

ENMORE GREEN COMMUNITY NEWS

Winter 2025 - 2026



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Editorial

As I write this editorial, I am trying not to get too excited. As the Editor of our Community newsletter I am interested in all the articles that come in but my heart is embedded with St. John's Church. In our Spring/Summer newsletter, we launched the Fundraising Appeal for vital repairs to the church building and circulated a detailed leaflet about what was needed. The original figure on the leaflet was £60,000 but we have to add the 20% VAT to this. Ironically, if we build a new church it is zero rated but repairs to a much loved building are liable for the dreaded VAT.

With the backing of our church members, the Friends of St. John's and the Enmore Green Community, we reached a 30% total of donated and pledged amounts. This enabled us to approach various local and national Trusts for additional funds. This then pushed us forward to the stage where we could start planning for the first stage which is the exterior repair work needed.

Following a meeting with our Architect, the Contractor and St. John's Deputy Church Wardens, the start date for contract commencement will be

2nd February 2026

Further details about the work to be done is in the St. John's page but a big thankyou to everyone for helping us to get to this point.

Jo Churchill

Editor

Deputy Churchwarden for St. John the Evangelist

Friends of St. John's

In the editorial, I mentioned that we were able to move forward with the St. John's Appeal because of the donations and pledges we had received.

Right from the start, the Friends pledged £5,000 as a commitment to their ongoing support for St. John's.

The Friends help in so many ways with the upkeep of the building and of the churchyard. They also pay for the production of this Newsletter as well as paying for and running our website.

Please consider whether you might sign up to become a Friend. Annual subscription is from £15.00. An application is on the website - www.enmoregreencommunity.com or ask for an application form from the Secretary and Yes it's me again.

Jo Churchill

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Andrew Brickell

It is very sad to tell our readers that Andrew died on the 21st October at his home in New Zealand. We have sent our prayers and condolences to his widow, Claire.

Andrew first contacted us in February 2024 having discovered copies of our Enmore Green News on the Internet! Our Spring / Summer edition of 2024 contained details of his family and their long association with Enmore Green. His ancestors owned and ran The Fountain Inn in the 1830's. Andrew and his wife Claire visited the UK in the summer of 2024 and happily their visit to Enmore Green coincided with the Talk by David Godden on 'The Great Pool of Enmore' on the 25th September. They purchased two copies of the updated 'The Search for Sally King' for themselves and for the Australian branch of the Brickells.

Their home in Auckland is called 'Enmore Green'.

DONKEY FIELD COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Alas, we had no choice but to cancel Apple Day. After many years of beautiful weather coinciding with this special occasion it was inevitable that we'd meet a wet one sooner or later. A great shame, especially after so much hard work and prep had gone in to marking twenty years since the first fruit trees were planted.

Hopefully conditions won't be as wet come Wassailing in January. However, at the time of writing it's fast approaching mid-November and a balmy 14 degrees. Some proper winter chill *would* be most welcome. Keep an eye on our notice boards for further details. We are very much hoping to welcome the White Horse Morris Dancers back.

There's a small committee which oversees the admin side of Donkey Field Community Orchard activities. Personally, I'd like to thank them for their time and effort; Zara, Kate, Catherine, Andrew, Anita. Of course, we lost lovely Helen Lanchbery in the autumn. She is missed by us all.

Before Christmas and on into spring, volunteers from Clayesmore School will be doing more habitat creation on Saturday mornings. We shall be mostly over The Butts side from now on, coppicing the boundary hedge and having fun in the woodland bit.

I went to Dorset COP (Conference of the Parties) at The Exchange in Sturminster Newton on Saturday November 1st with a delegation from Shaftesbury. Over 300 people attended from all over the county and beyond.

We had a slot to promote some of the wildlife-friendly conservation projects going on here. Specifically, I had ten minutes to talk about Shaftesbury Orchard Town, and this is what I said;

Shaftesbury Orchard Town is something which links nature conservation, local food production, sustainability and community cohesion.

It's unusual but not unique.

Shaftesbury Orchard Town is a version of a story being told elsewhere across the country.

If you're not yet hearing it where you live, don't worry, because it's an inclusive story which invites everyone and everywhere to jump in and take part.

After World War II, intensification of farming practices and changing food markets had a profound effect on the British countryside, not least on orchards.

Between 1970 and 1997, commercial orchards alone declined by 64%. Many smaller domestic orchards in villages and on town edges were lost to building and roads. In 1988 the environmental charity Common Ground started the Save Our Orchards campaign, to raise awareness of the precarious position orchards were in.

Four years later Common Ground initiated the creation of Community Orchards as positive, practical responses to halting the decline. I'm sure that Community Orchards are familiar to many of us in this room, as green spaces where the virtues of garden, allotment, woodland and wildlife sanctuary blend and overlap. There's a Community Orchard run by Dorset Wildlife Trust just down the road at Broad Oak, another in a field behind houses at Shillingstone and, about seven miles north of here, we have one in Shaftesbury. We call ours the Donkey Field Community Orchard because it's a scrap of land which was traditionally used by travelling folk as a stop-off grazing post for their animals. We manage it in partnership with the Town Council, locals and volunteers. Most of the practical conservation tasks get done in autumn and winter on Saturday mornings with pupils from Clayesmore School. We benefit from their youthful energy and enthusiasm, they have a wonderful time learning and playing in an amazing open-air adventure classroom. The Donkey Field was planted with fruit tree types and varieties which were chosen by Shaftesbury residents, so from the very get-go we harnessed community engagement. Now, our Donkey Field Community Orchard is 20 years old, and has become a much loved and used part of Shaftesbury's beating heart.

So we've started a new story - one which takes Community Orchard spirit, energy and magic and applies it across the whole of where we live. The opening chapter has been about sowing seeds in people's minds and embedding the Orchard Town concept in the psyche of Shaftesbury.

We're doing this in many ways, including by distributing and planting new fruit trees, reclaiming a lost orchard in one of our public parks, and establishing a Town Tree Nursery where we've started propagating future, homegrown, stock.

As a desktop exercise, we're mapping what already exists, to identify gaps and make linkages.

Joe Hashman

St. John's Church

Despite all the fundraising events, the work of the Church goes on. Our monthly services are all at 11.15am and are

1st Sunday Parish Communion

2nd Sunday Morning Prayer

3rd Sunday Morning Worship

4th Sunday Morning Prayer

A change of the pattern though for December.

Sunday 14th December

11.15am Let's Go to Bethlehem

The story of the Jesse Tree

A medieval custom of hanging symbolic ornaments on the branch of a tree during Advent – ornaments which represented the people and events down through the history of the Hebrew people that led to the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem. It was called the Jesse Tree, named after the father of King David. The Messiah was prophesied to be a descendant of David, which is the Tribe of Judah, the royal line of Israel.

Our Narrator will be Rafe Commissaris from the Arts Centre who will lead us through the story with Hymns and Readings from the Old and New Testaments.

Friday 19th December Carol Singing around the Christmas Tree on The Green

6.00pm - 6.30pm. Collection for St. John's Church and the Friends of Westminster Hospital

Sunday 22nd December

Traditional Carol Service

3.00pm

With the St. John's Singers

Christmas Day - Christmas Communion

10.00am In St. James Church

Sunday 28th December Team Service and the Patronal Festival of St. John the Evangelist and Apostle

10.00am

Repairs to St. John's

One of the things that has to be done before any repairs can be carried out is a Bat Survey to find out if St. John's has any bats. This was done and confirmed there was no evidence of the presence of bats. However, the Bat Conservation Trust, under the authority of Natural England, ask that roof work be carried out from March to October to avoid disturbing bats during hibernation. We are very conscious of our responsibility to wildlife in our churchyard so are following the instructions. Starting in February will give our Contractor the opportunity for drainage work under ground before the erection of scaffolding in March. Windows can be repaired and templates taken for the replacement curved guttering.

We have allowed a contingency amount to take account of any additional roof work that might be discovered once the scaffolding is in place.

It is possible that the church will have to be closed once the overhead work has begun and in this case, we will operate from our Church Hall.

It is anticipated that the exterior work will be completed by the end of May 2026. This then gives us the summer months for the building to dry out before re-plastering and decoration can take place.

Our fundraising efforts will continue.



St. John's Churchyard

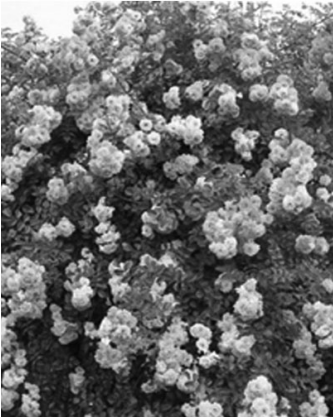
In the Spring edition of our newsletter, we spoke about managing the wild area that lies between the Orchard and our grave spaces. The area had become very overgrown with the main culprit being the onward march of the Brambles.

There is concern that in the early Spring, the brambles will smother the snow-drops, the primroses and the daffodils.

We are taking the advice of Joe Hashman of the Orchard. His view is that brambles also play their part in the wild life world but need to be 'controlled' rather than dug out. So during this November, our gardener Jamie Fisher Pearson, has mown and strimmed the whole area. This will be done again in January. This should allow all the plants to co-exist. We will see how this works out and it could be that we have to do this work every year.

Blushing Lucy – our Rose (contd.)

At the present time, our Rose is sprawled across a nearby grave site and trying to colonise the railings. A structure to support it is underway and when completed will be dedicated to 'Mothers we've loved and lost'.



Julian Richards, our well known archaeologist, is overseeing the project. During the Summer, Julian was on the island of Iona leading a week for the group of pilgrims who were staying in the Abbey. The Reverend Mary Ridgewell who now lives in Enmore Green was also there on Iona that week.

During general chat with members of the Iona community, Julian talked about the rose at Enmore Green. A lady then said 'Oh, my mother is buried in a little church in Enmore Green just by a large tree.' Julian explained that the tree had fallen but that the rose was thriving and would soon rise again thanks to the new structure. The result of this amazing co-incidence (or was it just a co-incidence?) is that this lady will travel to Enmore Green when the Rose structure is dedicated in the Spring and will stay with Mary.

St. John's Church Hall

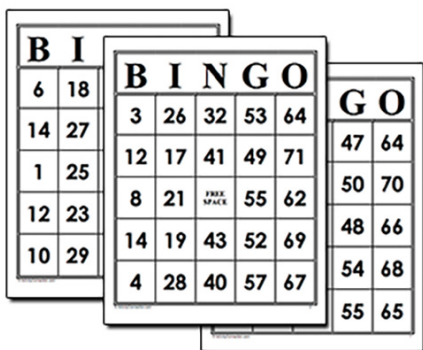
It seems a long time ago now but the Open Day on the 9th August was a great success. Folk came along during the afternoon for tea and cake and then more arrived in the evening for the Barbecue and music via Alan Wicks. It was a lovely day and evening so the tables and chairs outside were well used.

Charges for use of the Hall are £10.00 per house inclusive of heating. Please chat to Sue Hake on 01747 851338 if you would like to consider using the Hall for your event.

There is a Coffee morning on the first Wednesday of every month from 10.00am to 12noon with a foodie raffle; £2.00 for coffee/tea and biscuits.

And then a new booking for the third Thursday of each month

Something new for those Winter Afternoons



Bingo at St. John's Church Hall (top of Church Hill)

Every third Thursday of the month starting on

Thursday 15th January 2026

Hall open from 2.00pm

Eyes Down at 2.30pm.

Prizes to be won

Come and have a fun afternoon

Enmore Green Community Field

We are pleased to continue the long run of dinosaur free incidents at the field. Since the other football post was eaten no dinosaur larger than a pony has been spotted. The fence is working well.

The Council are keeping the field neat, clean and tidy - and this includes excellent cooperation from nearby residents to ensure the area is dog poop clear. Safe and fun for everyone, except larger goal post eating dinosaurs.

Lovely views from the benches, great picnic area although currently chilly, you can bring your own hot toddy.

Entrance from the Butts or through the Donkey Field from Church Hill.

Jeffrey Smith

Coffee Member

If you have any news or information you would like us to include in the Spring 2026 issue - please contact

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Shaftesbury Homegrown

At Shaftesbury Homegrown we are now concentrating on preparing the beds for winter after an excellent harvest. Despite the very hot summer weather, we have been enjoying a huge amount of beautiful fresh produce (including 70 kilos of tomatoes from the polytunnel!) and there are still plenty of things to pick such as salad, kale, parsnips, Brussel sprouts, leeks and celeriac. Before too long we will be starting to look at what seeds to order for next season. Plans are to expand on flowers and herbs as they are very popular.

We have a few new enthusiastic members now, which means we can look forward to good company, much laughter and another bumper crop next year. We get great satisfaction from growing our own food as much as we can, given the rising cost of living.

Our work sessions are 10am till 1pm on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday mornings, and we are happy to show visitors around and explain what we do down at Homegrown. New members are always welcome.

Helen English

(07789 845498)

The Garden Table

The Garden Table was closed at the end of October after a very successful few months. A total of £350.00 was raised for St. John's Church.

We are very grateful to Lionel and Sue Hake who look after the Table in the entrance to their home. It has become a friendly meeting place throughout the summer. Thank you also to all those who donated plants and produce and to those who supported us.

Friends of Breach Common

Well it's finally raining. A good drenching, soil soaking, pond filling rain! If I could dance I'd be out doing my best Gene Kelly impression but my tuneless whistle will have to do.

We've spent some time on pond maintenance lately. With the help of our little weevil friends the Azolla seems to have been eradicated. We've been digging out the grass that has tried to take over the ponds. The ponds have been bone dry for months but the wildlife they hold will have found its place to cope with the conditions, we hope! All the grass removed was placed to the side so any wildlife can easily access the water when it returns.

The willows have been pollarded and, although there is still some work to do on this, we used posts made from coppiced hazel to construct barriers using the cut willow as infill. You will see a small section of this by the lane, and if I say so myself it looks rather professional. A group of students from Claysmore School assisted us in this effort, and Barbara, our willow weaving wonder, wound the willow cuttings in. Proper job!!!! The knotweed has been treated so we'll see whether more treatment is needed in the spring. Our thanks go to Justine on the Town Council who is a supportive advocate of the Friends and chased this up.

So we now move into our autumn/winter efforts. Keeping the paths clear and usable is an ongoing chore and we enjoy the excuse to get our pruning saws out to remove fallen branches, normally willow. The Common produced an abundance of fruit this year. Apples, elderberries, blackberries and even raspberries were harvested by lots of you. Flavoured gin, vodka or pies? Let us know what you made, and if it's gin we'd love to taste it.

The dreaded bramble digging is also on the list. When we took on caring for the Common it was basically a massive, mostly impassable bramble patch. This is a chore that, like the washing up, is constant and never-ending. Some of the areas previously cleared have become overgrown... again! But it's very satisfying when your efforts are obvious to all.

The noticeable enjoyment and positive feedback we get from people is a lovely boost and much appreciated. On that note I'm off into my little back garden to transplant the wild foxgloves that are taking over down onto the Common. We had a wonderful show of them this year and I hope this carries on.

Enjoy the rain

Fran

News from Enmore Green Allotments

The Enmore Green allotments continue to thrive and occupancy is currently high with many visitors commenting on how beautifully the plots are kept.

Our volunteer days have concentrated on repairing rainwater harvesting tanks, as well as clearing our boundary with St John's church hall, which we are also developing as a wildlife area. We put up two solitary bee houses earlier this spring and I'm pleased to say that some of the cells have been used and sealed. One definitely looks like the work of leaf cutter bees. I was lucky enough to see some leaf cutter cocoons at a bumble bee workshop run by Bridget Stalbridge and they are incredibly beautiful - made up of overlapping discs of leaves - rather like a fine Havana cigar! We are planting nectar rich plants along the stone walls, starting with marjoram, which is always a magnet for both bees and butterflies.

There is also a new 'dead hedge' along the top of the boundary with the hall. This method of stacking up cuttings and weeds, is much better for the environment than burning our waste and provides an undisturbed habitat for birds, insects and small mammals. The cuttings break down slowly and release their nutrients back into the soil.

It's been an amazing year everywhere for fruit and the allotments have a fantastic assortment of fruit trees, as well as soft fruit. We are hoping to be a part of the Orchard Town project and encourage more fruit tree planting on the site - another win for wildlife of all kinds.

Catherine

Committee Member



ADVERTISEMENTS

The Search for Sally King A story of Enmore Green. £8.00 per copy.
Available at our Coffee mornings on the first Wednesday 10.00am to 12noon in
St. John's Church Hall, or from The Shaftesbury Museum., Gold Hill.

St. John's, Enmore Green and the Weir Family

The Weir Pulpit and the Enmore Green War Memorial £2.50.

Contact Jo Churchill on 01747 850432/jo.churchill@enmoregreen.co.uk

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Lauren.victoryus@gmail.com

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Yoga with Emily If you are interested in booking a class or have questions
please email Emily at: yogaemilyshaftesbury@gmail.com or contact her on 07495
379042

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 15th January 2026

Bingo at

St. John's Church Hall (top of Church Hill)

Hall open from 2.00pm

Eyes Down at 2.30pm.

Prizes to be won

Sunday 1st February

2.30pm in St. John's Church

Baroque and Beyond

Elinor Tolfree, David Grierson and friends

£8.00 pay at the Door

Good music, comfy chairs with tea and cake

What's not to like?

Thursday 19th February

Bingo at

St. John's Church Hall (top of Church Hill)

Hall open from 2.00pm

Eyes Down at 2.30pm.

Prizes to be won

Wednesday 4th March

St. John' Church Hall (top of Church Hill)

7.00pm

It started with a Murder

Tales from archaeology

David Godden talks of being drawn into archaeology by an old murder and then what followed.

Refreshments available

Tickets: £8.00 pay at the door

Thursday 19th March

Bingo at

St. John's Church Hall (top of Church Hill)

Hall open from 2.00pm

Eyes Down at 2.30pm.

Prizes to be won