

ALVESTON MAGAZINE

April/May 2026

No 559

Newsletter for Alveston Parish, produced
by the Churches since 1970



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Or post to 'Alveston Magazine',
1 Beech Close, Alveston, BS35 3NH.

*Views expressed
by contributors
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of the Helmet
editors
or committee.*

Your Helmet editor is Diane Barnard (01454 885793) .
Contact David Moss if you are interested in advertising
(revsrural@gmail.com).

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<u>Edition</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Delivery</u>
June/Juy/ Aug	May 1st	May 26th
Sept/Oct	Aug 1st	Aug 25th
Nov/Dec/Jan	Oct 1st	Oct 27th

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Payment by cheque or bank transfer must be received in advance.

We can now be found online for reading and downloading at <https://alvestonmag.co.uk/>

ALL Contributors - Please send in original art-work and good quality photos and not what has gone via social media or some online storage which compresses the size and will result in poorer quality reproduction. We need it to be at 300dpi. A half page advert needs to be landscape format and full page 'portrait'.



THE MESSAGE OF EASTER: A LIVING HOPE

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live" (John 11:25–26)

Good News in Today's World

Our press has recently been full of news about charismatic leaders like Farage, Polanski, and Trump, who, with their charm, charisma, promise, and vision, promise to reshape our world. It is easy to forget that Jesus was an immense Charismatic leader whose message of resurrection reshaped our world forever and can still do so today.

Jesus: The Charismatic Leader

In John's Gospel Jesus is portrayed as the Charismatic leader whose "I am" messages brought life and hope to all people. Jesus' last "I am" message, *"I am the resurrection and the life,"* was spoken to a woman named Martha after her brother died. Martha misreads Jesus' words as referring to the hope of new life for her brother in heaven. Jesus corrects her misunderstanding and restores her brother to new life. Jesus shows her that the word "resurrection" speaks more to the Christian hope of bringing life to the community around them than to the promise of eternal life.

The True Message of Christianity

It is so easy to think that the message of Christianity is just about what happens to us when we die. The New Testament doesn't end with Jesus' death on the Cross. The New Testament's message is how Jesus' Resurrection changed the world, bringing faith, hope, love, and life to all people. To believe in the resurrection is to believe that the local church can become a beacon of light and love to all, to those who believe and those who do not. It is about creating a living church where people embrace the values and actions of Jesus, sharing compassion, generosity, love, and understanding to all. It is characterised by individuals who dedicate their time to volunteering, making meaningful contributions to the community they live in through acts of loving service.

A Vision for the Church

This is my vision as Vicar of St. Helens' Alveston. Rev David Moss

Methodist Church Worship – April & May

10.30	5 th April	Pete Jones – Easter Sunday
10.30	12 th April	Rev Dr John Emmett & Kennedy Mutesva
10.30	19 th April	Pete Jones – Café Church
10.30	26 th April	Rev Dr Simon Edwards – Holy Communion
10.30	3 rd May	Team Ministry
10.30	10 th May	Chris Leese
10.30	17 th May	Ken Luxon Pete Jones – Café Church
10.30	24 th May	Rev David Deeks – Holy Communion
11.00	31 st May	Methodist Circuit Assembly at Witherwood

Methodist Church News and Events

Witnesses

Covid will live long in the memory for many reasons. Loved ones who passed away or couldn't be visited; social distancing; travel restrictions; empty shelves in the shops; schools, offices and churches closed; test kits; queues for vaccinations; weddings postponed, and so on. We remember these things so clearly because we were there and they impacted our lives in very significant ways. We were witnesses to everything that happened and don't just remember the facts, but the pain, suffering and consequences too.

Many people witnessed the remarkable events of Jesus' life and crucifixion. A dozen or so spent three years accompanying him wherever he went and saw the total transformations he brought about in peoples' lives. Jesus healed countless people and released them from all manner of things that were holding them back from living life to the full.

Some of Jesus' followers recorded what happened, and their accounts convey the raw emotions that were felt as well as the facts. They also told of their amazement at not only seeing Jesus after his resurrection but talking to him and eating with him too. The honesty of the writings is refreshing. Two people didn't believe that Jesus had returned after his death until they encountered him in the most personal way imaginable. Their experiences didn't just transform their lives, but thousands more as they travelled vast distances to tell others.

Jesus still changes lives today, and it never ceases to amaze me how radically and completely his love does that. I recently spoke to a young man who shared his remarkable story. Despite a good job and loving partner, he'd struggled with many aspects of his life. In desperation, he picked up a Bible, devoured it in a week, and it changed him beyond recognition. He left his job to study theology and is now in the early stages of becoming a Methodist minister. His passion to tell everyone about Jesus in every possible way is inspiring.

On **Good Friday** (3rd April) today's Christian witnesses will carry a cross through Alveston at about the time Jesus carried his cross and was crucified. We will leave the Methodist Church at **3pm**, follow a circular route and return to enjoy hot cross buns, tea and coffee. Please join us for all or part of the walk, or just the refreshments afterwards. We will be delighted to share with you our stories of the life-changing power of Jesus' love.

Pete Jones 01454 412912

Community Cuppa continues to be a real blessing to all looking to make new friends or simply enjoy good company. We meet on Saturday 18th April and Saturday 16th May from 10.30 to 12.00 in the church hall. The warm welcome, conversation, excellent refreshments and 'Ian's Intriguing Quiz' make for a morning well spent.

Craft and Chat is another way to make new friends and enjoy good company. Whether you have been doing craft for a long time or would like help to start, you will be made very welcome. We meet on Thursday 16th April and Thursday 21st May from 2 to 4pm in the hall. If you are not into craft, then just pop in for a coffee and chat. Contact Elaine on 415374 for more details.



St Helen's Church contacts

www.sthelensalvs.co.uk

Rev David Moss 01454 415190

Licensed Lay Ministers-

Tracey Black (And for children's activities) 01454 417660

Tracey.lynne.black@hotmail.co.uk

Judith Heybyrne 01454 616725

Church Warden -

Gail Lowe 07949 920851

Alveston Methodist Church contacts

Rev Dr Simon Edwards 01454 418176

Stewards -

Peter Jones 01454 412912

Pam Jones 01454 412912

Doreen Stears 01454 850453 (Contact steward)

Hall Hire - Peter Jones 01454 412912

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ST HELEN'S CHURCH NEWS – April/May 2026

April Services

1 st	12 noon	Informal Service of Holy Communion then Soup Lunch??
2 nd	6.30pm	Maundy Thursday Agape Fish and Chip Supper
3 rd	9am	Messy Church Good Friday Workshop
	10.30	Stations of the Cross
4 th	7.00pm	Easter Fire
5 th	8am	Easter Day Holy Communion
	9am	Breakfast following 8am Communion Service
	10.30am	All Age Service with Communion
12 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	NO MESSY CHURCH AS SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
	10.30am	All Age Service
19 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	Alpha Course with Breakfast
	10.30am	All Age Service with Communion
26 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	Café Church with Breakfast
	10.30am	All Age Service

May Services

3 rd	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	Breakfast following 8am communion service
	10.30am	All Age Service with Communion
6 th	12noon	Informal Service of Holy Communion then Soup Lunch
10 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	MESSY CHURCH with Breakfast
	10.30am	All Age Service
17 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	Alpha Course with Breakfast
	10.30am	All Age Service with Communion
24 th	8am	Holy Communion
	9am	Café Church with Breakfast
	10.30am	All Age Service
31 st	8am	Holy Communion
	10.30	All Age Service

St Helen's Church News

Coffee Cake and Chat – Tuesdays 10.30 to 12.30 weekly

Charity Coffee Cake and Chat – First Tuesday of the month supporting nominated charities:

Tuesday 7th April - Street Life – a Charity that began in 1997 to provide hot meals, drinks, sandwich packs, clothing, toiletries, sleeping bags and dog food, on Brunswick Square in Bristol every Saturday evening.

They serve up to 100 people, some are rough sleeping, others are homeless. All are in need! It is a ministry of City Church and mobilises volunteers from local churches and community groups across Bristol.

Tuesday 5th May - Christian Aid - Christian Aid Week is celebrated in the UK on the second week of May every year, this year between May 10 to 16. Christian Aid's objective is to provide humanitarian relief and long-term development support for poor communities worldwide, while highlighting suffering, tackling injustice, and championing people's rights.

As there is no longer an annual door-to-door fundraising drive in Alveston please come along and help us raise funds for this hardworking Charity.

Knitting Group continue to meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month between 2 and 4pm and during the year they support a number of charities through their various projects.

Art Group meet on Fridays between 10 and 12 noon weekly.

All abilities are welcomed by both groups.

Why not come along to any of our events and meet some new people in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

4@4 – led by Chris Hill, is continuing with a concert at 4pm on the 4th Sunday in April. Entrance is always free (there is a retiring collection in aid of church charities). Refreshments are served following the performance. See page 15

St Helen's Church Kitchen and Bell Tower Projects

Over the last two years we have undertaken two large projects, the Organ renovation and a new Air Source Heat pump system. This year we are looking to build a new kitchen and repair and improve the ringing chamber for the church bells so they can be rung to their full capacity.

Over the next few months we will be raising funds for these projects so please keep an eye out for our fund raising events and come along and support them. Donations to the projects will also be gratefully received. Please contact Rev'd David Moss revsrural@gmail.com for further information.



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NOTICE OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**ON MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2026 – 7.30PM
(Jubilee Hall)**

***THIS IS THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PEOPLE OF
ALVESTON, RUDGEWAY & EARTHCOTT***

***IT IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS OF
THE PARISH COUNCIL.***

COME AND HAVE YOUR SAY!

In attendance, the Parish Councillors, your local South Gloucestershire Councillors, representatives of the Jubilee Hall, the Youth Centre, Alveston based Charities, St Helen's School, the Police, Community Forum and many local residents.

**JOIN IN THE DISCUSSION
(Followed by Refreshments & Chat)**



OCTOPUS DRAMA GROUP BOX OFFICE OPENING

The box office for Octopus Drama Group's forthcoming original murder mystery comedy will open at Rosie & Rex gift shop at the top of Thornbury High Street on Saturday 2nd May.

Performances on Wednesday 10th to Saturday 13th June will take place at Christ the King Church Hall in Castle Street. Get ready... set... for an evening of fast-paced, playful intrigue - packed with physical comedy, visual gags and sparkling dialogue.

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NEWS FROM the ALVESTON Women's Institute (WI)

In January we heard from wildlife and pet portrait artist Beth Pinnock who first picked up pencils in lockdown and became hooked into the magic of drawing, which helped to calm her. Learning techniques from online tutorials and workshops, she then developed her own techniques and style and created "Peace, Pencils & Portraits" which offers Retreats with mindful drawing, coloured pencil workshops and pet portrait commissions.

Coloured pencils are versatile and easy to use anywhere, with hard and soft textures, and are less messy than paints. Beth studies animals' unique character and captures their soul onto paper. She shared some wonderful images of birds and dogs, her favourite animals to draw, a fascinating insight into what can be done just with coloured pencils.

Carolyn Morton, retired Forensic Science Lecturer at University of the West of England, was a welcome return speaker to our WI in February with a fascinating talk about Fires and Explosions!

We learnt some incredible and valuable facts, with a few surprises along the way. Here are just a few:-

- Fire is a chemical reaction, burning gas, with no matter being consumed, but it is converted into carbon monoxide and water.
- Fires take hold incredibly quickly. Within 0-30 Seconds a small flame can turn into a major uncontrollable fire, so don't wait to gather items, get out fast.
- Disturbingly, around 80% of children aged 2 to 13 do not wake up to the sound of smoke alarms, boys being the most difficult to wake.
- Photography in fire investigation is very important as it captures perishable evidence, documenting burn patterns and illustrating structural damage to determine the fire's origin and cause.
- **The colour of the flame is caused by different chemicals.**
- We drive with explosives in our cars - airbags contain a small controlled pyrotechnic explosive device (inflator)!
- A carbon monoxide (CO) detector is a crucial safety device that sounds an alarm when it senses the poisonous, odourless, colourless gas produced by fuel-burning appliances such as a boiler, so do make sure you have one in your home. Also essential with wood burning stoves.

Once again, Carolyn provided us with a mine of information presented in an interesting and amusing way which made for a most enjoyable talk. A few questions followed and then Liz gave the vote of thanks.

The information on the next meeting is in the Events listed in the notices pages in the middle of this magazine.

Thornbury Radio Launches First-Ever Radio Presenters Academy Day



Thornbury Radio successfully hosted its inaugural Radio Presenters Academy Day on Sunday 12 January 2025 at the Turnberries Community Centre, welcoming 29 enthusiastic attendees keen to explore the world of local broadcasting.

The Academy Day marks a major step in Thornbury Radio's mission to grow its on-air talent and strengthen its behind-the-scenes team, supporting the station's continued expansion as a social enterprise. The initiative aims to bring even more local voices to the airwaves — local people talking about local subjects for the local community — reflecting the station's belief that *Thornbury Radio is more than a radio station: Your Choice. Your Voice!*

Participants were guided through a full programme led by Thornbury Radio's presenter team, covering: The history and evolution of Thornbury Radio, Presenter styles and effective audience communication, show preparation techniques, Practical news-reading exercises, Hands on familiarisation with audio editing software, an introduction to studio technology, and how to craft engaging links and structure a show.

Feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive, with comments including: *"It was brilliantly delivered by a team whose skill and enthusiasm was so much on show."*

"Thoroughly enjoyed it!"

"Well done TR team – a fantastic initiative, well attended and delivered."

Greg Robinson, Mid-Morning Presenter & Director at Thornbury Radio, said: *"It was our pleasure to launch the presenter academy, our community-based initiative to welcome more people into local radio. The day was fantastic, and it was great to see how interested our community is in local radio. We gave hints and tips on presenter style and gave the attendees an opportunity to practise using equipment we had purchased thanks to our grant donors — Thornbury and District League of Friends and the Thornbury Round Table. We hope to repeat the event in the future and hopefully grow the event with further purchases of equipment."*

Following the success of this first Academy Day, Thornbury Radio plans to run future sessions and continue investing in opportunities that empower local people to get involved in community broadcasting.



Presenter Academy Day participants getting to grips with technology to create radio links

Thornbury Choral Society will perform its Spring Concert on Saturday May 16th at 7.30pm at St. Mary's Church Thornbury (BS35 1UE)

Under the direction of our Conductor Steven Kings we shall perform Rossiini's "Messe Solennelle". The soloists are:- Charlotte Newstead {Soprano}, Rebecca Chellappah (Alto), Michael Gormley (Tenor), Robert Marson (Bass), Christopher Williams (Piano), Edward Dean (Harmonium).

Tickets are £18 (pre booked); £20 (on the door); £5 (under18s).

For further information, please go to our website www.thornburychoralsociety.org.uk

Sunday April 26th 4pm St Helen's Alveston.

The **St Helen's 4@4 concert series** will be a **Come and Sing – Vivaldi Gloria**. The choir and orchestra will work from 13:00 with a public performance at 4 o'clock. Free to participate either as singers or audience. Retiring collection in aid of church charities. Singers are asked to email alvestoncomeandsing@gmail.com indicating which voice part and whether they need a vocal score.

There will be a summer break for the 4@4 series, returning September.

Collectors' Book Fair Saturday 25th April, Easter Compton 10am to 12 noon

This annual Book Fair, at Easter Compton Village Hall, will be celebrating its 20th anniversary when it takes place again on Saturday 25th April. Now one of only three national events run by the Observer's Books Collectors' Society, it features thousands of vintage collectable books for sale. As well as Observer's books, others include Ladybirds, Beatrix Potter, Wayside & Woodland and many different book series on subjects like natural history, transport and militaria. All book enthusiasts are welcome and admission is free. Advice and valuation on books can be gained from the expert stallholders who come from all over the country to attend. Refreshments available. Telephone 07989 494159 for further details.



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THORNBURY Art Club

Tuesday 28th April 2026 Club Night

In this live demonstration professional artist Oriane



Pierrepoint will create a charcoal portrait from a photographic reference, focusing on the core principles behind a strong likeness. She will discuss tonal blocking, measuring and proportion, and mark making in charcoal, showing how a portrait develops from broad value masses into a more refined form. The demonstration offers insight into both technique and decision-making throughout the drawing process.



We will have a short break for free tea, coffee, and biscuits. This will give us an opportunity to chat with member, visitors and the artist. Don't miss this fantastic chance to learn, socialise, and enjoy an evening of art, whether you're just starting out or looking to refine your skills. **If you're interested in joining the Club**, our membership secretary, Pat, will be on the door to give you more information or else contact us below.

**Members free, non-members very welcome - £6 on the door, cash or card.
7.15pm until 9.30pm.**

For more information contact:- www.thornburyartclub.co.uk
www.facebook.com/ThornburyArtClub or email publicrelations.tac@gmail.com

**Venue: - SMCH – St Mary's Church Hall, Eastbury Rd, Thornbury, BS35 1DR
Free parking on-site. For regular club events see the notices on page 20**

Create a beautiful landscape painting in acrylics An All Day Workshop with Mark Warner

Be sure to book your place at this exciting workshop and develop your acrylic painting skills. Using acrylics, Mark will explain how to apply colour, line and contrast within a landscape composition and how to build up layers within a painting.

Mark is an experienced practising artist and tutor who works from his studio in North Shropshire. Mark has demonstrated at our Club Nights several times. He is a popular tutor and works in an enthusiastic, engaging style.

Workshop fee :- Club Members - just £45 for a day's tuition. Non-members £55

Date:- **Friday 22nd May. 10.00 until 4pm**

Venue:- St Mary's Church Hall, Eastbury Rd, BS35 1DR

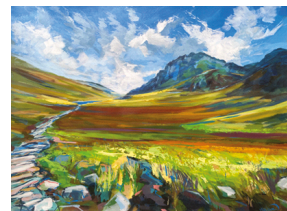
Things to bring:

- A packed lunch and a mug (tea and coffee provided).
- Equipment requirements to be advised.

Numbers for this workshop are limited so please book early.

Enquiries to Louise:- Louiseabj@gmail.com

Club members will be given priority booking. Any interested non-members should email Louise to join a waiting list.



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NOTICE BOARD

The following groups and organisations meet regularly

St Helen's Pre-school Little Stars at St Helen's School: Mon-Fri 8:50-15:30
Pilates, Zumba and other fitness classes - contact Sam on 07977632003
Amateur Radio Club, Chantry: Wed 7:30pm (secretary 07765892447)
Thornbury Chamber Players: Methodist Church: fortnightly Thurs 7:45-9:45
Sharon Phillips School of Dancing, contact 07989652780
Climate Action Thornbury & Surroundings see www.sustainablethornbury.org
St Helen's Church Coffee, Cake and Chat 10.30am to 12.30pm every Tuesday.
St Helen's Knitting Group – 2nd Wednesday of each month, 2pm- 4pm at Church. For further information please contact 01454 616725
St Helen's Church Art Group – Fridays 10am-12 noon, all abilities welcome. Further information please contact Anne Harrison on 01454 885532.
Thornbury Orchestra Wednesdays 7:45 – 9:45, St Helen's Church.
www.thornburyorchestra.org.uk

Scouting:- Beavers Thursdays from 5.30pm - 6.30pm
Cubs Tuesdays from 6pm - 7.30pm
Scouts Fridays from 6:30pm to 8pm

THORNBURY ART CLUB - Tues 3rd and every Tues. Thornbury Art Club, Tuesday Painting Studio Group, SMCH, 1.30-4.30 pm. Tel. 01454 414433
Thurs 5th and every Thurs. Thornbury Art Club, Thursday Painting Studio Group, SMCH, 1.30-4.30pm. Tel. 07776271010
(SMCH – St Mary's Church Hall, Eastbury Rd, Thornbury, BS35 1DR)

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

- Meets for Coffee and Chat on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 10 am at the Swan Pub in Thornbury. Monthly meeting is on the last Sunday of the month 12.30 pm at the Wheatsheaf Pub in Thornbury.

ALVESTON COMMUNITY EVENTS

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www.alvestoncommunityevents.co.uk



SOME EVENTS HAPPENING IN APRIL

Mon 6th 7:30 Alveston Gardens Association - Formative, Restrictive, or Renovation Pruning or Plant a Witch's Broom - Ian Sadler - JH
Tue 7th 2pm Northavon Dolls House Club - 01454 501901 - AMH
Mon 13th 7:30 Alveston WI - Complementary Treatments - Jeanne Long - JH
Thursday 16th - 2pm Craft n Chat - See below
Wed 22nd 7:30 Alveston Local History Society - The Berkeley Dig
Prof Stuart Prior - AMC

SOME EVENTS HAPPENING IN MAY

Mon 4th 7:30 Alveston Gardens Association - Selva in Valgardena - Andrew Hockey - JH
Tue 5th 2pm Northavon Dolls House Club - 501 901 for details - AMH
Mon 11th 7:30 Alveston WI - Resolutions and sales table - JH
Thursday 21st - 2-4pm Craft n Chat - Elaine, 01454 415374 - AMH
Wed 7:30 Alveston Local History Society - Summer Music - Brigstowe Village Band - AMC

AMC = Alveston Methodist Church; AMH = Alveston Methodist Hall; JH = Jubilee Hall;
SMCH = St Mary's Church Hall, Thornbury.

Please Note The Alveston Magazine (Helmet) team is having to say goodbye to Tony and Frances Houghton as they are moving to pastures new to be near their family in Herefordshire. We are grateful for all that they have done to help keep us running. Tony has been the contact for the diary for many years.

Do continue to pass on annual programmes and details of future events (deadline 1st of the month preceding publication) but now to Alvestonmag@gmail.com

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Alveston Local History Society

**WED 22ND APRIL -
THE BERKELEY DIG**

**WED 27TH MAY -
SUMMER MUSIC -
BRIGSTOWE VILLAGE BAND**

**7:30 IN THE ALVESTON
METHODIST CHURCH**



ACTION
ARTS
GROUP

Shanties at The Ship with The Port of Bristol Shanty Singers.



The Port of Bristol Shanty Singers are rolling up at The Ship, Bristol Road, in Alveston on the evening of April 25th at 7.30pm.

A gathering of shipmates has been convened by the Action Arts Group to keep the music going and the smiles on our faces!

The Port of Bristol Shanty group currently performs predominantly to raise funds for The Teenage Cancer Trust, keeping the tales of old Bristol's seafaring alive, creating new songs and revitalising the old. Get to know the members of the crew on their website at www.pobshantycrew.co.uk

Tickets will cost £15 and can be booked by emailing AAGThornbury@gmail.com or ringing 01454 850933

THORNBURY AND DISTRICT LEAGUE OF FRIENDS (TADLOF) invites you to a FREE coffee/tea and cakes morning on **Wednesday, 6th May** 10am-noon at The Armstrong in Thornbury.

The League of Friends support local health and well-being groups in the area with financial grants. 23 donations were made in 2025. Among new recipients were Thornbury Wayfinders, Moon and Lotus, Severn Area Rescue Association and Rockhampton Ravens.

Krunch and Jigsaw have received an award since we became a grant giving charity in 2021.

Please be our guests and join us on 6th May, in the surroundings of the refurbished Armstrong Foyer.

There will be a raffle on the day and all profits will go directly to supplementing this year's funding programme, so please bring along a little cash!!

Hawkins Hide Allotments – Spring!

I'm writing this at the end of February but spring will come! It has rained and rained and rained so far this year. But then it did last year as well. Will we get a really dry summer again?



If so we need to catch that window between it being too wet to do anything down the allotments and baked solid. The joys of clay soil. Although I'd still rather have clay than sand. Anyway, April, for me anyway, is the big planting month. Outside and in the greenhouse. Time to really get going.

Mostly I grow the same stuff every year but I do like to try something new every year, that may or may not become a staple. Cucumbers were an experiment many years ago, I grow them every year now. I grew sweet potatoes last year and the year before. Jury's still out really, I shall grow them again this year. I am overwintering some plants on the window sill so we'll see how they do. For "real" potatoes I'm only going to grow early potatoes this year, and I picked a variety that is supposedly drought-tolerant. We'll see. Not sure what this year's experiment will be yet.

I work out what I'm going to grow and then look at the seed packet or book for when to plant it. I pick the mid-point of the suggested range as that is probably the optimum time to start something. Should it be planted inside or outside? I have found I get more success with starting things in things inside (well, in the greenhouse) rather than direct. Does that affect when to start it?

At that point I have a list with when to start them off so I sort my seed packets. And wait very impatiently to get started.

This year: Potatoes - earlies and sweet (which aren't really potatoes at all), Leeks and shallots (but not onions), Carrots and parsnips, peas and climbing french beans, purple sprouting broccoli, romanesco cauliflower and kohlrabi, cucumbers, courgettes and squash, sweetcorn (grown at home).

What are you going to grow?

Happy Growing, Alison

If you are interested in taking on an allotment please apply by contacting the Alveston Parish Clerk, Graham Smith using clerk@alvestonpc.co.uk If you would like more information about the allotments before applying please contact alveston.allotments@gmail.com





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The Severn Vale Art Trail, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, is set to be the biggest and best one ever, with more than 80 artists and makers across more than 35 venues. Taking place over the Mayday bank holiday weekend (**Thursday 30th April to Monday 4th May**), the trail has come a long way since its beginnings in 2006. Back then, Barbara Ray was Artistic Director of the Thornbury Arts Festival. “The Festival usually just chose one or possibly two artists or makers to have an exhibition in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall over the period of the Festival,” says Barbara. “I wanted to make a much more inclusive visual side of the Festival and the Open Studios movement was just picking up at that time.”

The first year had just 20 participants, with some high profile artists including painters Jane Lampard and Christine Russell and sculptor John Higgins. They ranged from Olveston in the south to Coaley in the north, all displayed in their own homes/studios. Today, as well as artists and makers opening up their own homes and studios, many also showcase their work in shared venues, such as village halls and churches.

“When we started, the trail was supported by South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) and Arts Council England South West,” says Barbara. “SGC employed a Consultant Deborah Harrison who had set up several other Open Studios before. She looked around the county and concluded that because Thornbury has a long-standing Festival with a viable Committee etc, that they would support the Open Studios on our side of the county and not elsewhere.”

And so the trail steadily grew. From 20 artists in 2006, to 31 in 2007, 40 in 2009 and eventually to more than 80 today. The trail has also broadened its appeal, with ceramicists, woodturners and even upholsterers joining the line up. “I am immensely proud of what the Severn Vale Art Trail has achieved,” says Barbara. “We don’t receive any external funding now and the trail is run entirely by volunteers, who simply believe passionately that local artists need a platform on which to showcase their work.” From Sharpness in the north to Tockington in the south; Wickwar in the east and Oldbury in the west, there is something for everyone on this year’s trail.

This is your chance to support local artists and purchase unique paintings, photography, ceramics, textiles, jewellery, upholstery, woodturning and much more. Or simply have an inspiring day out - as well as buying beautiful pieces, you will also have the opportunity to watch many of the artists and makers at work.

Many of the venues have refreshments or are located close to local coffee shops, and include some interesting churches, working studios and community buildings. For details of all the artists and venues (including accessibility, direction and opening hours) and to view the trail map, please visit www.severnvalertrail.org or pick up one of the printed trail guides from local shops and cafes.

Follow the Severn Vale Art Trail on Instagram and Facebook (@severnvalertrail) for all the latest updates.



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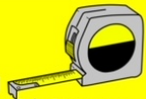
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'EASTWOOD GARDENERS' CLUBS

Tuesday April 14th - Our April meeting will be a talk by Helen Mugridge on Gloucestershire Wildlife.

Tuesday May 12th - The May meeting will be a talk by Duncan Coombs on Climbers and Wall Shrubs.

We meet at Turnberrie's in Thornbury, Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 start.

Visitors are welcome, £5 cash please.'

All Magazine Distributors and Contributors - please note:-

Alveston Magazine dates 2026

The printers will now deliver all magazines to St Helen's Church a few days before the last Tuesday of the month.

If those who usually receive a box or bag are able, please collect your batch from the church from Sunday services - or from 10.30 - 12.30 on the last Tuesday. Coffee and cake will be available.

(Brian and Elaine Lee are now retiring, having undertaken most of this process since the start of the pandemic restrictions.)

The deadline for contributions is the 1st of the previous month. We are planning **5 rather than the previous 10 editions per year.**

Edition	Deadline	Collection/Delivery
June/July/Aug	MAY 1	MAY 26
Sept/Oct	AUG 1	AUG 25
Nov/Dec/Jan	OCT 1	OCT 27

We can still take more adverts, see inside front cover for details

We can now be found online for reading and downloading at <https://alvestonmag.co.uk/>

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Intimate Image Abuse (Revenge Porn): The unauthorised distribution or sharing of intimate or explicit images or videos of individuals without their consent, typically with the intent to embarrass, humiliate, or coerce them.

Sextortion (Extortion or Blackmail Using Intimate Images): Coercive tactics involving the threat to distribute compromising images or videos obtained through webcam interactions unless the victim complies with the perpetrator's demands, usually monetary or sexual in nature.

Content for Ransom: Holding digital content or data hostage by encrypting or blocking access to it until a ransom is paid, commonly associated with ransomware attacks.

Identity Theft (Fake Profiles): The fraudulent use of someone else's personal information, such as name, photos, or other details, to create fake online profiles for deceptive purposes, often for financial gain or to tarnish the victim's reputation.

Hacked Social Media: Unauthorised access to and manipulation of social media accounts, often resulting in the dissemination of false information, spamming, or identity theft.

Hacked Accounts (Email, Gaming, Banks, Virtual Currency): Unauthorised access to various online accounts, including email, gaming platforms, banking services, and virtual currency wallets, often leading to financial loss or data breaches.

Banking or Virtual Currency Scams: Deceptive schemes targeting individuals' financial accounts or virtual currency holdings, aiming to trick victims into providing sensitive information or transferring funds to fraudulent entities.

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THE SOUND OF SILENCE

The silence was deafening. He stood underneath an endless expanse of silent stars in the dead of night, wondering where life was going to take him. An Owl flew up toward the glowing golden moon on silent wings.

Even the trees were silent with no wind to ruffle their branches, as they stood like sentinels outlining the wide expanse of the ice covered lake.

The stars slowly disappeared as cloud rolled across the heavens and large snowflakes began to fall silently to the ground, making intricate patterns on the earth. So very quiet you could almost hear the earth breathing if you listened hard enough, he was thinking to himself as he stood there among the silent snowflakes that were falling thick and fast now. The moon had now disappeared leaving a faint glow through the cloud, just to establish its place should the snow bearing cloud move away. A lone wolf howled in the distance, echoing around and around amongst the trees and across the lake, shattering the silence with its cry. The man started nervously and felt in his pocket for the reassuring hard feel of his revolver, just in case, he thought. The cry had seemed to come from the other side of the lake, so all is well, he thought to himself.

The cry came again. but was taken up by a second howl, which sounded nearer this time. Oh no, thought the man, one lone wolf I could cope with, but not a pack of them, glancing around nervously through the falling snow to the tree line, where he thought he saw movement. Difficult to tell through the falling swirling mass of white snowflakes. He stood very still. Peering hard into the distance, and, yes, he saw two or more grey shapes moving between the trees. I was not put on this earth to be feasted on by wolves, he thought to himself, so he slowly drew his revolver from his pocket, slipped off the safety catch and fired it twice into the air. It echoed around with shocking clarity into the silence of the night. He counted five wolves as they scattered and ran between the trees toward the safety of the mountains.

The lone man turned, fervently thanking the Lord for his lucky escape, and made his way back homeward, looking over his shoulder all the while. As he did so it stopped snowing, the cloud moved away and the full orb of the golden moon appeared once again, lighting his way along a sparkling silvery path through the snow, and no sign of the wolves.



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FAIR COP ALFIE TO HELP RE-OPEN THORNBURY'S COSSHAM HALL



Top comedian Alfie Moore will launch this year's Thornbury Arts Festival and help celebrate the re-opening of The Armstrong performance and community venue.

The policeman turned stand-up comic will appear in the renovated Cossham Hall, within The Armstrong, on Friday, April 10, making a welcome return to the festival after his sell-out show in 2023. Alfie has a big following due to his hit BBC Radio 4 series *It's a Fair Cop* and tickets for his show are expected to be in high demand.

The 2026 arts festival has been brought forward by five months so it can be among the first events in the previously named Armstrong Hall complex, which closed in 2020 but is being revived thanks to a major campaign.

Volunteers behind the festival only wrapped up their 2025 event last October but, keen to return to their traditional "home", swiftly devised a programme of four evening shows, a guided town walk and a science spectacular for families.

The schedule includes Cardiff Cotswold Opera, which aims to open the world of opera to new and less traditional audiences. It will bring the concert *Murder at the Opera* - an audience favourite of popular opera, musical theatre and fun - to town on Saturday, April 11.

Mark Thompson's Spectacular Science Show on the afternoon of Friday, April 17, is designed for both children and adults. It won the Best Kids' Show accolade at the Edinburgh Fringe and aims to show that science is not boring.

Later that day, audiences can experience National Theatre Live, where a play performed on stage in front of a theatre audience is filmed and subsequently screened at venues globally. In the first of what is hoped to be a regular The Armstrong event, *The Audience*, starring Helen Mirren, will be shown.

Bringing evening performances to a close on Saturday, April 18, will be The Churchfitters folk band and their high energy show. As well as "normal" instruments, they also play others created from such items as saucepans, saws and scrap metal.

The final event will be a guided walk led by local historian Meg Wise on the morning of Sunday, April 19, to feature places associated with the life of benefactor Handel Cossham.

Visit www.thornburyartsfestival.org.uk for full details of events and ticket information from March 2.



Notes from the Severn Vale Village Agent

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Attendance Allowance helps with extra costs if you have a disability or health condition severe enough to need someone to look after you. Depending on the level of care needed you could get £73.90 or £110.40 a week to help with personal support if you are of state pension age and have a physical disability, a mental disability, or health condition for which you have needed care for at least 6 months.

You could get extra pension credit, housing benefit or council tax reduction if you get attendance allowance. You do not have to have someone caring for you to claim. Attendance Allowance helpline is 0800 731 0122

See www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance

Christian Aid Week 2026 Money raised will help Christian Aid and its



Fridah tends her small city plot, tucked away at the end of an alley by her home in Dagoretti. Credit: David Macharia/Christian Aid

partners to support communities to find practical and sustainable ways out of poverty. This year's appeal is focusing on work in Nairobi, Kenya, where intense poverty means families have a daily struggle to feed their children.

With secure jobs hard to find, and most people earning less than a dollar a day, to cover school costs, rent and water, providing food for every meal is a relentless problem. But with tools, seeds and specialist training from Christian Aid's partner, Beacon of Hope, families are learning

how to make the most of a small space in the city to grow a steady supply of fresh vegetables to cook or sell.

To find out more about projects like this, visit caid.org.uk

To get involved with Christian Aid Week, visit caweek.org

ALVESTON LOCAL HISTORY MEETING FEBRUARY 2026

At this month's meeting we welcomed Liz Eddington to talk about the Quaker movement and some of the members who lived and died in the Thornbury area. Liz began by talking about the origins of the Religious Society of Friends. It began during the religious and political turmoil of the Civil War and the Commonwealth (1642-1660). Many people of all classes and religions were unhappy with the situations in which they found themselves. For many the close connection between religion and the state was unacceptable.

A shepherd from Fenny Drayton, George Fox, was one of them who gave much more time and thought to the problem than most. About 1652 he had a "revelation" decided that he needed to spend time in silence and wait for God to speak directly to him about how to act in any given situation. He started preaching to the Westmoreland Seekers who very readily took up his ideas.

They believed that everyone was equal, salvation was available to all, and everything and everywhere is sacred so there is no need for churches or sacraments. These were highly dangerous ideas in a society where social rank and power were seen as fundamental to the stability of the country as well as personal position. Originally calling themselves "Friends of the Truth" the term "Quaker" arose when a judge, on being told he should tremble at the word of the Lord, asked "should we all be quakers?".

George began to travel around the country promoting his ideas and in 1654 found a particularly receptive audience in the Bristol area. Olveston proved extremely fruitful, with 40 out of 100 families in the parish becoming Quakers. A burial ground established at Lower Hazel In 1656 is still in use today. By the 1660s the movement was perceived as a threat to the established order and persecution began. Quakers were banned from holding public office or be apprenticed to a trade guild. They were unable to recover debts, administer estates or become freemen of cities and were fined for refusing to take oaths. If they couldn't pay the fines any property they owned could be forfeit to the crown. Imprisonment was the usual punishment, or transportation to America.

Persecution reinforces a strong communal identity, which happened very quickly. A system of local, area, regional and national (yearly) meetings was set up to govern the practical running of the organisation and administer discipline where necessary. It also led to the members keeping a low profile, "Quietism", after being publicly very active in the early years.

The restrictions on occupations available led to many Quaker men going into trade and becoming very successful. Chocolate manufacturers and shoe makers were mostly Quakers. The Derbys, iron founders in Coalbrookdale, were another highly successful family. In the Bristol area Joseph Sturge VI was involved very early on in the campaign to abolish slavery. Emily campaigned for women's rights, and had she not died prematurely due to falling off her horse would perhaps have accomplished a great deal more. She worked with Octavia Hill to provide decent housing for the poor. Paul Sturge was a conscientious objector in WW1.

At this point time unfortunately ran out and were had to close the meeting. It had been a fascinating and informative evening. Thank you very much Liz.

ALVESTON GARDEN ASSOCIATION - AGA - REPORTS

The last AGA meeting of 2025 featured our chairman, George Hargreaves, talking about our visit to memorable gardens in the Scottish Borders. Beginning with the exciting RHS Bridgewater site near Manchester where the party admired the astilbes and veronicastrum in the pink/purple colour range. There were some examples of cloud pruning of conifers. Pink and red hydrangeas, bright orange heleniums, blue perovskias and plumbago offered different colour palettes. Moving north into Scotland the AGA group visited Kailzie Garden near Peebles where there were tall Irish yews and herbaceous borders of *Campanula lactifolia*, salvias, and cactus dahlias, plus beds of roses, begonias and geraniums.

The next stop was Dawyk Botanical Gardens, which featured shuttlecock ferns and spotted orchids and lots of lichen (an indicator that there was little pollution). Foxgloves grew alongside Martagon lilies. The trees included Chinese cork oaks and Chilean pines.



Mellerstain Gardens, owned by the Earl of Haddington, was visited next and had impressive herbaceous gardens seen here. <<<

Arriving in Edinburgh next some AGA members visited the Royal Yacht Britannia whilst others went to the Botanical gardens. The traveller, George Forrest, sent over 25,000 packets of seeds back to Edingburgh Botanic Gardens from his different expeditions!

The next garden visited was Floors Castle with its red/orange/ pink borders, and finally there were smaller National Trust Gardens at Priorwood and Harmony House. All were resplendent in their summer flower displays and foliage.

The first meeting of January 2026 featured a young speaker, Josh Egan Wyre from Pershore Horticultural college, talking about his role in educating 275 students on apprenticeships or full time courses as well as students on short courses.

From the college plant nursery he had brought along a range of winter flowering shrubs such as the red cornus Baton Rouge and the white willows such as *Salix Alba*, as well as the willow *Vitallina Britzensis* with its red/orange stems. He recommended hollies with purple/green stems and irregular gold markings such as Golden Milkboy and an *ilex crossgilliana* with purple leaves. *Viburnum Fragmentissimum* was favoured because of its pink tinged white flowers and wonderful scent .



The cotoneaster Pershore had red/pink berries. Carokia Webbs Wonder was also praised because of its unusual frosted chocolate flowers. On *Arbelia grandifolia* sometimes the reddish sepals remained until the winter and were used by florists. *Brachyoglottis* with yellow flowers and silver leaves was ideal for damp soils. The honey bush, *Melianthus major*, smelt of peanut butter but would only be found in conservatories. (We must have been smelling the wrong plant because peanut butter was not recognizable to us!) The tall fronds of phormium with their purple flowers added colour to the garden through their variegated foliage. The purple/pink sedums were good for colour too, particularly Purple Emperor. Josh also recommended miscanthus for moving silver stalks in winter and the

36 clematis Freckles or *Cirrhosa* for more subtle winter colours.

There was a good attendance at the February meeting. An extended visit to 8 gardens of Hampshire and Dorset is being arranged in May. Topical tips included sowing chillies, peppers, onions and sweet peas and pruning deciduous hedges and late-flowering clematis. We then welcomed plantswoman Julie Richie to talk about the “Perennial” Year – which perennial plants she likes to grow at her nursery in Tewkesbury, which cultivars she finds best and tips for cultivation.

Julie began with a reed grass - *Calamagrostis*. It grows tall feathery plumes in summer which hold on through the autumn and winter to provide long-lasting structural interest. February/March - *Cyclamen coum* is a very low-growing pink or white flowered plant which provides colourful ground cover in winter, particularly under trees and shrubs.

Iris unguicularis also provides interest. Try “Mary Barnard”. The old leaves should be removed in March. *Yellow Epimedium versicolor sulphurea* is another good ground cover plant for dry shade. Julie also mentioned the dry flower stalks of *Phlomis russiliana* and the attractive 2 tone green leaves of *Arum italicum*.

For spring into early summer we find hellebores in full growth, particularly the pink and yellow *Eric Smithii*, whilst the *brunnera* (perennial forget-me-not) Jack Frost was thriving in the shade and *arabis Arctic Joy* (white) was very floriferous. *Blue Ensign pulmonaria*, which likes moist light shade, fades from pink to blue and contrasts well with the *erysium Apricot Twist*. Perennial wallflowers, which like well-drained soil, start flowering about April and will repeat flower but need summer pruning. They can die suddenly but take readily from cuttings, so propagate some when pruning.

Alliums make a good spring show of tall colourful globular flowerheads but the foliage dies as the flowers open. Presumably this can be cut down? They like well-drained soil.

Try “Globemaster” or “Purple Sensation”. Geraniums “Ann Folkard”, “Elke” and “Orion” are well worth growing, as are geums “Hill Top Beacon” and “Totally Tangerine”.

In May pinky red *astrantias* *Hadspen Blood* and *Elaine’s Pink* came out, as did the sea holly (*Eryngium*) - one for moist soil. Red and yellow *euphorbia Griffithii* were impressive. By June tangerine geums were in bloom, plus pinks and 3-foot-tall orange *trifoliata*.

Echinacea are good for bees and butterflies. They thrive in full sun in a well-drained soil. *Agapanthus* need plenty of water to initiate the formation of flower buds for the following year - *Midnight Star* is a particularly vibrant blue. *Crocsmia* “Paul’s Best Yellow” goes well with it.

July - Colourful plants include yellow *phlomis* florets.

Penstemons come in a wide range of colours such as those of *Victoria plum* and *garnet* and are easy to grow. *Veronica* (right) flowers through July and August and is good for pollinators.

In September *rudbekia Goldstern* and the *eupatorium Purple Emperor* were flowering. *Sedum Matrona* and *sedum Karl* had very healthy growth too.

Michaelmas Daisies provide an excellent autumn display. There are many cultivars and colours including *Alma Potschke* and *Helen Picton*. They like good drainage. Old Court Nursery at Colwall, near Malvern specialises in growing them and is open to the public.

Finally Julie recommended hardy chrysanthemums with the deep pink “*Bretforton Road*” and orange flowers of “*Golden Greenheart*” as two of her favourites.

Finally, *nerine Bowdenii* and *Dixter orange chrysanthemum* were in full bloom along with *cyclamen Hederifolium* and *iris Foetidissima*.



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