

The Leigh & Coombe Hill Newsletter

Issue no. 214

April/May 2025

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News from Coombe Hill and The Leigh residents is welcome by email, deadline for next issue is May 15, 2025



The Leigh's oldest resident, Dorothy, who will be 100 in June, remembers the event first hand.

*'There were news boys on street corners shouting out that the **'War is Over'**. I followed the crowds to Trafalgar Square and down the Mall. There were masses of people dancing, laughing and generally very happy. There was no room for cars as the roads were full of people... It took some time to get used to going to bed and not worrying about any bombs.'*

Dorothy, born in London and stayed until she was 32. During wartime she remembers walking over bombed buildings and rubble to get to St Paul's Cathedral to be confirmed by the Bishop of London.

Village VE Day Celebration! Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May

A community celebration has been funded by CIL money, so we may all come together - friends, family, parishioners, young and old, to mark 80 years of peace since the guns fell silent at the end of the war in Europe. This Anniversary event will provide us all with an opportunity to reflect on the enormous sacrifice, courage and determination of our country.

Complimentary soft drinks and plenty of cake (!) will be served on Monday, 5 May at 3pm on The Leigh Green (by the pond). Feel free to bring a chair/picnic rug, drinking vessel and, if you prefer, additional picnic food, wine, etc.

Master of Ceremonies will be Colin Dearing, a knowledgeable WWII enthusiast who will make a toast and possibly be dressed in a uniform of the time - if you would also like to dress up in vintage clothing, please do!

Save the date - there is a wet weather plan, no matter what. For catering purposes, if you are able to attend, please could you email numbers to anniehidson@hotmail.com by Sunday 27 April.



Please the Bees, create an ecosystem with No Mow May

We don't need to venture far afield to make space for nature. Our lawns and green spaces can be colourful kingdoms of organisms all coexisting, bursting with life and potential. Take a closer look. Your lawn is an ecosystem in itself - below the ground there's a complex world of fungi and microbes living among the roots.

Above the soil, plants form mini jungles which shelter, feed, and support all kinds of beasts from insects to birds and mammals. Our valuable green spaces can be teeming with life across the seasons - if we only give them a little room to grow.

With over 23 million gardens in the UK, even the smallest grassy patches add up to a significant proportion of our land which, if managed properly, can deliver enormous gains for nature, communities, and the climate.



Betty the Bedford van's amazing restoration

The Baking Bird story began in 2014 when Trevor decided to find a van to convert into a mobile coffee van so Tracy could fulfill her dream of baking cakes for a living.

Trevor first saw Betty on the market in London but the sale was for two Bedford vans. A short time later, she came up for sale again on her own in Cheltenham, which made it feel like it was meant to be.

The very dilapidated 1960 van took Trevor five years to restore and he completed the conversion just as COVID struck. Any events that had been booked were rapidly cancelled, however, after a chat with Sam at Coombe Hill Farm Shop, a regular pitch was agreed and as they say, the rest is history.

The business has been serving an ever-changing range of delicious homemade cakes, speciality teas and artisan coffee for almost 5 years now and has been well supported by not only the locals but has also been visited from people as far as Australia. Betty is one of a kind and long may she bring happiness to people in the form of cake, coffee and nostalgia!



Leigh Villagers are Victorious!

A contingent from The Leigh (Remfrys/Robsons) entered Sandhurst's quiz on 15th February in aid of the Air Ambulance. In the past, some national newspapers referred to Sandhurst as 'The Village of the Damned' following a series of catastrophes involving a chemical spill, flooding and an unexploded bomb. Well, the Leigh quizzers have added to that list with a convincing (some say lucky) victory. Let's hope Sandhurst send a contingent back to our quiz on Saturday 12 April at St Catherine's Church, The Leigh. 7.30pm start. £12 per team (up to 6 people). BYO drinks and nibbles. Profits to Maggie's Cheltenham and St Catherine's Church. Please book your table via jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com



In our growing community we would love to have your photos and junior news. For example, personal achievements, fund raisers and special events.

Simply send a good quality photo as a high resolution jpeg or PDF and tell us about the picture. Don't forget to include first name and just the initial for the surname (GDPR) and age, if you think it's appropriate.

Send to Jo for consideration at jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com



Well done Hugo!

A well deserved trophy was recently awarded to a promising young footballer, Hugo P of The Leigh. 'Player of the Match' was for his new team, Longlevens Football Club

Miss Bussey's Busy Bees, Easter Holiday Club



For children aged 5-12, with nature at its heart is open for bookings. Find out more here: www.missbussey.co.uk

Start planning for the Norton Leigh & District Horticulture Show - Saturday 9 August 2025

Children aged 13-16 years

- Class 65 A fruit and/or veg animal model
- Class 66 A4 'landscape' – any medium
- Class 67 1 black & white photograph 'Portrait' (face/head and shoulders, max size 6"x4")

Children aged 8-12 years

- Class 68 A fruit and/or veg animal model
- Class 69 An 'eggbox monster'
- Class 70 A4 colour pencil drawing 'Transport'

Children aged 5-7 years

- Class 71 A fruit and/or veg animal model
- Class 72 Decorate a pebble – any medium
- Class 73 A5 Birthday card – garden related

Children aged 4 years or under

- Class 74 A4 Handprint painting

! 16 Week Road Closure, Coombe Hill !

The road closure will be part of a bigger scheme to widen the A38 and A4019, install new traffic signals, renew existing drainage, enhance pedestrian and cycle facilities and landscaping. Initial preparation includes site clearance ahead of the main construction phase, which will start in June 2025, for approximately 12 months.

Closure of the A4019 (**estimated for sixteen weeks, June - Oct**) from Coombe Hill junction to Knightsbridge Business Park will be fully closed. The A38 will remain open. Access will be available for affected homeowners during this period.

The upgrade to the A38/A4019 junction at Coombe Hill was part of the the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme, which gained £249M of funding in 2020 from UK Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), administered by Homes England.

Parish Council Meetings. Have your say.

The next Parish Council meetings will be Wednesday 9 April and Wednesday 14 May at St Catherine's Church, The Leigh, at 7.30pm – all welcome. Agendas etc can be found on theleighpc.org.uk

Dates for your diaries

6 April and 4 May - Guided walk of Tewkesbury Battlefield. 10am

Tewkesbury Battlefield Society walks last around 2 hours and are free, (donations welcome). Just turn up, dogs on leads welcome. Meet on the steps of the Abbey Lawn gate, midway along the car park in Gander Lane. (postcode GL20 5PG. What3words: informer.clings loaf) www.tewkesbury.org.uk.

12 April Quiz Night St Catherine's Church, The Leigh. 7.30pm start. £12 per team (up to 6 people). BYO drinks/nibbles. Profits to Maggie's Cheltenham and St Catherine's Church. Book your team via jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com

24 April A FREE talk, 'So Begins Your Next Gardening Adventure' 7.30pm. At Norton Village Hall. Everyone welcome. Followed by The Horticultural Society AGM - keen gardeners are welcome to join.

28th April Norton & The Leigh Historical Society. Norton Village Hall. 7.30pm

A grim poetical justice - Smallpox in Gloucester in 1896. Dr Toby Thacker is a lecturer at Cardiff University. Highly recommended. Entry £3.

2nd May The Annual Plant Sale 7 - 7.45pm, Norton Village Hall

If you blink you'll miss the 45 minute frenzy. Be there at 7pm sharp.

11 May 2025 Charity Sale 10am - 1pm Coombe Hill Farm Shop

100% of sales go to Cheltenham Cobalt Cancer Unit and Dementia UK

17 May Church Coffee Morning. 10am - 12noon. St Catherine's Church.

Homemade cakes by Carol and Kate.

19th May Norton & The Leigh Historical Society. Norton Village Hall. 7.30pm

Gloucester Film Makers. A compilation of footage of Gloucester 1920s - 1970s with John Greene and Mike Morris. Entry £3

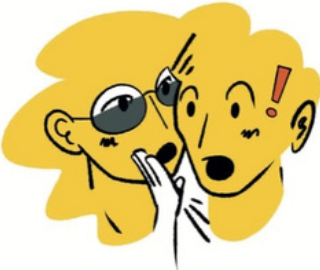
14 June The Leigh Village Fete & Dog Show 12pm - 3pm St Catherine's

Bric-A-Brac, Books, Tombola, Games, Lucky Dip, Plants, Produce, Raffle, Refreshments etc. Everyone welcome. Free Entry. All proceeds to St Catherine's Church, The Leigh and Sue Ryder, Leckhampton, Cheltenham.

9th August Annual Horticultural. Show Norton Village Hall

The full schedule of classes will be available in April. Show off your fruit, flowers and vegetables PLUS! Baking, photography, handicrafts. Please give it a go.

CHELTHENHAM OPEN STUDIOS
Cheltenham's best kept secret.
Help us let everyone in on it.



SAVE THE DATE
7-15 JUNE 2025

ORIGINAL ART
MADE HERE

cheltenhamopenstudios.org.uk

Art lovers! Open Studios, 7-15 June

A few artistic members of our community will be exhibiting their work during the Open Studios event, both in Cheltenham, and as a new addition, in The Leigh as well! Prepare to enjoy the work of our talented neighbours. More news soon. It is well worth a visit so save the dates!

Sweetpeas Doggie Deli Coombe Hill Farm Shop

Friday 18 April & Friday 2 and 11 May



AT COOMBE HILL

Coombe Hill Service Station

Open everyday, 6am - 10pm

Petrol, newspapers, basic groceries, frozen foods, alcohol, BBQ charcoal, firewood. Evri ParcelShop

Approved Car Buying Centre

Offers instant valuations, car collection service, and same-day payments. please contact Shaun Taylor on **07836 777268** or info@approvedcarbuyingcentre.co.uk

Coombe Workshop

Monday - Friday: 8am - 6pm

Saturday: Appointment Only

Highly qualified vehicle technicians.

Honest, trusted, friendly and skilled MOTs, services and repairs. Specialists in classic and performance vehicles, tailored to our customers' needs. **01242 896333**

info@coombeworkshop.co.uk

Coombe Hill Kitchen

Catering for all party and event needs. Hot or cold. Delivered dinner parties. Afternoon tea. Try before you buy.

Call Kate on **07971 064872** or email

kate@coombehillkitchen.co.uk

The Swan Inn

Tuesday - Saturday 12 - 10pm

Sunday 12 - 6pm

Monday - closed

Specials and discounts!

Tuesdays - Steak Night Special

Thursdays - Burger night Special AND

over 60's 25% discount. Loyalty cards.

Blue Light 10% off for NHS, emergency services and members of armed forces.

Coombe Hill Farm Shop

Thursday 10am - 2pm

With Cow Shed Garden & Antiques

Friday & Saturday 9am - 2pm

With Cow Shed Garden & Antiques

and The Baking Bird

Sunday 10am - 1pm

With Cow Shed Garden & Antiques and The Baking Bird

Farm Shop sells fresh fruit, vegetables and locally reared meat. Free-range eggs. Chiller/freezer selection. Baked goods.

Cow Shed Garden and Antiques sells a fascinating collection of decorative pieces, garden antiques and collector's items. A treasure trove of gift ideas.

The Baking Bird serves delicious homemade cakes, artisan coffees, speciality teas, hot chocolate (try a Bobby Dazzler!) and refreshing cold drinks.

Easter Simnel Cake

This Gary Rhodes recipe is guaranteed delicious! Jo R

225 g (8 oz) plain flour
1 teaspoon ground mixed spice
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
175 g (6 oz) butter
175 g (6 oz) light brown soft sugar
A pinch of salt. 3 eggs, beaten
1 tablespoon golden syrup, warmed
175 g (6 oz) sultanas and 175 g (6 oz) currants
100 g (4 oz) glacé cherries and mixed peel, chopped
2-3 tablespoons brandy
600 g (1 lb 5 oz) marzipan
1 tablespoon warmed apricot jam, strained. 1 egg, for glazing
20 cm (8 in) deep, round tin, greased and lined with greaseproof paper. Heat oven to 170°C/325°F/Gas Mark 3.



Cream together the butter and soft brown sugar until light and fluffy. Slowly add eggs and beat into the butter mix. Add the golden syrup, with sifted flour, dried spices and salt. Add all fruits and brandy. If the mixture is very thick, soften with milk. Spoon half the mix into tin. Smooth flat, making sure there are no air bubbles. Roll 200 g (7 oz) of the marzipan into a 20 cm (8 in) disc and place on top. Pour on and smooth the remaining cake mix.

For best results, wrap and tie brown paper around tin. Bake in the pre-heated oven for 1½-2 hours. After 1½ hours, check every 10 minutes by pressing in the centre; the cake will feel firm when it's ready. When the cake is done, remove from the oven and rest for 30 minutes. Turn out onto a wire rack.

Once absolutely cold, roll another 200 g (7 oz) of marzipan into a 20 cm (8 in) disc. Brush the cake with apricot jam. Place the marzipan disc on top. Brush with some beaten egg and colour under a pre-heated grill to a light golden brown.

The remaining 200 g (7 oz) of marzipan can now be shaped into eleven small balls (represents the 11 faithful disciples). Place the balls on a baking sheet, brush with egg and also glaze under the grill. Sit the balls on top and cake is ready.

The Leigh Village Fete

& Companion Dog Show

Saturday 14 June
12pm-3pm
St Catherine's Church

Bric-A-Brac, Books, Tombola, Games, Lucky Dip,
Plants, Produce, Raffle, Refreshments etc

Free Entry to Fete

All proceeds to St Catherine's Church, The Leigh
and Sue Ryder, Leckhampton

Keep in touch, stay informed

Keep informed via The Leigh Parish Council website theleighpc.org.uk, the village noticeboard, or contact the Parish directly on leighpc@hotmail.co.uk Better still attend the meetings or even volunteer to get involved.

Tewkesbury Borough Council - Planning Portal
To view any pending planning applications go to:
tewkesbury.gov.uk/services/planning

FixMyStreet

Use this website to report potholes, blocked drains, broken signs, manhole trip hazards etc.

Waste Wizard - How to recycle an item
[Waste Wizard gloucestershirerecycles.com](http://WasteWizard.gloucestershirerecycles.com)

Bin collection days

To find out when your bins are due for collection - just enter your postcode on this page:
tewkesbury.gov.uk/services/waste-and-recycling

The Leigh Facebook page- **Leigh Parish Community**

Church Services at St Catherine's

6th April, 6pm, Evening Prayer

17th April, 7pm, Maundy Thursday, an Agape Meal at 7pm, a simple meal to reflect the Last Supper.
Please contact h_cotton@hotmail.com

4th May, 6pm - Songs of Praise

18th May, 10.30am - Benefice Family Communion

EASTER SERVICES in the BENEFICE

19th April, Boddington Church, 7.30pm - Easter Eve, New Fire and Holy Communion Service at
20th April at Sandhurst Church 9.30a.m - Easter Day, Holy Communion Service.

The Leigh and Coombe Hill Newsletter

We hope this newsletter helps our growing community connect. Please contribute stories that might be of interest to other residents. Simply send in a good-quality photo and an outline of the story, and we'll do the rest!

To minimise our impact on the environment, please opt for a digital copy by email.

Otherwise, one of our volunteers will deliver a printed version to you. If you do not wish to receive the newsletter at all, either let your delivery person know or email Jo R.

The newsletter is bi-monthly and is produced, printed and delivered by a team of volunteers. Deadline for the June/July edition is **May 15th**. Email all communication to jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com