

Upton St Leonards Life

incorporating Church News

Issue 124

December 2024



Wishing all Upton residents, their families, friends and our advertisers a very Happy Christmas and New Year from the USL Life Team



© Picture used with kind permission of Paul Price

Are you interested in supporting and improving nature and how things are connected?

If so please see the article on Biodiversity on page 14 and brief details of a village meeting on 17 March 2025 in the Pavilion

Have you had a look at the new Parish Website yet?

There are many links to different organisations in Upton plus information on Parish Council activities and the latest on things like road closures which are notified too late to be included in our newsletter.

The link to use is : - uptonstleonards-pc.gov.uk



What's Been Happening in Upton?

USL Ladies Probus Report

October's speaker was Martin Fry who once again delighted our visual & aural senses with his amazing photography of the Cotswolds, accompanied by poetry & music. There was also the opportunity to buy prints & calendars. Everyone should have felt relaxed and, hopefully, renewed after that meeting.

The meeting on 20 November had Upton's own Mike Stratford to talk about 'The Forgotten Army', which was very appropriate being so near the date of the annual Remembrance Sunday. Afterwards, those members who booked adjourned to Bowden Hall for the Club's annual meal.

There is no meeting in December but we'll be pleased to see everyone again on Wednesday 15 January 2025 in the BMI at 10am. We will be having our annual Bring & Buy Sale with all proceeds going to the James Hopkins Trust, a local children's charity supporting children with life limiting conditions as well as family respite care.

Unfortunately, there is no Government funding support for children's charities such as these, making fundraising vital. So please save those (ever so slightly) unwanted Christmas gifts for this worthwhile event!

The President & Committee of USL Ladies Probus Club would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Upton WI Report

"NO SPEAKER" in sight, Angela Harris our President opened the AGM by thanking all members for their support.

She read her report on the past year's speakers and events starting with Jan and Chris's Garden Party in August which was a very happy and enjoyable occasion on a beautiful summer's day. Another highlight was our visit to the Javelin Park Incinerator.

The nearly new sale of clothing at Upton's Autumn Show raised £170 for the Church Roof Appeal.

Remembrances were recalled in losing a faithful friend last November, Marlene, who is always in our thoughts. Angela drew attention to our small committee of five ladies, hoping others may join us, following which Margaret Stewart came forward and was warmly welcomed as a new member.

All the committee were thanked with Advent Calendars and surprise gifts.

Helen Thorn was thanked for her floral decorations.

Secretary Pam Tidgell gave her yearly report on our speakers and activities. Treasurer Jane Watkis gave her account of our finances, with a gentle reminder that subscriptions will increase to £51.

As no speaker had arrived, Michael Morris stepped up to entertain us with a kaleidoscope of films ending with a group of Girl Guides at Haresfield Beacon in 1953. Happy carefree days!!

Date for our diaries is GJWI on Wednesday 4 December at St Matthews Church, Cheltenham, with tickets costing £17.

We meet again on Monday 2 December at 2pm for our Christmas presentation of 'Tall Tales' by Bill Church in The Pavilion, Upton St Leonards. Christmas outfits and Santa Hats are optional to wear!

Everyone is very welcome to attend.

Kathy Quant

Twyver WI Report

This month's evening began with our Annual Meeting.

Reports from our Treasurer, Secretary and President were welcomed with gratitude. Our finances are in good order, and the next step was to vote for the incumbent committee for 2025.

Monica was again elected as President, Val as Secretary and Nicola as our Treasurer, all very much appreciated by the members. We reminisced on the past year and the wonderful speakers we were fortunate to have. We currently have 42 members.

Next year's subs will be increased to £51 per year – payment due on 1 April 2025 but reminders will be sent in due course. As a result of rising costs of speakers and having been let down on occasion, the committee decided to put an emergency plan in place and have purchased a projector to ensure our evenings can be reorganised at very short notice. Next year we will once again be voting for Resolutions, members to acquaint themselves with the proposals in readiness.

The formalities were then closed off and we turned our attention to the wonderful array of crafting goodies laid out on the tables for our evening's delight. Lots of happy chatter reverberated around the room as members enjoyed 'crafting for Christmas' with various simple ideas using materials supplied by our generous craft conscious ladies, and we had cake and ate it!



Our next meeting will be on 9th December when we will have a real treat in store as Ian Oliver is coming to entertain us and we will be hosting our ladies' choir as guests for the evening. All welcome.

Linda Munnoch

What's been happening? Cont'd

BMI Entertainment Report

On Saturday 19th October "Earl Tee" entertained members with a selection of music from the 60's onwards. It was an enjoyable evening.

The third comedy night of the year was on Sunday 27th October with Nik Hill, comedian/comper on the night and 3 very funny comedians.

There was another entertainment night on Saturday 2nd November with Bak 2 Bak. There weren't many people on the night, but this may have been due to the fact that there were lots of firework events in the area.

73rd British National Ploughing Championships

The British National Ploughing Championships in October this year was held over two days on the Thoresby Estate near Newark in Nottinghamshire where 250 ploughmen and women from across Great Britain competed in 15 different ploughing categories with over 300 plots ploughed over two days. This is the high point of the ploughing competition season, a competition dating back to the early 1950's when there were just two classes, horse drawn and tractor. A range of different categories has been added over the years.

David and Martin Franklin, whose family have farmed in the village for over one hundred years, entered once again after winning a qualifying event earlier in the year. Both were entered in in the same class with their vintage mounted ploughs.

Conditions were very tricky with heavy rain but both persevered and after judging was completed for a number of different criteria, including straightness, neatness and uniformity among others, David was delighted to be awarded 4th place while Martin finished a very respectable 16th place out of 31 competitors.

The top ten placed ploughmen in the class then competed on day two in a "plough off" to see who would then go on to represent Great Britain at international level. David didn't make top spot but was still delighted with being 4th at national level and both David and Martin now hope to continue their success in the next ploughing competition season.



New street in Upton named

Only 2 houses left to sell

On Monday the 18th November, the new entrance road into the Bowden Hall Farm development was officially named. It will be known as Monica Sims Close.

For all who may not know, Monica Sims OBE was a very important lady in the BBC. She was the very first female Director of the Beeb when she joined the 17 other male members of said board. During her career she was very influential and was the founder of BBC Childrens Television and was also very involved with the set -up of the famous Blue Peter programme. Monica passed away in 2019 after spending the last few years of her life in the Richmonds in Painswick. Prior to that she had lived at Brimps Lane on Upton Hill but spent most of time at her flat in London.

She was very generous to our village as in her will she left substantial legacies to both the Church and the Village Hall, not to mention the Central Office of the WI. It was felt only fitting that she have a legacy of her own in our village, so permission was obtained from Stroud District Council to have her name on the register of streets.



The ceremony was carried out by villager Mrs Meg James, who is Monica's cousin, accompanied by family members cutting a ribbon to open the Close. Also present was Ms Angela Hughes of Dawn Homes who were the developers of the site and the Parish Council Chair, Keith Pearson



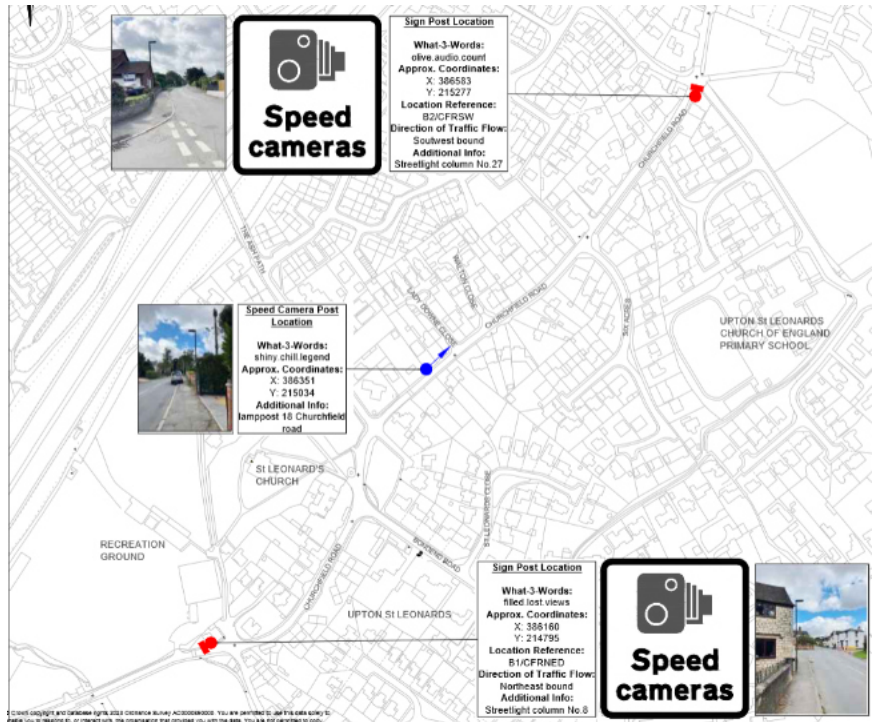
Parish Council Report for November

Speed Camera Update

We are pleased to confirm, after several years of effort behind the scenes, our first Speed Camera is due to be installed with appropriate signage over December 2024/ January 2025.

The first camera will be an ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) located in Churchfield Road which will enable us to identify persistent offenders, who will receive letters from the police. This will be of great value given the additional traffic flow we expect to experience from the new Winnycroft Estate (420 new homes).

A second VAS (vehicle activation system eg smiley face/speed display) has been agreed for The Portway and this is likely to be installed during the summer of 2025.



Parking Issues in Upton

We are pleased to have seen that the recent painted triangle on the junction of Churchfield Road and Bondend Road has been having the desired effect of stopping people cutting the corner when coming up from Rance Pitch, so we are grateful to Highways for their assistance. However at the same time we have noted that a number of motorists who attend the Church services and/or use the Church Rooms have a tendency to park far too close to the corner (the Highway code recommends that an absolute minimum of 10 metres should be left free from corners). The problem this causes is that it narrows the road perception now that the triangle is there.

We would urge Churchgoers and other residents alike not to park near the corner of Bondend Road at the junction. There will be a white line put down soon by Highways highlighting the area which shouldn't be parked upon.

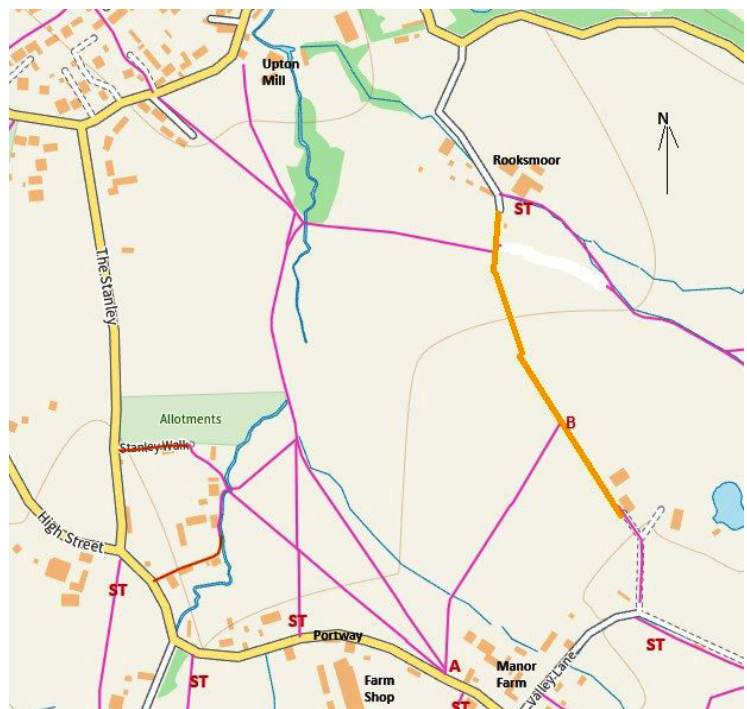
We appreciate your co-operation in this matter. We have also received complaints about parking by parents picking up and dropping children off at school. This has been an issue in Bondend and Twyver Close for some while, but has now spread to Six Acres, where it seems parking has been inconsiderate and indeed residents have received some degree of abuse when asked not to obstruct driveways. The PC is now working with our Neighbourhood Warden and the Police to monitor this situation and if parking is such that it blocks access or causes an obstruction, parking fines may be issued.

Kissing Gates recently installed around the village

Here's a map of the area where six new kissing gates have been installed, as mentioned in November's USL Life. The whole area bounded by The Stanley, Portway, Valley Lane, Rooksmoor Lane and Bondend Road is now stile free.

ST shows where there is a stile outside the area.

A big thank you to The Footpath Team whose recent work removed the 6 stiles between points A and B on the map and replaced them with kissing gates. Enjoy!



What's Coming Up in Upton?

Entertainment at the BMI

All events open to members and signed in guests.

BMI PENSIONERS' LUNCH

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER

TICKETS @ £23 PER PERSON
FOR BMI PENSIONERS WHO WERE IN RECEIPT OF THEIR PENSION BEFORE 31ST JANUARY 2024 AND PAID THE BMI PENSIONERS RATE AT THAT TIME.

MENU

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A COMPLIMENTARY DRINK ON ARRIVAL
2 GLASSES OF WINE WITH LUNCH
A FREE RAFFLE
ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY "KENNY"



Christmas Eve Entertainment Night

Tuesday 24th December

From 8.00p.m. with the band

"Tribune"



New Year's Eve Entertainment Night

Tuesday 31st December

From 8.00p.m. with

"Ian Oliver"

Tickets £17.00



Upstagers Next Production

.....Will be a Panto titles "Ali Baba and the Four Tea Thieves"

The shows will take place on 20th, 21st and 22nd February 2025 at the Village Hall

More details to follow in the January edition of USL Life



BMI Christmas Draw

Saturday 14th December

From 8.00p.m



What's Coming Up in Upton? - cont'd

LifeStyle course with Millie Barnes in 2025

Jan 13th & 27th, Feb 10th & March 10th

7-9pm each evening

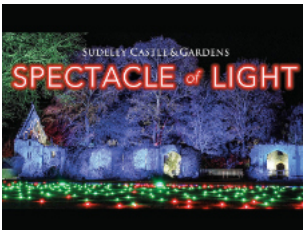
in the Sports Pavilion.

More Details in the January edition.

Some things happening outside the village



1-15 December - Christmas Markets at Gloucester Quays
(Weekends only)



1-30 December - Spectacle of Light at Sudeley Castle



1-30 December - Aladdin at The Everyman Theatre



1-30 December - The Enchanted Garden by Night at Painswick Rococo Garden



1-30 December - Cinderella at The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury



24 December - Christmas Eve Midnight Mass at Gloucester Cathedral

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DOMESTIC INSTALLER



Portway Farm Shop

We are so lucky to have a Village Farm Shop and butchery! Portway's own beef, pork from a farm at Birdlip, poultry from less than 4 miles away, lamb from selected local farms – the shop loves to support other local producers.

They are, of course, planning for Christmas. The manager says, "we are preparing to offer our loyal customers the best Christmas range yet.

Local dry aged turkeys, hand selected, hung for longer to give them a full and succulent flavour, and traditionally dressed by our skilled butchers. These are free range 'Kelly Bronze' birds, a traditional slow-growing strain, over twice the age of standard intensively grown birds.

How about boneless turkey breast joints – a fantastic and convenient alternative to a whole bird? Stuffed or wrapped in streaky bacon!

Fancy something rather different this year? Locally grown cockerel. Cockerels offer a unique flavour profile that sets them apart from turkeys. Their meat is tender, succulent, and bursting with flavour.

Moving away from poultry, try our home cured bacon and gammon. Home made sausages, pigs in blankets, pies, cheese, and much, much more."

If you haven't visited the farm shop, or haven't been there for a while, do make a visit. See the butchers at work, look over the range of produce. And it's not just meat - vegetables, cakes, bread, juices, dairy, and so on.

Portway Farm Coffee Shop

At the top of the stairs there is the coffee shop. A perfect place to sit and natter, enjoy a hot drink and cake, surrounded by the smells of all the fine produce below you.



To see more of what the farm shop offers and get the latest news, follow them on

@Portway_farm_shop (Instagram)

@Portwayfarmshop (Facebook)

Neighbours who own large overhanging trees

This is a problem which the team were asked to cover. The advice that follows is directly from Citizens Advice for England.

Step 1: Initial Conversation

Talk to your neighbour face to face if you can - make a note of what you agreed. If you don't feel comfortable speaking to them, write a letter or ask someone to contact them for you. Keep copies of any letters or emails you send or receive.

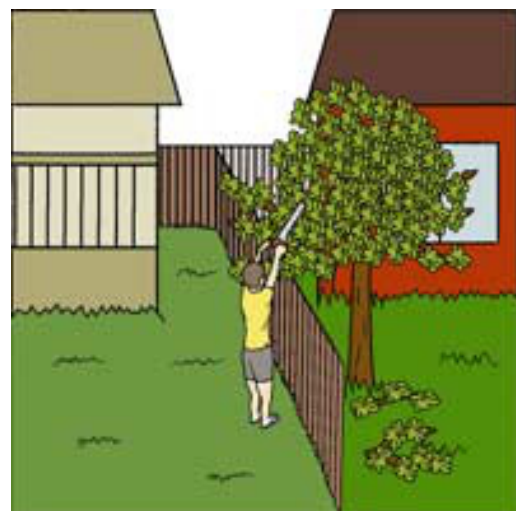
It's often best to find a compromise, for example sharing the cost of pruning a hedge even though you think your neighbour owns it. It could help you keep a good relationship and might be cheaper than paying a solicitor to resolve the disagreement.

Step 2: (if no action taken)

If your neighbour won't cut branches hanging over your garden, you're allowed to chop them off - but only the bits on your side of the boundary. Check if your neighbour will let you throw away the branches - legally they own them.

If you think your neighbour's tree is dangerous, you can report it to the council - for example if you think it might fall over. They might ask the owner to make it safe or deal with it themselves. Search for 'trees' on your council's website to find which department to contact.

Get specialist help from a tree surgeon if the roots of your neighbour's tree are affecting your home and garden. You can cut them yourself but you must try to limit the amount of damage to the tree, which can be difficult to do. You must tell your neighbour in advance if a tree surgeon needs to go on their land.





Saint Leonard's Church

Churchfield Road
Upton St Leonards
Gloucester
GL4 8AT



Rev Helen is available Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday

Rev Helen Champion

Everyone is welcome to join in our Christmas celebrations and services

Christmas Services and Events

December 1st -	8.00 am	Holy Communion - Led by Rev Marilyn
	10.00 am	Family Worship. - Led by Rev Helen
December 2nd		Explore Advent. 9.15 am : 11.45 am: 1.15pm : 2.45pm
December 3rd		Explore Advent. 9.15 am : 2.45 pm
December 4th		Explore Advent 9.15 am : 2.45 pm
December 8th	10.00 am	Holy Communion - Led by Rev Helen
December 15th	10.00 am	Holy Communion
	4.00 pm	Christmas Carol Service
December 18th	9.00 am	School Carol service
	2.30 pm	School Carol Service
December 19th	4.30 pm	Carols in the King's Head
December 20th	7.30 pm	Brownies Christmas Concert
December 22nd	10.00 am	Holy Communion
December 24th	4.00 pm	Nativity for families
December 24th	11.00pm	Midnight Communion
December 25th	10.00 am	Morning Celebration
December 29th	10.00 am	Holy Communion

For the children of Upton St Leonard's Primary school

A Christmas prayer

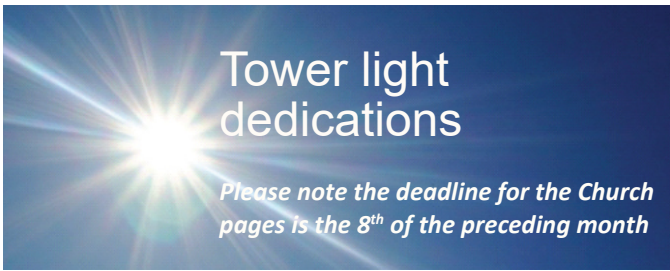
*Holy Jesus,
by being born one of us,
and lying humbly in a manger,
you show us how much God loves the world.
Let the light of your love
always shine in our hearts,
until we reach our home in heaven,
and see you on your throne of glory.
Amen.*



*Lord Jesus, Light of light,
you have come among us.
Help us who live by your light
to shine as lights in your world.
Glory to God in the highest.
Amen.*



The 500 club and Christmas Draw will take place after the service on Sunday 22nd December in the Old School Room



If you or your family wish to sponsor the lights in celebration of a birthday, an anniversary, for a loved one's life or for any other reason then please contact Jenny Cunningham for more details. Please note that the deadline of the Church News is the 8th of the preceding month.

The Tower Lights are sponsored in loving memory of Joe Stubbs, still very much missed by his family and friends

The Church Tower is lit on the 24th December in loving memory of Reginald William Crawford, husband and father, remembered daily and forever in our hearts. Julia and Barbara

The Remembrance Sunday Service at St Leonards began with a short outdoor service in front of the War Memorial, led by our vicar, Helen Champion, in glorious sunshine. The names of all the known local men who fought and lost their lives in WW1 and WW2 were duly read by Michael Stratford and remembered.



It was a poignant moment that whilst the names were being read out, a gentle breeze brought down a flurry of individual leaves. Dave Knight played The Last Post when banners from the Beavers, Brownies and Scouts were lowered and the two minute silence was



observed by all. When Reveille was played, the banners were raised, the National Anthem was sung, and wreaths were laid on the Memorial..To finish, we were invited

To sing Amazing Grace with the bagpipes..

Thanks to

Duncan Lord for doing the sound system. Before leaving, everyone was warmly invited to a short service in the church.

Thank you to all those who came and supported this special occasion.

Sheila Hodder



The Fish & Chip Supper and Quiz Night proved to be popular again and tickets sold out very quickly, leaving a few would-be participants disappointed.



A huge thank you to Gill for arranging the evening, and to the ladies who

helped, served and collected and washed up. It really was an enjoyable evening.



Thank you too to Val Doll , Quiz Master extraordinaire, for putting us through our paces and

causing many head scratching moments!

It is hoped a similar event will happen in the New Year, so watch this space!





Dear friends

Christmas is drawing near and the nights ever colder and darker. For some of us, this is a favourite time of year. For others, it is the hardest. It's not just the weather that makes it so hard. There are memories of lost loved ones who leave an empty seat at our table, pressures put upon us to give or provide beyond our means, expectations that are sometimes difficult to live up to, and so many other things that make Christmas a less than joyous occasion.

This Christmas may I encourage you to wonder like a child at the birth of the baby in an ordinary place to an ordinary family. Messy and noisy (and probably smelly too). The child, given the name Jesus, was also called Emmanuel, meaning God with us. I love this. God made himself this vulnerable, relying upon the care of loving parents, to make himself known to us, to be with us and to give us hope.

Hope is just a four-letter word but its implication can be life changing. People use the word in eager promise that things will turn out well; that maybe tomorrow will be better. Sometimes those things do become good, and our hope is strengthened; sometimes they don't turn out so well and hope is diminished. We let each other down and our circumstances say to us that there is no hope.

Maybe we put our hope in the wrong places. Jesus, Emmanuel, is our hope - hope that is real; hope that gives us a future with our heavenly Father; hope that gives us reason to live this life, giving all the love we can, no matter what our circumstances say. Let's put our hope and our trust in him.

Whatever you hope for at Christmas this year, I pray that you may know the light of Christ and the love of God expressed through him. Do come along to one of our special Christmas services where you can be assured of a very warm welcome. And do let us know if we can be of any help.

Romans 15 verse 13

Now may God, the inspiration and fountain of hope, fill you to overflowing with uncontainable joy and perfect peace as you trust in him. And may the power of the Holy Spirit continually surround your life with his super-abundance until you radiate with hope!

Have a lovely Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Rev Helen

Who's who in the church

Parish Priest:
Rev Helen Champion

Churchwarden:
Gill Howell

Parish Safeguarding Officer
Sue Downey

Wedding & Baptism Enquiries
please contact Rev Helen

Interment and burial of ashes
enquiries

PCC Secretary
Kay Hutton

2025 Calendars showing St Leonards Church through the seasons

There are still a few calendars available at the Village Store/Post Office if you are still thinking of a useful Christmas gift for family and friends



Mother's Union

"Autumn Floral Harmony" was the theme of our October meeting, and two Branch members presented flower arranging accompanied by suitable music. Judy Jackson in purple produced four beautiful creations and Margaret Bishop provided incidental music to fit the theme. Firstly, was the "Last Rose of Summer" with the Rose Adagio from the ballet Sleeping Beauty by Tchaikovsky, secondly "Halloween" was prepared to Dance Macabre by Saint-Saens.

Then came "Remembrance" made whilst Requiem for a Soldier from Band of Brothers by Michael Kazan & Frank Musker was played and finally "Peace" a beautiful arrangement in white and again Saint-Saens provided the accompaniment as the Swan from The Carnival of Animals. Judy then added silver bits and bobs to turn it into a Christmas decorative piece. Some lucky members went home with the four creations as raffle prizes, and it was good to welcome some visitors.



Our December meeting will be a Festive Afternoon Tea at Norton Garden Centre, Twigworth on Thursday 12th December at 2.30pm. Any member wishing to attend should ensure they have paid their £10 deposit to Sarah Cripps beforehand.

On Saturday 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence began and will conclude on Sunday December 10, which is Human Rights Day. Throughout this campaign, Mothers' Union will be joining with over 6000 organisations from over 185 countries to raise awareness of and call for an end to gender-based violence and abuse in all forms and in all societies. Gender based violence is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can affect anyone at any time, and it takes many forms. It can be part of a damaging cultural norm or hidden behind closed doors; it can be very difficult to ask for help

Kate Gale



Time to Remember Service

Many people attended the Time to Remember service in October, to hear their loved ones names read out and prayers said for them. There was an opportunity to light a candle in their memory.



Thank you to everyone for their support and those who helped selling Poppies in Morrison's this year.

A total of £6,616.30

was raised this year in Morrison's alone

Tuesday Morning Prayer

9.30 am

In the Rectory

Bondend Road

Everyone is welcome



500 Club Winners for November

Will be announced in January



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Biodiversity In Upton St Leonards

Talk about biodiversity is everywhere and your Parish Council has a duty to halt its decline and, in time, make moves to improve it. The Parish Policy can be found on the new Parish Council website <https://www.uptonstleonards-pc.gov.uk/biodiversity-and-the-environment>.

This also has links to other information and YouTube links.

Why should we be bothered? Well, all Parish Councils have to have a Biodiversity Policy and consider the impact of what they do and say, including Planning applications. As part of this process the PC is encouraged to engage with all stakeholders and this includes you, the school and its pupils, the recreation ground, Glebe Field and Cud Hill Common, as well as liaising with other authorities e.g. District and County Councils.

As a result we would like to invite you to a meeting on 17th March at 7.30pm in the Pavilion where we hope to have a series of short presentations and finish with a Q and A. We are also planning a Bioblitz event at the Rec on June 7th from early morning until just after lunch, and then a bat survey at dusk onwards. This is a series of surveys of things like moths and other insects, birds, bats as examples so that we document what is present now (2025) and then repeat the surveys maybe every 3-5 years to help show how improvements that have been made have enriched the biodiversity of the area.

(eg <https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events/stratford-park-bioblitz-2024>)

Put simply, Biodiversity refers to all living things, from tiny micro-organisms to large land and ocean-dwelling mammals, from moss to massive trees.

In the context of this message, efforts to improve biodiversity will preserve the habitats where these living things can thrive, and reduce our impact on them to reverse the decline in habitat and species numbers.

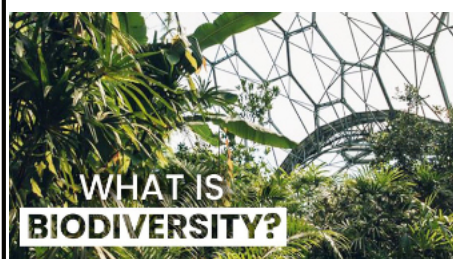
What is meant by habitats? In USL this means our gardens, hedges, woodland, orchards, grass verges, the playing field, ponds, streams and farmland as the main examples but this list is not exhaustive.

It is obvious that if we remove hedges, as an example, then this reduces the cover and protection for small mammals such as mice and hedgehogs, birds and nests, pollen and nectar for insects, berries for birds as well as plants that like the protection from the elements. Using weed killers and pesticides in our gardens isn't great either.

What can you do? Consider the amount of lighting you have outside at home (affects the behaviour of nocturnal animals), maybe let things "grow" a bit (beautifully manicured bushes lack flowers for pollinators or consider No Mow May), don't leave litter, obviously, and consider picking it up when you go out for a walk (take a bag and a litter-picking tool from somewhere like Screwfix), reduce the use of chemicals in your gardens and sow a few wild flower seeds in a patch. Maybe have a small fence cut-out that allows hedgehogs and smaller mammals to travel through our gardens. Maybe put up some bird boxes.

You might find that some areas in the Parish are left a bit wilder eg parts of the recreation ground may be left to grow a bit longer especially around the periphery, and some larger trees may be roped off to prevent you trampling on the shallow roots and compacting the soil. You may see that the Footpaths Group have reduced the small bushes and brambles at Cud Hill Common. This is to maintain it as a Common ie open grassland. Brambles will eventually take over and reduce the variety of species found.

Whatever you feel about the world around you, habitat and species loss is a major concern and we all have a duty to consider the impact of what we do each and every day.



Some useful YouTube videos shown above

PRAYER by Kathleen Jamie

Our baby's heart, on the sixteen-week scan
was a fluttering bird, held in cupped hands.

I thought of St. Kevin, hands opened in prayer
and a bird of the hedgerow nesting there,

and how he'd borne it, until the young had flown
and I prayed: this new heart must outlive my
own.

**BEATTIE IS THREE
by Adrian Mitchell
(1932 – 2008)**

At the top of the stairs
I ask for her hand. O.K.
She gives it to me.
How her fist fits my palm,
A bunch of consolation.
We take our time
Down the steep carpetway
As I wish silently
That the stairs were endless.

**DELIGHT IN DISORDER
(could this refer to a teenager?)
by Robert Herrick (1591 – 1674)**

A sweet disorder in the dresse
Kindles in clothes a wantonnesse:
A Lawne about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring Lace, which here and there
Enthralls the Crimson Stomacher:
A Cuffe neglectful, and thereby
Ribands to flow confusedly:
A winning wave (deserving Note)
In the tempestuous petticoate:
A carelesse shooe-string, in whose tye
I see a wilde civility:
Doe more bewitch me, then when Art
Is too precise in every part.

THOUGHTS

Not everything that counts can be counted,
And not everything that can be counted counts.

Albert Einstein – Nobel Prize Physics 1921

**BEAUTIFUL OLD AGE
by D. H. Lawrence (1885 – 1930)**

It ought to be lovely to be old
To be full of the peace that comes of experience
And wrinkled ripe fulfilment.

The wrinkled smile of completeness that follows a life
lived undaunted and unsoured with accepted lies
If people lived without accepting lies
they would ripen like apples,
and be scented like pippins in their old age.
Soothing, old people should be, like apples
when one is tired of love.
Fragrant like yellowing leaves, and dim with the soft
stillness and satisfaction of autumn.

And a girl should say:
It must be wonderful to live and grow old.
Look at my mother, how rich and still she is! -

And a young man should think: By Jove
my father has faced all weathers, but it's been a life!-

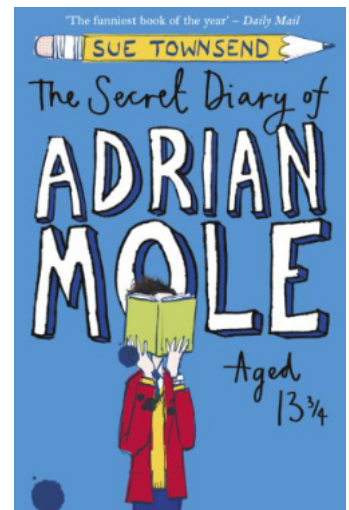
LIGHT READING FOR CHRISTMAS

**THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE Aged 13 $\frac{3}{4}$
by Sue Townsend**

This is the first in a series of Adrian Mole books.
Written in diary style it focuses on the worries and
regrets of a teenager who believes himself to be an
intellectual.

It is set in 1981 and 1982 and historic events (Wedding
of Prince Charles and Lady
Diana Spencer, Falklands
War) are in the background.
Much of the humour in the
book stems from Adrian's
naïve view of life combined
with his total confidence in
his views.

The series continues until
the final book – Adrian
Mole: The Prostrate Years
published in 2009.
Easy reading with plenty of
laughter.



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Japanese Haiku Poems for Christmas

The haiku is a Japanese poetic form that consists of three lines, with five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third.



**Mistletoe, holly and Ivy;
 nature is the greatest player here
 for Christmas decorations, gather and enjoy.**

**The fate of the Christmas tree;
 back in the attic or out in the garden,
 guilt will come whatever happens.**



DECEMBER

1	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
2	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
2	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.30p.m.
2	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
3	Tue	Recycling and food waste week		
3	Tue	Tuesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
3	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
3	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m
4	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
4	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
4	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m
7	Sat	BMI Pensioners Christmas Lunch	BMI	12.00p.m.
8	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
9	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
9	Mon	Coffee Club Christmas Lunch	BMI	12.00p.m.
9	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
10	Tue	Rubbish and food waste week		
10	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
10	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.
10	Tue	Copy date for January issue of USL Life		
11	Wed	Wednesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
11	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
11	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
11	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
14	Sat	BMI Christmas Draw	BMI	8.00p.m.
15	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
16	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
16	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	BMI	7.30p.m.
17	Tue	Recycle and food waste week		
17	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
17	Tue	Tuesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m
17	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.
18	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
18	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
18	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
22	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
23	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
24	Tue	Rubbish and food waste week		
24	Tue	Christmas Eve Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.
25	Wed	Christmas Day		
26	Thu	Boxing Day		
29	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning		
30	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
31	Tue	New Year's Eve Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.

JANUARY

6	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.30p.m.
6	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
10	Fri	Copy date for February issue of USL Life		
11	Sat	Post Christmas/New Year Quiz	BMI	8.00p.m.
13	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
16	Thu	History Group		
		- "My father Dennis Wyatt" – Edward Wyatt	Village Hall	7.45p.m.
18	Sat	Fun Horse Race Night	BMI	8.00p.m.
20	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
30	Thu	Craft Club	The Old School Room	10.00-12.00p.m.

F E B R U A R Y

3	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.30p.m.
3	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
10	Mon	Copy date for March issue of USL Life		
10	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
14	Fri	Valentine's Day		
15	Sat	Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.
17	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	Village hall	7.30p.m.
27	Thu	Craft Club	The Old School Room	1000-12.00p.m.

Contact Paula Quinn to have an event mentioned in the diary

Weekly courses

This section lists the courses that run every week.

Activity	Day	Venue	Contact	
Yoga	Mondays 10am	Village Hall Annex	Lara Bricknell	07876 764425
Art Class	Tuesdays 2pm	Village Hall Annex	Christine Hughes	01452 614227
Dance Workout	Tuesdays 7pm	Pavilion	Debra Law	07505 761420
Chair-based Pilates	Wednesdays 1.45pm	Pavilion	Angela Harris	
Tai Chi	Thursdays 10am	Village Hall Annex	Christina Caldwell	
Pilates with Sam	Fridays 9.30am	Village Hall Annex	Sam Slatter	07894 757360

Christmas in Upton - some examples from the past

Christmas activities in Upton in the past followed a regular pattern, apart from the time of World War I – it is during this time that we have most records for village festivities.

Children of the village were provided with tea, followed by a magic lantern show in the BMI. A party was held in the rectory for church workers, a light supper was served and games were played.

At Christmas 1915 every soldier from Upton was sent a parcel which included a shirt, muffler, gloves, socks, belt, boot laces, 1lb of toffee, 1lb ginger nuts and a pack of cards.

Those serving at home received a knife, purse, writing case, a spoon and fork.

This was repeated again in 1916 and 1917. Gifts were also collected in 1916 and sent to help the starving children in Belgium.

At Christmas 1917 children of Upton picked 13 cwt of blackberries which was sent to make jam for the troops.

The government paid the school £7 10s 11d and the berries made 1 ton of jam. Horse chestnuts were also collected (about half a ton), and sent to the Director of Propellant Supplies of Fuel for oil lamps.

The community came together in a time of crisis.

Mike Stratford

Postscript: On 25th December 1914

it is said that war weary German and British soldiers laid down their weapons and played an impromptu game of football known forever after as The Christmas Truce.

For more information check out the website footballandthefirstworldwar.org.)

Our world has changed inevitably since then but let us live in hope for a more peaceful world.

Linda Munnoch

Ring in the new in the bell tower.

Charlie has moved on to pastures new and we have a new Tower Captain in the belfry. Trevor Morley is based at St Lawrence's in Barnwood and has successfully taught many new bell ringers. Trevor has started a new team of ringers to get the bells of St Mary de Crypt ringing regularly again in the city centre.

We would welcome more of you to join us in the ringing room in St Leonards even to simply see how it is all done. Charlie had a dream of training a team of indigenous Upton ringers but unfortunately was unsuccessful, however with a new tower captain in place and different ways of teaching we could still build an Upton-centric band of bell ringers. The primary aim is to have bells ringing before every Sunday Service.

We will keep the bells in Upton ringing on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 until 9pm and will start earlier, when possible, to give new starters the best chances of succeeding. It takes a while to learn to handle a bell rope but given a few lessons most people can successfully ring a bell.

If you would like to return to ringing or to take it up as a new hobby or simply to give it a go please get in touch. You do not need to be musical, nor a church goer and age is no limiting factor. There are several ringers in the area still ringing at the grand age of 90+ whilst the youngest ringers in the area are 11 years old.

If you are considering taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) award scheme you may be interested to know that bell ringing fits under several of the different headings (e.g. volunteering, new skill, music) and if you learn for an hour a week you'll soon complete the challenge and may even wish to keep up your new hobby for longer.

Bell ringing is a social activity, keeps you fit in mind and body and brings many opportunities to meet new people and to take it as far as you want, be it ringing a single bell once a week in Upton, ringing around the world when travelling, or aspiring to ring peals with like-minded people.

If you would like to find out more please contact:- **Trevor Morley**

Obituary for Mildred Rennie (1928 to 2024)

It was with great sadness that we learned about the death of our neighbour Mildred on October 23rd.

Mildred first moved to Churchfield Road in the mid 1970's from Stockport due to her husband's job relocating to Gloucester. She was a member of the village 'Get Together Club', where she enjoyed meeting up with people to have chats and to



listen to talks. She attended coffee mornings in the village as well as going on day trips and holidays arranged through Christchurch Abbeyle. In 2020 she moved to a care home in Frampton. Whilst there she enjoyed joining in with the weekly craft activities and having visits from local primary school children who would sing to the residents.

Her funeral was held at Gloucester Crematorium on 14th November.

If you have new neighbours, and they would like their arrival to be mentioned in USL Life, please let us know.

UPTON ST LEONARDS LIFE

Web site <https://usllife.org.uk>

To contact us, use the website above or the postbox by the Village Hall main door, or use the contact details that appear below:

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Next month's editor - Andrea Dawson



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Remembrance Sunday

It was heartwarming to see so many people attending the service at the War Memorial on Sunday 11 November. They included many youth groups, some of whom bore the flags showing respect to those who had fallen.



Reverend Helen conducted the service at the War Memorial. Mike Stratford read the names of Upton people killed in both world wars, many of whom were young men when they lost their lives.



Poppy Selling at Morrisons

One of our regular stalwart Poppy sellers, Eddie Spence had some assistance this year at Morrisons from his Grandson who is proudly wearing his Great, Great Grandfather's WW1 medals when he fought with Royal Irish Rifles (36 Ulster Division) at the Battle of the Somme



Craft Club

The Ladies have enjoyed the embroidery work making the gorgeous sunflowers over the last 2 meetings. At the October meeting they made a beautiful sparkling bauble. They chose their Christmas material and under supervision they completed their bauble decoration.

Next extra meeting on 14th November and our regular meeting on the 28th.

