

# The Black Mountains Group Benefice NEWSLETTER

December 2024 & January 2025



St Margaret's



St Clydawg's  
Clodock



St Mary's  
Craswall



St John's  
Newton



St Michael's  
Michaelchurch Escley



St Peter & St Beuno  
Llanveynoe

The Parishes of Clodock & Longtown with Craswall,  
Llanveynoe, St Margaret's, Michaelchurch Escley & Newton

Part of the Abbeydore Deanery  
[abbeydoredeanery.org](http://abbeydoredeanery.org) / [abbeydoredmc@gmail.com](mailto:abbeydoredmc@gmail.com)  
01981 620145 / 07432 873422

Rev. Luci Morris: [luci.borderlinkbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:luci.borderlinkbenefice@outlook.com)

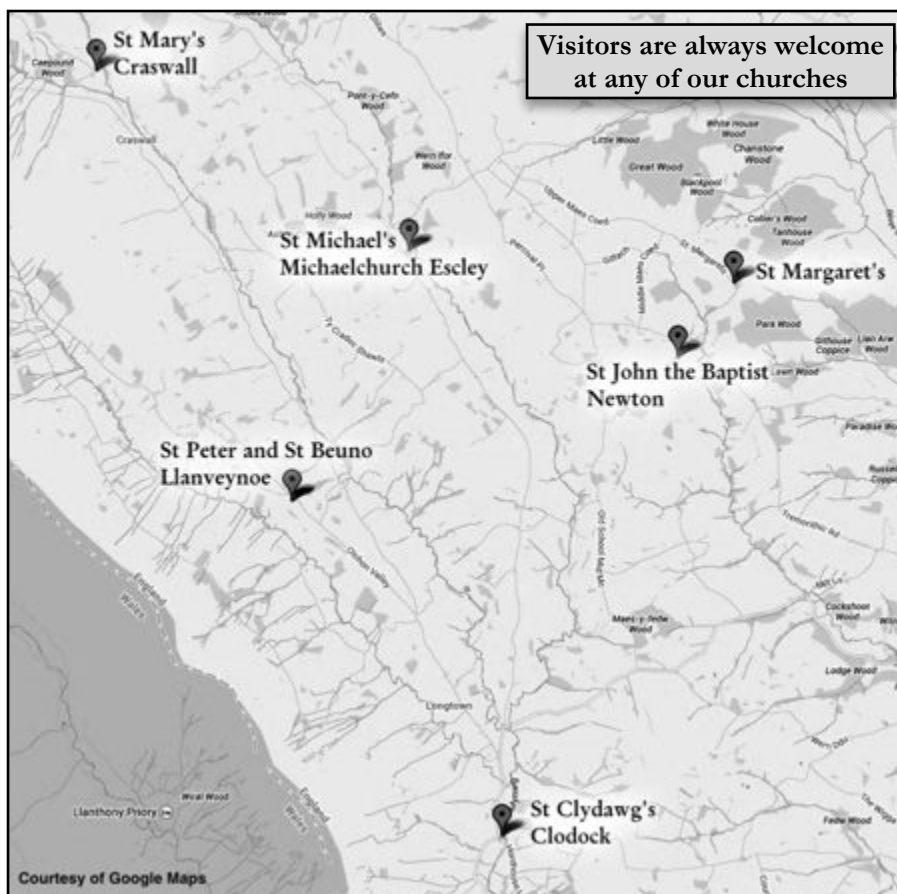
**[www.bmgparishes.org.uk](http://www.bmgparishes.org.uk)**

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**£1**  
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## Churchwardens

### Clodock & Longtown

Mr Nick Vaughan 01873 860201

### Craswall

Mrs Christine Cleaton 01981 510674

### Llanveynoe

Commodore Peter Tribe 01873 860260

Mr Donald Phillips (*Honorary Churchwarden*)

### St Margaret's

(Vacant)

### Michaelchurch Escley

Mrs Olive Howells 01981 510228

### Newton

(Vacant)

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## From the Clergy

### A BLUE CHRISTMAS

Dear Friends,

Christmas is near. To some it means parties, feasting and drinking. To many it means buying wonderful presents for the children, that you can scarcely afford. To many it means coloured lights, Christmas trees, maybe carols and nativity plays. To the Christian it means the birth of Jesus who came into the world to bring love, to teach us about peace and justice. It can of course mean all these things together for some.

Unfortunately for not a few, it means loneliness or grief, sad memories of a loved one, despair about jobs, money or relationships. With such folk in mind, we have words and prayers under the title of a Blue Christmas.

*'Christmas doesn't work for everyone, does it God?*

*For a lot of people Christmas is sad and full of bad memories.*

*For a lot more, Christmas is cold and hungry and lonely.*

*Help us O God, to watch and to listen:*

*to watch out for people who might need our help, to listen to people who tell us their stories.*

*Christmas doesn't work for everyone, does it God?*

*But it might work a bit better if we looked for You in the people around us as well as in the manger.'* Iona writer, Ruth Burgess

So, let's bear these folk in mind, and give what we can to Food for Families or Shelter. Or maybe invite a neighbour in for a meal or just give a call.

Or if you yourself feel like one whose Christmas will be blue, don't be ashamed, you're not alone. Be ready to talk to a good friend or someone from your local church. The Herefordshire Reuse and Recycle Organisation sell toys and more for very low prices. Weds to Sat 10-3 @ Wye Valley Court, Netherwood Rd, Rotherwas, HR2 6JG

For mental health crisis one can call 111 opt 2; Samaritans 116 123; Text SHOUT 85258.

We send our love and hope and maybe we'll see you at one of our Christmas services in one of our local churches, (see elsewhere in your magazine, or on the Abbeydore website.)

*Rev'd Jane*

### READINGS: DEC. 2024, JAN. & 1st SUNDAY IN FEB. 2025

#### Sunday 1st December

Old Testament	Jeremiah 33: 14-16
New Testament	1 Thessalonians 3: 9-end
Gospel	Luke 21: 25-36
Psalm	25: 1-9

#### Sunday 8th December

Old Testament	Malachi 3: 1-4
New Testament	Philippians 1:3-11
Gospel	Luke 3: 1-6, Luke 1: 68-
Psalm	74

#### Sunday 15th December

Old Testament	Zephaniah 3: 14 - end
New Testament	Philippians 4: 4-7
Gospel	Luke 3: 7-18
Psalm	146: 4-end

#### Sunday 22nd December

Old Testament	Micah 5: 2 – 5a
New Testament	Hebrews 10: 5-10
Gospel	Luke 1: 7-18
Psalm	80: 1-8

#### Christmas Eve

Old Testament	Isaiah 52: 7-10
New Testament	Hebrews 1: 1-4 (5-12)
Gospel	John 1: 1-14
Psalm	98

#### Christmas Day

Old Testament	Isaiah 9: 2-7
New Testament	Titus 2: 11-14
Gospel	Luke 2: 1-14 (15-20)
Psalm	96

#### Sunday 29th December

Old Testament	1 Samuel 2: 18-20, 26
New Testament	Colossians 3: 12-17
Gospel	Luke 2: 41-end
Psalm 148	(or Psalm 148: 7end)

#### Sunday 5th January

Old Testament	Isaiah 60:1-6
New Testament	Ephesians 3: 1-12
Gospel	Matthew 2: 1-12
Psalm	72 (1-9), 10-15

#### Sunday 12th January

Old Testament	Isaiah 43: 1-7
New Testament	Acts 8: 14-17
Gospel	Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22
Psalm	29

#### Sunday 19th January

Old Testament	Isaiah 62: 1-5
New Testament	1 Corinthians 12: 1-11
Gospel	John 2: 1-11
Psalm	36: 5-10

#### Sunday 26th January

Old Testament	Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10
New Testament	1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a
Gospel	Luke 4: 14-21
Psalm	19

#### Sunday 2nd February

Old Testament	Malachi 3: 1-5
New Testament	Hebrews 2: 14-end
Gospel	Luke 2: 22-40
Psalm	24 (1-6), 7 - end

## Deanery Update

### UPDATE ON ABBEYDORE DEANERY PARISH REORGANISATION, DECEMBER 2024

As you may know each parish and church is part of a wider grouping of parishes known as a benefice. Currently there are five benefices covering this area which now are to be reduced to four to match the number of paid clergy working in the deanery.

After dialogue with all 33 parishes in the deanery and wider discussion at The Gathering on 19th October when three options for grouping parishes into a benefice were discussed, new benefice boundaries have been proposed. The proposal was endorsed by the Deanery Joint Council meeting on 6th November and we hope that the Deanery Synod on 27th November will approve the proposal. If so, then three benefices will be affected: Cagebrook benefice, Ewyas Harold benefice and Black Mountains benefice:

1. From the existing Ewyas Harold benefice, three parishes – Kilpeck, St Devereux and Wormbridge – will join the Cagebrook benefice (Kingstone, Clehonger, Eaton Bishop, Thruxton and Allensmore) to make a new benefice of eight parishes
2. The remaining six parishes of Ewyas Harold with Dulas, Kentchurch with Llangua, Bacton, Abbeydore, Rowlestone and Walterstone will join with the six parishes from the Black Mountains group – Clodock, Llanveynoe, Craswall, Michaelchurch Escley, St Margaret's and Newton – to form a new Ewyas Harold/Black Mountains benefice.
3. Borderlink Benefice (Cusop, Clifford, Hardwicke, Dorstone, Bredwardine, Moccas, Preston on Wye and Blakemere) which covers the north of the Deanery and the Wyedore Benefice (Madley, Tyberton, Peterchurch and Vowchurch with Turnastone) will not be affected.

The formal Church of England processes to conclude these boundary changes will probably take up to 18 months. In the meantime, the Diocese has given the Deanery the go ahead to recruit a new vicar for the proposed Ewyas Harold/Black Mountains benefice.

Churchwardens and PCC members will meet the Archdeacon to kickstart the process in early December. We hope that the Statement of Needs – the job description for the new post – produced jointly by the parishes and the Deanery with input from the Diocese will be completed towards the end of January. After that the post can be formally advertised and applicants invited. With a fair wind a new vicar could be in post in the late summer. However, it may well take longer as there is a national shortage of clergy and most prefer to work in less remote areas.

The Deanery and the Diocese will do their best to support the new benefice with services and pastoral care but until we have someone new, it will not be possible to do everything that was done when there was a full-time vicar in post. Please bear with us during this time!

In the meantime, if you have any questions please do get in touch with either Rev Jane Rogers, the Rural Dean or Bill Giles the Lay Chair:

Jane Rogers [jane@blakemerehouse.myzen.co.uk](mailto:jane@blakemerehouse.myzen.co.uk)  
Bill Giles [billgiles47@gmail.com](mailto:billgiles47@gmail.com)

### OPEN MEETING – 7TH DECEMBER – 2.30pm at LONGTOWN VILLAGE HALL

for all parties interested in contributing to the job description for a new Vicar for the new Ewyas Harold and Black Mountains Groups of Parishes.

### SALEM BAPTIST CHAPEL

Llanwonog Lane, Longtown HR2 0LE



#### SUNDAY SERVICES

1 Dec	6.30 pm	Revd Misha Pederson
8 Dec	6.30 pm	Revd Lloyd Rickard
15 Dec	6.30 pm	CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION Revd Jonathan Greaves (& Puppets)
22 Dec		No service
29 Dec	6.30 pm	Miss Iona Prosser
5 Jan	6.30 pm	Bring & Share Service
12 Jan	6.30 pm	Speaker to be confirmed
19 Jan	6.30 pm	Speaker to be confirmed
26 Jan	6.30 pm	Mr Wilf Prosser
<b>OTHER</b>		
1-29 Dec		Nativities Exhibition (Chapel open weekends 10am-2pm)
24 Dec	5.00 pm	Carols at the Castle

#### ALL WELCOME

For further information, please email [longtownsbc@gmail.com](mailto:longtownsbc@gmail.com)

## Thanks

### LONGTOWN THURSDAY CLUB

We would like to thank all those who have supported the Club through 2024.

This year the Club has been able to make donations to Dore Transport, Longtown Village Hall and Midland Air Ambulance.

### CORNEWALL ARMS CHARITY EVENT In Memory of Glyn Prosser

Thank you for supporting the cards and quoits evening in memory of Glyn. We raised the fantastic sum of £631 for Prostate Cancer UK.

Thank you.

Isobel

## Forthcoming events



Longtown Library is  
next open on

4th December  
2.30 to 4.30pm

**Longtown and District Historical Society**

**Monday 2 December 7.30pm**

**Longtown Village Hall HR2 OLD**

**TIM HOVERD – THE EXCAVATIONS AT SNODHILL AND  
CUSOP CASTLES, AN UPDATE**

Cusop Castle may be a rare example of a ringwork castle but hardly anything is known about it. In 2023 the Cusop History Group received lottery funding to carry out excavations. Digs at Snodhill have shown how early and important it was but each year fresh discoveries have been made. Mr Hoverd may also talk about last year's community archaeological dig. He has guided all three projects.

Guests are very welcome at our meetings (£4). Membership costs £12 for the season. For more information, visit [www.lhsarchive.org.uk](http://www.lhsarchive.org.uk) or [jerrydpdavis@outlook.com](mailto:jerrydpdavis@outlook.com)

**Llanveynoe Church Village Christmas  
with Carols, Coffee and Pastries- 9.30am**

**Sunday December 22nd at the Church**

Informal get-together with musical entertainment.

Rev up with us, with only three days to go 'til Christmas!

*Pamela Tribe*

# CHRISTMAS SHOPPING FAIR

**Wednesday**

**11th December**

**7.00 to 9.00pm**

**Longtown Village Hall  
HR2 OLD**

**LOCAL CRAFTS AND PRODUCTS**  
Come and enjoy Longtown's  
fabulous Christmas retail  
experience!

**£5**

to include tea,  
Coffee and a  
mince pie

In aid of Longtown Village Hall funds

A poster for a Family Carol Service. It features a central illustration of five children in winter clothing standing in a row. The text is framed by a decorative border of small evergreen trees. The title 'Family Carol Service' is at the top. Below the illustration, it says 'Mon 23rd December 3pm' and 'St. Margaret's Church'. Further down, it describes the service as 'An informal service, suitable for all ages, followed by hot chocolate/ mulled wine and mince pies'. At the bottom, it says 'Everyone welcome!'.

**CAROLS AT THE CASTLE**

On **Christmas Eve at 5pm** there will be our now traditional **Carols at the Castle**. Carols, with hot punch and seasonal nibbles for all and with the castle lit for Christmas. Father Christmas will be very busy on Christmas Eve, but we expect Frosty the Snowman to arrive to see the children. Do come and join us. Why not make a special Christmas lantern to show us all. There will be a collection in aid of Schools for Uganda.

**OLD ENGLISH CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**

Come and enjoy a superb evening of traditional (pre Victorian) Old English Carols by Candlelight. It will be an informal entertainment with mulled wine and mince pies on **Friday 27th December at 7pm in Clodock Church**. It will be sung and played by **Vital Spark, West Gallery Singers**. No charge, but there will be a retiring collection to support Clodock Church and Schools for Uganda.

**LONGTOWN WASSAIL**

**Wassail** is now a tradition in Longtown – it was a roaring success in the BC years (before covid) and we hope to repeat that on **Saturday 11th January 2025. Meet at Longtown Village Hall car park for a prompt start at 7pm**. There will be drummers, mummers, musicians and Morris dancers. There will be a torchlit parade to the castle from Longtown Village Hall car park and back. Join the parade or meet us at the Castle – or in the Village Hall later for singing and the mummers play. There will be a bar and hot food for sale. Cider for the ceremony at the Castle has again been kindly donated by **Fair Oak Cider of Bacton** – our grateful thanks to them. Come and join in the fun. There will be a collection in aid of Schools for Uganda.

**NEWTON ST MARGARETS WOMEN'S GUILD**

We usually meet on **2nd Thursday evening** of each month at 7.30pm in Newton Parish Room HR2 0QR.

New members and guests are very welcome. There is normally a charge of £5 per person at each meeting. This is to cover cost of hiring the room and to pay our speakers. Or you could opt for the "value for money" £20 annual subscription!

**Thursday 12th December at 7pm:** Members Christmas Meal at **Mary Powell's**. This needs to be booked in advance.

**Thursday 9th January 2025 7.30pm Newton Parish Room: "Film Night":** We are planning a "cosy evening in" with a surprise film to cheer you, hot chocolate and other exciting treats to keep you going.

*If you would like further information and/or a lift, please phone 07794 920729.*



**FLICKS IN THE STICKS WITH ARTS ALIVE**

**at the Escleside Hall HR2 OPT**

**Thursday 27th February 2025**

**THE MOSCOW DRUG CLUB**

*(named after the song!)*

Do save the evening for this exciting and highly amusing group describing themselves as Transcendent Troubadours of World Jazz and Folk. The Flicks Team

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## Local Newsround

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### LONGTOWN COMMUNITY PRIMARY & PRE- SCHOOL

Here we are with the nights drawing in and the trees emptying their precious golden cargo. The children are having great fun piling the windfall into their wheelbarrows and creating large piles of soft golden leaves, even designing pictures and animals from what they can find blown onto the ground.

Let's take a look at what has been happening in Longtown Community Primary and Pre-School since the last time we spoke.

For the youngest members of our community our **Stay and Play** sessions are a wonderful chance to explore and play with our ever-growing collection of animals. We open our pre-school doors on the first and third Friday of each month during term time, from 9am to 11am offering games, books and outdoor play equipment to explore, if you can tear yourself away from Eric the rabbit! Refreshments and snacks are available, all for the entry price of £2 per family. These are run on a drop in basis, no need to book. The remaining dates for this year are 15th Nov and the 6th and 20th December 2024.

Our **Pre-school** children love outdoor based activities, and as well as caring for Eric our rabbit, they are now looking after our four new Indian Stick insects. Our exotic new arrivals are settling well into their home. Plans are moving well for our new Wildlife area featuring a wild flower meadow along with a pond and apple trees. Pre-school is open every Monday to Thursday for children aged 2 and above. We do accept funded places for 15hr and 30 hrs.

We are very pleased to announce a special wintry Come and Play on Tuesday 27th November from 10:30am to 12pm. Wrap up warm and come and enjoy one of our FREE winter play sessions for families with children aged 0 to 5 yrs. Play in our beautiful on site woodland, enjoy a slice of pizza fresh from our outdoor pizza oven, meet our Hub animals and generally play and meet new friends.

Along with Pre-school our **Reception** children have enjoyed hunting for bugs, eating delicious fruit crumble & kebabs and have helped sweep up the autumn leaves on the playground. They love their autumn walks around our beautiful area of Longtown.

**Class 2** had a very exciting visit from our truly super friends, the fire officers, who brought their magnificent fire engine to school. Supporting our history studies, they helped the children understand a little about how the Fire of London spread so quickly. The children had built their own houses with cardboard to represent the wooden structures of the day. They set them alight on the playground and noticed how

the fire spread from one to the next. Fortunately for us, the fire officers were on hand to put out the flames much to the children's delight. They have also been investigating how sounds are made in science, writing letters about the dragon who lives in the radiator and in outdoor learning foraging, making shelters and mobiles using tools.

**Class 3** have been incredibly busy writing this half term with focus on playscripts, diaries and even composing their own poems. In science they have been learning all about our teeth and have been making models of the structure of a tooth from Plasticine. Outside they have been river dipping and creating pieces of natural art.

**Class 4** have been studying World War II, topped off with a visit to Cardiff Castle where they were able to experience the tunnels within the walls of the castle which were used as air-raid shelters during the war. They completed their topic of circulation in science, and they have been polishing their netball skills out on the courts.

Some of Class 4 also enjoyed some action-packed dodgeball games competing at an event with other schools at Kingstone High. The school games values of honesty, respect and determination were very much in evidence from all the children, along with lots of amazing throwing, catching and dodging. Well done everyone involved!

We enjoyed a very successful Open Day on the 22nd October. The sun shone and we welcomed some new faces to school. It's always a pleasure to show new families around school and if you missed the Open day, please contact Emma in the office to arrange a visit of your own.

The whole school enjoyed drumming workshops with Rhythmicity at the end of October. The hall was ringing with the rhythmic beats and patterns and everyone thoroughly enjoyed their sessions.

We are thrilled to announce we now offer regular music tuition through Mr Gary Gray, or Gary Guitar as the children call him. We now have a talented group of budding musicians learning to play the keyboard, guitar, ukulele and drums!

We would like to extend a massive thank you to the talented Wild by Nature team who donated £1000.00 to the school fund, following a hugely successful Harvest Feast at Lower House Farm. We really appreciate their support and generosity.

We are running **Warming Wednesdays Breakfast Club** to add a little lift to the middle of the darkening weeks. From now until Christmas Warming Wednesday Breakfast Club will be serving hot croissants and hot chocolate, alongside our regular breakfast favourites, with some seasonal music to set us up for the school day.

On Friday 8th November we once again welcomed Kesri, a local Hindu lady, who spoke to all the children about the beautiful Hindu festival of Diwali, giving us a glimmer into a different culture and way of celebrating festivals.

The following week, we celebrated Children in Need, with a spotty and Super Hero theme. Families were asked to make a small donation which was sent off to the Children in Need fund raising event. Lots of fun was had and everyone looked amazing!

Parents and carers came into school after the half term break for their chance to speak to the teachers and look at their children's books and displays. We enjoy working closely with our parents to ensure that our pupils are well supported and challenged in school. It was lovely to see everyone and hear such positive feedback!

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with the amazing things we get up to in school!

#### **Coming up...**

Our Christmas performance this year will be a **Walking Nativity** led by our younger pupils. Starting at Longtown Castle, following the journey of Mary and Joseph on that night in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago we will make our way to our school grounds telling the story as we go. Parents will be treated to a wonderful performance of acting and singing, followed by refreshments to keep us warm. I can't wait!

Exciting news, our first **Drop Off as a local Re-use and Recycle Hub** will be on Wednesday 20th November from 9am to 11am. Our collection hub is run by the Golden Valley Reuse and Recycle School Project for our local community to drop-off items to be recycled and reused. Please see our facebook page for more details.

Please contact Emma in the school office if you would be interested in a visit or looking for a school place for your child/ren. Call 01873 860239 or email [admin@longtown.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@longtown.hereford.sch.uk) Follow us on Facebook to see up to date information about all the wonderful things we get up to in school. Thank you.

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#### **MICHAELCHURCH ESCLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Well autumn is well and truly with us with November finally giving us some brighter days after a somewhat gloomy start. However, it was the heavy rain of late October which really caught us all off guard – though it was so extreme I'm sure there is little we could have done about it - and we have definitely been thankful for a few dryer weeks, however dull they may have been! Mind you, pre-school definitely got into the seasonal spirit when they visited Twilight Pumpkins at Mairdiffe Court Farm near Abergavenny. They had a super time collecting their pumpkins in the shadow of Skirrid Fawr and wandering through the maize tunnels!

Lots has also been happening back in school. First off, we were very excited to have a visit from Sealegs Puppet Theatre who entertained the whole school - pre-school to Year 6 - with a beautiful retelling of Hans Anderson's classic tale of the Ugly Duckling. Later in the month we had a wonderful day with drumming superstar Landing Manning. The children - and staff - had a brilliant time learning different beats and rhythms and they especially loved being able to share what they had learnt with parents, family and friends at an end of day performance.

Another visitor to school was Danelo Yarnold, from the Sealed Knot historical society, to kick off Oak Class's topic on the English Civil War. Danelo, is an amazing artist who is passionate and very knowledgeable about this incredible period of British history in the middle of the 17th century. After a day packed with learning about different aspects of life and the wars, the children

finished the day drawing portraits of Charles I. Danelo offered a reward of a replica thruppence for the best portrait, with Isla and Holly picking up a prize each! And whilst Oak Class were getting to grips with revolution and republicanism, Acorn Class were enjoying an online workshop with the Royal Ballet!

At Michaelchurch we love our Times-Tables and in celebration of this, we held one of our termly TT Rockstars days. The children spent a fun day developing their times-tables recall through a series of games and challenging activities.

Finally, Year 6 have been out and about in Hereford for their Bikeability training. Lovely though Michaelchurch Escley is, it doesn't present sufficient challenge for really effective road safety training, so for the past four years we have taken them into Hereford to learn cycling road safety on the busy city streets. As always, the children were amazing, not only learning very quickly how to pass parked vehicles safely and make a whole host of different turns but coping extremely well with some chilly and damp conditions!

Coming up it is going to be 'Jingle Bells All The Way' as we get ready for Christmas. This year looks like it will be even more busy than usual. We have so much to look forwards to: Hunting for and collecting the school Christmas tree from a local forest, our Christmas Fair on Friday December 13th (stalls available), our community carol service at St Michael's church, Christmas decoration day, a trip to the panto (thank you Peterchurch Primary School!) and of course, our ever popular Walking Nativity, now in its 10th year! We also have Pre-school heading off to see the 'Elves and the Shoemaker' at the Courtyard Theatre.

In addition, we are managing to squeeze in an Open Day for the school and pre-school on the 4th December (9:30am to 11:30am) and a pre-school Festive Welly Walk on Monday 9th December (9:15 to 11:00). Phew, we will definitely need the Christmas break when it comes!

If you like the sound of Michaelchurch Escley Primary and Pre-School and feel it is the right place for your child – whether they're pre-school or school aged, then please get in touch via our school email address ([admin@michaelchurch-escley.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@michaelchurch-escley.hereford.sch.uk)) or give us a call on 01981 510208. We'd love to show you around!

*Louise Crocker, Head Teacher*

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#### **INAUGURAL CAT'S BACK FELL RACE**

The inaugural Cat's Back fell race took place on Sunday 20th October 2024. The race was held as part of the 31st South Wales Winter Hill Series co-ordinated by the Welsh Fell Runners Association.

The race started in the Monnow Valley from Mountain Mayhem's base at Tybubach, Craswall. It's planned route climbed steeply on footpaths through farmland before reaching the base of the ridge at the Cat's Back car park. From this point on runners were due to follow the classic ridgeline of old red sandstone all the way to the summit of Black Hill for a quick 'once around the trig', a dib at the compulsory checkpoint and a fast return descent to the start field.

The weather had different ideas – on the day of the race westerly winds gusting over 50 mph were battering the ridge, so the route was re-routed on safety grounds with a single touch point on the ridge and a shorter return route using a lower path. Despite the forecast conditions, 51 people turned up to take part and fierce competition ensued amongst all categories of runner.

Congratulations to all runners who completed the course and especially the following runners:

1st Male Wyndham Turner (31:27) 1st Female Katie Ironside (39:04) 1st Male Under 23 James Osman (43:54).

Full results and all category winners can be found here:

<https://www.welshfellrunnersassociation.org.uk/en/results>

A lot of favourable feedback has been received which highlighted the overall quality of the event, the friendliness of marshals, the quality of facilities and the warmth of welcome and tasty refreshments at Mountain Mayhem.

A big thank you: The event could not have taken place without the co-operation and support of Vicki and Fred Phillips, the Black Mountain Graziers, local landowners and the volunteers from Longtown Mountain rescue Team and the local community who were the race marshals. A donation of £300 to Longtown Mountain Rescue Team will be made from the event proceeds.

*Mike Fawcett, Race Organiser – Longtown MRT*

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## Round and About

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### PETERCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

We are sad to announce the passing of one of our Trustees Mr Simon Vaughan Winter. Simon had been a valued trustee for many years and was integral in starting the summer show. He was also responsible many of the posters for our Music evenings and the show. We as a committee offer our condolences to Janine and his family.

**Monday Club every Monday morning 10am-12pm Pop in for Tea/Coffee and a chat**

**Why not come for Gentle Dance exercise with Abbie Mason every Thursday morning 11.30 am-12.30.**

**Hatha Yoga is being held every Wednesday 6.30pm -8.00pm and 10.30 am-12pm**

**Parish Council meetings every 3rd Tuesday of the month 7-9pm**

**W I First Thursday of every month from September to March 2-4pm**

**Dementia Matters Herefordshire will be holding a memory cafe 10.30am -12.30pm this will be every 3rd Friday in the month from September 20th.**

Dementia Matters Here(fordshire) are pleased to introduce the **Peterchurch Memory Café** at **Peterchurch Village Hall**, which will run once a month on the **THIRD FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH** from **10.30am-12.30pm**.

Our Memory Cafes are designed to enable people with memory problems or concerns, their families/ friends or carers, to get out and meet like minded people. Every Café involves fun quizzes, activities and occasional guest speakers, with professional support, information and advice available. A contribution of £2.50 per couple is requested, and there is

no booking necessary.

Dementia Matters Here(fordshire) are a local charity, supporting those with memory or cognitive concerns/ diagnoses across the county. For more information please call us on **01432 804480** or email [charlotte.banks@dementiamattershere.org.uk](mailto:charlotte.banks@dementiamattershere.org.uk)

### Village Art Club

Starts again every Monday 7.00pm - 9pm from 16th September and every Wednesday 1.30pm -3.30pm from 18th September

The new booking form is now on the website [www.peterchurchvillagehall.org](http://www.peterchurchvillagehall.org) along with what's happening at the Hall

Peterchurch Village Hall is a community building, run by a small committee of dedicated trustees. It is the ideal venue for local events, and is available for hire from £10 an hour. As well as hosting many a birthday party, the hall has a few regular user groups – Parish Council every 3rd Tuesday of the month.

We always welcome new groups! If you wish to hire the hall or have any other inquiries, please call any of these numbers:

- The Booking Secretary (Sarah) – 07774 457887
- The Chairman (Brendan) – (01981) 550 482
- The Hall – (01981) 551 162
- (Please leave a message if you are unable to reach anyone on the numbers above.)

**WE WISH YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**





### THE HUB @ ST PETER'S PETERCHURCH

**The Hub @ St Peter's** is a lottery funded Reaching Communities project which includes a Café, NHS Health Visitor Hub and branch of Hereford Libraries all within a working church. See [www.hubcommunity.org](http://www.hubcommunity.org) for further details or call 01981 551143. The centre will close at 2pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December and re-open at 11am on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January.

**The Hub Café** is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 11am to 2pm. We have a specials board, jacket potatoes, quiche, soup, cakes, and puddings plus hot and cold drinks all to eat in or take away.

**Chatty Café** is on every Wednesday at the Hub from 12 to 2pm. It's a wonderful opportunity to make new friends. Please call us on 01981 551143 if you require free transport in order to attend.

**Pre-school Play** at the Hub is held every Thursday 9-11am for under 5's and their Parents or Carers. Admission is free! You can have your baby weighed and chat to the Health Visitor from 10-11am at the Well Baby Clinic drop-in. The Café is open so treat yourself to drinks and snacks too.

**Youth Café** at the Hub is held every Thursday for 11-16 year olds from 5-7pm all year round. Admission is free! Discounted food and drink are available and there is plenty to do.

**The Hub's Bell Tower Library** is open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 11am to 1pm, also on Fridays from 2pm to 4pm and on Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon.

**Hedgerow Communion** – There will be a Hedgerow Communion on the Winter Solstice, Saturday December 21<sup>st</sup> when we will meet at 3.30pm at Little Mountain, on the B4348, turn uphill at Westbrook between Dorstone and Hardwick. It's a time to pause, attend and celebrate, when everyone is welcome. It involves yoga, meditation, sharing bread and wine, silence, poetry and ritual.

**The Deanery Website** lists all you need to know about Church services and walks in and around the area and offers opportunities to help in and around local churches. Please email Anne Lloyd at [abbeydorecdm@gmail.com](mailto:abbeydorecdm@gmail.com) for more information or to receive her monthly information email.

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### PETERCHURCH – THE MONDAY CLUB

This friendly little club is run at Peterchurch Village Hall every Monday serving Teas and Coffee.

Everyone is welcome to pop in between 10am and 12pm.

We had a very busy November and December. Fish and chips were supplied from Karen at the Nags Head so many thanks to her.

We went on our Christmas shopping trip on the 27<sup>th</sup> November. A good day was spent in Cardiff. I'm sure there will be plenty of things purchased.

If you feel like coming please do. There's no obligation to come every week but I know you will always get a friendly welcome and it's a great way to make new friends.

We are always looking for volunteers and if you feel like you would like to help us as a volunteer please ring Mrs. Kath

Gaze on 01981 550579 or pop in and you will be very welcome.

You don't have to do it every Monday. We are happy with any time available. It's just making Tea and Coffee.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

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### Notices and Advertisements

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#### UPDATE AND THANKS FROM CRASWALL ST MARY'S

First, a big thank you to everyone who made our Harvest Sunday such a special day. The weekend started off on the Friday when we gathered at the church to do a bit of tidying and then arranging the quantity of flowers that everyone brought along. Decorating included arranging a large quantity of dry and tinned food (which we took down to the HUB after the weekend, to be distributed to local families in need).

Saturday we met again in the afternoon at the Hall to set out the tables and table settings and prepare some of the salads for the Harvest lunch.

Sunday's service was very well attended, as ever, and we had a good team of small people to help us present the symbols of our harvest; hay, sheep's fleece, fruit and veg, eggs, food from farmers from afar and lastly grapes, symbolizing that Jesus is "the new wine". Because we've been able to rearrange the pews in the church into a sort of square circle the kids were able to have the toy box out in front of the communion table and contentedly and quietly! occupy themselves during the service.

They were all able to help again later in the service when we invited all the congregation to write down their thoughts/ prayers/ concerns on the paper petals which we'd laid out on the pews beforehand as part of our prayers segment of the service. Christine H helped the kids to assemble all the petals into a large flower to place on the communion table.

Our church service collection and the proceeds from the auction of the fruit and veg decorating the church, after our Harvest Lunch, raised a total of £214 to be shared between the Air Ambulance and We Are Farming Minds, two charities that are really important to our rural communities. (Thank you Malik and Emily for bringing along the largest homegrown beetroot I'm sure anyone has ever seen!)

Our Harvest Lunch was again very well attended with over 60 coming along to share the feast! We had an amazing selection of puddings to offer (thank you everyone who brought along donations) and it was nearly tea time! before the last few dishes were washed and tables stacked away. A grand day.

And a heads up for December... we will be doing our DIY (aka lay led) Christmas Carol Service on Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 11.00am so do get in touch if you have any favourite carols you'd like us to include, ( Christine 01981 510674/ Geoff 01981 510460 ) and we'll do our best to include them in the service. We'll have seasonal refreshments after the service for a chance for a quick catch up before Sunday dinner and then a trip down to Newton for more carols ( 4.00pm ) and mulled wine!

## Concerts for Craswall

## DATES FOR THE DIARY 2025

## Saturday March 29th

## Ensemble Renard

Five outstanding young musicians who are keen to explore a wide range of timbral possibilities. Tunnell Trust and Countess of Munster artists and Britten Pears young artists, they have quickly emerged onto the scene as one of the UK's most promising young chamber ensembles.

## Friday June 27th

## Laura van der Heijden (cello) and Jâms Coleman (piano)

Laura van der Heijden is one of the leading cellists of her generation, captivating audiences and critics alike with her deeply perceptive interpretations and engaging, creative programming.

From Anglesey, North Wales, Jâms Coleman is a pianist who enjoys performing as a soloist, chamber musician, and vocal accompanist, regularly working with singers and instrumentalists at the top of the profession.

Jâms' duo partnership with cellist Laura saw their most recent album '*Path to the Moon*' described as 'intriguing and beguiling' by The Guardian and as 'gently alluring, enigmatic and romantic' by Gramophone.

## Saturday June 28th

## Emma Johnson (clarinet) and The Gildas Quartet

Internationally acclaimed solo clarinettist, recording artist, composer and lecturer, Emma has been described by The Times as "Britain's favourite clarinettist". Since winning the BBC Young Musician of the Year at the age of just 17, she has gone on to become one of the UK's biggest selling classical artists and is known for the diverse range of the repertoire she plays.

Passionate advocates of music from all periods, The Gildas Quartet, praised for their 'energy, verve and refreshing approach,' have performed to critical acclaim at major venues including the Bridgewater Hall, Barbican, Wigmore Hall and live on BBC Radio 3.

**Sunday June 29th** – Details coming soon.

## Sunday August 10th

## Ensemble Hesperis with Claire Ward (soprano)

A dynamic and innovative period ensemble, with a passion for showcasing Early Music through intelligent, distinctive programming, Ensemble Hesperis has gained a strong reputation for championing rarely heard music, bringing forgotten stories to life through original historical research.

British/Irish soprano Claire Ward is a 2022-2024 City Music Foundation Artist and a young artist with Opera Prelude since 2021. In 2023 she made her solo debut with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment conducted by John Wilson, and joined the Monteverdi Choir working with John Eliot Gardiner and Dinis Sousa in European tours.

## Saturday October 11th

## Mikeleiz-Zucchi Duo

A London-based ensemble formed by Canadian saxophonist David Zucchi and Spanish accordionist Iñigo Mikeleiz-Berrade. Winners of the Royal Over-Seas League Annual Music Competition's Mixed Ensemble Prize and City Music Foundation Artists, the Duo's repertoire spans everything from reimagined traditional works to modern repertoire and improvisation, all vividly rendered by the unique combination of saxophone and accordion.

## Concerts for Craswall

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As our 2024 season closes, we wish to express our most heartfelt thanks once again to all our wonderful volunteers. We couldn't do it all without your dedication!

Each year, alongside our trustees, Friends and donors, a range of supporters generously donate their time and energy to help us bring fantastic classical music to the area and nurture the next generation of talented musicians.

However, despite these amazing efforts, we are still keen to attract additional support. Current opportunities include

- Finance
- Marketing
- Concert Logistics
- Music Planning

So, if you have a few spare hours and would like to help bring these popular concerts to life making a genuine difference in our community, we would love to hear from you.

For further details on the opportunities available, drop us a line at [secretary@concertsforcraswall.org](mailto:secretary@concertsforcraswall.org) or call 01981 510112 for an informal chat.

## ARE YOU MUSICAL?

**I play the guitar and I am looking for anyone who wants to make music with me.**

**Why? – for private enjoyment.**

**Any instrument. Any standard.**

**Singer? – yes. Maybe Jazz ... anything considered.**

**Contact: Mike Sury, Pontynys Cottage, Longtown.**

**07967507884. [mikesury@doctors.org.uk](mailto:mikesury@doctors.org.uk)**

**Saturday 7 December 2024  
10am to 12.30pm  
Dorstone Village Hall**

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**Saturday 11 January – Kingstone Church  
Saturday 1 February – St Michael's Hall Ewyas Harold**

### Longtown and District Historical Society

On behalf of the Longtown and District Historical Society I am appealing for support in acquiring material for display at events in Longtown and Craswall during the spring of 2025. We would particularly be interested in old photographs of people, events and places in our community that we could enlarge for display and which tell a story, for example school activities, weddings, agricultural activities, community events or whatever you think the public would enjoy. Also historical documents, maps etc.

Please contact Dr Jeremy Davis, Hon Sec LDHS, Old House, Michaelchurch Escley.

Email [jerrydpdavis@outlook.com](mailto:jerrydpdavis@outlook.com)

### Christmas cards sold in aid of St Michael's Hospice

During November and early December Lucy Bufton of Lucy's Hair and Beauty in Peterchurch will kindly be selling a selection of Christmas cards in aid of St Michael's Hospice.

If you want further information I shall be at the Hub Café during opening hours on Wednesdays or you can email me on [evaannmorgan42@gmail.com](mailto:evaannmorgan42@gmail.com) when I will send you a poster of the cards available or you can ring me, Eva Morgan, on 01981 550282.

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**Sunday 8th December at 6pm**

St. Mary's Church Hay on Wye

Tickets £10 on the door in aid of Herefordshire Growing Point

### More Singing Matters

**With Fiona Evans, Director Hay Community Choir**

#### **IT'S DEFINITELY HAPPENING**

**On Saturday, 8th February, 2025**

**VENUE: Longtown Village Hall**

**TIME: 10.00 am to 3.30 p.m.**

**COST £20.00**

**BRING: A bottle of water, a pencil, a desire to sing and a packed lunch**

**Coffee and Tea will be provided**

Singing is good for you. Singing together with other people is even better for you so come along and do yourself and others a favour that will get your feet tapping, your heart racing and bring a smile to your face.

**Tickets available from Sarah Ashton,  
The Old Greyhound, Longtown, HR2 0LD  
07968375218, [ashton.sj@googlemail.com](mailto:ashton.sj@googlemail.com).**

Please pay by Cheque (made out to Sarah Ashton) or cash at present. Online tickets available shortly

**Closing Date 30th January, 2025**

### "O LITTLE TOWN ..."

*A contribution from Sam Ashton*

O Gaza's narrow, prison strip,  
what tears within you lie?  
Above your curfew, nightmare sleep  
the rocket flares go by,  
For in your broken streets arise  
men ready for a fight;  
the hopes and fears of torment years  
could meet in you tonight.  
A child is born of Maeri;  
and gathered close in love,  
While armed bands creep and spy drones keep  
their watch from high above.  
O bomb blast boom and small arms crack  
proclaim lost human worth,  
as soldiers sing to conflict's ring,  
enforcing peace on earth.  
Though sirens wail how silently,  
the gift of life is given;  
the birth imparts to bitter hearts  
the blessings of its leaven.  
No ear may hear its coming,  
but in this warfare's din,  
where parents' arms receive a child  
sweet love will enter in.

O displaced babe of Gaza Strip  
this camp is where you'll stay;  
may hope last long within your soul  
so you can have your day.  
You'll know the rasp of brutal words  
that shape this seething hell,  
You'll either be a child of hate,  
or make Deep Peace Life's Well.

*Sam Ashton. (With apologies to Phillips Brooks)  
Christmas 2023 and very little has changed in 2024.*

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### GRAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT THE CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Saturday, 14 December at 7.00pm - St Mary's Church, Hay-on-Wye

Music for the Christmas Season with one of Britain's great university choirs: Tavener, Rachmaninoff, Poulenc, Beamish, Aleotti, MacMillan, Cornelius and more.

Programme details and tickets at [www.haymusic.org](http://www.haymusic.org)  
Tickets also from the Hay Tourist Bureau and the door if still available.



### THE MARSYAS TRIO WITH LOTTE BETTS-DEAN, MEZZO-SOPRANO

Sunday, 12 January at 3.30pm - St Mary's Church, Hay-on-Wye

'Echoes of a Distant Land': Music for flute, cello and piano by Maurice Ravel, Judith Weir, Camille Saint-Saëns, Mel Bonis and Michael Finnissy (world premiere). Pre-concert discussion with Judith Weir and Michael Finnissy.

Programme details and tickets at [www.haymusic.org](http://www.haymusic.org)

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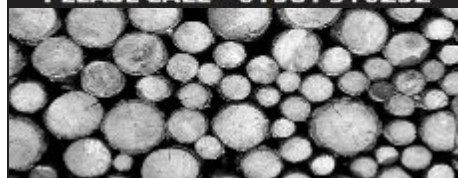
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(May - Oct):	10.00 am - 2.00 pm
<b>Bank Holiday Mondays</b>	<b>10.00 am - 2.00 pm</b>

Oh help me, I am so behind on getting out our **Christmas Order forms**, to make Christmas simple, orders for local food can be booked for Friday to take with you if you are aware this year. Order forms need to be back with us by **Tuesday 3rd December**, for process and ordering. If you want an organic turkey, ask us now, don't wait for the form!

**Hopes Hygge Hug** on Thursdays 6-7pm have been marvellous, we very much look forward to seeing you with time to chat. Same again next November we have loved it!

Join us on **Small Business Saturday** 7th December

To celebrate small business and its powerful impact to make our communities a better place as the combined largest employer in the country.

### Make life easier this December at Hopes

- ★ Calon Wen, Organic Milk & Cheese
- ★ Skin Food Gift Collection
- ★ Sugar Welsh Butter
- ★ Mix of four bags of kindling and logs for a bargain £18.99 and easy to carry

### Local author joy

I am utterly thrilled that we have new books from **local authors** and can show off the talented writers on our doorstep, take time to look at our shelves.

### Join our gang in 2025

We welcome you to join us in January 2025 to rest and recuperate, these are going to be our themes for our best ever trading period. We are interested in how we can support you with new habits and dietary changes on your doorstep or everyday essential items you want to choose to purchase from your community.

Let's make life easier together and look on our doorstep first to build resilience and joy.

### House of Lords

I had a little special moment in November and I got to speak at the House of Lords (on the Terrace) about Sustainability, this was a very kind invitation by Small Business Britain after being a participant on the BT CiPD accredited course. Jesse Norman MP also joined the event to support our Sustainability Small business journey.

### LONGTOWN POST OFFICE - 2056186

**Royal Mail, DPD and Amazon postal and parcel services available**

**Monday to Friday 10.30am ~ 3.30pm and Saturdays 9am ~ 11am**

Travel card only £10 opening balance, come and find out more. If you have a family member travelling talk to them as this is a very useful gift

Saving money and buying online, save money by having your parcels delivered to the Longtown Post Office where we keep them safe and dry. Royal Mail offers this service via Local Collect and Amazon gives you the option too.

Thank you very much for we have had a customer open our first instant access savings account, thank you very much. Please bring your passport, birth certificate and

**Winston Churchill stamps** go live on the 30th November an alternative stamp to the Cathedral Christmas Stamps.

**Last Posting dates** for Royal Mail and DPD – pick up a leaflet when you are in.

### FREE to check your Personal & Business Banking account balance

Using your account card we can print out a balance, we will hand it to you upside down to read.

**For holiday insurance go on line and quote our Post office code of 2056186**, this is super helpful to us.

**To chase a letter or parcel please call Royal Mail Hereford on 01432 346100**



**Hopes of Longtown** – Open seven days a week 01873 860444  
[www.hopesoflongtown.co.uk](http://www.hopesoflongtown.co.uk) / @HopesofLongtown / [info@hopesoflongtown.co.uk](mailto:info@hopesoflongtown.co.uk)  
 join our Facebook group Hopes of Longtown and post community/charity events for free  
 Like our Hopes of Longtown business page to keep up to date with news  
 Tag us in your passion for food and community via Twitter / Instagram / Pinterest / Facebook

CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

**Sunday 1 December**

9:30 Llanveynoe Morning Worship  
15:00 St Margaret's Holy Communion

**Wednesday 4 December**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

**Thursday 5 December**

1:30pm Michaelchurch Michaelchurch Escley Primary School and Community Carol Service

**Sunday 8 December**

9:30 Clodock Holy Communion

**Wednesday 11 December**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Holy Communion

**Sunday 15 December**

11:00 Craswall Carol Service  
16:00 Newton Carols and Mulled Wine

**Wednesday 18 December**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Community Carols

**Sunday 22 December**

9:30 Llanveynoe Village Christmas: Carols, Coffee & Pastries  
18:30 Clodock Carol Service

**Monday 23 December**

15:00 St Margaret's Family Carol Service

**Tuesday 24 December**

21:00 Clodock Holy Communion for Christmas Eve

**Wednesday 25 December**

10:00 Michaelchurch Communion for Christmas Morning

**Sunday 29 December**

10:30 Newton Group Morning Prayer and seasonal refreshments

**Sunday 5 January**

9:30 Llanveynoe Holy Communion  
15:00 St Margaret's Epiphany Evening Prayer Service

**Wednesday 15 January**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Holy Communion

**Sunday 12 January**

9:30 Clodock Morning Worship  
11:00 Michaelchurch Holy Communion

**Wednesday 15 January**

0:30 Ewyas Harold Holy Communion

**Sunday 19 January**

9:30 Craswall Holy Communion

**Wednesday 22 January**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

**Sunday 26 January**

11:00 Clodock Holy Communion

**Wednesday 29 January**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

**Sunday 2 February**

9:30 Llanveynoe Morning Worship  
15:00 St Margaret's Holy Communion

**Wednesday 5 February**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

**Sunday 9 February**

9:30 Clodock Holy Communion  
11:00 Michaelchurch Morning Worship

**Wednesday 12 February**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Holy Communion

**Sunday 16 February**

9:30 Craswall Celtic Morning Prayer  
15:00 Tbc Tbc

**Wednesday 19 February**

0:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

**Sunday 23 February**

11:00 Michaelchurch Group Holy Communion

**Wednesday 26 February**

10:30 Ewyas Harold Prayer & Praise

EVENTS PLANNER

Mon	02 Dec 2024	7.30pm	Longtown & District Historical Society: Tim Hoverd: <i>The Excavations at Snodhill &amp; Cusop castles</i>
Wed	04 Dec 2024	2.30-4.30pm	Longtown Library, Longtown Village Hall
Wed	11 Dec 2024	7.00-9.00pm	Christmas Shopping Fair, Longtown Village Hall
Thu	12 Dec 2024	7.00pm	Newton St Margaret's Women's Guild: Christmas meal
Tue	24 Dec 2024	5.00pm	Carols at the Castle, Longtown Castle
Fri	27 Dec 2024	7.00pm	Old English Carols by Candlelight, with Vital Spark at Clodock Church
Sat	28 Dec 2024	10.00am-noon	Longtown Village Projects, Longtown Castle
Thu	09 Jan 2025	7.30pm	Newton St Margaret's Women's Guild: Film Night. Newton Parish Room
Sat	11 Jan 2025	7.00pm	Longtown Wassail. Starting from Longtown Village Hall
Mon	03 Feb 2025	19:30:00	Longtown & District Historical Society: Members Evening
Sat	08 Feb 2025	10.00am-4.00pm	Day of Singing, with Fiona Evans. Longtown Village Hall
Thu	27 Feb 2025		Flicks in the Sticks with Arts Alive: The Moscow Drug Club. Escleyside Hall

Village hall contacts

**Craswall Hall**

Bookings: Janet Watkins 01981 510226  
General inquiries: Christine Cleaton,  
cleatonfamily@btinternet.com

**Escleyside Hall**

Mark Hollowood, 01981 510208  
admin@michaelchurch-escley.hereford.sch.uk

**Longtown Hall**

Mark Ewins, 01873 860829  
www.longtownvillagehall.org.uk  
bookings@longtownvillagehall.org.uk

**Newton Church Room**

Mary Powell: 01981 510295  
mary.powell37@btinternet.com

**Escley & District Sports Pavilion**

Kirsty, 01981 510682  
www.escleysportspavilion.com  
escleysportspavilion@gmail.com

**Golden Valley Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)  
Peterchurch Police & Fire Hub, Hereford HR2 0RU**

**01981 550253**

PC 3687, Jeff Rouse 07870 150972  
jeff.rouse@westmercia.police.uk

PCSO, Margaret Andrzejewska 07773 053895  
margaret.andrzejewska@westmercia.police.uk

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goldenvalley.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

