

EARDISLAND PARISH MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2024

ISSUE 203



HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2025

Photo: Steve Ware, December 2023

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EDITORIAL

Firstly, an apology. I managed to leave out Jo Watson's appreciation of Eirian Jones in the last edition. I try to get things right but I make mistakes. Sorry.

There is much in this edition about floods, so I won't labour the issue. However, the community spirit was to the fore, with people chipping in to help those in need – for the second time this year. The meeting with Ellie Chowns M.P. in the Village Hall was very well attended, which can only help to enforce to central and local government that this community has a very real problem with flooding.

I was sorry to hear that Martin Thomas and Alan Pryce, who have contributed so much to the village over many years, have now chosen no longer to have a holiday home here in Eardisland. I am told that they will visit from time to time. I am sure you will join with me in thanking them for their many contributions and wish them all the best for the future.

Finally, I thank all those who have contributed to the Eardisland Parish Magazine over the past year, and there are many. There are those who submit articles, dates, adverts etc., those who organise and deliver to all households in the civil parish, the printers and the publisher, Eardisland Parish Council. Thank you to you all.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

Chris Bivand

EARDISLAND PARISH DIARY

Friday 29 th November	Film 'Six Inches of Soil', p. 21
Sunday 1 st December	Christmas Lights, p.15
Sunday 8 th December	Christmas Film, p.16
Friday 10th January	Magazine copy date
Thursday 23 rd January	PPG Meeting, p.19
Saturday 25 th January	Bingo Night, p.17
Friday 28 th February	Quiz Night, p. 18
Friday 7th March	Magazine copy date
Thursday 27 th March	ETA SGM, p.20
Friday 9th May	Magazine copy date
Friday 4th July	Magazine copy date
Friday 5th September	Magazine copy date
Friday 7th November	Magazine copy date*

The copy dates above were approved by Eardisland Parish Council without amendment. They are, therefore, the same as the draft dates in the September magazine. The circulation date is usually a week or so after the copy date, but this can vary. If you are advertising an event, please work on the basis that the distribution date is two weeks after the copy date. This, of course, depends on there being no technical problems.

Please note that there are other dates in the magazine that refer to individual organisations, such as the Women's Institute and Eardisland Church services. These can be found in the relevant reports that appear in 'Index' on page 2.

*I have requested the Parish Council to amend this date to Friday 14th November. This would be the same as this year's dates, given the calendar change. Please regard the amendment as provisional until the PC approves or amends the change.

As always, please plan ahead and let me have copy as soon as possible before the copy date. This gives me time to work through all the submissions and, very importantly, follow up on any errors or queries.

That said, thanks for all your contributions.

Ed.

EIRIAN VALMAI JONES

I first met Eirian, who has sadly died at the age of 84, when she became Chief Speech Therapist at Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge. I was her secretary and, more importantly, we became great friends.

Eirian (or Miss Jones, as I called her when at work) was a highly innovative therapist, well respected by her peers – she was an expert in aphasia (a communication disorder) and also swallowing techniques. Speech therapy covers such a wide range of treatments, neurological illnesses e.g. Motor Neurone Disease, strokes, stammering, to name but a few. She wrote papers, lectured and taught many students. Every patient was given such support from Eirian, not just clinical but emotional support, she would also include family as well. She became a good friend to many, often working long, long days – but she was always there to help and support when needed.

Eirian loved Eardisland and was often seen walking her much loved dog, Sweep. She enjoyed the village community and worked in the village shop. Eirian enjoyed her garden, antiques and was an avid reader. Her love of animals was great.

Most of all, I remember her for her kindness, empathy and generosity. She was a thoroughly decent person.

RIP Eirian Valmai Jones

Jo Watson

ALAN GRAHAM HOLLOWAY

b. 4th December 1948, d. 11th September 2024



Alan was a man whose kindness, humour, and love of life left an indelible mark on everyone who knew him. Alan's life was one filled with love, adventure, and creativity, and his story is one that will be remembered for years to come.

Alan's and Val's love story began on New Year's Eve in 1990, at the Black Star pub in Stourport on Severn. Val had just moved into a new home, only to find that all the electrics had gone out. Via friends, Alan immediately stepped in to help, fixing the electrics without hesitation. After finishing the job, Val offered him a sandwich for the road, and they ended

up sitting together in the living room.

In a moment that has become a favourite story, Alan unknowingly jammed the ill-fitting living room door shut. With no other way out, Val had to climb through the bay window to set him free. She always laughed, saying that she couldn't get a man unless she locked him in. From that funny and fateful day, their relationship blossomed, and they would have been married for 32 years last October.

Twenty-six years ago, they moved to Eardisland, where they built a life together, full of shared hobbies, travels, and memories. Every year, Alan would build Val a snowman, a simple but loving gesture that showed his thoughtful and playful nature. Together, they explored the world, traveling to places like New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and France, making memories that would last a lifetime.

Alan was a man of many talents and passions. He was training to be a ski instructor, reflecting his love for the outdoors and adventure. His creativity shone through in his art, and he and Val shared a special bond over their love for capturing the beauty of the world—Val with her photography and Alan with his painting. Val would take the photos, and Alan would transform them into beautiful works of art, blending their talents and creating something special together.

They also enjoyed playing chess, often spending time challenging each other in a game that tested their strategic minds. Meals out were another favourite pastime, as well as attending Morgan sports car rallies, where they indulged in their shared love for the elegance and power of these classic cars.

As Alan's health declined, Val continued to care for him with the same love and devotion that had defined their life together. She would take him fishing, a pastime that brought him peace and joy. Even when Val would ask, "Are you ready to go now?" Alan would always respond with, "Just one more cast," extending their time together by another hour or so. Those moments by the water were a reflection of Alan's spirit—patient, calm, and always finding joy in the simple pleasures of life.

Alan was a man who brought light into the lives of those around him. His dry humour, his thoughtfulness, and his creativity were just some of the qualities that made him special. He was a loving husband to Val, always finding small ways to show his affection, whether it was building a snowman or sharing a quiet moment over a meal. His love for adventure, whether through skiing, traveling, or painting, was always present, and he lived life with a sense of curiosity and wonder that was truly inspiring.

Parkinson's robbed him of many things, but nothing could take away the incredible life he had.

My thanks to Val and family for allowing me to use Mark Townsend's eulogy. Ed.

EARDISLAND PARISH COUNCIL

I am aware that it has been some time since the PC had an article in the Magazine, so after consultation with the editor, I thought the time was right to introduce our new Parish Clerk, whilst at the same time updating you all on some of the activities being undertaken. After some four months without a Parish Clerk, I am pleased to report that following a successful recruitment campaign run by Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) the Parish Council has appointed NEIL BARRINGTON as our new Parish Clerk.

Neil was appointed on the 10th of October. He is currently Clerk to four other Councils in Herefordshire. He is a previous Parish Council Chair and current Councillor for his home constituency. He joins us with a wealth of experience as a Clerk having first taken up the role with Little Birch Parish Council in 2022. Neil holds a Certificate in Local Council Administration and comes to us as a fully qualified (CiLCA) Clerk and has the unique ability to see issues from both sides of the fence. He is a very welcome member of the Parish Council team, and I am sure, like the Council, you will welcome his appointment.

Neil faced a somewhat baptism of fire as the village faced its first flood of the winter. On this occasion the river peaked at 1.44 m and resulted in excess of some 30 properties flooding, with some flooding for the very first time. As one whose property floods I am acutely aware of the impacts it has on us as individuals, on our families and neighbours and as a wider community. I, like so many of you, find myself indebted to all members of our community who go out of their way, and at some personal risk, to help us all.

Whether they be from the Flood Group who close the roads, man the barriers and check on vulnerable residents, or members of the E-Team who assist in the clear up activities after the event, or members of the Village Hall team who spend so long clearing up the mess after the event, my thanks and gratitude personally, and on behalf of us all, to all of you too numerous to mention by name. You really are what makes our village the caring, special place that it is.

There is, as I am sure you are aware, a lot of activity that goes on in the background. It is only right that I thank Councillor Roger Phillips, who I know has worked tirelessly on our behalf in raising our flood issues and concerns at the various forums within Herefordshire Council, and who has been instrumental in ensuring that we have received a further £2,800 of funding following our application to the 2024/2025 drainage grant. Some of this is for ditches clearance and some for a Drainage Asset Survey. Gully clearing and cleansing will also be undertaken by Herefordshire Council.

We have also had the Environment Agency attend the village the morning after our latest flood and I believe more recently as well. I know they spoke to some residents, but to not enough of you. To those of you that sent videos, photographs and details of the extent to which you, and the village

flooded to the Parish Clerk, thank you! All of them have been passed onto the Environment Agency to assist in their evidence gathering and their assessment of measures to take.

I have been advised personally that the EPFR (Eardisland Property Flood Resilience) scheme is the EA's number one priority when it comes to delivering the measures, yet as we all know it is taking far too long to implement.

Members of the Village Hall Committee hosted our new MP, Ellie Chowns, at the Village Hall on the 15th to hear first-hand the effects and the impact of flooding on you all. I would encourage all affected and concerned to raise the issues of concern at all and every available opportunity and as widely as possible. Indeed, Ellie has already raised the issue in Parliament calling for more funding for Councils for flood prevention and resilience. These activities deserve, and demand, the support of all of us.

In conjunction with our Environment and Sustainability Group we have written to our MP Ellie Chowns, to the leader of Herefordshire Council, as well as to our neighbouring Parishes raising our concerns with respect to the quality of the water in the River Arrow and the issues associated with flooding. The responses thus far have been encouraging.

A few more take-aways:

- Three new benches have been purchased and are in the process of being sited.
- A reminder that Gigaclear Internet is available at the Village Hall.
- The wall at the entrance to the village car park has been repaired.
- We have a proposed start date of the beginning of next month to install the new fence around the playground.
- Planning approval has been obtained with regards to tree works on the riverbank and on the Recreation Ground.
- After extensive legal consultation by the PC, a way forward with regards to the Village Hall Extension was discussed at November's Parish Council Meeting.

There will be more updates in the next magazine.

May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Council to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Jerry Blyth
Chair, Eardisland Parish Council

AN UPDATE ON EPFR FROM THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The evening of Thursday 14th November saw me update fellow Councillors on a call I had received earlier in the day from the Environment Agency, and it is only right and proper that having updated them I give fellow parishioners the same message.

Like my predecessors in the role of Chair, and as agreed by fellow councillors at a meeting in early July, I have been heavily involved in building a working relationship with the Environment Agency, actively engaging them and slowly convincing them diplomatically of the need to progress issues associated with all areas river and flooding related. I am proud of the fact that it is also why we are now the EA's number one priority when it comes to PFR.

It was by developing those relationships that during the latest flood I was able to call direct and advise that once again we being hit by a flooding event and that the time was now to demonstrate their commitment to helping our community. You may be aware that we asked for and sent to the EA numerous photographs and details of the properties and businesses that flooded as well as reporting in numerous breaches of the riverbanks, brooks, streams and ditches.

Likewise, I was in contact with our Ward Councillor and ensured that he was added to our Flood Group communications so that he had current and up-to-date information that he could pass on to relevant bodies within Herefordshire Council.

As a result of these contacts the EA attended on scene on the Saturday morning, after the latest flood, and spoke to several members of the community as well as to members of the flood group. I also know that they have visited subsequently and that they will continue to do so. But I recognise that I could, and should, have done more with regards to communicating more widely.

The conversation I had with Emily Penning from the EA on 14th November confirmed their commitment to EPFR scheme and to hold a meeting with Parishioners before Christmas and in association with Herefordshire Council representatives from both the Heritage and Conservation domains. They will be available to answer any, and all, of your questions and provide full updates as to the position with the EPFR measures as well as actions and measures being considered or taken with regards to flooding.

Emily has committed to keeping the EPFR website up to date and to answer questions that any of you have which can be emailed to: eardisland.pfr@environment-agency.gov.uk

A great deal of work has been done by a great number of people to get us to this point, but it is important that we keep up the momentum and that we keep engaging with those than can help us. I for one, and I know that my fellow Councillors, likewise, will do just that.

Jerry Blyth, Chair Eardisland Parish Council

MP VISITS EARDISLAND TO TACKLE FLOODING CONCERNS

In a pivotal moment for the village, local MP for North Herefordshire, Ellie Chowns, visited Eardisland to hear residents' concerns about recurring floods and the challenges they pose to the community. The meeting, held in the village hall, brought together residents, councillors, and other stakeholders to discuss potential solutions and progress on local flood management initiatives.

During the discussion, residents raised pressing concerns about flood risks and the damage caused to homes and infrastructure. These included the need for better flood defences, improved maintenance of the River Arrow and surrounding ditches, and management of runoff from agricultural land. There was also a strong focus on the strain placed on the village's outdated drainage system.

Ellie Chowns MP listened closely to the residents' concerns and committed to several actions, including:

- Writing to the government to advocate for the approval of a Flood Recovery Framework, ensuring better financial support for communities like Eardisland.
- Supporting efforts for River Arrow regeneration and further discussions in the New Year to explore natural solutions to flooding upstream.
- Following up with the Environment Agency (EA) on the Property Flood Resilience program launched in April 2023 and urging them to maintain the village weir more effectively.
- Helping residents access grants and funding, including writing to the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to explore additional financial support.
- Liaising with West Mercia Police to address specific flood-related community concerns.

The meeting served as a reminder of the collaborative effort needed between the Environment Agency, Herefordshire Council, and local residents to reduce flood risks effectively.

Progress on Local Flood Management

Herefordshire Council's commitment to improving flood resilience in Eardisland was highlighted during the meeting. The council has approved funding for several drainage and ditching projects as part of the 2024/25 Drainage Grant program, including:

- £1,800 for ditching works
- £1,000 for a drainage asset survey
- Gully clearing and cleansing, to be undertaken directly by Herefordshire Council.

These initiatives aim to map all drains, culverts, and gullies under council responsibility, repair damaged infrastructure, and create a maintenance schedule to prevent future flooding.

Residents were also reminded of the importance of maintaining their own roadside ditches, as many fall under the responsibility of riparian landowners. Information on this can be found on the Herefordshire Council flood management webpage.

Looking Ahead

Before Christmas, the Environment Agency will return to Eardisland to provide an update on the Property Flood Resilience Program, which was first introduced in April 2023. This program aims to equip properties with measures such as flood barriers and raised electrics to reduce damage during future flooding events. Many attendees expressed their appreciation for Ellie Chowns' visit and the opportunity to have their voices heard directly. The MP reiterated her commitment to championing local concerns at both the regional and national levels, bringing much-needed attention to Eardisland's flooding challenges.

A United Community

As the winter months approach, the village remains resolute in its efforts to hold decision-makers accountable and work together to protect homes, businesses, and livelihoods. With new funding secured, actionable commitments from local government, and continued engagement from their MP, there is hope that tangible progress will be made in reducing flood risks for Eardisland.

For further updates on the flood management efforts and the Environment Agency's visit, keep an eye on upcoming editions of the parish magazine and the Parish Council website. The Eardisland Parish Council's official website is <https://www.eardisland-pc.gov.uk>

Additionally, the Eardisland Community Website <https://www.eardisland.org.uk> offers information for residents and visitors.

From Cllr. Rebecca Rhys-Donoghue

Flooding:

The high rainfall of recent months and a huge local deluge of rain on 16th October on a saturated surface caused the second major flooding event in less than twelve months. The work of the local Flood Response group of volunteers is tremendous, ensuring householders are alerted to the imminent risk, the more vulnerable helped, formally closing the highway and supporting residents coping with the aftermath of the flood in their homes.

As your local Herefordshire Councillor, I will continue to liaise with the Parish Council, Herefordshire Council, Environment Agency, and Lugg Drainage Board to ensure we can do all we can to prevent and mitigate the flooding impact. The Titley monitoring station which measures the rising depths of the river Arrow is a proven four-to-six-hour warning of river levels and potential flooding for the village, and I will continue to ensure its value is well understood by all agencies. Maintenance of drains and ditches is critical to mitigate against flooding and I have secured from Herefordshire Council a grant of £1,800 to the Parish Council this winter for local drainage works and an additional £1,000 for a survey of local drains so we can ensure we have a proper mapping of our local drainage systems and identify maintenance going forward. In addition, Balfour will also carry out gulley clearing and cleansing and is discussing proposed minor drainage schemes with the Parish Council.

It will be important to continue to include highway drainage in the 2025/26 County Council budget as part of the Highway Investment Programme alongside the drainage grants to Parish Councils. As a noted County flooding risk maintenance of the village drains must be a priority and local landowners too must ensure their drains, ditches and gulleys are as clear as possible. Recognising that at times of high-water levels drains and ditches will be overrun but if they are free as the water subsides it will return to its normal channels quicker.

As many householders will know, the Environment Agency has been in discussions on property flood mitigation and my understanding is they will be holding a public session in the village within the next month. The EA and our community need also to appraise fully, and understand the impact of, the removal of the lower weir in Eardisland.

The Government has in the past at times of high flooding incidents from named storms opened a Flood Recovery Framework, where they allocate funding to local authorities to allow three-month council tax breaks and other hardship funding. The Government did not launch the FRF in October as there “wasn’t severe widespread impact across multiple areas “. There is some funding from

the Herefordshire Community Foundation Property Flood Resilience scheme which can be seen on their website.

Highway issues:

Please report any potholes and problems online:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/report-problems-road

Report a serious pothole, flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places: **01432 261800**.

Roger

EARDISLAND COMMUNITY SHOP NEWS

Following a busy summer season, we are aiming to keep your shop open every day from 9.00am to 3.00pm, except Sundays when we close at midday.

We are introducing some new Christmas lines including speciality breads, seasonal flavours of Country Flavour preserves, Cartmel sticky toffee pudding, new Happy Fudge flavours, and in addition to the very popular Frank's Oaties we'll be stocking a variety of their delicious large fruit cakes.

Our Christmas opening hours:

Christmas Eve:	9.00am until 12.00
Closed:	Christmas Day and Boxing Day

Open as usual Friday 27th to Monday 30th inclusive.

Tuesday 31st Dec - close at 12.00.

New Year's Day closed.

Thursday 2nd Jan - 9.00 am to 3.00pm as usual.

The water tap has been turned off for the winter period to avoid frost damage. If anyone has a set of shop keys which they do not use, would they please return them to the shop.

A big thank you to all our volunteers and to new ones who have stepped up to help. As usual we still need more volunteers to spread the load!

The shop committee would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

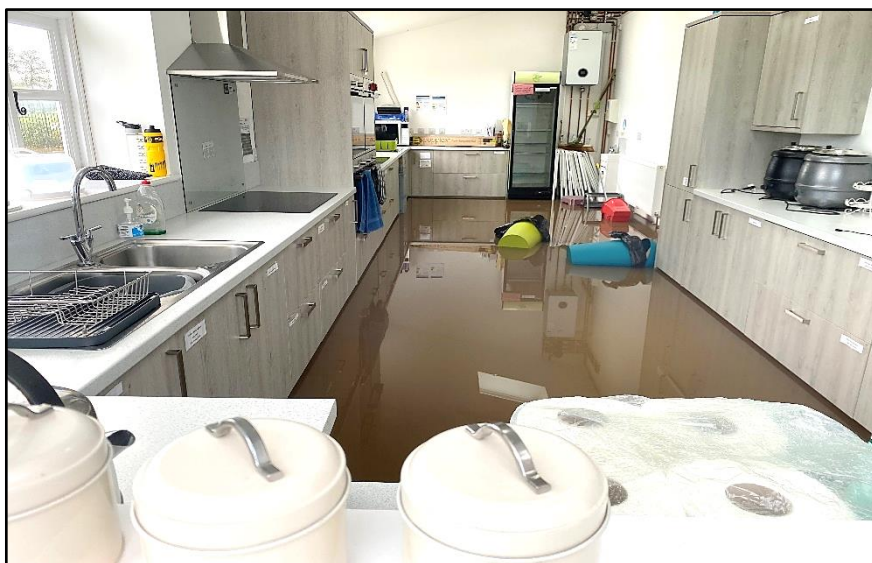
We had another busy day supporting the craft fair in the hall, with Wendy selling her wonderful jams and cakes as well as a full day serving cake, teas and coffee. Thanks to all in the village for the support of help and the generous supply of home-baked cakes.

We hosted another of our Film Nights with “Flicks in the Sticks,” The Miracle Club on September 21st, enjoyed by many. Our next film is a family Christmas film “Arthur Christmas” a Christmas comedy film produced by Columbia and Sony Pictures. Featuring the voices of James McAvoy, Hugh Laurie, Bill Nighy, Jim Broadbent, Imelda Staunton, and Ashley Jensen. Families all welcome.

We unfortunately had to cancel our main fundraiser “Race Night” due to the flooding in the village and that of the Village Hall. We will look to reschedule this in the Spring when the flood season is over.

The flood in October was the worst the Village Hall had suffered, and an enormous amount of work was entailed to get the hall pumped and cleaned out in 5 days so classes and clubs could carry on as normal. Well done to all those that helped with support of equipment and most importantly their time. As a result of the high costs involved in the clear up and drying out of the hall, we proceeded to apply to the “Herefordshire Community Foundation” for assistance.

We are pleased to announce we received a £2000 grant towards purchasing equipment such as pumps and dehumidifiers alleviating the high cost of hire in the future.



We hosted yet another fun packed Quiz Night on the 8th of November, with several new teams and locals joining in. We look forward to seeing both regulars and new faces at our next Quiz in teams of up to 6 with Fun rounds and questions for all to enjoy.

We will be supporting the Christmas Lights and Santa event this year on December the 1st, with free mulled wine and mince pies. Please come and join in and enjoy. This is an event hosted by many groups in the village and brings together people of all ages, fostering a sense of togetherness and local pride. We have just a few places remaining on the Christmas Wreath Making Workshop in the Village Hall on the 13th of December. Please contact Amanda Canning at petals.bouquets@gmail.com if interested.

We are pleased that the Eardisland Air Rifle Club continue to meet every Tuesday evening from 7pm. Contact Andy Wood 07540 687573 for details and interest.

New to the Village Hall - Martial Arts classes, we have a new weekly class offered on Monday afternoons from 4 pm, open to adults and kids. If interested, please contact Troy Morris at troy@troymorrismartialarts.co.uk

The Village Hall is a great venue for hire for private parties, christenings, celebrations, hosting a talk or a fundraising event for your cause or charity. It offers large kitchen facilities, tables and chairs as well as WIFI, music equipment, projector, screen and a DVD player at your disposal.

The Costs to hire the Hall are:

Entire Premises: just £69 / day £44 for 4 hours and £15 for a single hour.

Main Hall Only: just £63 / day £38 for 4 hours and £13 for a single hour.

Meeting Room Only: just £38 / day £19 for 4 hours and £7 for a single hour.

We would welcome any new members to the committee who feel they would like to be involved in any way big or small! We also have a Volunteers and Helpers list which if you feel you are unable to commit but would like to be involved in the fundraising events, please do not hesitate to contact me. Susie 07799486210.

A huge thanks to all supporters of our events. Please look out for our Village Hall Activity Posters for what is coming up in the next few months.

December:

Sunday 8th – Flicks in the Sticks – Arthur Christmas - 4pm – Village Hall

January:

Saturday 25th – Bingo Night 7 pm Village Hall - Fundraiser

February:

Friday 28th – Quiz Night 7pm – Village Hall

Susie Curtis and team – EVHM



Eardisland Christmas Lights

Sunday 1st December

Santa's Grotto from 4.00pm | Lights on 5pm

FREE EVENT - ALL WELCOME

Mulled Wine | Mince Pies | Carols

to thank you for your
support this year



Brought to the community by Eardisland Village Hall,
Eardisland Community Shop, Eardisland Parish Council,
Eardisland Church and the E-Team.



Join us for a family
Christmas Film

at Eardisland Village Hall

Sunday 8th December | 4pm



Admission: £4 adults, £3 children

Snacks and bar available

To pre-book tickets,
email
susie.evhmc@yahoo.com



Eardisland
Village Hall



Registered Charity No 1108366



BINGO NIGHT

Join us at
Eardisland Village Hall
for a night full of fun!

Saturday 25th January
Bar from 6.30pm | Game starts 7pm

£5 per book (6 games)
Raffle | Prizes

Eardisland
Village Hall

Registered Charity No 1108366



Eardisland Village Hall

QUIZ NIGHT



Friday 28th February; 7pm
Eardisland Village Hall

Maximum team of 6

Bar & refreshments provided



£2 admission - booking recommended!

Email susie.evhmc@yahoo.com or
scan the QR code to book

Eardisland
Village Hall



MORTIMER MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

The Practice has 2 new GPs both from Ryelands Surgery in Leominster.

Dr Emma Derbyshire and Dr Neda Abyaneh. Dr Matt Howard has returned to the Practice to finish his registrar training. Dr Verity Oloro also joined the Practice several months ago.

From July to October 350 patients did not attend for booked appointments. From January the total amounts to 1091 - this is 89 clinical days lost.

Texts are sent out the day prior to appointments for those who have mobiles as a reminder. If mobile numbers have changed please can patients inform the Practice thank you.

The 24 hour repeat Prescription Pharmacy Service is on hold as the Practice is considering an extension to make it more accessible.

Parking at Kingsland surgery is becoming a major issue. Numerous staff cars including doctors have had their cars hit over recent months due to careless driving or bad parking. The Practice asks that patients only park in the designated spaces which are marked. Coronation Hall Kingsland can be used as an overflow car park. When parking in the road outside the surgery please consider the neighbours' access.

Our next PPG meeting is January 23rd 2025. If anyone has any issues or concerns they would like me to highlight please contact me.

Diane Lee
01544 387685

EARDISLAND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The Eardisland WI started the autumn with a taster session at Eardisland Bowling Club. We had a rare day of dry weather to have a go and many of the members took part and a number watched our endeavours. Thanks to Barbara, Susie, Norman, Doug and the other members of the Club who welcomed us and took a few hours from their day to support us.

We visited the Judges' Lodging in Presteigne for our October meeting. This fascinating tour by gas and oil lighting round the authentically restored and interesting Georgian Building, included the living quarters, servants' quarters and the court room where the biannual assizes were held.

The November meeting was led by our inestimable member Mavis Tantrum who demonstrated Christmas Flower arrangements that were raffled to the attending members raising valuable funds for our WI.

Several members also took part in training organised by Ben Woodcock to carry out water testing on the river Arrow, as part of the clean waters campaign.

The next meeting will be the WI annual Christmas Lunch.

During the quarter we were also able to welcome two new members, one re-joining after a number of years and another new to the village. New members are always welcome, and guests may join our meeting for a small fee of £5. (if it is a visit other charges may apply).

2025 will start with a talk by Carole Millin on the history of the English language on 13th January. We will follow this with a demonstration by Alexandra from Croft Farm, Knapton on homemade chocolate on 10th February. In the new year meetings will start at 2.00 p.m.

The AGM will be held on Monday 10th March, 2.00 p.m. in the village hall.

W.I. Committee

EARDISLAND TWINNING ASSOCIATION

SAVE THE DATE!

The next Special General Meeting of Eardisland Twinning Association will take place on Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7pm in Eardisland Village Hall. The Association's Constitution states that all Eardisland parishioners and interested residents of neighbouring towns and villages are welcome to attend all association meetings/organised events. There is no formal membership or membership fee. There will be no obligation to join a committee unless you are interested! Please phone me if you would like more detailed information. Thank you.



Ruth Brinton-Bivand
Founding Chair, Eardisland Twinning Association (07773 706147)



Presents...

SIX INCHES OF SOIL

The inspiring story of young British farmers
standing up against the industrial food system

Friday 29th November from 6pm
Eardisland Village Hall. HR6 9BP

**Festive Feast and Film
followed by a Q&A**

With local farmers and
producers: Guy Tudge, Rob
Swift and Stephen Ware

Tickets: £7.50

inc. Festive buffet and a welcome
drink provided by
Eardisland Community Shop
Bar also open on the night.



To book visit:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/newleaf
or scan the code
or call 07851 445412
or purchase in Eardisland
Community Shop!

SEWAGE TREATMENT IN EARDISLAND AND RIVER POLLUTION

The Parish Council has been contacted several times with concerns regarding best practice for septic tanks (STs) and private treatment plants (PTPs).

Eardisland does not have mains sewage infrastructure, so all properties will therefore have either a septic tank or a private treatment plant to process 'foul' wastewater from toilets, baths, showers, sinks and washing machines (NB 'storm' – rainwater - should not be treated in the same system). The proportion of harmful phosphates in the river which comes from domestic systems such as these is likely to be less than 3% of the total, as most pollution comes from rural land use and larger sewage treatment works. However, keeping your sewage treatment plant healthy is a good way to reduce phosphate outflow, and there is some advice on how to do this below. Properties that flood may be at increased risk of releasing pollution into watercourses during flood events, and there are some steps you can take to reduce this. Some properties may need permits, and it's suggested parishioners seek specialist advice if they think this may be the case.

Permits: Some properties, particularly those with septic tanks which may discharge directly into watercourses, may need a licence from the Environment Agency. Full rules are here <https://www.gov.uk/permits-you-need-for-septic-tanks>

Best Practice for Septic Tanks and Small Treatment Plants: Don't put fat, oil or grease down the drain. Dispose of this through the bin service. Don't pour milk, cream, paint or paint cleaners etc down the drain. Don't flush wipes, sanitary products or nappies. Only pee, poo and paper loo roll can be managed. Even biodegradable wipes can interfere with and harm ST and PTPs. Don't use chemical cleaning products – especially those with hazard warnings on the label. These can harm the crucial bacteria required to treat the waste but might also pollute and harm river wildlife because ST and PTPs cannot remove these forever chemicals from the water. Use bleach sparingly. Don't flush medicines, garden, car or other chemicals. Don't put food scraps down the drain. Check if your household cleaning products are safe to use in a ST or PTP and swap to ecologically friendly brands. Do set up a regular maintenance agreement with a licensed waste company to check your system is working as it should, isn't polluting and doesn't need emptying.

Best Sewage Treatment Practice: During general flooding in your area, while a flood is in progress, homeowners are advised to reduce all non-essential water use and to flush toilets as little as possible. Putting the washing machine on or having a bath during a flood event will put your ST/PTP under pressure because the ground will be saturated and may be a pollution risk due to breaching the capacity and overwhelming the soakaway. Limit water use and flushing until the ground is no longer saturated.

Localised flooding of your ST/PTP and soakaway: If the area where your septic tank and / or drainage field is located becomes covered with flood water, or is saturated for some reason, try to avoid adding more wastewater the system and avoid contact with any standing water that may contain sewage. A PTP is less likely to fail during a flood event, but as there are electrical parts it can be worth checking it is working correctly after the flood. If you think your system has been damaged by a flood event or a blockage it is best to seek professional help to reinstate the functionality and check that the system is functioning as it should.

RIVER ARROW WATER QUALITY TESTING

Following on from the 'Can Our Rivers Survive' talk held earlier in the year it was great to see 25 volunteers being trained to carry out water quality testing across the Arrow catchment last Saturday. The new testers headed back to their parishes of Eardisland, Shobdon, Pembridge, Titley, and Weobley ready to start weekly testing for pollutants including phosphates and nitrates.

Eardisland's teams will test the Arrow, Millstream, and Tadpole/Southall Brook. Training and equipment have been provided by the Campaign for Protection of Rural England, and we're grateful for the use of the Church as a training venue.

CHRISTMAS TREES – REAL OR PLASTIC?

The Parish Council is again supporting the use of real Christmas trees from a local supplier. We'd also encourage you to take advantage of the free disposal from the car park after Christmas. Real trees have an average carbon footprint of 3.5kg if disposed of by burning or chipping. If they end up in landfill this can increase to 16kg. Plastic trees have a carbon footprint of around 40kg, so would need to be reused 12 times to reduce their impact to the same as real trees. Artificial trees are usually made of oil-based plastic, so are non-biodegradable and non-recyclable. Buying a tree grown locally also cuts down on pollution from shipping plastic trees long distances and helps support a local sustainable business.

Ben Woodcock
b3nwoodcock@gmail.com or 388976



EARDISLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Every now and again, a new member joins our scheme and slowly but surely our representation continues to increase across the breadth of Eardisland parish. There are many reasons to join our Neighbourhood Watch scheme and here are just a few:

- **Crime prevention:** You can help prevent and reduce crime in your community.
- **Community involvement:** You can show that neighbours are looking out for each other.
- **Community updates:** You can stay up-to-date with what's happening in your area.
- **Home insurance:** You may be able to save money on your home insurance. Some insurers offer discounts to members.

Focussing on one of those points, members get regular crime prevention advice with recent updates including how to protect your home against burglary, and understanding the different types of fraud and scams that are prevalent and how to protect yourself.

If you are interested in joining this scheme, you will need to become a member and then join the Eardisland scheme using the following link:

<https://members.ourwatchmember.org.uk/join> to register by providing your personal details and selecting the Eardisland scheme and gain access to regular security hints as well as discounted security equipment and home insurance.

If you have any questions on how to join or any aspect of Neighbourhood Watch please get in touch, or if you don't want to join online, call or email me with your name, address and contact details and I can complete the membership process on your behalf.

Joe Logan

Phone: 01544 388878. Email: eardisland_neighbourhood_watch@hotmail.com
(please note the 2 underscores)

CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE

Children wanted to decorate the church christmas tree on December 14th at 10am.

There will be the usual hot chocolate, sausage rolls and treats!

Children, please bring your mums dads, grandmas, grandpas and auntsies for a coffee/tea - perhaps they might like to help with the high branches 🌲🌲

I very much hope to see you there,

Love Dian xx

TWICE OVER THIS FESTIVE SEASON THE CHURCH BELLS WILL RING A FULL PEAL –

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN??

The simple answer is that the bells will ring, in a very musical way, continuously for 3 hours.

To understand why the bell ringers would want to do that a simple explanation of change ringing is required. Change ringing means that every time each of the 8 bells rings they must be in a different order and never repeated.

This is where we get to the mathematical bit. If there were only 3 bells available then you could ring just 6 different changes (3 factorial for those good at mathematics), 4 bells would mean 24 changes, 5 bells (5 factorial) 120 changes etc. At roughly 2 seconds per change those 120 changes would take 4 mins. The 720 changes for 6 bells taking 24 minutes and then the 5040 changes for 7 bells taking some 3 hours. That, therefore, has laid down the challenge for ringers: to ring over 5000 different changes, consecutively, taking 3 hours. Some, or rather just a few, take the next extreme step of ringing the 40320 changes possible on 8 bells that will take them 24 hours. They are either extremely dedicated to ringing, mad, or both and must have very good neighbors close by. Personally, I don't fancy ringing a bell whilst wearing a nappy so I am more than happy to stick to the 3 hour challenge, feel the sense of achievement, celebrate a local event and also keep the neighbors happy.

Here comes the Eardisland bit. As the local Tower Captain, I noticed that a full peal of 5000+ changes has not been rung at Eardisland since April '23 so I decided to put a band of ringers together to start this festive season with the joyous sound of our lovely bells, the first week in December. Whilst planning this I also received a request from Derby Cathedral ringers to come and celebrate the New Year by ringing a peal in January, hence we have the 2 events. For those who do not share my enthusiasm for the sound of bells, please note that a

further request from Bromyard ringers to ring another one 5 days before Christmas was rejected as we felt that 3 peals inside 4 weeks was just too much.

So there we have it. Local ringers (and guests) will hopefully bring some Christmas cheer to our village by ringing from 9.45am till almost 1pm on Saturday 7th December and it also happens to be my Golden Wedding Anniversary hence the choice of date. Derby Cathedral ringers (I expect them to sound really good) will ring on Friday 3rd January in the afternoon (aprox 1pm till 4pm). That band of ringers will then go on to ring something similar at Hereford Cathedral the following day. If any of you feel inquisitive enough wanting to see what we are doing then you are most welcome to come inside the church and observe us, through the glass doors whilst we are ringing, but please try not to disturb us as we need to concentrate quite a bit.

If, for any of you, this has stirred a possible interest in bell ringing of any kind, do not hesitate to contact me for further information. My contact details are available inside the church tower and I would be most happy to chat further.

To ring a church bell you don't have to be strong, a mathematical genius or religious; just tall enough to reach a rope (10+ years old) and even those not so fit should note that recently we have had a ringer using a wheelchair and another Falkland war veteran ringing with only one leg (he sits on a bar stool). So why not you?

Geoff Cowling
Eardisland Bell Tower Captain

CHURCH MATTERS

All are most welcome to services and will find a friendly and caring community. Come along and find out more; contact us too, if you are interested.

If you would like to volunteer to read a lesson, lead prayers, become a welcomer, sing, play, look after the church in any way or choose a hymn for a special occasion, please let us know.

Priest-in-Charge:	Rev. Julie Read, The Rectory, Kingsland
	07826 194400 01568 708255
	rev.julie@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk
Curate	Rev Rosie Roberts 07720 333383
	revd.rosie@mortimerscrosschurches.co.uk
Reader	Rosie Capon: 07811 436412
Churchwarden/Organist	Annette Blyth 01544 388241
Deputy Churchwarden	Dian Cope 01544 388317
Treasurer:	Mike Coleburn 01544 388486
PCC Secretary:	Avis Denny 01568 780874

Services at St Mary the Virgin, Eardisland and in the Benefice

Date	Time and type	Which church?
Sunday 24 th Nov	9.30am Holy Communion	Eardisland
Sunday 1 st Dec	9.30am Holy Communion Advent Sunday	Eardisland
Sunday 8 th Dec Advent 2	9.30am iSingPop	Eardisland
Saturday 14 th Dec	10am Christmas Tree Decorating. Hot chocolate too!	Eardisland
Sunday 15 th Dec Advent 3	9.30am Holy Communion	Eardisland
Sunday 22 nd Dec Advent 4	5pm Carol Service with candles. Seasonal refreshments	Eardisland
Tuesday 24 th Dec Christmas Eve	10pm 'Midnight' Mass	Eardisland
Wednesday 25 th Dec Christmas Day	9.30am Family Communion Please bring a gift to show us!	Eardisland
Sunday 29 th Dec	10.30am Holy Communion	Kingsland
Sunday 5 th Jan Epiphany	9.30am Holy Communion	Eardisland

CALM is our theme for Advent and **BRIGHT** for Christmas as we join with the nationwide Anglican theme. Of course, you may recognise those words as they are taken from the well-known carol, Silent Night.

Advent is a 'waiting' time as we prepare and remember the meaning of Christmas; in church the 4 Sundays and 4 weeks of Advent are celebrated with the lighting of candles on our Advent Wreath. In our homes, often it is a very busy and even anxious time when we

almost go crazy preparing and trying to make things perfect for the Big Day. And then are we too tired or stressed to enjoy it properly?

In church we shall have a **calm** space where you can sit and be quiet; read a book, reflect, withdraw from the noise and the busyness of the world. Wrap up warmly and even bring a flask of hot drink if you like.

And then Christmas will be **bright** – bright with the light and hope of Christ come to overcome the places of darkness in the world.

CHRISTMAS CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE 5PM 22nd DECEMBER

Come and sing some favourite carols, listen to the Christmas story, watch the children dress the beautiful crib and enjoy the candlelight. Our small wooden candleholders were especially made for us by one of our congregation, Bill Manzoni. Bill was Lindy Connop's father and grandfather of Pete.

Also, a special memory are the early daffodils planted round the base of the tower by Derek Wareham; they are normally peeping out by the 'midnight' 10pm service on Christmas Eve – unless we have had really crazy temperatures!

TRAVELLING CRIB – this is a box containing the Holy Family and all the people who came to worship baby Jesus. Households take turns to 'host' for a night during Advent; unpack the figures and arrange them as you like, add the fairy lights to illuminate them, think about the wonder of the birth of baby Jesus.

There will be a list of dates in the shop and you can come and sign up for whichever night in Advent you would like Mary and Joseph to visit you; and they will travel each teatime to the next home. Whoever has it on Christmas Eve must be able to bring it to the Christmas morning service!

CHRISTMAS CARD SCHEME

As we are becoming a 'greener' village, and as we are working towards being an Eco Church, instead of writing Christmas cards to all your village friends - and to save paper and other resources - we would like to invite you to display your seasonal good wishes in the church. Just a piece of paper/card, decorated if you wish, with your greeting and first name/s written (legibly!) and we will provide a space to put it. In lieu of the cost of cards, you could kindly make a donation to the church or your favourite charity.

Annette Blyth
Church Warden

LETTER FROM REV. ROSIE ROBERTS

Dear friends,

Christmas is almost upon us, with all the excitement and activity the season brings! Included with this magazine is a card with details of all the Christmas services we will be holding at St Mary's, which comes with our warmest season's greetings from all of us in the church community.

It is a privilege for us to celebrate this season with you each year as your parish church. I don't know if you think of it as 'your' church, but if you live in this parish, it is your church in a real and legal way. Everyone living in this parish has the legal right to be baptised in the parish church (or have their children baptised

here), to be married here and, when the time comes, to have your funeral here and be interred in the churchyard. It is always an honour to mark these important points in your lives with you, and to continue to pray for and support you before and after these events.

Your church is here for you in other ways too. We pray regularly for our community and would always be happy to pray for you if you have a particular need or concern. We also visit people in our community; if you are lonely or bereaved or just in need of some company, we would be only too happy to come and see you. The church is also open every day as a quiet space to come and reflect or light a candle. These services that your church offers aren't just for those who believe in God, or who come to church regularly (or at all); your church is here for you no matter what you do or believe, because it is *your* parish church.

We are keen to make sure that the church, as a building and a community, is here for future generations. This is why we are contemplating an ambitious project of building works in the near future, which will hopefully see a kitchen and toilet installed in the church to make it more welcoming and comfortable for all who use the building. This is also why we continue to reach out to our community, welcoming younger generations through our monthly I Sing Pop service, one-off gatherings such as the Christmas tree decorating (which this year will be happening on Saturday 14th December at 10:30), and the new benefice youth group we're setting up - contact me if you'd like more information about this!

If you'd like to make sure that your church is here for you in the years to come, praying and marrying and baptising and burying and celebrating, we would always welcome your support, whether this is helping to fundraise, getting involved in the building project, attending events, making a regular financial contribution to the work of the church, or coming along to a service to see what we're about. Whether we see you in church or not, I pray that you will all experience peace and joy this Christmas season.

With every blessing,

Rosie

CRAFT & PRODUCE FAIR

In the end this year's craft fair was played out in dry conditions, with partial sun, which was so different from the forecast given earlier in the week. Indeed, we were so fortunate to have fine weather for both erecting and dismantling the marquee, in complete contrast to what this parish suffered just over a week later.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers, by my reckoning well over 50, who helped either before, during or after the event. Also, to the many of you who baked and donated magnificent cakes. You were amazing. Finally, to those who supported the event by simply attending. It was slightly disappointing to see the footfall was down 10% this year, although still a very healthy 542. A huge thank you to Wendy Cross, whose produce stall topped £1,000. What a star she is!

The barbecue was more popular than ever, helped maybe by extra seating and extraordinarily good chefs! Refreshments were also up, although the raffle was significantly down. For those who are interested in figures, the overall profit was £4,523, of which 50% has been distributed to the church, with the remaining 50% divided between Eardisland in Bloom and the village hall. The overall take is only slightly down on last year, due to the purchase of ten yellow reflective jackets, which will be used for stewarding future events.

If you have an opinion on how this show can be improved, please let me know, particularly if you have a skill or sideline which can be utilised. I'm looking at maybe children's face painting as an example.

The 2025 show will run on Saturday 4th October, with bookings opening towards the end of March.

Phil Milchard

eardislandcfair@btinternet.com



EARDISLAND BOWLING CLUB 2024

We are now closed for the winter after a successful season out on the green. We joined the Tarmac League this year which involves home and away matches against clubs around Herefordshire and we finished 3rd, which was a great achievement. The men also had success finishing 3rd in the 2nd division of the Herefordshire Men's League. Our club saw new members joining at the beginning of the season and so our membership was boosted to 11 in the Ladies section, 28 in the Men's section plus our social members. Tuesday club evenings saw regular high numbers of members playing, which was partly due to our new members being keen to learn or improve their game.

Some of the W.I. ladies visited us in September and enjoyed having a go at bowling and were very impressed with the club house and facilities. In the same week Marilyn and Tia Mecke entertained our members and visitors with an

Evening of Mediumship. Oct 20th was our annual Presentation Dinner where our club competition trophies are presented following a delicious meal cooked and served by Isobel Farndon and her team of helpers. On closing day, we played a fun competition and then sat down to sausage and bacon baps and a fond farewell.

We are currently seeking sponsorships to help the club thrive and to keep the bowling green and facilities in good condition. We are also looking to modernise our club shirts and if any companies would be willing to offer sponsorship, we would be happy to arrange a meeting.

We look forward to season 2025 and would be happy to welcome anyone who would like to join our club. It's a great game and an opportunity to make new friends both at the club and around the county.

Barbara Kay (Club Secretary)
fitcats@btinternet.com

SEEN OUTSIDE A PUB IN KENT

"ALL AMERICANS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT"

FLYING DRONES AROUND AIRFIELDS

As drones become increasingly popular for both recreational and professional use, it's important for drone enthusiasts and operators to understand the specific regulations and safety considerations when flying near airfields.

Airfields are classified as "no-fly zones" under UK drone regulations. This means you cannot fly a drone within a specified radius around an airfield without explicit permission from the relevant authorities.

To fly a drone near an airfield, you must obtain permission from the airfield operator. This process involves detailed planning and communication to ensure safety. Shobdon Airfield administers all SUA (drone) flight requests within its aerodrome using Altitude Angel's suite of technology to manage these requests

<https://www.shobdonairfield.co.uk/drone-restrictions>

To operate drones or model aircraft in the UK you may need to register with the CAA for a Flyer ID and obtain insurance. Further information can be found at <https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-code>

It is important to understand that drones pose a significant danger to aircraft and their occupants. Considerable fines and even prison sentences can be imposed on anybody considered to be operating in a dangerous manner. For further information follow the link to the CAA website: <https://www.caa.co.uk/drones/rules-and-categories-of-drone-flying/introduction-to-drone-flying-and-the-uk-rules/>

If you have any further questions please contact Shobdon Airfield on 01586 708369.

Thank you,

Shobdon Airfield



WE ARE FARMING MINDS



We are Farming Minds registered charity has been set up by farmers for farmers to tackle mental health in the farming community within Herefordshire.

How can we help?

24 Hour Support Line:

We run a **FREE 24 hour Support Line** 7 days a week for farmers and their families within Herefordshire who are feeling distressed and need someone to talk to anonymously.

Counselling:

We provide **fully funded counselling** to anyone in the **Herefordshire farming community** who may be in emotional distress.

Training:

We offer **FREE mental health awareness training** to anyone living or working in or with the farming community in Herefordshire.

Social Events:

We run a series of **FREE social events** throughout the year to break the isolation often felt by the farming community in Herefordshire.

Befriending:

Befriending volunteers offer companionship and support to people who are isolated and lonely – they may visit you at home and/or phone for a regular chat. A befriender can offer conversation and a listening ear to those that need it.



'Taking the bull by the horns' to tackle Mental Health in the farming community

Call our Support Line:

0808 802 0070

Or text:

07786 203 130

General enquiries: wearefarmingminds@gmail.com

www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk

Registered charity number: 1191461



WeAreFarmingMinds

MARKHAMS GARAGE - KINGSLAND

In the latter part of the nineteenth century a new form of transport began to gain popularity, cycling. As a result, across the country, small workshops sprung up to service these early machines. When the first automobiles started to appear, they required repairing, servicing and fuelling. Many of the numerous cycle workshops expanded to accommodate the new machines, and the age of the garage came into being. In time, of course, motor vehicles of all kinds were a much more lucrative trade, and the bike sector mainly split from the automotive trade. In addition, some garages offered taxi services, especially in rural areas where public transport was poor.

One such garage is Markhams Garage, in Kingsland. Over time, many of these small enterprises amalgamated and formed large companies. This is not the case for Markhams, which, except for a brief period, has remained independent. This year, it is celebrating its 100th anniversary. More than that too, for it has just been awarded '2024 Winner Regional Garage of the Year' by AGG, an auto care group.

The history of the business is fascinating. If you are interested to read a detailed account from the founding to the present day, please contact me, chrisbivand@gmail.com and I will send you a pdf file. Unfortunately, it's too long sensibly to publish in this magazine.

Bryan Markham (b.1940), the son of the founder, Maurice Markham (b.1900), sadly died earlier this year. In 1977 Bryan bought the premises from Maurice and the business effectively became his own. Some five years before his death, Bryan featured in a magazine article.

"Nestled in the quiet village of Kingsland, just outside the rural Herefordshire town of Leominster, Markhams Garage Ltd relishes the more unconventional requests as part of a normal day. "Just like the post office, a good garage should be at the centre of village life", states Bryan Markham, the 79 year old proprietor, who joined the firm in 1966, after his father founded the business three decades previously. Consequently, the community relies on the garage's brawn and brains to help with a wide range of problems that extends beyond their transport needs. While you might expect technicians to help with pleas to coax an unwilling engine into life on a cold morning, or help to wake a lawnmower from hibernation, calls beyond the usual call of duty, such as assisting with heavy furniture lifting, or even guiding randy bulls across the road safely into another field, is seen as typical country garage life. Two staff members are also on-call firefighters that are part of the local fire station and respond to emergency calls, including road traffic accidents.

Within this seemingly idyllic picture of country life, you would expect the premises to be chock-full of Morris Minor Travellers, Austin A30/35s and

Series II Land Rovers but this is not the case, as technician, Simon Powney, admits. In truth, while Land Rover is the most popular marque that we see, the other vehicles are so varied that Markhams Garage would not be able to meet our customers' needs if we decided to specialise. Bringing tradition into the 21st Century should you imagine that a rural garage can last, by ignoring the challenges that are threatening the independent aftermarket, think again. If anything, rural life can make overcoming these trials even harder, but Markhams' survival has not been due solely to customer loyalty but rather its evolution. By the early 2000s, for example, it ceased its bus repair and taxi services, closed its bodywork repair division and expanded its mechanical repair facilities, with a bespoke six-bay workshop. At the same time, its two-bay MOT building was equipped with one of the first ATLs installed in the UK, which is due to be replaced again shortly. Another double bay incorporates a heavy-duty ramp for commercial vehicle repairs. We cannot afford to be complacent with technician training either, and we send our technicians regularly on courses to keep abreast as far as we can with new technologies.

Managing change, or at least a willingness and ability to make changes, is what helps with any business survival plan. We never feared change, which means that, whether we have to alter our modus operandi, to meet fresh challenges, or just keep a wary eye open for new opportunities, addressing change is only a component of the overall management strategy. Recognition as the 'hub of a community', has meant that an 'anything goes' approach has been essential. Naturally, being competitive in a hectic market is vital. Prices are critical, if we bump them up, even by £1 per hour, at worst, our customers will believe that something has gone wrong. Yet, with labour rates at £48 per hour, which can be exceeded by upwards of twice that amount in nearby Leominster, or Hereford, Markhams can only be said to offer great value for money.

It may only be a small team at Markhams but being on top of the latest technology is crucial to maintaining a local service to the community. We have been very careful to be as 'tech-aware' as we can be and it can sometimes shock our local customers when we produce a dedicated electronic reader, when dealing with their motoring problems. Knowing how to use the latest technology proficiently is also essential, although we know that a lot of it can save us money in the longer term, which can only be beneficial to a business possessing 90+ years of local consistency. Yet, so many communities change their boundaries.

Young people leave to be educated and earn money in cities. Original inhabitants soon become outnumbered by out-of-towners. We are reminded constantly of logistical changes, but we have made it our job to know what's happening locally and we can service company and fleet vehicles to the most exacting of manufacturer standards, without the associated heavy on-costs. While village life, in some respects, can be idyllic, it demands steely determination to remain on top, but Markhams has some great advice to offer

anybody in a similar situation. Listen to your customers as a priority. Without their custom, you have NO business. They have made it their business to understand customers' needs. In looking after them, they look after us. It is too easy to state that loyalty in modern society has been turfed out with the baby's bathwater, but it is in our remit to nurture, and we care deeply about how we foster strong local relationships. If there any secrets resident in a small local garage business, very few of them are untried, or untested by Markhams Garage and, it proves that people management, in its broadest and most visceral sense, is what maintains this garage's place in its community."



Markhams team of technicians now is, from left to right:

Darren, Tavey, Simon, Dave, Mark and Jake

The story of Markhams garage is an interesting history that reflects the many changes that have happened over the last century.

I know that they have welcome custom from Eardisland (including Ruth and me).

Please do contact me (email above) if you wish to receive the .pdf file giving the full history of this successful business.

Ed.

WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE PAYMENT SCAMS

Once again, the criminals have seized upon an opportunity to scam unsuspecting pensioners with texts suggesting they are eligible for a Winter Fuel Allowance Payment, and even offering sums in excess of the normal allowance, which was withdrawn by the Government for many pensioners.

There are also reports of further adverts appearing on Facebook and Instagram which may also have used authentic looking Government Department logos and headers. Basically, these scams are promoting a “*Winter Fuel Payment*” or a “*Heating Subsidy*” which of course do not exist.

If you are actually eligible, then you will have received a genuine letter from DWP in October.

The things to look out for in these adverts are:

- Poor spelling and grammar
- Low quality images
- Too good to be true offers

And, as always, check the account details behind the advert and never click on any links provided or pass over personal details which they may ask for.

Take Five to Stop Fraud

STOP: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

CHALLENGE: Could it be fake? It’s OK to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

PROTECT: Contact your bank immediately if you think you’ve fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud

ALWAYS REMEMBER:

- Avoid disclosing security details
- Emails, Phone Calls and Texts may not be authentic
- Always make direct contact with any organisation by using a genuine phone number
- Stop and Challenge any unexpected requests
- Protect others by reporting Fraud and Scams

If you’ve fallen for a scam, report it to Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or via **actionfraud.police.uk**

Scam Text messages can be forwarded to 7726 to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks. You can also report Scam mobile calls by texting **7726** with the word “**Call**” followed by the scam caller’s phone number.

Forward Fake Emails received to **report@phishing.gov.uk**

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, then use the short phone number - **159** - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.

West Mercia Police

THINK “PHARMACY FIRST”!

In a national poll earlier this year 75% of people said they wanted to see pharmacies offering more healthcare services such as treating sore throats and urinary tract infections, and now they are!

Government and the NHS have backed pharmacists to provide a new NHS ‘Pharmacy First’ service to give people more choice about their healthcare.

Open long hours when other health care professionals are unavailable pharmacies are helpful to all people who may live in towns or the more rural parts of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The NHS Pharmacy First service allows pharmacists to provide advice and where appropriate, supply NHS medicines for the following conditions:

- Earache (aged 1 to 17 years)
- Impetigo (aged 1 year and over)
- Infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over)
- Shingles (aged 18 years and over)
- Sinusitis (aged 12 years and over)
- Sore throats (aged 5 years and over)
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs) in women (aged 16 to 64 years)

If you have symptoms that suggest you may have one of these conditions, you can walk into a pharmacy and be offered a consultation with a pharmacist in a private consultation room.

If you have symptoms that suggest you have one of the above conditions, why not give the Pharmacy First service a try?

How do I find a pharmacy for these new services?

To find a pharmacy convenient for you including if you would like to have a free blood pressure check (for people over 40 years - it’s important to ‘Know your Numbers!’ or contraception services please use this link or ask in any pharmacy: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/>

LEOMINSTER FOOD BANK NEWS

Leominster Food Bank is an independent charity, funded mainly by donations from individuals and also supported by the Household Support Fund administered by Herefordshire Council.

Since January this year we have given out over 2000 food parcels, of which 850 were for children. We have spent £31,000 on food so far in 2024, in addition to food donations from the public. These figures keep increasing every year as the cost of living goes up and therefore the needs of people who are struggling.

Every week we run two Food Bank sessions, by referral, for those in need of emergency food. We also run two Food Share sessions where we give away supermarket surplus and end of life food to anyone who comes: the aim of this is to reduce food waste and increase access to fresh food to people who might otherwise struggle to afford it. Food Shares also help to reduce the stigma often associated with accepting food from food banks. Every evening we distribute end of day surplus food from the Co-op. Through our Money Advice Centre we help clients with budgeting and bills, and we offer emergency help with heating via our partnership with the Fuel Bank Foundation. Additionally, we give out summer holiday food bags to help families reduce their need to access the Food Bank.

We have a large 'back-room' team who enable all this to happen by picking up food from supermarkets every day, shopping, checking and shelving food donations, bagging food and making sure our food and premises are safe and hygienic.

We are an entirely volunteer-run organisation, so we rely on the generosity of individuals giving their time and energy to be able to offer these services.

How can you help?

- Volunteer for us – we are in urgent need of volunteers for a variety of jobs. Although a lot of our work is public-facing, many of our volunteers work behind the scenes collecting and sorting food. The commitment varies from a few times a month upwards, depending on how much time you have available. Volunteers need to be resilient, have a kind and non-judgemental attitude and be able to work on their own initiative after training.
- Set up a standing order or give a one-off donation. Cash donations are very welcome, as we need to pay for food of all kinds including fresh fruit and veg, plus washing powder, toiletries and other important items. We buy the majority of the food we give away.

If you've already donated food to us through one of our collecting points, thank you – we really appreciate it. By installing the 'Bank The Food' app on your phone, you can get updates about which items we are in need of most. Visit www.bankthefood.org to download it or check the list on our website. If you think you can help us by volunteering your time, please email leominsterfoodbank@gmail.com or phone us on 07715 410575. Details for setting up a standing order can be found on our website www.leominsterfoodbank.org

We are extremely grateful to our local community for their huge generosity in terms of food, financial donations and volunteering, without which we would not be able to continue this important service to vulnerable members of our community in Leominster and surrounding villages.

EARDISLAND WEATHER REPORT

September proved to be a very wet month with 142mm (5.6inches) of rain recorded with thunder and lightning on the 20th. Temperatures ranged from 15 to 24°C with barometer pressures from 28.98 to 30.18. River levels rose from 10 to 48 inches.

October saw one of the wettest months I have ever recorded with 154 mm (6.06 inches) of rain. Temperatures ranged from 10 to 18°C and barometer pressures from 29.00 to 30.1 were recorded. Because of the amount of rainfall in September, the river then rose to 66 inches, the highest I have seen here.

Incidentally, I follow the Titley river gauge and this showed 2.35 meters at 11.30p.m. on October 16th, their highest level recorded was 2.4 meters on the 10th of January 1986.

The first frost was recorded on the 11th October, and we had three named storms pass, Kirk, Helene and Milton.

The equivalent rainfall for 2023 was September 68 mm (2.67 inches) and October 152mm (5.98 inches), when the river rose to 60 inches on the 20th.

Doug Tantrum reporting from Kingfisher House

The Titley river gauge, upstream, is vital to understanding what is likely to happen in Eardisland. A peak there takes around six hours to reach here. This varies in time. Please remember that every time the village floods, it happens in different ways. The link for the Eardisland gauge is:

<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/station/2195> , from there you can click to see upstram, to Titley.

Ed.

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EARDISLAND CRAFT AND PRODUCE FAIR 2024



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