

The Leigh & Coombe Hill Newsletter

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News from Coombe Hill & The Leigh residents is welcome by email, deadline for next issue is November 19, 2025

The Horticultural Show, 2025

Despite the extremely dry conditions this year, we're delighted to record an increased number of competitors and exhibits. Again, The Leigh triumphed with Overall Winner: Jo R, but hot on her heels in 2nd place was Harriet R.

Mary C and Harriet R shared the Chairman's Rose Bowl for flowering arranging.

Thanks also to: Ken P, Pippa H, Katie H, Laura I, Martin R, Oliver H, Anne H, Dorothy H, Lucy C and Nicky W.

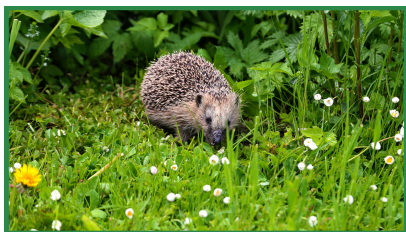
The Junior Section was well supported this year with excellent entries by Josie & Freddie I, Ivy & Ellie Walters, Thomas C and **Chester C** (Below) who won the under 4 years' Trophy for his A4 handprint painting of a carrot.

The Harry Wilks' Challenge Shield was won by Team Robson (Jo R, Harriet R, Nicky W and Chester C)

Thanks to all attending the Prize Giving and for bidding at the produce auction - we raised £116 for the Gloucester Food Bank. The 2026 show is Sat 8 August - Join in the fun and give it a go! **Horticultural Committee**



For the Love of Nature, Please Lend a Helping Hand!



Hedgehogs favour gardens as they are relatively safe from predators. Autumn is a crucial time to build fat reserves and find a safe, warm nest to hibernate. Here's how you can help.

1. Provide extra food and water. Feed in the early evening, until after the first frosts, as younger and underweight hogs may still be foraging.

- Food: Meaty wet cat or dog food (poultry or meat-based, not fish), or hedgehog food from wildlife suppliers.
- Do not give milk, it causes severe digestive problems. Fresh water in a shallow dish is best.

2. Create safe nesting spots

- Leave quiet, undisturbed areas of your garden with piles of logs, leaves and brush for natural nesting materials.
- Buy or build a hedgehog house, position it in a sheltered, dry corner, entrance facing away from wind and north.
- Do not disturb potential nest areas after mid-October.

3. Keep the garden hedgehog-friendly

- Avoid pesticides and slug pellets, they poison hedgehogs.
- Before lighting bonfires, move the pile to a new spot. A hedgehog may be nesting inside.

- Check long grass/undergrowth before you strim or mow.

4. Provide access into neighbouring gardens by cutting hedgehog highways (13x13cm holes) at the base of fences or walls - connectivity helps them find food and mates.



Further to the recent article about the successful installation of swift boxes around The Wharf, many Leigh parishioners have contacted the Parish Council to enquire whether The Leigh could also create permanent nesting sites for such migrating birds.

Could anyone wishing to host a swift box on their property or help with the installation please email jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com by the end of October so we can gauge the level of interest before going ahead.



The **Leave the Leaves** campaigns to avoid raking up leaves so they can decompose naturally. This practice provides crucial overwintering habitat for butterflies, moths, lady beetles, and queen bumblebees to name just a few. Leaf litter also enriches the soil with nutrients and reduces garden waste. Also, shredded leaves can be used as a natural mulch for flower beds, supporting soil health and providing cover for plants.



I have a rather old fashioned rain gauge reading in inches rather than mm - here is what it has recorded this Spring and Summer, 2025. I have compared these figures with the 30 year averages (Pershore, Met Office figures).

	The Leigh	30 year average
March	0.25	1.83
April	0.75	1.77
May	0.54	2.05
June	1.30	2.23
July	1.10	2.08
Aug	0.46	2.07

Totals 4.40 inches 12.07 inches

We are 7.67 inches short, by my reckoning, at the time of calculation, 28th August. **Oliver H**

Leaves can be shredded by a lawnmower and left to decompose on the lawn or gathered and placed around trees and in garden beds, where they act as a beneficial mulch.

A layer of leaves can help suppress weeds in garden beds. Decomposing leaves can also help maintain a more consistent and slightly warmer soil temperature throughout the winter.

How to Participate

Mow and Mulch: Use a lawnmower with a sharp blade to cut the leaves into smaller pieces, so they decompose faster.

Spread the Leaves: Rake leaves from your lawn and spread a thin layer over garden beds and around trees.

Create Leaf Piles: If you have excess leaves, pile them in a corner where they can naturally break down into compost or add to your compost bin.

Consider "Insect Hotels": Stack fallen branches and garden waste to create a habitat for overwintering invertebrates.



KIDS CORNER

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

Send to Jo for consideration at jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com



SLIMY POPCORN



1tbsp vegetable oil
75g popping corn
200g white chocolate
2tsp green food colouring
70g white chocolate buttons
1 tube black or dark chocolate writing icing



Line a baking tray with baking paper and set aside.



Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Once hot, add the popping corn and cover with a tight-fitting lid. Leave for 5 mins, shake the pan to prevent it from burning on the bottom. When the corn is popped. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.



Put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl with the green food colouring. Set the bowl over a pan of simmering water and stir until the chocolate has turned an even green colour.



Pour the melted chocolate over the popcorn in the pan and toss well to coat. Tip out onto the lined baking tray and spread out in an even layer. Leave for about 45 mins to set.



Lay the chocolate buttons flat and add a dot of writing icing on top of each one.



To serve, transfer the set popcorn to serving bowls and top with the chocolate eyes.

Thanks to the Tesco Real Food team.

Sparkle, No Bangs Party - Everyone Welcome!

Remember last year? We had so much fun that we're doing it again. This year it will be on Saturday 1 November in St Catherine's Churchyard, The Leigh from 5pm until 7pm. Free Admission and everyone is welcome. Hotdogs will be on sale. Hot chocolate, adult alcoholic punch, jumbo sparkers, marshmallows, glowsticks will be provided. Bring your own torch, chair and thermos mug (and your own drinks if you prefer)

For catering purposes, please drop a text to either Karen 07711 632256 or Hazel 01452 857180 with numbers of adults and children in your group.



Services and Events at St Catherine's

5 October, 3pm, Harvest Service and Smalls for All Collection

Smalls for All is a Charity dedicated to collecting new underwear for people in Africa and the UK who cannot afford them, emphasising the importance of dignity. This includes brand new pants for ladies, gents and children or gently worn bras. Anyone wishing to give but cannot make the Harvest service could kindly leave on the bier at the back of the church, before 5th October and they will be handed over at the service.

**SMALLS
FOR ALL**



www.smallsforall.org

19 Oct, 10.30am, Family Holy Communion

25 October, Harvest Meal and Quiz 7.30pm, £12. Pudding donations welcome. Book by 22nd Oct with Sue (07484347851) or Hazel (01452857180)

2 Nov, 6pm, Songs of Praise

8 Nov, Coffee Morning 10am - Noon. Homemade Cakes by Carol & Kate



Coombe Hill Book Club



The first meeting included introductions, favourite genres and recommendations. We discussed *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson - with a few questions to ponder: How would the story unfold? What does the 'lottery' mean? Which characters will become more prominent?

The next meet-up will take place at **The Baking Bird on Saturday 15th November at 11am.** Our read for the group is ***The Nightingale* by Kristen Hannah**, a historical novel set in Nazi-occupied France during WWII. Arrive early to order coffee and cake, and wrap up warm. If you'd like to bring books for our Book Swap, please do.

If you'd like to join us or for more information, please email Sara at 13saraviiall@gmail.com - everyone is welcome.



Fireworks at home? Please Note!

If you are planning to set off fireworks, as a courtesy, please let your neighbours know in good time in case extra arrangements need to be made for dogs, cats, horses and sheep! Thanks. Jo R

PARISH SERVICES

Coombe Hill Service Station

Open everyday, 6am - 10pm

Petrol, newspapers, groceries, alcohol, BBQ charcoal, firewood. Evri Parcel Shop

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. **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 Leigh Shed at GL19 4AF

Eggs, cake, fresh produce, preserves etc

8am - 10pm self-serve/contactless payment

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.



National Riding Club Champions, 2025

Huge congratulations to Esther B and Polly who were crowned National Showjumping 80cm Champions, out of 105 competitors, after an intense jump-off. Esther and Polly of The Leigh are members of the Malvern Hills Riding Club.

Seasons Greetings

It may seem a bit too early to talk about Christmas but if you would like us to print a greeting for your village friends and neighbours in the next newsletter, please be sure to send your message and donation by **Nov 19th**.

All you need to do is leave a charity donation (suggested amount £5) in an envelope labelled donation and your name, at Daniels Orchard (deadline 19 November) and include your message. Messages will be published in the December edition, in time for Christmas.



Alternatively, the village postbox will be hosted outside Little Holborn as usual. Postage dates are **7 - 14 December**.

Jane A and Jo R will be sorting post at Daniels Orchard but may need some help with deliveries. Please contact Jo R if you'd like to volunteer to be a delivery elf. Our chosen charity for both services will be James Hopkins Trust who work tirelessly to provide nursing respite care for Gloucestershire's life-limited and life-threatened young children.

Christmas Cards Charity Sale

Wednesday 15th October - 10.30 am - 6.00 pm
In aid of Colbalt Appeal Fund

Complimentary coffee and cake. Please come and bring your friends. If you are unable to come on the day, but would still like to buy some Cobalt cards, please phone 01452 731519 to arrange another day after 15th October to come over and choose from whatever stock is left.



The Dovecote,
Sandhurst Lane,
Sandhurst, GL2 9NR
(go past church and follow the signs)



Easy Crab Apple Cider Vinegar Recipe

Delicious in salad dressings and an excellent, natural household cleaner. Apple cider vinegar also has many health benefits. These may include: Lowering blood sugar, lowering cholesterol, calms acid reflux, aids in weight loss, boosts the immune system, helps prevent cell damage, it's also antimicrobial and antifungal.

For this simple recipe you will need...

- Apple scraps or whole, chopped crab apples
- Pure honey, preferably local
- Spring or filtered water
- Large mason jar. Muslin or coffee filter paper & string
- Bottles to store the finished vinegar in

Fill a clean 1 gallon jar $\frac{3}{4}$ full with washed and chopped crab apples or any apple scraps. Add about 1-2 tablespoons of honey. Pour in the water until almost full and stir really well. Cover and tie with muslin or a coffee filter paper and store out of sunlight.

Stir well every day for two weeks as it ferments. Strain the liquid then pour it into the clean jar. Cover again, wrap a towel around it and leave it for about four weeks. Now taste! If it is nice and vinegary and it's no longer fermenting, then you can pop it into clean storage bottles, ready to enjoy. If not, just leave it for another week or two. **Karen, Cyder Press Farm**

Norton & The Leigh Historical Society

Monday 27th October Pursuit to Mons

Phil Pembridge Local historian Phil retraces his grandfather's terrifying horseback journey during WW1

Monday 24th November - A Gloucestershire Christmas

John Putley Christmas customs in Gloucestershire's past

Meetings are in the Committee Room of Norton Village Hall. Doors open at 7.15pm, talks start at 7.30pm prompt. Entry £3. All welcome. Please bring your friends, we need your support!

Parish Council - Dates & New Contact Info

Please note the Parish Website has been changed to **leighparishcouncil.gov.uk** - to reflect that the Council is a local government tier. The new email address is **clerk@leighparishcouncil.gov.uk**

With the growing number of local planning applications, transport improvements etc you may want to attend a meeting and have your say. The next FULL Parish Council meeting is **Wednesday 12 November, 7.30pm** at St Catherine's Church, The Leigh. However, should a additional meeting be necessary for planning issues, 8 October has been reserved.

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 October/November edition is **Nov 19th**. Email all communication to **jorobsonmailbox@gmail.com**