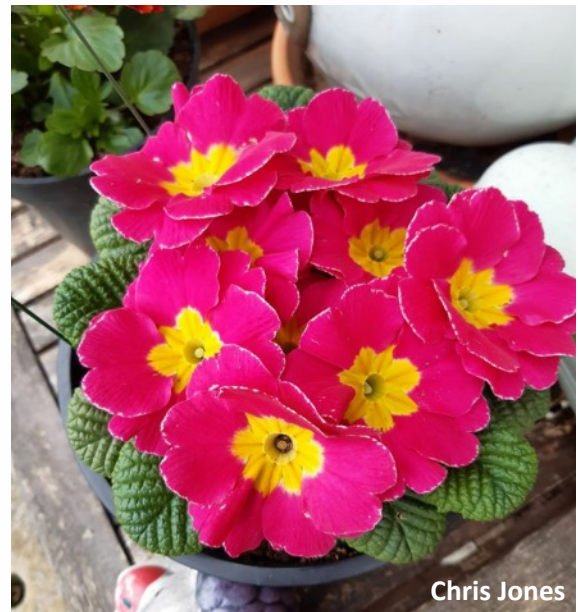
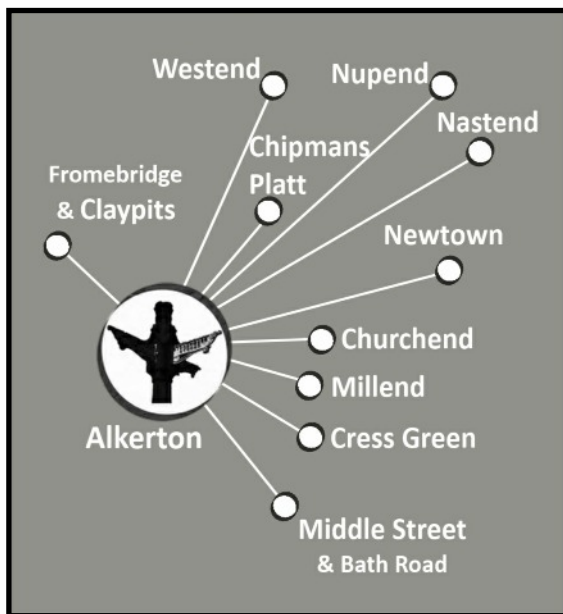




<https://eastington.website>

April/May 2020



Chris Jones

**Who said the Spring Show was cancelled? (Just had to have it on-line)
Well Done Dale!**



Ann Pitcher



Beccy Pegler



Love Eastington
@eastingtonnews

Celebrating Community
in Eastington

Signpost

Your news... your ECN!

Written by You, Produced by Tom & Jan Low and Mary Gribble.



Dear Readers,

I hope you are all staying as safe and well as possible in these difficult times.

We are all taking the utmost care to stick to all distancing and sanitising advice here and urge everyone to do so. We hope you like Sarah's poem on page 4 - the line

'you can't do it on your own'

may be the one for us all to think about!

Fortunately we have our wonderful community here - so many people so willing to provide help for those in need of it. If you are especially vulnerable, or are having symptoms, you will be helping the whole community by letting volunteers help you to stay at home. So please just ask!

This issue, number 180, represents 30 continuous years of ECN!.

We may have to take a little break now if things do not improve - but "we will be back"!

Stay at home and stay safe

Jan, Tom and Mary

Inside this issue...

WELLBEING

- 2 Editorial - Coronavirus
- 4 Corona and Children
- 5 Social Togetherness
- 6 Doctors and Vets
- 7 Citizens Advice Bureau
- 8 Announcements and Information
- 23 Keep Well, Keep Moving!

GROUPS

- 14 Playgroup
- 15 Wild Hogs Rescue

COMMUNITY

- 11 Volunteers
- 18 Highway Improvements
- 18 Forest Green Rovers
- 19 Community Land Trust
- 22 OHMG
- 24 Sylvia Grace Bliss

COUNCILS

- 3 Parish Matters
- 3 District Councillors' letter

CHURCHES

- 16 St Michael and All Angels
- 20 Methodist Church

HISTORY

- 12 Whalebone Arch

No Diary Dates - for obvious reasons!

Deadline for next issue : Uncertain - please watch our facebook page.

Please email your articles, stories, photos and events to articles@eastington.website
or, for ads please use advertising@eastington.website

Space is limited - we may omit, edit or shorten articles. Views expressed in ECN are not necessarily those of the editors.

See it in colour via the Eastington Hub <https://eastington.website>

Wellbeing

Coronavirus - Covid 19

Well, here we are in lockdown and struggling to not let this thing get too much on top of us. Being isolated, whether you are sick or well, is no joke at all, but there is a HUGE amount of goodwill in Eastington and people really want to help you - do not struggle on your own - see following pages for where to turn to for help.

In addition, we are all being snowed under with information, guidelines, public notices, advice and instructions - we have tried to summarise some of the more important bits.

First and foremost all these rules! The point is that you, anyone you know or meet, and just about anything you touch - as well as recently breathed, coughed or sneezed air - just might be carrying the virus. It can get into (and out of) your body through your eyes, nose or mouth, and may hide itself - so be aware and be sensible. For most of us, the rules really boil down to these simple mantras:-

1. Stay at home

2. Stay 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people

3. Wash hands - use tissues - don't touch your face

Obviously, in real life, it is not as simple as that; we need to go out to get food, medical attention, exercise, to do essential work and to help others - and there is not always space to maintain our distance. We have to make decisions, and we must all think hard about those, but we can only do our best.

However, if you know or suspect that you have come into contact with the infection then there are no decisions - you must enlist the help of others to maintain 'total' isolation fully for 14 days or until any dry cough or fever have subsided (at least 7 days). Even within your house. You should also get help to shield yourself by fully self-isolating long term if you are especially vulnerable due to ill health or superior age.

Please keep up to date with all current Government guidelines at www.gov.uk/coronavirus
(If you cannot get online, please make sure that someone can do this for you).

Our thanks and gratitude go to those who really do have to put themselves at risk every day to ensure that the rest of us can eat and be looked after when we need it.

Our sympathies go to all who are ill, as well as to the many small businesses that we have in Eastington who are now closed, and to all whose livelihoods are severely affected.

So how do we make this bearable?

If you are well and in reasonably good circumstances, then do not waste a good crisis! Take the opportunity to learn something new, follow a shy ambition to paint or write or get 'crafty'. If you are a family try to enjoy each others' company (not always easy!) - respect each others space but do share some time to invent family games or projects or watch a film together.

There is loads of inspiration on-line if that is available to you - if not, reach out.

Do try to get a new daily routine going and make sure that you do get some exercise and proper sleep.

Keep in regular touch with friends and family using whatever digital means you have (try Zoom for a family conference!) And write, send cards (hand made of course) or telephone those who are not so connected. If you do not know your neighbours very well, a postcard popped through the door could make a new phone-friend. It's a really good idea to have the phone numbers of those around you in any case.

Most of us are fortunate enough to have a garden - this may be your greatest asset - make good use of it!

We will all need each other as things go on - so whether you are fit and able or less so, do make the effort to contact other people and always be ready both to ask for help and to give it in whatever form that may be.

Councils

PARISH MATTERS



I am writing this on the morning after the Prime Minister has told us all to stay at home; I hope you are all well and keeping safe.

If you need help or advice **please don't hesitate to get in touch**, if we don't know the answers we have ways of finding them.

There isn't a lot happening with Parish Council, we won't be meeting until it safe to do so we will keep in touch remotely and make decisions by e mail.

The Playpark has been closed but the allotments are still open for the use of those with allotments only, but please observe the 2 metre rule.

If you have any questions please get in touch.

Muriel Bullock

Muriel.bullock@eastington-pc.gov.uk 01453 826172 or 07715 962309

Lynne Farnden 07708 775768

District Councillors' Newsletter

Ebley Mill is now closed to the general public for the duration of the Covid-19 epidemic.

Please telephone in any emergency to 01453 766321, where you will be directed to the relevant contact for the reason for your call. Out of hours number is 01453 222104

A more comprehensive Customer Services email address is customer.services@stroud.gov.uk

All details of SDC's emergency planning arrangements are on www.stroud.gov.uk

Many staff are working from home at this time, but contact telephone lines have been set up to direct your call to them at home if necessary.

From the Severn Ward viewpoint, Robert Hitchin Ltd has put forward two parcels of land to be included in the next Local Plan, in Whitminster Parish. These parcels of land run from the A419 northwards to Grove Lane, then from Grove Lane northwards to the parish boundary with Moreton Valence, all within the M5/A38/A419 triangle. These were put forward too late to be included in the Local Plan consultation, which ended on January 22nd. Proposed are 2250 houses, Employment land, Community and Leisure facilities, and a Primary School. Whitminster Parish Council will be vigorously contesting this proposal when further consultation takes place, as well as to a small parcel of land off Hyde Lane in the village

Both Cllr Stephen Davies and Cllr John Jones hope you all stay safe and well.

Keeping to the advice given out daily by the Government, hopefully this virus will be beaten soon.

Cllr.Stephen.Davies@stroud.gov.uk 07802 595307

Cllr.john.jones@stroud.gov.uk 07808 922918

Wellbeing

Corona and children

School related questions - there is a lot of information on www.gloucestershire.gov.uk, but if you can't find your answer, there is a dedicated phone line and email address to help parents with all school related enquiries, including questions relating to Free School Meals

Tel: 01452 426015 or email COVIDSchoolenquiries@gloucestershire.gov.uk



<https://nursedottybooks.com>
- some nice free books

There are some really good free learning and entertainment resources on the **Teachers Pet** website www.tpet.co.uk.

Also have a look at Chatterpack.net and www.wired.co.uk

Use this shortlink: shorturl.at/sDU56

To access a wealth of resources from UCL University College London (- a page that is a bit hard to find otherwise)
- for children of all ages

A poem written by Sarah Chatterton for her nephew - and now shared widely on Facebook. I have tried to get in touch, but I am sure she will not mind me reproducing it here.

Send Me Home

My name is Connie Corona
I come from far away
I really need to get back home
I really didn't want to stay

There was a creature in the sky
I've heard it was a bat
I wanted an Adventure
So I attached myself to that.

It flew me to a country
I didn't know anyone there
And the world it took a hold of me
And carried me through the air.

I know I've scared a few
But I would like you to be calm
I only wanted to explore,
I never meant to cause you harm.

I would like to return to my family
So as a country you must unite
Please all stay at a distance
This is the only way to fight

You need to wash your hands
And play some games at home
But everyone needs to do this
You can't do it on your own

There's lots of things to do
Build a den, paint or bake,
Draw a lovely picture
There's lots of things to make.

Sit down and watch a film
Create a game of your own
All of these will help
To return me to my home

The adults are not being mean
They do this because they care
They will lift me back in space
And travel me through the air

A couple of months is all it takes
To do the things I've said
Then I'll be back with my family
At home and in my bed

I will let you know, and thank you
For all the work you've done
Then you can go back outside
And be kids who just have fun.



Wellbeing

Isolated? You are not alone!

The so called '*social distancing*' is very badly named.

At this time 'social togetherness' is more apparent more than ever - just in a *physically distant* way.
There are so many good people wanting to help those that perhaps do not have friends or family close by.
If this is you, please, please ask for help - we all need a little bit of this from time to time.

There are two main ways of reaching out:-

If you are comfortable using the internet, then Gloucestershire helphub may be for you.
This aims to put people in touch with volunteers, matching area and need.



Just visit the above website and you will be able to fill in a form to ask for or to offer help.
Many Eastington volunteers have joined this scheme, so you will find a match.
There is also a phone line if you need help, or cannot use the forms : **01452 583519**.
The lines are open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm and Saturday - Sunday 9am-4pm.

If you are not comfortable online, then the

Eastington Coronavirus Community Volunteers

can help you

We are a group of local volunteers who want to help those in Eastington. We co-ordinate with each other on our facebook page (as above) and talk to you on our dedicated phone number:

07495 302263

Your details will not be made public or put online

We look forward to your call!

For more details please see our poster on the back cover of the magazine.

Wellbeing

Doctors

Health concerns in general should initially be addressed by checking NHS online services for advice if possible or otherwise by phoning 111.

Use electronic means for repeat prescriptions as far as possible (e.g. Google EverGreen or Patient Access).

Please check for online updates/info news from your surgery if possible

- otherwise always email or phone for advice **before** trying to visit the surgery

Dr Esmailji Stonehouse Health Clinic 01453 823144

www.stonehousepractice.co.uk email: stonehouse.reception@nhs.net

High Street Medical Centre Stonehouse 01453 822047 www.medicalcentre-stonehouse.nhs.uk

Regent Street Surgery Stonehouse 01453 825690

www.regentstreetpractice.co.uk email: regent.reception@nhs.net

Frampton Surgery 01452 740213 Prescriptions: 01452 741664 (12 noon - 4 p.m. only)

Out of Hours: 01452 740213 www.framptonsurgery.co.uk

Vets

All vets are closed except for emergency care or vital supplies. Always phone for advice **before** visiting.

Bowbridge Veterinary Group Phone: 01453 825796 (Stonehouse) or 01453 762350 (Stroud)

Wood Veterinary Group Animal Hospital Phone: 01452 543990

Five Valleys Veterinary Practice Phone: 01453 765304

SPA Veterinary Services <https://www.spavets.co.uk> say:-

Please ring us on our normal contact number: 01452 529480 to discuss if you think your pet needs to be seen. We are happy to provide advice and we are hoping to provide video calls soon to help us decide if we need to see your pet.

SEVERNSIDE OSTEOPATHIC PRACTICE

Help for when it hurts



Registered Osteopath in Saul

Osteopathy is not just for neck and back pain
But for so much more.....

- ❖ Help for aches, pains and stiffness
- ❖ Help for when you are unwell and unsure
- ❖ Sports injuries
- ❖ Womens health – before & after pregnancy
- ❖ Children with growth and postural problems



Caroline Tosh DO MSc FSCCO

T: 01452 740818

E: ctosh1@talktalk.net

We will be offering priority shopping
to our vulnerable customers
and those who care for them:

Mon - Sat 8am - 9am
Sun-10am - 11am

Please bear this in mind
when shopping with us and help us
to support our communities.



It's what we do

Wellbeing



Please note that following national guidance on Covid-19 Citizens Advice Stroud has closed its face to face services at all offices and outreaches, but will continue to operate a phone and email service.

If you need advice please do contact by phone 0808 800 0510,

or email by using the email advice page on our website :-

<https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/stroud-cab-email-advice.php>

(Or just search for Citizens Advice Stroud)

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold – Attendance Allowance

This is a benefit that helps with extra costs if you have an illness or disability, either physical or mental or both, and severe enough to require someone else to help you with your personal care needs.

You can make a claim for Attendance Allowance if you have reached State Pension age or more, and it is normally payable after six months of needing the care. It is paid at one of two rates, £58.70 or £87.65 per week, depending on your care needs. Attendance Allowance is tax-free and not means-tested, which means your income and savings will not affect the level you may be entitled to.

You do not need to have someone actually caring for you in order to make a claim.

The claim form can be obtained from the **Attendance Allowance helpline on 0800 731 0122** by providing your contact details. Please note that the form is complicated and lengthy and you may wish to get advice and help before completing it.

If you would like more advice on this or other matters please contact **Stroud Citizens Advice** weekdays 10 am to 4 pm on Freephone: **0808 800 0510**.

Further information can also be found at **www.citizensadvice.org.uk** and then search for attendance allowance.

Eastington Community News

It is our 30th birthday - 180 continuous editions !

We thought that it was important to bring you this issue of the ECN

- To share what information we can
- To bring you details of where to turn for help if you are stuck
- To encourage and help organise our local volunteers (THANK YOU!!)
- To embrace our wonderful sense of community, and keep it alive
- - and to give you something to read in the long dark hours!...



Go on - sing it !
(Twice!)

Our dedicated band of delivery-people have all willingly agreed to deliver this edition during their daily exercise walks. We have taken every care to ensure that distancing and good hygiene practices have been observed throughout the productions and delivery process.

However, sadly, if the situation does not improve we may have to cancel subsequent issues until it does.

(If this happens, advertising that has been paid for will be rolled forward into better times - thank you for your support and understanding)

Wellbeing



Eastington Farm Shop have been offering free deliveries to the over 70s on orders over £10. They are maintaining a strict distancing policy within the shop and would prefer that you make telephone orders for collection. Card payments only. Call 01453 823655 for more info. See Eastington Farm Shop on facebook page for updates.



The Whitminster Inn have been offering take-away food, free light meals for children and shopping baskets of essential items for the more vulnerable - which many of our residents have enjoyed. Sadly they are short of supplies for the moment and at the time of writing can no longer offer these kindnesses.

However, they say they may resume if they can get supplies - so please watch out for posts on Facebook!.

Electrical Breakdown help

I would like to offer, for a 3 month period, free Electrical call outs to anyone within Eastington, to include one hour of labour. This would be for any loss of power or any dangerous situations. It does not include materials, which would be charged at cost.

In a time of need, this may give people some security, and avoid any journeys for contractors. I already have an approved safe working system should any customer be in self isolation, and obviously if isolated myself the terms would no longer exist. I am a fully qualified approved contractor, who now as a bit more time available due to the closures of Colleges.

I sincerely hope I can help anyone who may require these services..

Sean Bryan Platinum Electrical GL10 3UY **07867 229299**

<https://www.platinumelectrical.org.uk> seanbryan@platinumelectrical.org.uk

Apollo Taxis in Stonehouse

To all the elderly & vulnerable people in the Stonehouse area.

We are offering free transport to supermarkets so that you can collect or we can collect your essentials during this period of uncertainty. We can also pick up prescriptions from the Pharmacy and bring them to your home address & take you to Doctors or Hospital appointments. We are also offering NHS staff who do not have transport free transport to and from their place of work.

Please ring **01453 823344** and we will do our utmost to assist you.

Merretts Heating at Frocester, are open **for breakdowns only** - Gas, oil and plumbing.

Any further information you might want please contact the office 01453 79205. Regards Carrol O'Neill

MOT exemptions

If your MOT is due to expire soon the Government is granting a temporary exemption for 6 months from 30th March 2020. Vehicles must be kept in a roadworthy condition or you could still be prosecuted.

Bath Road Garage is open only for keyworkers.

If you are a KEY WORKER and need emergency work on your vehicle, please ring garage on 01453 822907 and leave a message or email bathroadgarage@sky.com and we will see if we can help.

Council Tax Help

If you pay your council tax over a 10 month period, Stroud District Council will allow you to miss April and May payments and pay them in February and March 2021.

The number for Stroud district council is 01453 766421 you don't need a reference as they can find it by postcode and house number/name. Or email revenue.services@stroud.gov.uk as the line gets busy.

Wellbeing

Hospital Visiting suspended

The NHS in Gloucestershire has announced that it is stopping visiting to its hospitals effective from Monday 23rd March 2020. It will also apply to the county's mental health and learning disability inpatient units. However, there will be special allowances made for birthing partners, parents or guardians of patients under the age of 18, patients with a learning disability or autism who require a carer, relatives collecting patients on discharge and those at the end of life. These will be restricted and must be pre-arranged with the nurse or midwife in charge.

General telephone number for hospital enquiries 0300 422 2222

Corona Scams

It is so hard to believe that there are some inhuman people out there who would take advantage of vulnerable people in this world-wide time of trouble. However this is the case, so on top of everything else, we now have to watch out for this.

One unpleasant scam recently was targeting the parents of people on free school meals, sending a text asking for bank details 'to ensure that they continued to receive meals'. Others offer instant loans or pretend to be your phone company, your insurer or your bank and they have very sophisticated ways of appearing genuine. If any offer is made to you out of the blue it is unlikely to be for your benefit.

Never respond to any request for your details. Even if something appears to be genuine but you were not aware of it beforehand then check it out thoroughly - tomorrow! Scammers will always try to rush you into doing something NOW. Nothing is that urgent, whatever they say.

Another cruel and wicked attempt to part you from your money is to offer for sale 'medicines' that will cure or protect you from the virus. At the present time, these do not exist. Full stop.

This is really hard for people who need a little help - after all you have to trust someone. Just make sure that it was you who asked for the help and that any offer is in direct response to your request. Don't be afraid to ask for details from any caller - ask someone else to check them out for you if you are suspicious. No-body genuine will ever be offended!

Pets, Gloves, Knobs and Knockers

Animals do not seem to be susceptible to the virus in the same way that we are, but can act as a carrier because they are a surface that we touch. Any 'touch' can transfer the virus to - and from - your hands, and it can live on surfaces for hours or even days. However, the virus does become inactive much more quickly (perhaps within a day) on dry/porous surfaces like paper, fabric (and fur) than it does on hard surfaces like steel or plastic.

The virus does not invade you through your skin - it gets in through your eyes, nose and mouth - which we tend to touch (a lot!) with our hands.

Gloves do not really offer much protection at all in this regard - unless possibly they remind you not to touch your face. Disposable gloves, (or gloves that can be thoroughly washed/sanitised) may be helpful in some circumstances to relieve your poor washed-raw hands.

Hard surfaces that are touched by many people - especially all knobs, knockers, bell pushes, door edges etc are a great way for the virus to get around. Especially those on your front door or gate.

Soap and water, dilute bleach and alcohol based cleaners are all good virus killers. (Not necessarily all 'anti-bacterial' wipes etc will do the job so well - read the small print!)

Please sanitise your front door/gate touch points after any callers/deliveries

Wellbeing

Number 61 Bus Service.

The Service is being reduced to two-hourly - see the temporary timetable:-

<https://tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/West/Temporary/61.pdf>

Or just go to www.stagecoachbus.com and look for the updates.

On the up side, time restrictions applying to the English national concessionary bus pass scheme in Gloucestershire will be removed from Monday 23 March. Anyone holding a pass will be able to travel for free on all public bus services until further notice.

All public gatherings and events have been disallowed by Government guidelines from March 2020, and many services shut or curtailed until further notice. The following are just a few..



Sorry, but **The Nail box** is closed until further notice . Thanks. Gill Rodway.

Severn Vale Rotary



Due to the current unprecedented situation we very much regret to announce that two of our main charity fund raising events have been affected.

The Severn Bore Breakfast which was to have taken place on Good Friday 10th April 2020 has been postponed until 18th October 2020 by which time hopefully matters will have improved. However this is subject to review and further notification will follow.

The Kingsway Family Fun Run due to take place on Sunday 19th April 2020 has been cancelled but we hope to run the event next year.

Many thanks to those who have supported these events in the past and we look forward to seeing you all next time round when this dreadful time is behind us.

With best wishes , Peter Bray President, Severn Vale Rotary

Cotswold Canal Trust



Due to the Corona Virus, please note that all activities run by The Cotswold Canals Trust are cancelled until further notice. This includes Visitors Centres, Book Store, Western Depot, Eastern Depot, Boat Team activities, Boat Trips and log sales.

The office is currently closed until further notice but can be contacted on 01453 752568.

CCT have established a response team to deal with any urgent or dangerous occurrences on the canal i.e. Tow path obstructions, fallen trees or flooding. Contact: cctwesterndepot@gmail.com.

Volunteering work parties are also cancelled during the crisis - any queries please contact the Assistant Volunteering Manager Ian.Moody@stroud.gov.uk

Please note also that towpaths do remain open for exercise, but avoid moored boats and stay clear of other users - Always observe the 2-metre rule. If it looks anything like busy please go home! Ed

All Household Waste Re-cycling Centres in Gloucester are now closed.

Please **double-bag all used tissues** and cleaning cloths

Please **do not put anything other than genuine toilet paper down the loo** - tissues and kitchen roll etc. do not dissolve properly and will clog the pipes!

Community

Volunteers!

Would you like to spend some time helping others - shopping, other errands, dog walking or just being a friendly face (voice!) to talk to?

We are sure that those of you that can are helping friends and family, but this is a hard time for people who do not have local support - and there are many ways that you can help.

1. You can register on the **GOODSAM** website. This is run by the Royal Voluntary Service and is helping to providing support for the NHS. You can register for different types of job ranging from helping to transport patients to simply having a friendly chat with someone. You can get DBS checked (to certify that you don't have a criminal record!) during this process if you wish.
<https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>

NB You will also find LOADS of helpful information and advice for volunteers in general on this website, whether you wish to register or not. Recommended for all who want to help.

2. Register on the **Glos. Helphub** website and offer to be matched to a person needing help.
3. Join the **Eastington Community Coronavirus Volunteer** task force - phone **07495 302263** - or see back cover. This is help by and for the people of Eastington. You can offer to help man the phone line and/or to undertake food delivery or errands for those who cannot get out, or just be a friendly contact.
4. Pop a note or a postcard (something like the one below) through a neighbour's door, especially if they are vulnerable or on their own - or even just because you always meant to get to know them a bit better, but never quite got round to it! **(Always observe all physical distancing and sanitising precautions - wash your hands - be sure that you are spreading only kindness)**

HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

My name is
.....

I live locally at
.....

My phone number is
.....

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:

<input type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Posting mail
<input type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep. #ViralKindness



History

EASTINGTON'S WHALEBONE ARCH

Stephen Mills

Whalebone arches are one of those odd things that pop up in various parts of the world. They usually consist of a whale's jawbones. Examples in the UK include Whitby, the Isle of Lewis, and Edinburgh. Farther afield they can be found at Isafjordour in Iceland and even a double one in the Falklands Islands. Sometimes they reflect a local history of whaling, whereas in other places, they are simply erected as a novelty or have some other local connection.

As many older residents of the village will already know (but many newer ones may not) is that Eastington also once had one. It's been mentioned in several previous ECN articles (156 and 169) that described Alkerton House, a substantial dwelling with grounds that was replaced by Swallowcroft. The arch formerly stood in the garden close to the house, and for many years was a notable talking point for visitors and a well-used spot for photographers.



History

But what were the origins of Eastington's arch? After all, we're not exactly known for our history of whaling - we don't often get whaling ships coming up the river Frome! Although there seems to be no document trail, our arch reputedly came from a whale that became beached on the banks of the River Severn at Littleton-upon-Severn near Thornbury in January 1885.



The event became an overnight sensation and thousands of people flocked to see the unfortunate creature which by now, had been hauled ashore using chains coupled to steam traction engines brought in from nearby Olveston. Understandably, it caused a lot of local interest, but also attracted sightseers from farther afield. The Midland Railway even ran special excursion trains from Bristol to Thornbury, the nearest station, and at times, there was reportedly a three-mile tailback of carts and carriages trying to get to the site. No-one is sure of the total number of visitors, but one newspaper suggested more than 20,000!

A few weeks after the whale beached, Hector Knapp, a local fisherman from Oldbury, recorded in his diary:

"Thear was a Whal cum ashore at Littleton Pill and bid thear a fortnight. He was sixty eight feet long. His mouth was twelve feet. The queen claim it at last, and sould it for forty pound. Thear supposed to be forty thousen peepal to se it from all parts of the country and from far and near."

Amongst the many visitors was a local Methodist preacher who, in order to verify the Bible story of Jonah and the whale, decided to see if it was possible for a man to stand upright inside the whale's mouth – apparently he could.

And what became of the whale? After some dispute over ownership, it was eventually claimed by the Crown and towed by a tug down the Severn estuary then up the Avon. It finally came to rest in St Phillip's Marsh in Bristol where it was exhibited to thousands more visitors before being made into fertiliser. Some of the whale's bones were reportedly donated to the British Museum, although the jaw bones somehow made their way to the garden of Alkerton House. I can only image how difficult transporting them must have been – many years ago I helped move them and can confirm that they are very heavy!

Alkerton House was eventually demolished and the arch disappeared, only to come to light many years later in Whitminster - it's now stored in Eastington. Hopefully one day it will re-emerge.

Note: You can find out more about the whale's story by visiting Thornbury Museum.

Groups

Eastington Playgroup



This term has for obvious reasons not been like our previous spring terms, but even though it has been much shorter it has been filled with fun none the less.

We have been planting seeds for our mothers day gifts, which with any luck will bloom into a beautiful primrose and we have been talking about our mum's and why they are so special to us.

As our priority at playgroup is the safety and well being of our children we have also spent time focusing on how we can keep safe and clean. We have been washing our hands using the song 'Happy birthday', to ensure we are washing them for long enough and have been engaging in experiments to monitor the effectiveness of thorough hand washing!

We are now closed until further notice but are looking forward to what the new term (whenever that will be) will bring and with some exciting activities for the children to engage in.

It is with great sadness that our playleader Mandy Owen has left us to start a new challenge. Mandy has worked at Eastington playgroup for 20 years and has been playleader for almost half of those. She has worked hard for our community playgroup and we thank her for her many years of service and for all the support she has given so many families over the years. We wish her all the best in her new challenge and will miss having her in our playgroup team.

When we return to Playgroup Jenny Winfield will be stepping into the role of Playleader from deputy, and Donna Dalby will take on the role of Deputy Playleader for the session. All emails and general registration enquiries will continue to go through our administrator and play assistant Michelle Papps.

We hope all of our families and the community are keeping safe at this time and we cannot wait to have all of the children back in our care and to restart a new term filled with lots of fun and play based learning.

If you have any questions or would like a registration form please contact Michelle our administrator: 07977 342 742 - email eastingtonplaygroup@hotmail.com

or visit our website www.eastingtonplaygroup.co.uk



There are some ideas for activities for younger children on **Eastington playgroups** facebook page.

(Search 'Eastington Playgroup') - make your own play-doh, draw shadow pictures, make a treasure hunt etc, etc. We are adding to it as often as possible.

Snakey Park



Please note that the playground at Snakey park is closed during the crisis,.

Please do not exercise dogs in the park or on any part of OHMG grounds.

Thank you

Groups



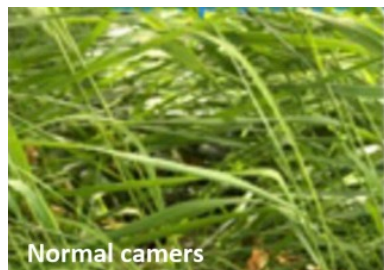
Wild Hogs Hedgehog Rescue

The weather this winter has been so mild that many hedgehogs have not hibernated. Please keep feeding them in your gardens with cat food and water as they are all hungry at this time of year.

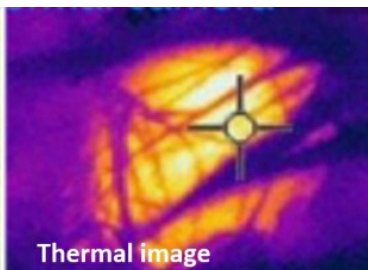
We have had reports that hedgehogs have started breeding. This is very early, as we do not usually see this until end of March/April time. It may result in some early babies this year, so please watch out for these and call the rescue immediately if you disturb a nest.

If you're tidying your garden please be aware that there may be hedgehogs under piles of leaves, nesting under sheds or decking and under log piles. If you disturb a hedgehog and need to move it, please put on some gloves and gently place it under a dry hedge. Put food out that evening and if possible leave some dry hay (not straw) for it to build a new nest.

Some hedgehog rescues have already reported strimmer injuries coming in. **If you are going to strim or mow your lawn, please check before you cut.** Hedgehogs do not move out of the way of machinery, they just curl up in a ball.



Normal cameras



Thermal image

This is a picture of a hedgehog in grass taken last summer, it's really difficult to see them, so please shuffle through the area and see if you can find them.

This will also help toads, newts, frogs and even slow worms!

Within the hedgehog rescue, we are at our quietest time of the year now and are using the time to perform a deep clean on the empty cages and hutches in preparation for the new season. We do not need newspapers at the moment, thank you to everyone who has donated papers during the busy winter months.

We have been releasing some of the larger hedgehogs during the warmer weather. We always try to release hedgehogs back to the place they came from. This is best for the hedgehogs and easier for us too. If we can't do this, we will release them to a similar type of area with a known population of hedgehogs. This is the latest best practice advice.

During half term we held a hedgehog craft day and some of the children made hedgehog snow globes. They also decorated hedgehog highways to help to connect up gardens to allow hedgehogs to move between areas.

Found an injured hedgehog? PLEASE CALL US ON 07949 976717

If you have concerns about a hedgehog you have found, please call us immediately. Do not email or send a message via social media. Do not visit without calling first as there may be no-one there. If we are unable to answer, please leave a phone message with your name and contact number and we will call you back as soon as we are able.

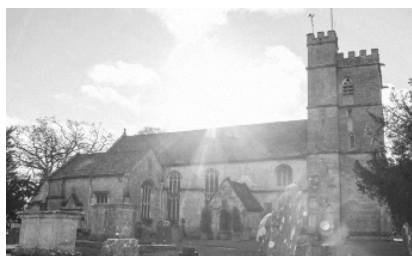
CORONAVIRUS (CORVID 19) UPDATE: We are still accepting hedgehog admissions.

Please call us on 07949 976717 to make arrangements.

We may ask for more details over the phone to minimise contact.

Church

St Michael and All Angels, Eastington



The big news is that public worship has been suspended for the foreseeable future as well as the church closing its doors. Weddings and baptisms have also been suspended, as well as lent courses, bell ringing and all other church gatherings. In relation to funerals, these will continue, albeit with significant restrictions.

On the one hand, this will have an impact on our lives together as the people of God. On the other hand, it offers us exciting opportunities to be the church in a new and different way. Far from having to “shut up shop”, we must face the challenge by becoming a radically different kind of church rooted in prayer and serving others.

Our lives are going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday, and more by the prayer and service we can offer each day. Whilst we may not be able to pray with people in ways we are used to, we can certainly pray for people, and offer practical care and support.

In circumstances where people are self-isolating because they are symptomatic or have been in contact with someone who has been symptomatic, no pastoral visits can be undertaken until their isolation ends. However, we can still provide pastoral support via the telephone and other means of communication.

Numerous resources are available which can enable us to continue practising our faith which are set out below.

Resources

There is a range of new and existing Christian resources available for people to engage with at this difficult and challenging time in the life of the nation and the world:

- Search for “Stroudwater Team of Churches” on Facebook.
We will be live streaming a simple act of worship at 9am, 12noon and 6pm daily - do join us.
- Download the free app “Time to Pray” on your mobile or tablet
- The website www.achurchnearyou.com offers advice and livestreams of services
- The website www.churchofengland.org offers a daily prayer for you to join in
- BBC Radio 4 Long wave and DAB. Daily Service at 9.45 am
- BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship. Weekly at 8.10am
- Songs of Praise BBC 1 TV at 1.15 pm

If you require any help and support, or simply would like a chat, please do not hesitate to contact any of the following individuals:

Revd Steve Harrison	07466 858975	rectorstroudwater@gmail.com
Revd Liz Palin	01452 741147	tv1stroudwater@gmail.com
Revd Dave Bishop	01453 822332	tv2stroudwater@gmail.com
Mike & Jacky Naylor	01453 822728	mike@mikenaylorsurveyors.co.uk
Chris Amys	07867 482586	chris.amys@hotmail.com



Church

St Michael and All Angels, Eastington

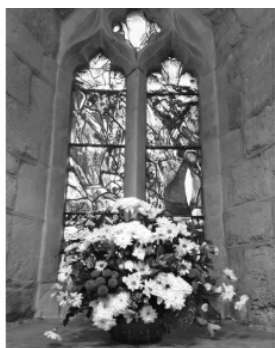
Fundraising Appeal

The church at St Michael & All Angels is involved in every aspect of our village, sometimes in ways that are obvious, sometimes less so. We realise many people have an attachment to the church, those who were married or baptised, those who have admired its historic interior and those who have an affection for the church as a place of prayer.

Our aim is to maintain, conserve and enhance the church so that it continues to serve the local community for years to come. However, the church building is in need of constant upkeep and renovation. Roof repairs have cost approximately £2,000 in 2019/2020, and £5,000 in 2018/2019.

Following the onset of the Coronavirus outbreak, the church at St Michael & All Angels is now closed until further notice in accordance with Government guidance, this will result in a significant drop of income from collections. In addition, there is no income from weddings, baptisms and funerals. We appreciate that many of us will be facing hardship at this time but nevertheless when the time is right, we are appealing for much-needed funds to ensure the church can serve the people of Eastington for future generations.

As St Michael & All Angels Church is closed until further notice, we will not be able to decorate the Church with flowers to celebrate Easter. Here are a couple of photos of the various flower arrangements from Easter in previous years to enjoy.



Afternoon

I hope you are all keeping well.

Just to let you know that:

1. For those who miss sung worship we are providing links, on our Facebook page, to a range of worship songs/hymns (traditional and modern) that are available on Youtube.
2. As Steve has already mentioned we are planning to live stream morning prayer on Sunday, starting this coming week; Steve will lead morning prayer at 10.00am, while Liz and I will take it in turns leading evening prayer at 6pm.
3. I am not aware of the CofE livestreaming another service so you may want to consider
*Trinity Cheltenham are live streaming a service from 10.00am and can be found on this link
<http://trinitycheltenham.com/live-stream/>
4. * Alternatively you can watch a live streamed worship service from Wesley's Chapel (starts 11.00am every Sunday): <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA>
5. I have recorded Psalm 23 if you would like to watch that and the link is: <https://youtu.be/T33YrRwyyQ>
6. I have also recorded an action song, which is popular in the schools I visit and can be found on this link, which will help you keep fit and worship at the same time! <https://youtu.be/pN-NWhZhhXs>

We continue to hold you all in our prayers and if there is anything, for yourself or our communities that we can pray for, please let us know.

We hope you are all keeping well, with every blessing,

Rev Dave

Community

A419 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS NEWSLETTER MARCH 2020



The toucan crossings at Chipmans Platt and Oldends Lane will be commissioned week commencing 23 March 2020, and the footpath surfacing will be completed this week.

We will be installing new road crossings along Downton Road this month and we are hoping to complete the majority of the works during the day. It may however be necessary to carry out some of the works during the night. If this does happen we will let you know. To ensure this is undertaken safely we will be implementing pedestrian diversions.

Works to construct the splitter island at Horsetrough will continue and the alignment of traffic will be altered.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In partnership with the Stonehouse History Group we have moved the milestone marker at Downton Road to a new agreed location and have donated a new plaque which will be installed shortly.

We are also in the process of relocating the Horsetrough at Horsetrough Roundabout to ensure it is preserved for future generations.

We are pleased to announce that the A419 scheme has been shortlisted for a Considerate Constructors Award.



Ecotricity and the FGR Stadium



The Secretary of State declined to 'call in' planning permission for the football stadium on the North side of the A419.

This means that Dale Vince now has outline planning permission to build it. There are certain conditions, and there are plenty of details to haggle over before full detailed permission is given.

In the meantime, Dale is working with Stroud DC with a view to applying for permission to build the Business park as shown on the South side as early as possible.

All well ahead of the Local Plan review, of course.

Community



Eastington Community Land Trust Ltd. (ECLT) Providing the affordable homes that Eastington needs

Just as the weather was improving.....Covid-19 shuts us down

By the end of February, we were feeling positive about the progress that E.G.Carter were making, coping with wind (no fences fell down) and rain (remember Storm Dennis?). This was the scene in mid-February, with foundations coming out of the ground but surrounded by standing water (and mud).



The saving grace was that, despite the mud, the spine road gave the vehicles a sound base.

March started with the spine road being joined to the public highway, allowing better access and making wheel washing more successful.

Good progress too on the foundations, which here are fully ready to ground floor level, able to take the timber framing.

But - by then Covid-19 had begun to take its toll, reducing the framing workforce from two gangs to one. The first set of homes (four flats) was fully framed when the site became un-workable.

A glimmer of the future, then frustration.



ECLT Development to be called Fullers Close

Our original preference was for 'Puddleworth Close', but this was disallowed as being too close to existing 'Puddleworth Lane'. Stroud DC and the Post Office have now agreed with our suggested name, Fullers Close.

The clay of Claypits was used to support all three of Eastington's cloth-making mills. In the process of 'Fulling' the clay combined with the lanolin in the wool to provide bulk to the material, historically producing military uniforms and still providing tennis ball covers and snooker cloths today at Lodgemoor Mills, Ebley.

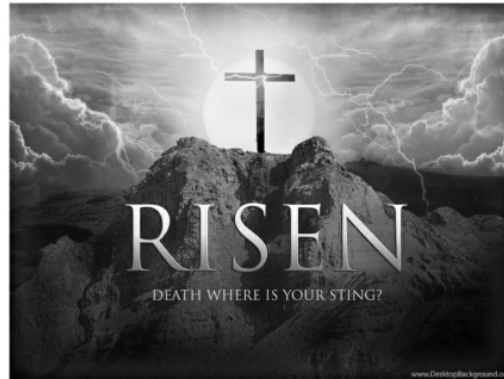
Church



Eastington Methodist Church



OR
?



Where is your priority? - God or Toilet Rolls?

We live in surreal times. At the time of writing, the supermarket shelves have been stripped and on the TV people can be seen walking across the supermarket car park under the load of enough toilet rolls to keep them going for many weeks. What do they think is going to happen; why is this happening? The world has been hit by the shock news that modern mankind, even with sophisticated science, is not after all, capable of solving every issue instantaneously. A tiny virus, which was more or less unknown at the start of this year, has already trashed stock markets, filled hospitals and caused massive lifestyle changes, looks like it has the capacity to continue to do so for many weeks if not months and even years.

Government and society in general has largely dispensed with any faith in God and Jesus His Son. Things that are unambiguously declared as wrong and evil in the Bible are not just tolerated but are encouraged. Has all this “progressive thinking” made people happier on the whole? - I think not. There are a lot of things that would justify God’s anger: greed (back to toilet rolls), hate, sexual immorality, selfishness, leading others astray, 200,000 abortions per year, and above all, not seeking God and ignoring Him.

Is COVID-19 a pestilence sent by God to judge the world? - possibly; but with about a 1% or 2% death rate and that largely of people with a life limiting medical condition, it could be a lot worse (the Black Death was nearer 33% including children). Should we regard it as a shot across the bow – I think we would be wise to do so. God responds to repentance at both the individual and societal level; you might like to read the story of Jonah in the Bible and what happened in Nineveh where God threatened to destroy the city because of sin but they saved themselves by repenting. If you don’t have access to a Bible, our Youth Club made a video of the story and it is on the EMC website.

So the challenge is whether we get on our knees and seek God or get in the queue in the hope of getting more toilet rolls before they run out again.

If you want to talk to us about any questions you have or fears you are experiencing due to the current situation and/or about salvation in Christ; please contact us.

Church



Eastington Methodist Church

What is Happening at EMC and how can we help?

Like most churches, all of our regular services and community activities have been suspended until further notice in accordance with the Government's attempt to slow down the rate of coronavirus infections so that the NHS is in a better position to cope. This includes our church services, the toddler groups and Friday youth club. Please expect these to resume when the advice changes and we will update the website and notice board when we know what is happening.

In the meantime, we are gearing up to provide practical and spiritual help and this will most likely be in co-operation with community wide initiatives which will probably be outlined elsewhere in Eastington Community News.

We are aware that there will be people who will feel isolated and lonely and possibly afraid at this time whether or not practical help is also needed.

Please feel free to make contact by phone for a chat or to get advice as to where to find help.

Contacts: Roz Wisniewski (Youth & Families Worker) 0776 190 2249

Beck Burgin 0751 119 7265 or 01453 827414

Rev. Phil Summers (Minister) 01453 542565

Easter

In amongst it all, we must not forget that, in April, it is Easter. It seems very unlikely that we will be able to celebrate it together in church and that disappointment is made all the greater as we had lined up Rev. David King to take our Easter Day service this year. We were really looking forward to this.

Easter is the culmination of Christ's ministry on Earth when He was killed on the cross on Good Friday and then raised from the dead on Easter Sunday. There is deep meaning in this as it is through His death that we are saved for eternal life with Him. It is a free gift, it is not earned, it cannot be inherited from your family but it is a gift that has to be accepted through faith.

There have been many feature films made about Easter, some of them blockbusters. Many seem to focus upon the events leading to the crucifixion of Jesus and some don't even go as far as the resurrection. One exception is the 2016 film *RISEN* by Joseph Finnes which very much focuses on the time after Easter. If it is in the programme schedules or you have access to one of the Internet streaming services, you might like to watch it.

If you want to talk to us about Easter or how to accept God's offer of forgiveness and salvation, please call.

For up to date information and a lot more, visit www.EastingtonMethodists.org.uk.

Ken Burgin – Senior Steward at Eastington Methodist Church

Community

Update from the Owen Harris Memorial Ground Committee (OHMGC)

which manages the Eastington Community Centre and the public field at the Memorial Ground.

Firstly we would like to wish everyone in our own Parish and the surrounding Parishes all best wishes for the future in these uncertain times.

We are very lucky to have such a great community spirit in Eastington and have lovely neighbours in Whitminster, Frampton, Frocester, the Stanleys, Severnside, and Stonehouse who are the same.

We are also privileged to live in this beautiful place - so going forward please take care of your neighbours if you can or, if you need help, **just ask!!!**

The OHMGC update is that, following Government guidelines, the Community Centre's regular hirers and all amateur sports have now stopped using the facilities and it is now closed until further notice.

We will continually review this and the next review date is the 30th April. If anyone has booked a party event at the Centre prior to 30th April your deposit will be refunded. Please contact us for this.

Anyone who has booked an event after 30th April can also contact us if you are concerned but we will be reviewing future bookings on a monthly basis.

Meanwhile we will continue to keep the Community Centre viable in respect of maintenance, cleaning and cleaning supplies in order to welcome back all our many regular users following this storm.

Please take care, all of you, for now and in the future.

Contacts are: Gill Glover - Centre Manager: 01453 828782

Vanessa Cousins - Bookings Clerk: 07086 802540

Mark Cousins: 01453 828557



...And from the Trustees:

The OHMG management team and trustees wish all our user groups good fortune during the period of the emergency and look forward to welcoming you back later.

With an abrupt loss of income from lettings, we will rely on our cash reserves to maintain the building in good condition. Minor repairs to the roof and programmed inside decoration can continue. There are sufficient funds to carry on for many months and if the restricted operation carried on a great deal longer, there would be need to find extra funding. Over the nearly 10 years of operation as well as maintaining the building and carrying out improvements we have increased the working capital to provide resilience for a situation such as the current emergency.

Last Autumn we held an AGM to a small group attending, which was followed by submission of an annual report and accounts to the Charity Commission. We have a loyal and diligent team of 5 management and 6 trustees to run the facilities and charity for the benefit of the community and sports users. If you are interested being involved in management or as a trustee please advise me. In particular there is vacancy for a trustees secretary to organise the AGM, another trustee with skills to develop PR and user group representatives such as Playgroup and Cricket.

Thank you again to all users of the facilities and hope to see you back soon.

In the meantime stay safe and connected.

Best wishes, John Morris - Trustees chair

Wellbeing

Keep well, keep moving!

What unprecedented times we are living in right now. It seems like each day there is new information to digest, new restrictions to navigate, new worries to cope with.

In such times of uncertainty it is important, *now more than ever*, to take care of your physical fitness and well being and to try and keep a sense of routine and order in your life.

A regular yoga practice not only provides the numerous physical benefits of increasing strength, flexibility and mobility but is also a natural anti-depressant remedy that can boost mental health. Part of yoga's effectiveness derives from its proven ability to allow the release of tension and the lowering of cortisol levels. Mind-body practices like yoga, where the emphasis is on deep mindful breathing, help the body to relax at its cellular level creating a state of deep rest and calm.

For me, yoga is a form of moving meditation that helps me stay in the moment as it demands (& hopefully gets) my full and undivided attention. So not only is my body increasing in strength, flexibility and mobility but so is my mind!

I have now taken all my local classes online using Live streaming on **YouTube** and have already been getting some really positive feedback from my regulars who have committed to keeping up their weekly practice in their homes.

If you have never practiced yoga before but think this might be the time to try, then have a look at my **YouTube channel – Carol Maguire Yoga** and click on **videos**. I have some short videos there, some of which are especially for beginners .

If you are keen to have a regular and varied weekly practice you can also receive an email link to my Livestream Videos. I hope to be teaching a virtual new lesson every week. I will be charging a small fee of £6 for these videos to try to keep my little business afloat, but if you are also suffering from loss of earnings, don't let that put you off, email me and we can discuss. caroline.maguire2@btinternet.com

You can also learn more about my style of Yoga Teaching at carolmaguire.co.uk where you will also find more contact numbers, information and testimonials.



Stay well, stay calm, stay mindful and breathe deeply.

Carol Maguire

Community

Many of you will have enjoyed reading the memoirs of Mrs Bliss in previous editions of this magazine. You can find them by going to the hub, www.eastington.website, click for 'ECN' and then choose the history category or just type 'Bliss' into the search box.

We were very saddened to learn of her passing in January.

SYLVIA GRACE BLISS

Sylvia was born on the 17th March 1924 at Canal House, Eastington, an only child to Cyril and Josephine Shill whose generations of families came from Eastington. Her grandmother lived with them and weekends and holidays were spent playing by the canal with lots of cousins.

Growing up, Sylvia attended Eastington Primary School, progressing on to Stroud Central School for girls. She cycled from Canal House daily and joined other friends in Stonehouse catching the Railcar to School.

Sylvia was a very creative person with music being one of her main passions. She gave many concerts singing either solo or as a duet with Stella Hunt, winning many competitions in the local area.

In 1943 Sylvia joined the Land Army, working on local farms. She thoroughly enjoyed her time working outside and this was documented in 2011 in a lovely article in the Stonehouse History Group Magazine.

Sylvia married Clifford Bliss at Eastington Methodist Church in 1946. They stayed at Canal House where Helen was born, until moving in 1951 to Cress Green before having Megan. As a family they all enjoyed walks across the fields and picnics in the Bluebell Woods (then known as the Gullet) where they would watch the Steam Trains.

Over the years Sylvia held positions as Chapel Organist, Treasurer and Trustee at Eastington Methodist Church. After Cliff retired, they began what turned out to be a very successful business of a Cattery. Cliff made all the chalets and Sylvia not only operated it as a commercial venture but also assisted the local RSPCA Inspector, looking after stray cats and kittens.

In 1989 Cliff and Sylvia sold the cattery and retired to Newlyn in Cornwall. Cliff sadly died in 2006 just 3 months short of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary and Sylvia returned to Stonehouse. She joined the Royal British Legion and the Local History Group and was also now able to enjoy the company of her great grandchildren and latterly great great-grandchildren.

Sylvia also had a passion for writing and admitted she wished she had entered journalism in her youth. Her letters were often printed in the Western Daily Press and she found there were always plenty of topics to write about! As someone who had been born and brought up in Eastington, Sylvia documented her memories of growing up here - which Megan typed and distributed, and much of which has been printed in this magazine from time to time - something she was very proud of as she felt had become famous at last!

In 2017 when her mobility became an issue, Sylvia moved into the Regency Retirement Home just down the road from where she lived in Stonehouse. She was still able to see all her family and friends on a regular basis as well as being able to colour, knit and do crosswords right up until the week before she died, at the grand age of 95, following a very short illness.

She will be greatly missed by family, friends and the staff and residents of the Regency Retirement Home.