leakage over many years, the Structural Engineer advised serious repair work, splicing seasoned oak into the defective and damaged sections. He was satisfied that the damage could be repaired for long term preservation. Instead of the previous tanalised softwood external boarding, kiln dried oak boarding was specified, after first netting the whole internal framework in stainless steel mesh and fitting lead soakers to all corners. This is one of the reasons it was all so expensive.

The work was finished at the end of February at a cost, in total, approaching £40,000, including Architect's fees. That we are able to pay this money is due solely to the villagers of Hunningham, plus some of our earlier churchgoers, who, in the course of the past seven years have helped to raise funds for an emergency of this nature.

We are indebted to Stephen Evans, who coordinated the work procedures from beginning to end, and who, via his contacts in the trade, was able to save us £5,000 on the cost of the seasoned oak timber.

The end result is impressive!

Paddy Taylor

Offchurch Garden Club

April 29th 7.30pm
Offchurch Village Hall

D-I-Y planting evening

Come and plant up a container
to brighten your garden all summer long.
Bring a container/large pot and any plants you have,
we'll supply compost and some bedding plants.

Everyone welcome

For more information phone

Claire Heather Jane
07568 500765 01926 422476 07747753799



OFFCHURCH FLOWER CLUB

Meets at Offchurch Village Hall 7.30-9.30 on the second Wednesday of the Month.

For the March theme the arrangements were ‘Pot et Fleur’, an imaginative combination of a potted plant and cut flowers.

We are learning from each other and appreciating different styles, each on our own budget and with some very imaginative ‘props’. Confidence is growing and we are very much enjoying being creative using the ‘themed’ programme agreed by members.

Meeting Dates are:

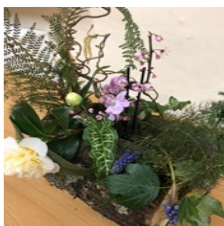
- *April 10th A talk by Holly Thurgood on the best seeds to sow for garden flowers to arrange.
- *May 8th. One off Change Of Time! Meet at Radford Hall Farm, Church Lane, Radford Semele at 1400 -1600 for a guided walk around Mandy and Henry Marriot’s farm to look at the trees planted over the last 40 years and the flora and fauna which thrive there.

All are welcome, to include a ‘cuppa and cake’, £5 for non-members.

Limited numbers so please book in with Maggie.

See contact details below.

- * June 12th ‘Floral Headdress’ Demonstration, then make your own!



Your first meeting is free, unless stated above.
Any further enquiries to mandhhartog@googlemail.com

Urgency: 3 2 1



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Reporting Speed Concerns - Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership

Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership is bringing partners together to improve the approach on how we investigate and respond to residents' concerns of speeding in their area. A consistent and data-led approach has been developed which considers all types of personal injury collisions reported and average speed data at the location.

The joint approach from Warwickshire Police and Warwickshire County Council is for members of the public to submit their concerns via the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership website. This is the central reporting method for speed concerns within Warwickshire.

To report a speed concern please visit: [Warwickshire Road Safety – Warwickshire Road Safety Speed Concern site \(warksspeedconcerns.org\)](http://warksspeedconcerns.org)

For more information about Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership, visit [Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership | Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership \(warksroadsafety.org\)](http://warksroadsafety.org)

(To follow each link, please hold down the Control key while clicking the link.)

EATHORPE EVENTS

Sunday, March 31st
Eathorpe Egg Rolling Day

Eathorpe residents, friends, family, ex-residents
Come to the renowned

Eathorpe Eggstravaganza



Meet on the village bridge at 10.00am for the decorated egg competition.

Walk up to Wappenbury Hill to roll our eggs down the hill to the bridge.

Followed by a children's egg hunt and refreshments at the village hall (please bring hot cross buns etc to share) and a general Easter celebration.

Warwickshire County Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Overview

Warwickshire County Council is responsible for around 1700 miles of public rights of way. These paths are both in the countryside and urban areas. They are important for enjoying and exploring, for travelling to work or school and for health and wellbeing. They are part of what makes Warwickshire a special place to live, work and enjoy.

A public right of way is a path that anyone has the legal right to use. There are four types:

- Footpaths for walking, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs
- Bridleways for walking, horse riding, cycling, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs
- Restricted byways for walking, horse riding, cycling, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs and horse-drawn carriages
- Byways for all modes including motorised vehicles

Every council that is responsible for public rights of way must have a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). This is a strategy which sets out how public rights of way meet the needs of the public, now and in the future. Our current Rights of Way Improvement Plan dates from 2011 and now needs to be reviewed.

We'd like to know about your experience of using our public rights of way, how important they are for you and what we should include in the new Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Your feedback will help to develop the priorities and actions of the new Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which will be produced later in

2024. Once the new Rights of Way Improvement Plan has been finalised and approved by the council it will be published on Warwickshire County Council's website.

Please complete our survey by 7 April 2024.

If you require a paper copy of the survey or an alternative format or language please email

wccrowip@blackwoodbayne.co.uk or paths@warwickshire.gov.uk or call 01926 413427.

This survey is to support the Improvement Plan only. If you want to report a problem on a public right of way please click on the link below: <https://rowreporting.warwickshire.gov.uk/CAMSWeb/standardmap.aspx>

Please give us your views. Click the link below.

[Online Survey](#)

Closes 7 Apr 2024

Opened 8 Jan 2024

Contact

Warwickshire County Council 01926 410310

wccrowip@blackwoodbayne.co.uk





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Messy 2024 dates for your diary

We have planned a number of dates for Messy Church gatherings in 2024. Pop the dates in your diary or on your calendar and look out for more information.

18 May : Pentecost

20/21/22 August: Messy Summer sessions

12 October: Messy Harvest

14 December: Messy Christingle

We do hope you can join us for all or some of these.

The Messy Team

Messy Church is for families of all shapes and sizes.

For more information contact Jane on 07850 4442316 or email off-churchmessy@gmail.com

EATHORPE COFFEE AND CAKE MORNING

**Sunday April 7th will see the first of a regular
Coffee and Cake Morning
in Eathorpe Village Hall
10am - 12noon**

This will be a regular event on
the 1st Sunday of each month.
So 5th May and 2nd June will
be next.

ALL WELCOME



THE POETRY PAGE

Born Florence Margaret Smith in Hull, Yorkshire in 1902, **Stevie Smith** moved with her family to the North London suburbs when she was three, then lived in the same house the rest of her life. She graduated from the North London Collegiate



School and went on to work as a secretary. She published several collections of short prose and letters as well as nearly a dozen volumes of verse. Although the nursery-rhyme-like cadences of her poems and the whimsical drawings with which she illustrated them suggest a child's innocence, Stevie Smith was a sophisticated poet, whose work was much concerned with suffering and mortality. Her rather macabre sense of humour can shock, as in her most famous poem, "Not Waving But Drowning."

Not Waving but Drowning

*Nobody heard him, the dead man,
But still he lay moaning:
I was much further out than you thought
And not waving but drowning.*

*Poor chap, he always loved larking
And now he's dead
It must have been too cold for him his heart gave way,
They said.*

*Oh, no no no, it was too cold always
(Still the dead one lay moaning)
I was much too far out all my life
And not waving but drowning.*

It is, I think, surprising to learn that Smith, although considered as a candidate for Poet Laureate in 1967, on the death of John Masefield, was turned down after comments from esteemed poetry critics that she “wrote ‘little girl poetry’ about herself mostly”. “Not waving but drowning” certainly is about herself but is hardly the writing of a little girl!

Stevie Smith was definitely a melancholy person - her poems can never be described as 'happy' - yet she rarely lapses into real depression. I suspect it was her sheer love of language which kept her from that. As an example, read “The Face”, where she is deliberately self-deprecating, but shows her joy in a well-turned phrase.

The Face

*There is a face I know too well,
A face I dread to see,
So vain it is, so eloquent
Of all futility.*

*It is a human face that hides
A monkey soul within,
That bangs about, that beats a gong,
That makes a horrid din.*

*Sometimes the monkey soul will sprawl
Athwart the human eyes,
And peering forth, will flesh its pads,
And utter social lies.*

*So wretched is this face, so vain,
So empty and forlorn,
You well may say that better far
This face had not been born.*

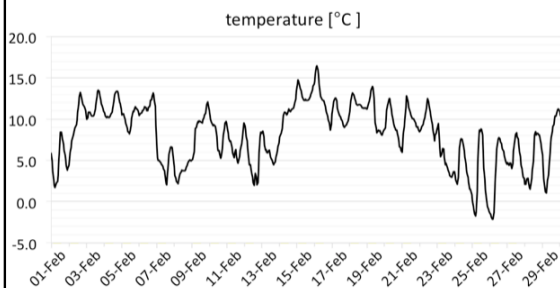
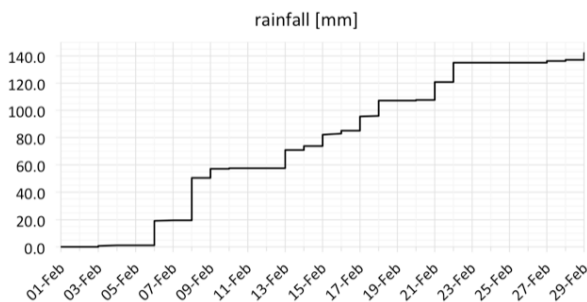
I, for one, am VERY glad that Stevie Smith was born, and left us such approachable and thought-provoking poetry.

WEATHER WATCH: FEBRUARY 2024

'February fill-dyke' certainly lived up to its name this year. And not only dykes were filled but also water butts, underground aquifers and reservoirs. However, the rains caused major problems to farmers, homeowners and drivers as the ground became saturated and rivers overflowed. Fields and roads were flooded. The bridge at Offchurch was closed on at least three occasions. Across the UK record rainfall totals were logged. In Offchurch 142.4 mm of rain fell, over three times the average of 42.2 mm, making this the

wettest February in the village since records began 26 years ago. The good news is that the ground is now irrigated to a considerable depth,

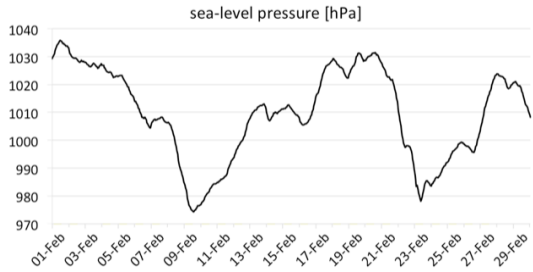
which should ensure good tree growth and possibly no 'hosepipe bans' this year. However, despite all the rain there were 8 dry days this month.



It was a very mild month; the average temperature was 8.1°C, which is 3.2°C above the average for the area and has set a record for the warmest February since records began.

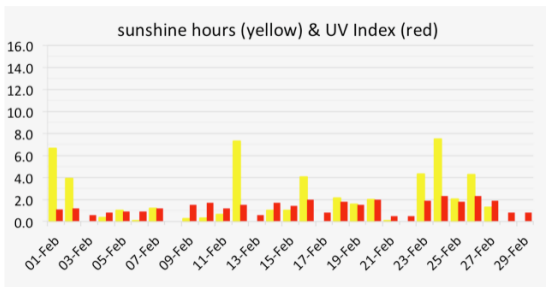
The highest daytime temperature was 16.7°C on the 15th. Most nights were also mild with just two air frosts and 11 grass frosts. The coldest night was the 25th when the temperature fell to just -2.3°C.

Surprisingly, despite all the rain we had no named storms! The sea-level atmospheric pressure rose to 1034 hPa on the 1st but fell to 976 hPa by the 9th.



The average pressure was 1010 hPa. Winds were

mainly from the southwest with a maximum gust of 27 mph on the 26th.



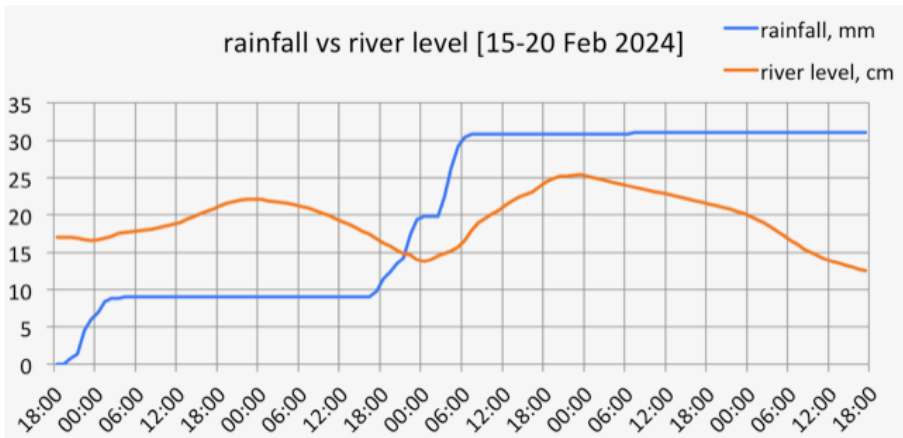
There were seven days with no sunshine at all, with a total for the month of 53 hours, which is seven percent below the February average. Note how the UV Index readings (in red on the

chart) are rising as the month progresses. This is due to the sun gradually rising higher in the sky.

Why doesn't the bridge at Offchurch and other places flood while it's raining?

“It poured with rain all day and yet the bridge was clear of water in the evening. It was dry overnight and yet the next morning the bridge was flooded and remained so most of the day even though there was no more rain.” This delay experienced in Offchurch and other places where roads are prone to flooding after prolonged heavy rain is due to the time taken for the excess water to drain into the rivers. Whilst the immediate rainfall into the river has some effect on the water level, it's the rainfall over the countryside, which drains into gullies, brooks and streams, and eventually into the rivers that causes the rivers to flood. After all, the surface area of the river is small compared to that of the surrounding

countryside. Of course, the actual amount of water eventually reaching rivers is dependent on the saturation level of the ground. Given that last autumn and this winter were so wet, it is likely the ground was already saturated before the start of February.



The chart above shows the change in river level during a spell of heavy rain (30 mm) over a period of five days from 18:00 hours on 15 February to 18:00 on the 20th. I have used millimeters for rainfall and centimeters for the change in the level of the river so that an easy comparison between the two readings can be made. It may be seen that after the rain stops it takes around 18 hours for the river level to rise to a peak and a similar time for it to fall back, if the weather remains dry. From the chart it appears that about 10 mm of rainfall causes a rise in river level of some 50 mm (5 cm). The photo shows the state of the bridge at Offchurch on 19 February at 9.00 am – incidentally it looks as though the vehicle is about to lose its number plate! It could have been a lot worse, some vehicles started to float as they tried to pass through the water and others broke down. Actually, several number-plates were recovered when the floods subsided.



Details regarding the state of local rivers may be found by entering your postcode on the 'check for flooding' government website, which is where I downloaded the data for the chart [2].

[1] Thanks to Clare Philpot of Offchurch for permission to use her photograph.

[2] <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/find-location>

For local weather details and forecasts go to: <https://offweather.hopto.org>

Richard Seaton rkseaton@outlook.com

THE ASIAN HORNET THREAT – POLLINATORS IN PERIL

Asian hornets are an invasive, voracious predator of our pollinator insects including Honey Bees. Accidentally introduced into France in 2004, they have since spread Eastwards to Italy, South to Spain and Portugal and North to Germany Switzerland, Belgium, Holland and now, to the UK.

2023 saw a massive increase in their numbers throughout Europe and, in the UK, from a yearly average of 2-3 nests per year up to 2022, 2023 saw 78 nests recorded, mainly in the South-East. We fear numbers will inevitably increase and, if they become established in the UK, from experience on the continent, they will have a devastating impact on our insect population, and on biodiversity. The already fragile balance of the ecosystem will be upset and pollinator services disrupted with consequences for flowering plants, food crops, and for creatures further up the food chain. There is also a risk of injury to ourselves from stings as, when provoked, they attack ferociously.

But how do you identify them? :-



The Asian Hornet looks like a large black wasp with some distinguishing features:

- *a single yellow/orange band around its abdomen,*
- *an orange face,*
- *and yellow tipped legs.*

Queens are up to 30mm long, and workers up to 25mm. They also have a deeper buzz than honey bees.

Although the yellow tipped legs are often cited as a main identification factor, these may be difficult to spot in flight and the thick, yellow\orange band on the

abdomen is a better indicator.

When and where can they be found?

Asian Hornets are easiest to see around flowers, on over-ripe fruit, carrion, close to water and, unfortunately, around bee hives from late spring through to late Autumn.

In spring, Queen Asian Hornets are active from after the last frost and will be looking to create a Primary Nest. These are typically low down in sheltered places e.g. under eaves of houses, in sheds, perhaps near last year's nest. The primary nest is off-white in colour, similar to a wasp's nest, but smaller. They start the size of a golf ball and grow to the size of a small melon.

In early Summer the hornets build a secondary nest, which is far larger than the Primary Nest, and can be as large as 80 cm in height and 50 cm wide. These secondary nests are typically high up in trees, but increasingly below 5 metres in hedges, long grass and even in structures like buildings. It is often difficult to see these Secondary Nests until the leaves fall.

Can Asian Hornets sting?

They can and the sting is more toxic than a wasp sting. What's more, they can sting repeatedly. Generally, away from the nest they are not aggressive but become highly defensive if the nest is threatened in which case they attack ferociously and en masse. Nests in hedges and long grass can be disturbed accidentally whilst, for example hedge cutting, retrieving cricket balls, by dogs and by other outdoor activities etc. Sports people, walkers, hedge cutters, tree surgeons and the like are particularly vulnerable to being stung.

What, and How, to report after a suspected sighting

If you think you have spotted an Asian Hornet, please note its location, take a photo or better still make a video of it, if you can, and note the direction it flies off. Then report this to the Non-Native Species Secretariat {NNSS}. part of DEFRA.

To report a suspected sighting, there is an App, The Asian Hornet Watch App, which is available on the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#). It offers a guide to identifying the insects as well as a means to report a sighting.

If the sighting is positive, further investigations by the Asian Hornet specialists will be triggered including tracking and tracing the nest and its eradication.

NEVER DELIBERATELY INTERFERE WITH AN ASIAN HORNET NEST.



Working Together as a Community
 Joint Parish Council Meetings

Our next meeting is scheduled for 19th March, 2024 at 7:30pm and is being held at local Village Halls. Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings. Residents can email or phone Parish Councillors if they have issues to raise.

For further information or an emailed copy of the meeting Agenda or minutes please contact the Clerk on Clerk.jpcehow@outlook.com

The meeting dates for 2024

The dates below follow the usual JPC pattern of meetings.

March	19th	Eathorpe Village Hall
April	No Meeting	
May	21st	Offchurch Village Hall
June	No Meeting	
July	16th	Eathorpe Village Hall
August	No Meeting	
September	17th	Offchurch Village Hall
October	No Meeting	
November	19th	Eathorpe Village Hall
December	No Meeting	

EASTER MEMORIES



One of my earliest Easter memories as a family (in 1946?) is climbing up to the top of Newbold Comyn Hill come rain or shine (baby Margaret in a pushchair) to attend the Easter Sunrise Service on Easter Morning at 6 o'clock! A large cross, decorated with fresh flowers, had been fixed to the

Beacon, which was not alight I hasten to add!

We then hurried home for a breakfast of decorated boiled eggs, then rushed to church for a Glorious Easter Celebration. My sisters Julie, Margaret and I had spent most of Good Friday painting the eggs, and we were quite upset to learn that they would be plunged into boiling water.

Of course the rest of Easter Day was spent arguing over who had the best chocolate egg. Later in the day we were given the eggs, strictly rationed so as not to eat too much at once.

Easter Monday was the day we went on the family bike ride for a picnic - it usually rained but that didn't deter us. After tasty sandwiches and sausage rolls, cake and a banana, and lemonade or cold tea, we played rounders or French cricket; dear Daddy showing us how to fly our kites, which inevitably got stuck in the trees. We generally couldn't retrieve them, so we cycled home in the rain singing to cheer ourselves up. Altogether a Happy Easter was had by all eggs, oops sorry, by all of us.

Wendy Green





Stop!
Think fraud.



Did you know?

Fraud accounts for almost 40% of all crime. In just one year, 1 in 17 adults in England and Wales were victims of fraud. That's nearly 3 million of us.

1 in 5 businesses were also a victim of fraud over a 3 year period. In other words, fraud is rife and it can happen to anyone.

Think you're immune from fraud?

Fraudsters can use highly manipulative methods to get us when our defences are down. Nobody is immune from fraud. We can all be more alert to the risks, and we can all do more to protect ourselves.

4 ways to frustrate a fraudster

1. Do you stop to check who's really contacting you?

Fraudsters often call or message people, pretending to be from their bank, other well-known and trusted companies, or even someone they know. They can be very convincing, particularly if they've already managed to get hold of some personal information, for example by looking on social media. Having earned their victim's trust, they often ask them to hand over confidential information, make a payment or give them access to their phone or computer.

How to reduce your risk

Never take calls or messages like this at face value – always take time to stop, think and check if the caller or sender is who they say they are.

If you've received a suspicious call or message:

- don't be rushed into a quick decision – think carefully before handing over money, personal details or access to your device
- if you have any doubts, hang up and do not call the number provided

- be aware that fraudsters can spoof phone numbers, so the number that appears on your caller ID may not be proof of who they are
- instead, check with the organisation directly using contact details you know are correct, such as those on a utility bill, official website, on the back of your bank card
- if you get a message from a family member asking you to send money, use known contact details to check if it's real

2. Do you automatically trust offers and click on links?

“Half-price tickets to a sold-out gig!” “Incredible savings on a last-minute holiday – hurry!” Fraudsters know most people love a bargain, so they use discounts, time pressure and FOMO (fear of missing out) to pressure them into paying out for non-existent deals. Or they urge people to click on links in phishing messages that can take them to a fake website, where the fraudster can steal cash and personal details, or infect the victim's device.



How to reduce your risk

If you see a tempting offer:

- don't be rushed into a quick decision – always take time to stop, think and check if the message, offer or advert is genuine
- don't automatically click a link, particularly in unexpected messages
- if you're not 100% sure, don't use the link to click through – go direct to the organisation's website
- always stay on trusted websites and use the site's recommended payment methods
- avoid paying by bank transfer or virtual currency
- think carefully before you hand over any money or personal details

3. Do you use the same password for different accounts?

Lots of people use the same password for multiple accounts, such as email, bank account and social media accounts. Less to remember, right? But imagine if a fraudster gets hold of that password. Now they can access all of

their victim's online accounts.

How to reduce your risk

Choose a different password for each account. Too difficult to remember them all? You can keep track of passwords using a [password manager](#), or by using [three random words](#) to make them more memorable.

You should:

- never choose a password that features names, places and numbers that are personal to you
- choose a different password for each account that is strong and hard to guess but if you can't change them all at once, prioritise your email account

4. Do you use 2-step verification?

Even if someone has chosen strong and unique passwords for their email and bank accounts, there's always a risk – however small – that a fraudster could get hold of them. If they do, there's nothing to stop them accessing those accounts to steal money and other personal details.

How to reduce your risk

[Setup 2-step verification](#) (2SV) on your most important accounts, such as email and social media. 2SV works by asking for more information to prove your identity when you're logging into an online account. It's one of the most effective ways to protect your online accounts from criminals.

For more information, please visit: <https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>

PASSWORD MANAGERS

Password managers are a must in 2024. With cyber crime higher than ever before, cybercriminals are using your passwords to steal your data and access your finances. Using a good password manager will allow you to use highly secured passwords which are easy to access and synced across all your devices.

You can find the solution best for you by going to the [Best 10 Password Managers site](#). (<https://www.best10passwordmanagers.com/best-free-password-manager>).

DO IT TODAY! It will be one of the best decisions you ever make!

COMMUNITY CAFE

The Community Café 'Drop In' is now seasonal.
Everyone welcome for refreshments & a chat at the café.

During the Spring and Summer ...

Every second Wednesday of May, June, July and August
Do come and join us for AFTERNOON TEA, home-made cakes,
sandwiches, conversation and company..

In Hunningham Parish Room

NEXT AFTERNOON TEA – 8th May 2024 3.30 pm

We hope to see you there. If you need a lift please contact Hazel
Taylor 01926 632428

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Welcome to The Red Lion Hunningham



At The Red Lion Hunningham, food is made strictly for the soul. Bright, beautiful and mouthwatering, our food is a true sensation for the eyes and the belly. This is the kind of food that is cooked simply and cleverly while showcasing the great British palette at its culinary best.

We are positioned within the peaceful village of Hunningham, 3 miles to the north-east of Leamington Spa, yet inside the Radford Semele Ward. The Red Lion Hunningham offers enviable views along the River Leam while overlooking the spectacular Warwickshire countryside. We are open 7 days a week for food and drink.

