

ROYAL MAIL CHOOSES HOLLOWELL WINDOW FOR FESTIVE STAMP



As you will no doubt have seen, the Christmas 2020 stamps carry the theme of the Nativity as shown through stained-glass windows. You may also know that one of these stamps is taken from St James Church in Hollowell. Reverend Allison Twigg said that she was thrilled that the

window was selected, **“It is indeed an honour and will bring much needed joy to our village community in 2020”**.

It is not known how the window came to be selected. However, a number of organisations, including The Victorian Society, have reviewed the windows in the church over the years and it is thought that it had been selected from the archives of one of these societies.

The Church of St James was funded by the Rev JD Watson in 1840, and designed by Sampson Kempthorne. It is in the Gothic style, and is known for its beautiful stained-glass

windows in the eastern apse of the chancel. The windows were designed by Henry Holiday and made by J Powell & Sons, in 1863. Each lancet window features a single narrative panel contained within a quatrefoil, set against a background of decorative paint work in the manner of the 13th century Decorated style. The north-eastern window depicts the Baptism of Christ, the central the Crucifixion, and the south-eastern, as in the stamp, shows the Virgin Mary and Christ child within the stable. The brightly coloured pieces of flashed ruby glass, and turquoise, blue, pink and purple tones demonstrates **the wide variety and high quality of the glass made at Powell’s glassworks.**

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Can you solve our
FESTIVE PUZZLES?
See pages 10-11

There’s something for all ages

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CONGRATULATIONS TO WELFORD CHRISTMAS TREE FARM—ON THEIR WAY TO DOWNING STREET (AGAIN)!

Local family business and Village Link advertiser, Welford Christmas Tree Farm has won the Christmas Tree equivalent of **‘The Oscars’ for the fourth time, with their beautiful 2020 Festive Wreath**. This means their wreath will hang on the door of no.10 Downing Street this year. Congratulations to Will and Ella Miles! More good news—the Christmas Tree Farm is open for purchases. Please check their website for information, or their facebook page. Email enquiries to: elves@welfordchristmastreefarm.co.uk Website: welfordchristmastreefarm.co.uk Tel: 01858 657008



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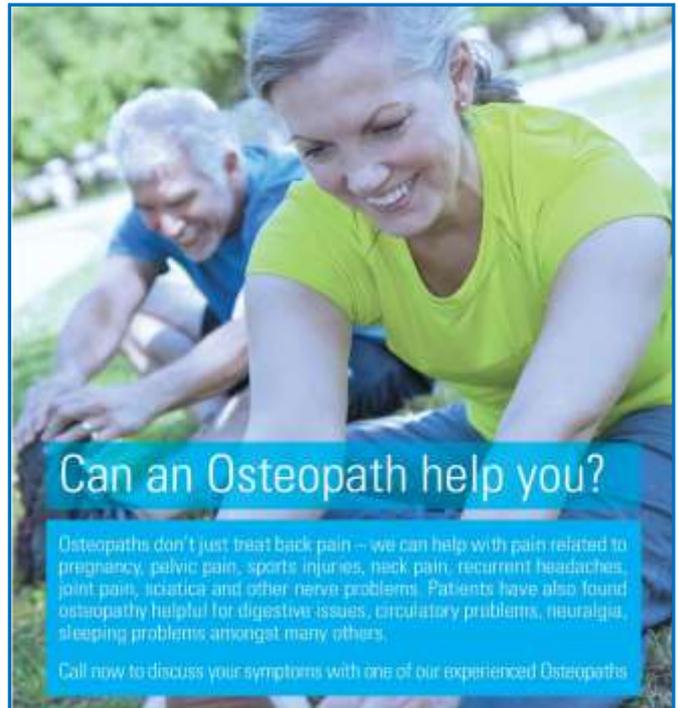


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COLD ASHBY NEWS

MAGGIE'S LITTLE MIRACLES

An uplifting true rescue story of hope and community teamwork

VILLAGE LINK

is a bi-monthly publication delivered free of charge to households in Cold Ashby, Cottesbrooke, Creton, Guilsborough, Hollowell, Teeton and Thornby. It is produced and distributed by volunteers. Due to restrictions of time and space there is no guarantee that copy submitted will be used. All funds received from advertising go towards printing costs.

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Cheques payable to 'Village Link'

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Monday 4th January 2021

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They say Christmas is a time for miracles but for the residents of Cold Ashby their little miracles came at the end of October when a stray cat arrived and brought the village some much needed hope and joy to brighten these dark and difficult days.

This is her story:

Maggie, as I've named her, turned up in our garden at the beginning of October. At first, I didn't take too much notice of her as we always have a lot of cats passing through on the lookout for a free meal. But Maggie just kept coming back and when I noticed her wandering outside in the pouring rain during a torrential storm, I knew something wasn't right. I tried to get her in out of the cold and wet but when I approached her she just ran and hid under a bush. At least she kept dry under there, but I was very concerned for her welfare.... Why would a cat be out in a storm....? Quickly, I grabbed my phone, took a photo of her and posted it to our village Facebook site to see if I could track down her owner. I posted her picture...I knocked on doors...but nobody knew who she was or where she came from...

The storm passed and Maggie continued to come back to our garden, I continued to feed her 2-3 times a day....she was always hungryAfter a few days, I was beginning to gain her trust and managed to get a better photo and reposted it to the village Facebook sites.

The very next morning there was some newssome news that I wasn't expecting... whilst out looking for hedgehogs, my neighbour spotted 3 kittens looking just like Maggie, peeping through the foliage in his garden –the mystery was solved - Maggie was hanging around because she had a family to look after.

Over the next couple of days, plans were hatched as to how we could rescue this little family and get them into foster care so they would be safe and cared for. Neighbours rallied round...traps and cages were borrowed and fortunately a foster mum, who is an ex-resident of Cold Ashby, was found and was willing to take them in and could provide them with the specialised care that was urgently needed.

Time was of the essence for their rescue...we didn't know how old the kittens were but judging by the photo we estimated that they were over a month old... they needed to be rescued soon to ensure they didn't remain feral and have no chance of adoption.

The rescue team co-ordinated their plans and it was decided that the rescue would take place **in three days' time... this would give everyone enough time to make the necessary arrangements and give me enough time to encourage Maggie to eat from the cage where she would be trapped.**

Rescue-day arrived, fortunately it was a clear, crisp morning and everyone was ready.

COLD ASHBY NEWS

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE ...

Maggie arrived at my garden at first light, just as she'd been doing for the past few days. I prepared the covered cage with her favourite food and she trotted in hungrily. Once I could hear her loud slurps, I steadied my nerves... this was it!! I stealthily moved towards the cage and quickly shut the door. She was in... part one of the rescue was complete.

Part two was not as straight forward...The saying "like herding cats" is often used and the rescue team can certainly put testament to the fact that cats, particularly kittens, are not for herding!!!

After a long game of hide and seek, we began to think that Maggie had moved her kittens to another garden. Five of us trawled the garden looking under every bush and conifer but they were nowhere to be found. We extended the search to neighbouring gardens but still nothing. After about half an hour, we all began to feel a little despondent but then just as hope was fading a kitten was spotted under the conifer in the front garden. Armed with a fishing net and towels we advanced to the conifer but in the blink of an eye it was off with the speed of a bullet...back round the boundary wall...through the foliage... and under the cover of the borders. At this point **we all realised that "the herding" technique was not going to work....we** needed a plan B.

Plan B involved using Maggie as bait. We fetched Maggie...who was remarkably calm and relaxed in her cage ...so much so that she continued to eat the food that was placed inside... we placed her by the conifer where we had seen the first kitten and put some small bowls of cat milk beside her. Some of her rescue team left, just leaving a couple of members watching intently from their bedroom window.

The bait was working...all three kittens came out and were lapping up the milk and playing beside their mum. We had flushed them out of hiding but the real challenge was how to catch them because as soon as one of us approached they would retreat under the cover of the conifer...we would need to catch them in a trap. Luckily, we had been lent a trap from a cat rescue organisation so this was put in place laced with milk.

We decided that we couldn't risk setting it up as a sprung trap in case one of them got injured as the trap was sprung... they would have to be trapped individually by closing the door by hand ...it would be a risky strategy because of their skittishness but it was our only option.

We knew that we'd have more of a chance if we just left one member of the team to do the catching - **so that's what we did**

and thankfully after a couple of hours I got the phone call to say two had been caught and were finally secure in their holding cage (after one had escaped from it and was charging around the garage - fortunately, it had been safely recaptured and was back in the now re-enforced netted cage). However, number 3 was proving to be a bit more tricky and was much more skittish and shy. It was going to be a longer waiting game for this one. After what seemed like an eternity, I got the call to say number 3 was safely caught and all three, along with Maggie, were ready

to be transported to their foster home. A call was made to their foster mum, Maggie was loaded into one car and the kittens into another and triumphantly we were off, calling at the vets on the way.

Maggie and each of her kittens were given a **quick examination by the vet...he deemed them far too "lively" and feral to be able to** have a full check-up but concluded them all to be healthy and informed us that Maggie was unchipped.

On arrival at their foster home, Maggie and her kittens were transferred to their holding cage so they could all settle in together and recover from the stress of their capture and adjust to their new home.

We had done it! We were jubilant in our success and congratulated each other on our great achievement none of us knowing that this was not quite the end of the rescue.

I was up early the day after the rescue to update the village Facebook page about our success. I had already decided that if Maggie was unchipped I was going to adopt her and bring her home once the kittens no longer needed her. But the kittens would need to spend quite some time in foster care ...they were very feisty and it would take a lot of time, care and socialisation if they had any chance of adoption so I decided to set up a crowdfunding site to help pay for their rehabilitation. This complete, I went off shopping and just as I was half way through, I got a call from one of the rescue team...there was another kitten...another neighbour had heard it meowing and calling

for its mother. On arrival home, I dashed round to the garden and it was confirmed...there was another and it was up the conifer tree calling pitifully for Maggie.

We knew we had to move quickly...this kitten had been alone on a bitterly cold and wet night and had not eaten or drank for over 24 hours...we were all really worried for its welfare. We **called Maggie's foster mum and told her that we had another** and would get it over to her as soon as possible. We knew that



Kittens nos. 1 & 2 captured



Kitten no. 3 captured

COLD ASHBY NEWS

this was going to be really difficult task... herding wouldn't work and we didn't have Maggie ...our only chance was to get it into the trap and hope that hunger and thirst would drive it in. We laced the trap with food and cat milk, covered it with a towel and this time we set it sprung - as there was only one there was less chance of injury. The trap was set and placed next to the conifer. We were ready! We left the kitten in peace for a while hoping it would soon come down and enter. Finally, after what seemed like an age, with a rescuers help, it was chased into the trap and was safely caught. Our mammoth mission was at last complete and the little bedraggled kitten was quickly transferred back to Maggie and the rest of the family. After a quick charge around the cage, it soon realised it was safe and it snuggled down with one of its siblings. The rescue was finally complete....Maggie and all of her kittens were at last, safe, warm and cared for. Thanks to the Cold Ashby community who helped with the rescue and have supported the Kittens fund, Maggie and her kittens have a safe, bright and happy future. With love, time and **patience it is hoped that they will all adjust to their new lives.** It's going to be a long road for all of them but with the continued support it is possible....miracles really do happen and not just at Christmas.

If you enjoyed reading our story of hope and would like to **contribute to Maggie's kitten fund I am enclosing the link to the Just Giving page.** Any donation large or small would be greatly appreciated and will be used for the care of the kittens until they are rehomed. **If you would like to see the progress of Maggie's**

family please check The Cold Ashby Village Facebook page where I post regular updates. www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/fionagunn-stokes

On behalf of Maggie and her little family we would like to wish everyone a healthy, happy and safe Christmas with some of your own Christmas miracles.

Fiona Gunn-Stokes



Maggie and family in foster care



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COTTESBROOKE NEWS



AUTUMN REMEMBERED

A much-maligned season, Autumn is not just a period of transition but has its own identity of glorious golds and reds, muted greens, low sunshine and enigmatic mists.

You walk round the fields and definitely get the feeling that the Earth is being put to bed. The cover crops are slowing down, the hedges have been cut, the streams flowing as they should. The birds gather in small flocks, a mix of finches fly from line to seed and back again. The migrant blackbirds are back, stripping the rowan berries, and the chattering red-wing have also started to appear. It is a time of feeding up and settling down.

KEEPING COTTESBROOKE CLEAN

Not unsurprisingly, the number of visitors coming to explore Cottesbrooke and walk in the beautiful countryside has increased this year. In fact weekends can be very busy indeed.

Whilst it is important that people get out into the countryside and enjoy all that it has to offer, it is also important to keep it clean and tidy. To this end, The Estate ask that people clean up after their dog, take their litter home, and park responsibly.



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Autumn 2020

Saxon Spires Virtual Carers Drop-In

The Saxon Spires Patient Participation Group is working with the Practice and Northamptonshire Carers to offer a Virtual Carers Drop-In session on Zoom, each month. The past few months have been especially difficult for carers. If you look after someone, you are welcome to join the meeting. They will be held on the first and third Tuesday each month 1.30pm - 2.30pm. To join the meeting call: Northamptonshire Carers on 01933 677837 or 01933 677907 for log-in details.

SSPPG Meetings

The bimonthly SSPPG Meetings are now being held on Zoom. The next meeting is on Tuesday 1st December 6.30pm. If you are interested in supporting the work of the Practice and would like to join the group, please contact the Secretary re information about the SSPPG contact the Secretary, Barbara Hogg on 01604 880552 or email hoggbc66@gmail.com There is more information about our meetings and events, on the Saxon Spires website.

CREATON NEWS

CREATON PLAYING FIELD

John Love: The Association would like to pay tribute to John Love whose sad passing was reported in the last edition of Village Link. John was a very long standing member of our committee, serving a spell as Field Manager, and always happy to **help at our events. We are considering how best to mark John's contribution with a permanent reminder on the field. Our thoughts and condolences are with John's family.**

Vandalism: We have suffered recently with a small spate of vandalism on the field which is extremely disappointing. We are a charity with a hard working team of volunteers and during the past 12 months we have been unable to undertake any fund-raising events. We now find ourselves spending our reserves **unnecessarily. With everyone's help, hopefully the culprits will be caught and deterred from future anti-social behaviour.**

Dogs on the field: Dogs are not permitted to be exercised on the field. Not everyone appreciates the presence of dogs and therefore they are only allowed to be walked whilst on a lead across the two Public footpaths which pass through part of the field.

FOSM HISTORY GROUP

Earlier in the year the committee decided it would not be possible to hold our meetings enjoyably or safely. This was a hard decision as we had an exciting programme and our 20th anniversary celebration to look forward to. However I want to assure members and anyone who was thinking of joining that we hope to have a series of talks and events starting in September 2021.

The History Group is important to people in the village as a sociable and friendly meeting place and of course for our fund raising for the fabric of St. Michael and All Angels. So remember while we go through winter and lock-down, we will meet again.

Kate McEwan, Chair

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WALKING GROUP

What lovely weather the Creaton Walking Group had for the October walk which took in the beautiful Ravensthorpe reservoir and the fields to the west of Coton. The Group were delighted to welcome a new walker. Always a pleasure to have new walkers.



The Creaton Walking Group have been helping out with a **new long distance path from Lowestoft to St David's** which goes through Northamptonshire so the November walk included part of the route by Brixworth. However, due to restrictions the Group were not able to walk together. The Group remain committed to regularly walk the footpaths and bridlepaths in our area to enable these to be retained and maintained.

As well as the monthly walks on the second Saturday of the month meeting at 10am at Creaton Iychgate, there is the **annual New Year's Day walk starting at 11am.**

Dates of next walks, assuming restrictions allow us to walk as a Group, are:

- Saturday 12 December 10am
- Friday 1st January 11am
- Saturday 9 January 10am

New walkers and well-behaved dogs always welcome. Walks are about 8 miles followed by an optional pub lunch when restrictions allow. Happy walking!



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CREATON PARISH COUNCIL

Creaton Parish Council Contact Details:

Parish Clerk: You can contact our Parish Clerk for Creaton Parish Council, Katrina Jones on creatonpc@gmail.com or by telephone on 01604 740862.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are available on the village website www.creaton.org.uk



Meetings are held bi-monthly at 7.30pm on zoom. The first 15 minutes is reserved for the public forum.

Parish Council Meeting dates 2021:

Meetings will continue to be held on the second Tuesday of each month.

The Parish Council will continue to hold meetings on Zoom until further notice. If you would like to join one of our meetings you will find the zoom meeting details on the agenda. You can join by telephone if you do not have access to a computer.

Planning Applications: Please look on the Daventry District Council website for full details of all Planning Applications.

Speed Signs



Some of you might have noticed the new speed awareness signs around Creaton, recently purchased by your parish council. It is our hope these devices will make a difference in slowing the traffic through the village. If you would like to become involved in the management of these signs we would like to hear from you. They collect data regarding the number of vehicles, their speed, and the time of day. This data can be used for research into traffic management, but currently we are not using this data. If you have a laptop running Windows with a Bluetooth connection, and an interest in spreadsheets and data collection, and you would be prepared to volunteer a small amount of time, then please get in touch.

On a more practical level, one device requires its battery changing about once a week, so it can be moved to several sites around the village. If you are interested in helping with **these duties, we would be grateful of the assistance. You don't** have to be a parish councillor or even live in Creaton, but you could report your findings to our bi-monthly meetings. We have protective clothing, spare keys, passwords for the bluetooth connection and training on the software for whoever might be interested.

Please contact Chris Reading on 01604 505788 or creadingcreatonpc@btinternet.com

Consultation on Council Tax

Residents are encouraged to respond to a current consultation on possible changes to council tax as a result of the local government reorganisation. The link is

<https://futurenorthants.citizenspace.com/lctrs-west/2021-22>

The deadline for responding is 13th December.



THANK YOU to Welford Xmas Tree Farm for again generously donating the village Xmas Tree to Creaton.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
THANK YOU TO ALL RESIDENTS

The Parish Council wishes all residents a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The parish council would also like to thank all residents who have showed their community spirit this year, pulling together to help those in need or isolated as a result of the pandemic through the village help scheme as well as through individual acts of kindness. We also thank all our key workers for their invaluable contributions during the pandemic.

As always don't forget you can contact the parish clerk, Katrina Jones, if you need assistance in identifying who to contact for any help you need.

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CREATON NEWS

CREATON URC

The Bible features a fair amount of Lamenting, not only in the book of Lamentations. A formal Lament has a definite structure:

- * It begins with an address to God
- * It continues by making detailed complaints – what has happened? Who is hurting and why? Whose fault, if anyone's, is it?
- * The next stage expresses trust in God
- * Then there is a direct appeal to God
- * Finally (if the writer is ready) a vow of praise

Perhaps you might try writing a Lament, it is a different way of focussing prayer.

What have you been missing most during Lock-down? For many of us, living alone, it has been the physical contact with another person we have missed - a hug, a handshake, a pat on the back, Passing the Peace during worship. Jesus was tactile during his ministry. He reached out to the sick, he shared hospitality with friends, he gathered with more than 6 people on a hillside. And his ministry was betrayed with a kiss. He was roughly crucified. God came to earth as a flesh and blood human and shared the physicality of being human. Even when we cannot embrace one another we can remember that he has never left us, he embraces us in love and for that we can give thanks.

The Creaton United Reformed Church will be continuing to hold two services each month in December and January 2021 (on the second and fourth Sundays of the month). Due to current restrictions, seating is limited and those wanting to attend **worship need to phone and "reserve a seat" (01 604 505650).**

Services

December: 13th at 11.00 am will be our Gift Service. As a congregation we are donating items for family Christmas Hampers for the Hope Centre, and we are also accepting warm clothes for them too. Poppies Coffee Shop room will be available to receive donations between 2pm to 4 pm on Wednesday 9th December. Thank you.

We shall have a service Christmas Day, starting at 10.00 a.m. but no service on 27th.

We continue to hold our friends and neighbours in prayer and wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with unexpected Joy.

Shalom

Rev'd Elizabeth Kemp



On 26th September in St Michael's, Verity Smith and Michael de Vries had the first wedding in Creaton for many months. The couple said that their first plan was to marry at Easter and for obvious reasons the original wedding had to be cancelled. **"This left us feeling blue, but not for too long, as we decided to go ahead and re-plan as soon as the restrictions allowed us to do so. We contacted Reverend Allison in the summer and her kind and calming influence reassured us that a socially distanced, 'covid safe' wedding was absolutely possible."**

Despite both being from Creaton families, they did not meet until 2017. "We do feel grateful that we could get married in a beautiful church, with close family and friends present, in the village that we grew up in. It was a day full of love, hope and unity."

We wish them every joy in their life together.

CREATON SINGERS

Carol Singing! Yes, the Creaton Singers are planning on Carol Singing this year, subject to restrictions in place on the day and the weather!

The date is Tuesday 22 December and we shall start at 7pm on The Green, then move on to the Corner of Cottesbrooke Road, High Street by Horseshoe Close, ending at Teeton Lane by The Village Hall.

If you would like the Singers to sing outside your gate or front door please phone Jane on 505610 or ask any member of the Creaton Singers. Let us know if you would like us to sing a particular carol.

Merry Christmas and a very happy and healthy New Year to all Village Link readers from the Creaton Singers.

CREATON WI

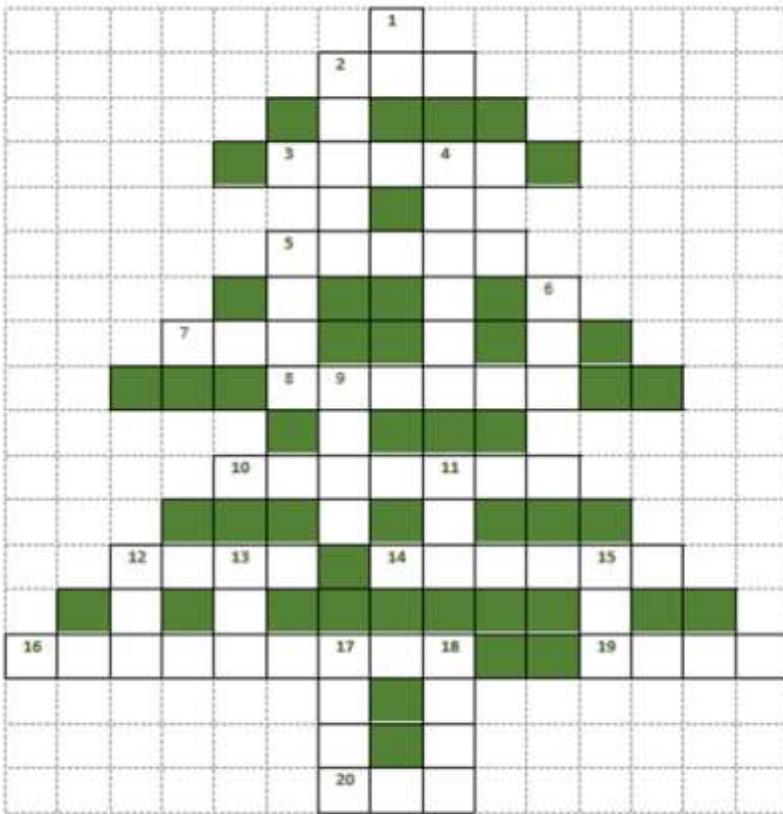


Before the Rule of Six you may have seen us meeting on Creaton Playing Field (left), once a fortnight. We will continue to get together in smaller groups for coffee and a chat for as long as we can, as friendship and support are more important than ever in these isolating and challenging times.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

HAPPY QUIZMAS!

CHRISTMAS TREE CROSSWORD



ACROSS:

- 2 Contains 2 Down (2)
- 3 Merlin was good at this (5)
- 5 Preservative (5)
- 7 He's good at building (3)**
- 8 Countdown to Christmas (4)
- 10 Go round (7)
- 12 Crisp and ... (4)**
- 14 Packaging tied with (6)
- 16 Words on a Christmas card (9)
- 19 Happiness (4)
- 20 Things stand on this (3)

DOWN:

- 1 Alright (2)
- 2 These sparkle (5)
- 4 Frosty hanging (6)
- 5 Swedish band (4)
- 6 Insect (3)
- 9 Symbol of Peace (4)
- 11 Allow (3)
- 12 Night before Christmas (3)
- 13 We do too much of this at Christmas (3)
- 15 Old horse (3)
- 17 Christmas (4)
- 18 A carol is one of these (4)

Christmas wordsearch

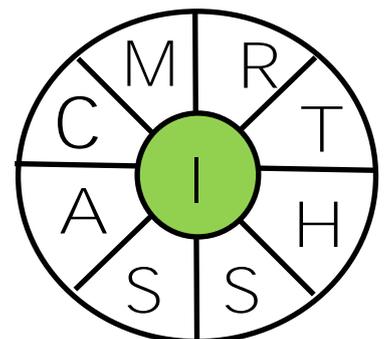
C	O	T	T	E	S	B	R	O	O	K	E	S	H
G	B	L	L	A	S	S	G	S	I	I	T	T	A
B	H	L	L	H	C	W	S	I	H	C	R	F	A
C	O	T	T	K	G	E	S	A	G	O	E	I	T
C	H	I	Y	O	I	L	H	U	U	L	E	G	E
R	O	N	B	J	Y	N	G	O	O	D	S	B	E
E	L	S	N	E	T	L	G	L	R	A	G	I	T
A	L	E	R	S	L	O	I	S	O	S	G	L	O
T	O	L	O	U	R	G	S	Y	B	H	R	O	N
O	W	S	H	S	H	R	B	H	S	B	N	R	H
N	E	L	T	T	E	O	T	R	L	Y	L	A	L
C	L	E	S	L	O	I	A	B	I	S	U	C	T
W	L	T	L	O	I	T	T	O	U	S	O	I	C
L	B	E	C	I	S	T	H	I	G	E	U	T	L

GIFTS
TINSEL
GUILDBOROUGH
KINGS
LIGHTS
CREATON
STAR
TEETON
COTTESBROOKE
HOLLOWELL
COLD ASHBY
TREE
THORNBY
CAROL
JESUS

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1588483/>

POLYGON

From these letters make words of three or more letters always including the central letter. Answers must be in the Concise Oxford Dictionary. The nine letters make up a seasonal word. How many words can you make, together with this 9 letter word?



HAPPY QUIZMAS!

THE LOCAL SCENE

CAN YOU FIND THE LOCAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES LURKING HERE?

By joining parts of ends and beginnings of words, or including whole words: e.g. *Everdon* in this first paragraph:

I am not one to *ever do n*othing. This week I have to fix a sink for Linda, vent Ryan's cooker, and do Edna's decor by Thursday.

I like a round of golf and my long range par keeps my handicap down. When his ball went in the rough today, quick off the tee Tony sneakily tried to move it but, being stung by a wasp, rat Tony got his just desserts.

I was not surprised when Flo remembered that neither Tom nor Tony had been in Pearl's Bar tonight. Tom gets cramp which, by drinking gin, he can just avert on one leg.

The rascal dwelling opposite me has a lawn you never see a weed on. It's made of concrete and is about an acre, at one time with a titanic old ash by the pond. His dog eats the flies he likes to swat for dinner.

Why has an ogre a thought only for his stomach? Borg has sausage markings Thor permitted him to have tattooed on his arm, and spits for Denmark at the Alternative Olympics. He's good, and people say he should dwell in G.B. or ought to have got citizenship with his son Aseb years ago. The finale feast had donuts brought on, and some vile broth we'll not describe.

His wife Donna is a liability steering a boat. Her great bow dented my side and cricked the neck of my grandma.

I dwell next door to Tonya. She often plays classical music and the one on the B flat horn by Bach is lovely.

How much is a farthing worth nowadays? I found one under the floor whilst looking for a jewel Tonya had lost last week. It will be fine, don't worry, I said, and told her I would find a lamp or torch to bring tonight to reflect on a mirror so I could see round the corner.

Do you remember the farces on B.B.C. television starring Brian Rix? I.T.V. tried to nab Rix, worth more in the 1970's than any other actor, to try to reach a broader audience.

At that time there was an old cab ramp to nearly the top of Bridge Street which was a shortcut I used to take up to school. One teacher, Mr Charles, toned his biceps in the gym by lifting the bar by one hand. Mr Bott was a terror, and no Bott lesson would end without us leaving with raps to nearly all our knuckles for being bad by not learning our spellings.

Compiled by Roger Brandon-Jones

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot 11 differences in the two pictures of Father Christmas below?

Younger children might like to colour in the pictures.



Answers will be on the Website: villagelink.org.uk

Unless otherwise stated, all puzzles compiled/drawn by the Village Link

GUILSBOROUGH NEWS

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Thanks to the sterling efforts of not just our group of Covid response volunteers but every parishioner doing what was needed to keep us safe during the Lockdown earlier in the year, we are proud to inform you that not one but two awards have been given to the Village. Well done everyone! Pictured is the Community Champions Award plus we've been informed we have been awarded the Unsung Heroes Rose of Northamptonshire which will be presented early in the New Year.

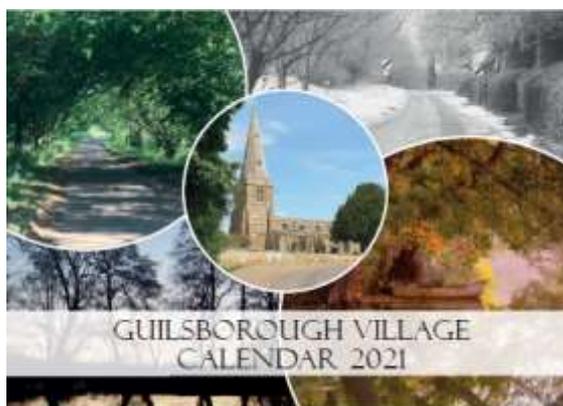


We are continuing to monitor traffic congestion throughout the village but in particular in Nortoft. A specialist in traffic management has been tasked to look at how best we may be able to manage the problem, but he isn't available until after the current period of Lockdown. Meanwhile we would like to thank the vehicle owners who have relocated where they are parking; this has helped a lot.

We are again contributing towards our now customary

Christmas tree on The Green with the hope we will be able to gather there, socially distanced of course.

A group of our residents have got together and organised the printing of a calendar to raise funds for a local charity. It features lots of colour photos taken by many of our residents and includes scenes from throughout the period of Lockdown - a hopefully unique experience! The printer, CDS of Mkt. Harborough, has very generously printed them free of charge so this is a great opportunity to raise as much as possible for the Saxon Spires Medical Equipment Fund. Cost is £9.50 and available from Gary Ashworth on 01604 743762 or 07896 559662.



PLAYING FIELD REPORT

Football Report

Many football games and practices have taken place this season at the Playing Field next to Guilsborough Academy, with two Guilsborough coaches. A second Under-12 size pitch is being marked-out as sometimes there are two Under 12 teams playing at home on the same day; it will also reduce the wear on the main full-size pitch, which also has another Under-12s pitch marked out in blue within its boundary. The Under-18s play on the full-size pitch on Sundays, with most boys from Guilsborough School. The GPFA has completed a PitchPower questionnaire on the surface and subsoil condition of the 3 pitches at Guilsborough Playing Field, involving taking 36 measurements, 27 photos and soil samples. PitchPower is linked to the Football Foundation, and one of the latter's objectives is to improve the standard of football pitches throughout England. The Football Foundation's

subsequent report has proposed that remedial work is needed over several years at a cost that they estimate of about £8,000 p.a. The GPFA has registered, but not yet applied, for grants from the Football Foundation to improve the state of the pitches, that would involve regular slitting, vertidrainning (30cm spikes), weedkilling, fertilising regularly, seeding and more. We hope the application will be successful.



General Report

The GPFA is a charity, and is therefore obliged to demonstrate that it spends money wisely, e.g. on electricity. It has therefore recently been agreed with FutureUtilityConsultants that electricity will be supplied by British Gas from September 2021 for three years at the same price, 10% less than the existing prices of EON, the current supplier, who would not quote as they only do so within six months of renewal. FutureEnergyConsultants may be of interest to other charities as they have a dedicated team who negotiate with electricity suppliers on behalf of charities and business customers.

The GPFA would like to thank responsible dog walkers for keeping their dogs on leads around the field perimeter and ensuring that they are "emptied" prior to a perimeter walk. As the GPFA approaches the end of another busy year, there is a desire from a few on the General Committee to "retire" and hand over their duties to others. "Volunteerism" has been a defining feature of English society for many generations, enabling activities to continue for the benefit of the local and wider communities. The GPFA believes that this "volunteerism" spirit exists in Guilsborough, and would welcome hearing from those who can offer their time and skills to maintain the Playing Field for the benefit of the village and local community.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS



The school and community are so proud that the Primary School has been shortlisted for The Northamptonshire Business Excellence Awards 2020 in the Category 'Community Project of the Year'.

The School were nominated for the work they do to 'Empower their young people', a combination of a sports project called the 'Playmaker Award' which was delivered to Year 6 and then a separate Wellbeing/Mental Health project 'Magnificent Mind Champion' delivered to Year 5. Pacesetter are involved in both projects and the projects included a day's training and further support sessions. From this point a 'Sports Committee' and a 'Wellbeing Committee' were set up. Both committees have impacted the delivery of sport and the wellbeing of their school and community. Below is the reference to the article in The Chronicle and Echo where you can read the story in more detail: <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/people/northamptonshire-school-and-sports-coaches-nominated-excellence-awards-3002849>



Photos from The Cronicle and Echo "Guilsborough Primary School were thrilled to be nominated".

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY

In these funny times where fundraising for the village is very difficult, we have been handed a fantastic opportunity to help fund the village needs at no extra cost or effort.

Compass Energy is a new oil supply company started by Tony Watson (Formerly Watson Fuels) and helped by Trevor Reay (also from Watson Fuels). They plan to run the company on good old-fashioned traditions of reliability, honest pricing, and prompt deliveries. See the advert on page 2.

By forming our own village buying group with them, we can save money and the village will benefit financially as **Compass Energy will donate money (£50 for every 10,000 litres) to our village charities.**

You are not tied into Compass Energy to buy your fuel. All you have to do is ring up and ask for a price, if the price is right then you can buy your oil from them. Remember to ask them to register your account under the GOBS group, so that the village benefits.

The fuel amounts will be monitored by Compass Energy and the money for the village will be registered and can be paid to the charities when needed.

This seems to be a fantastic opportunity for the village, please give it a try. We have already received our first delivery from them, it saved us £40 on 700 litres and was delivered 5 days after ordering.

Contact Compass Energy on 01604 345526 or Trevor Reay on 07702867349.

Amanda Miller

Welcome to Guilsborough
Haydn Carson recently moved
into number 7 Nortoft.



THANK YOU

Tilly Houghton has been litter picking in the playground and nearby football area for the last three months as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. The Parish Council particularly would like to thank her but I'm sure all users of the play area will be grateful too!



CHRISTMAS TREE

The Christmas tree will be up on The Green in early December—we hope everyone enjoys seeing it there. We would ask villagers to respect the tree and not to add decorations to it—the Parish Council insures the tree and has asked that members of the public look but **don't touch.**

If you would like to contribute to the festive appearance of the village why not add some lights and decorations to your own front garden and the whole village will look extra festive at the end of this unusual year.

Don't forget to look out for the Nativity and Angels on show in homes too while you are out and about.

HOLLOWELL & TEETON NEWS

PARISH COUNCIL

In Case of Emergency – although Hollowell Village Hall is not currently available for hire, the Management Committee has agreed to allow its use in response to a local emergency where residents may need to vacate their home at short notice. Incidents have occurred where residents have had to seek shelter because of fire or storm damage and under the current restrictions it may not be practical or legal for neighbours to take them in.

The Parish Council has provided funding for a stock of PPE to be available to assist with sanitising and compliance with Covid restrictions.

If residents have to vacate their home in response to an emergency and are in need of shelter they should contact the **'We are Hopewell'** Team to arrange access to the Hollowell Village Hall Tel 07780 265614 or email: wearehopewell@gmail.com

All Rise – the Council is processing budget requirements for the 2021 -22 financial year and having to second guess the likely impact of National and Local Government changes on funding arrangements. It seems inevitable that some increase in the Parish Precept will need to be made in order to maintain local services. This process will need to be finalised by January 2021 and the Council is scheduled to meet (virtually) on Wed 20 January 2021 when those decisions will have to be made.

HOLLOWELL VILLAGE HALL TOTE WINNERS

Dawn Fountain, John Maynard, Pauline Kirton, Stephanie Robbins, John Evans, Katherine Clarke, Emily Curtis, Helen Brown.

We apologise for the interruption in providing the Village Hall Tote during lockdown. A new Tote draw will start in January 2021 and a prize winner drawn each week. We will be collecting the annual subs during December. If you haven't yet joined the Village Hall Tote please give us a shout. Subs for **the year are £10 (some have two or more entries per household)** and the odds of winning sometime during the year are extremely good. It is a great way to support your village hall and have a bit of fun. Please drop Becky Gane a line if you would like to chip in. In. beckyjgane@gmail.com

EVENTS CANCELLED

Unfortunately due to the Covid situation the Pensioners Christmas Party, which is run by the Steam Rally committee, cannot be held this year. As we go to press it also looks as though it will not be possible to hold Hollowell Christmas Eve Service in St James Church. See pages 16 & 17 for details.



Virtual Produce 'Best in Show' winner Sarah Mourant, from Hollowell, receives her £10 gift voucher prize from Village Link's Andrea King

HALLOWEEN FUN

Hollowell's younger residents enjoyed a fantastic Halloween pumpkin trail at the end of October. The event was organised by Becky & Lee Gane, who grew many of the beautifully carved pumpkins that graced Church Hill for the night of the 31st.

BEST PUMPKIN CARVING:

Winner- number 6- the Harry Potter pumpkin (the Cooksley boys).

Runner up- number 11- vomiting pumpkin and pal (the Oswin boys).

WINNER OF THE PUMPKIN SPOTTING TRAIL:

Five families found them all, so these winners were drawn from a hat.

Winners- India, Penelope and Olivia.

Runners up - Isabella, Jessica and Edward.

Thank you to all who carved such amazing pumpkins and to Becky for organising the trail.



HOLLOWELL & TEETON NEWS

JON COOK—HOLLOWELL BIRDING NOTES NOVEMBER 2020

I thought for this month's column I'd write about what we might see close to home over the next few weeks. We have a great variety of resident birds, which in autumn are joined by visitors from further afield. Many of these will be very familiar and often **present in large numbers, but there's always the possibility of a rarity.**

Winter thrushes have arrived in good numbers over the last few weeks, with Fieldfares now often seen overhead in large flocks, **giving their 'chack' call, and Redwings, which can be nervy and flighty just after they've arrived, perhaps only glimpsed briefly in the cover of bushes and hedgerows where they feed on hawthorn berries and rosehips.**

With our warming climate, summer-visiting warblers which used to depart south for the winter are increasingly seen over-wintering - and often seen in gardens. These may be resident birds which have changed their behaviour and lost their migratory urge, or short-distance migrants from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Chiffchaffs continue to feed on insects in trees and shrubs.

Blackcaps will come to bird feeders and will also feed on rowan and other berries. A rare visitor, the Yellow-browed Warbler can very occasionally be seen in and around villages. Usually **drawing attention to themselves with a loud 'tsooeest' call, they are tiny birds, a member of the leaf warbler family, similar in size to the resident Goldcrest, which is often seen in gardens, sometimes breeding in Leylandii and other conifers.**



Goldcrest



Crossbill

Two other species worth looking out for are 'irruptive', meaning that they expand outside their normal territories and appear - sometimes in large numbers - further afield. Siskins and Crossbills, both usually scarce in these parts, have been seen locally in good numbers in recent months. As with other **birds I've mentioned here, their presence is often betrayed by their calls, which also help separate these species from commoner birds.** Crossbills feed in conifer woodland and are rarely seen in gardens, but are very mobile and may be seen overhead as they commute between feeding sites. There was a party of six Crossbills in the wood behind Hollowell sailing club earlier this week.

The final bird I thought I'd mention is the Marsh Tit. Once widespread and fairly common, it is in decline across the UK, but still seen in gardens, and a bird I see from time to time in Hollowell. Once again, it's worth learning the calls of this bird (the diagnostic one being an explosive 'pichay'), as they are often the most reliable way to separate this species from the very similar and much rarer Willow Tit.

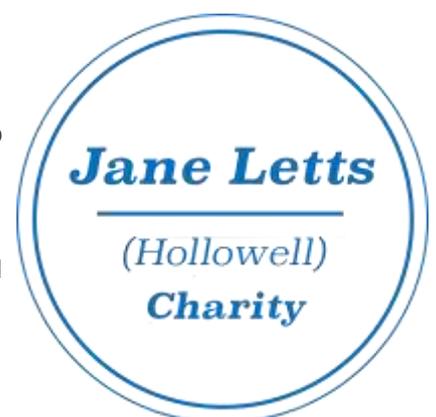
I've concentrated here on the more unusual birds that we might see close to home over the next few weeks, but we do of course also have our more familiar cast of regular visitors. I for one get great pleasure from seeing and hearing these around my home and garden, especially in these challenging times.

If you are interested in my work as county bird recorder, or would like to know more about how you can get involved with recording birds in Northamptonshire, see my website: <https://joncookbirding.wordpress.com/>

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR HELP WITH YOUR ELECTRICITY BILLS?

The Miss Jane Letts (Hollowell) Charity is run independently by three parish councillors who are appointed as Trustees. It was created in 1940 by a bequest from the estate of James William Boothe Letts. The bequest established an income to purchase coal or blankets for **distribution amongst the "poor widows and other deserving poor" of the Parish of Hollowell & Teeton.** In the mid 1990s, the terms of the Charity were altered so that it could also contribute towards household electricity bills.

To benefit you must be a resident of Hollowell or Teeton. Evidence that you are in receipt of a means-tested state benefit is helpful. Please email the Jane Letts Trustees at janelettscharity@gmail.com or write to them, care of March Barn, Church Hill, Hollowell NN6 8RR. Just send the trustees your contact details and they will get in touch.



THORNBY NEWS

UPDATE FROM THE RED LION, THORNBY

It's been an interesting few months here at The Red Lion in Thornby, as it has for everyone. The first lockdown, whilst a difficult time, enabled us to take a step back and make a few plans so it's been an exciting time for us here...

Following our re-opening on 4th July, the Government EOTHO scheme in August was a huge success, it was wonderful to see all our customers again and also some new faces after such a quiet few months. It helped establish customer confidence in all the Covid measures we have in place. We hope you all felt safe whilst visiting us.

We have now employed a fourth Chef which has enabled us to open our kitchen on Mondays. We are now open all day from Middy, serving food from 12-2pm and 6-9pm.

We have removed some of the seating from inside the pub to ensure we are meeting Covid guidelines, so we have added a temporary marquee onto the side of the building creating plenty **of room for drinkers and diners. And as it's started getting a bit chilly we have added heating so it's nice and cosy for the winter months.**

We are also in the process of creating a private dining space upstairs which will be ready for use in early December.

Sadly we were once again required to close our doors on 4th November, which meant more beer deliveries, more painting, and more planning!

At the time of writing, we will be ready to open again as of 2nd December to welcome all our customers once more. The Christmas decorations and tree are up and we have a fabulous Christmas menu on offer throughout December.

We are doing our best to make your visit as normal as possible whilst keeping everyone safe. We look forward to welcoming you soon! *Simon, Louise & The Red Lion Team*



CHURCH ONLINE

Christmas 2020 Services will be streamed via our Facebook page Uplands Group Churches and also on our YouTube Channel Uplands Group Churches

Sunday 20th December 6.30 pm

Carols for all: a traditional service of Lessons and Carols

Monday 21st December 6.30pm - *Blue Christmas*

Not everyone feels merry and bright at Christmas time in the best of years and some feel that this Christmas may be a more challenging one to celebrate. A quiet and reflective service that we hope can offer comfort, an opportunity to lay down the things that burden you, and a help to find a sense of peace as we journey together towards Christmas.

It may help you to have a candle to light and a small stone to hold for this service.

Wednesday 23rd December 4.00pm *Crib Service*

The traditional story of Christmas retold with a 2020 twist.

Christmas Eve Thursday 24th December 11.30pm - *Midnight Communion*

The first Eucharist of Christmas. With joy we meet the New Born King.

Christmas Day 9.30 a.m. - *Holy Communion*

A joy filled celebration of the good news of Christmas



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Uplands Group of Churches – Service Planner December 2020 - January 2021		6 th December	13 th December	20 th December	24 th December	25 th December	27 th December	3 rd January	10 th January	17 th January	24 th January	31 st January
8.30 a.m.				St Helen's Thornby Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	<i>This year, so that we can safely socially distance all those who wish to attend if it is necessary to book a seat at these services.</i>	<i>This year, so that we can safely socially distance all those who wish to attend if it is necessary to book a seat at these services.</i>				St Helen's Thornby Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer		
9.30 a.m.				FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion	FaceBook Livestreamed Common Worship Communion
9.30 a.m.				St Denys' Cold Ashby Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	St Michael and All Angels Creation Holy Communion Common Worship	St Michael and All Angels Creation 10.00pm CW 'Midnight' Communion Contact Bob 505966	St Denys' Cold Ashby 9.30 am BCP Contact Debbie 740773	St Michael and All Angels Creation Holy Communion Common Worship	St Denys' Cold Ashby Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer A/T/BT	St Denys' Ravenssthorpe Holy Communion Common Worship AT	St Etheldreda's Guilsborough Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	St Etheldreda's Guilsborough Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer
11.00 a.m.				St James' Hollowell Holy Communion Common Worship	St Andrew's Spraton 11.30pm CW 'Midnight' Communion Contact Bill 847457	St Denys' Ravenssthorpe 9.30 CW Contact Alice 07803 595106	St Andrew's Spraton Holy Communion Common Worship	Outdoors@11 St Etheldreda's Guilsborough	St James' Hollowell Holy Communion Common Worship	All Saints Cottesbrooke Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer	St Andrew's Spraton Holy Communion Common Worship	
5.00 p.m.				St Etheldreda's Guilsborough Evening Prayer With Music	St Etheldreda's Guilsborough	All Saints Cottesbrooke 11.00 BCP Communion Contact Allison 846099				St Etheldreda's Guilsborough Evening Prayer With Music		

ONLINE CHRISTMAS CHURCH
SERVICES ARE SHOWN ON PAGE 16

We cannot deny that 2020 has been a year of great challenge and as we come to its end it is

also a time to look back and reflect. For all of us the Coronavirus has made a huge impact, placing limitations and restrictions on our lives and meaning that we have had to find new way us of doing things.

The end of the year is a time to reflect on so much that has changed. To remember those who have died, to support those who have lost jobs, to be thankful for all who have cared for the sick and the vulnerable. For some of us though, the changes have been a blessing, more time at home with family, a realisation that we need to make an effort to telephone or video chat those we cannot see. Also, in many of our villages, local groups have gathered and worked together to ensure that those in need are neither left alone nor wanting. New community volunteers acting as angels amongst us.

Christmas this year will feel different. The family gatherings may well be smaller. For at least some of us, we may be joining in the familiar carols online rather than in church. But it will still be – as always – a time to care for one another and to be together.

What has not changed is the story and the meaning of Jesus' birth. *God is with us.* With us in the mess as in the good, in the disappointment and the difficulty, in sorrow and in celebration.

We hold together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be our individual role and that of the church to offer comfort and consolation. In the words of St Paul **in Romans 12.15, to 'Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep'.**



This year we cannot gather in large numbers in our church buildings, and a number of ways of bringing a bit of Christmas Spirit are still being planned, but look out for Advent Windows, Angel Hunts and Memory trees across our villages. More details of these will be shared in the villages participating over social media. Finally the churches of The Uplands Group are working together to prepare online worship for our communities so that we can still find comfort and joy in worshipping together **using the traditions of the past afresh to offer God's consoling love in the present.**

With Prayers for you all and for our communities,
Allison

Advent Windows 2020

Sharing a little light and joy and the message of Christmas this December! You can play your part by taking part in a community wide living Advent Calendar. Advent Window Trails are taking place in Cold Ashby, Creaton, Guilsborough, Hollowell, Ravensthorpe and Spratton

How it works....

- 24 volunteers agreed to decorate a street-facing window (an 'advent window') on a nativity theme, each is assigned a date.



- A new window 'opens' (appears and is lit) every day from 1st to 24th December.
- Each window then remains 'open' from its opening day from at least 5pm until 1st January.
- A trail leaflet is created for each village and we have an advent window trail that anyone can walk around and

enjoy. Some may choose to do it as December progresses, and others may prefer to wait until they're all open and follow the completed trail all in one go.

Shoe Boxes and Blankets 2020

Thank you

To everyone who contributed to the Shoe Box & Blanket collection this year.

We will be sending 29 blankets & 100 shoe boxes in support of the Blythwood Project. They will be going to families in need.

Janet.

Outdoors @11— 6th December
Is scheduled to take place ...subject to
Government Covid Restrictions

Village Angels 2020

Find the hidden angels in the villages of Creaton, Guilsborough, Ravensthorpe and Spratton and feel free to join in and paint your own too!

How it works.... Volunteers and children in school have painted angel rocks.

If you find an angel hidden in the village then return it to the church porch where each week you will find a different part of the Christmas Story. The Hunt will begin on Advent Sunday. Each week the angels will be rehidden so the fun can continue.

Angels feature in the Christmas Story, they are often heavenly messengers, but also bring protection and blessings. It will be wonderful to have a host of extra angels in our villages this Christmas Season bringing blessings and protection and wholesome fun for the young and young at heart!





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MEET THE FIREFIGHTERS ...



Guilsborough Station Manager

Q. Are there different roles for different skills, ages?

No. All firefighters are trained to the same skill set to include breathing apparatus wearers, RTC operatives, trauma care & HGV emergency fire appliance driving.

Q. What's the farthest distance you are called out to assist?

We are normally the first pump in attendance within an 8 mile radius. However, we can be called to assist other counties.

Q. What commitment do volunteers make?

We are not volunteers, we are paid members of staff and are trained to the same standard as the wholtime workforce.

Q. Have you had any recruits go on to join the wholtime service?

Yes, some people have joined from the on-call service to the wholtime service. There are many people in the wholtime service who also work as an on-call fire fighter in their time off.

Q. How often are you called out?

Normally, between 1-3 times per week. Entirely dependent on weather, crew availability, time of year.

Q. What does an average year look like in terms of number of call outs? Type/category of call outs.

Some on-call stations can have 300 a year, but Guilsborough average approximately 100. These are made up of road traffic collisions, chimney fires, animal rescue, co-responding (assisting East Midlands Ambulance Service), chemical incidents, house fires, car fires, farm fires, field fires.

Q. Have call outs changed since you started the job?

House fires have dramatically reduced due to an increase in fire safety, education and an increase in smoke detectors in properties.

Q. Worst bits of the job

Dealing with upsetting situations.

Q. Biggest surprise

Number of skills you are required to acquire and master.

Q. What's your day job?

Mercedes project 1 engine builder.

Q. How much does this interfere with family life?

It has a small impact on my family, however they are proud that I serve my local community.

The new recruit

Q. What motivated you to step up?

I wanted to challenge myself and become an important part of my community.

Q. How physical is the work? How fit do you need to be?

It is very physical. You do need a good level of fitness to be able to become a fire fighter.

Q. Is it what you expected? How different?

The role of a fire fighter is extremely varied. During the induction process you are well informed on what is expected. Full training in all areas is provided and refreshed on a regular basis.

Q. What's the biggest challenge for you?

Overcoming your own fears and trusting in the equipment and training you have been given.

Q. What do you enjoy the most?

Rescuing/helping people. Being part of a great team. Discovering the best version of yourself. Learning new skills. Responding on blue lights. Working alongside all other emergency services.

Q. What's your day job?

Leisure Centre area manager.

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