# Poughill Parish Newsletter



## Issue No 75

December 2025 - February 2026

Next Newsletter March 2026

**www.middevonparish.co.uk/poughill/parish-council**

## Note from the Editor

Everyone's thoughts are now turning to Christmas as we move towards winter. The village is going to look fabulous again this year thanks to all the villagers who have volunteered to take part in the Living Advent Calendar. Look out for the map on the Noticeboard and social media so that you don't miss any!

The now traditional Carol Service, followed by festive refreshments in the village hall will be taking place on 19th December - hopefully I'll see you all there!

Karen Wellerd k.wellerd@poughillparishcouncil.org.uk

**Next Issue - Editorial Copy Deadline: Monday 16th February 2026**

If you have a Facebook account, and would like to join the group, search for Poughill Village, Mid Devon to find us. Anyone can post questions, news, event details, minutes and notices of interest for the village of Poughill, Mid Devon.

## Advertising and Subscriptions

The Poughill Newsletter is produced four times each year:
March, June, September and December.

Advertising rates are £6.00 an issue or £15.00 for the year.

**For Annual Postal Subscription service at £8.00, including postage, contact:**
**Karen Wellerd** k.wellerd@poughillparishcouncil.org.uk

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# Poughill Parish Council

Full minutes are displayed on the Noticeboard and on the website https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/poughill/parish-council/

**September 2025**

**Finance** – The Current Account balance at 11/08/2025 was £4,300.34, plus £1,680.86 in the Instant Access Savings Account. The purchase of a further 200 crocus bulbs for the churchyard at a cost of approximately £30 was approved.

**Planning** – *New applications* - None. *Determined applications* - (1) Ref: 25/00904/LBC Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the installation of a Tesla battery and gateway to the rear elevation of the house and connection to existing fuse box. Location: Mill Farm House, Poughill. *Granted*. (2) Ref: 25/00903/HOUSE Proposal: Installation of ground mounted 14 solar panels. Location: Mill Farm House, Poughill. *Granted*. (3) Ref: 25/00906/HOUSE - 3 The Glebe, Erection of first floor extension. *Granted*.

**District Councillor Report -** Business Information Point are offering farmers in Mid Devon expert, tailored advice on a wide range of areas to help strengthen their farm business for the future. https://businessinfopoint.co.uk/agri-innovation-support/

**November 2025**

**Finance** - The Current Account balance at 30.10.25 was £3660.53, plus £1682.62 in the Instant Access Savings Account. The draft budget for 2026/27 was discussed. The quote for addressing the issues raised in the Churchyard Quinquennial Survey was approved at a cost of £320. Unfortunately the S106 funding pot for Cheriton Fitzpaine and surrounding villages has now been allocated to other projects. The clerk has registered improvements to Poughill's outdoor spaces as a project for consideration when future funding becomes available. In the meantime, the Clerk will obtain quotes for a bench to replace the broken bench in the little garden at the West end of the village hall.

**Streetlight No. 6 Consultation** - The consultation paper was approved and will be distributed to all households with the next Newsletter.

**Next Meeting – 8th January 2026 at 7.30pm** in the Village Hall.



**POLICE CONTACT NUMBER**
**Non-Emergency – 101**
**Emergency - 999**
**NPS-MidDevon@devonandcornwall.police.uk**

*Your Local Officers are;*
*PC Dan Armitage, PC Emily Ravenscroft and PCSO Lisa McMillan*

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### BESPOKE GROUP TOURS 2026

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# COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

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## POUGHILL VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall is run by volunteers who do this because they care, and because it's fun to do. We will soon be reduced to a team of 4, so we are in desperate need of new volunteers to join our dedicated team, to help run events and keep the Village Hall open. If you can't make a regular commitment, then one-off offers of help are equally appreciated. To find out more please email enquiries@poughillvillage.com with your details. Nothing lost, and much to gain!

# **Village Hall Report** - *Julian Wild*

After a right Shepherd's Warning of a sky this morning, the wind and rain have set in to strip away the last colourful leaves and, to judge by the long-range forecast, a very wet November lies ahead. Time to settle in the warm and contemplate the season past, as viewed from the Village Hall.

Things are ticking over with the larger events interspersed with Coffee Mornings and Yoga sessions.

The Monthly Coffee Mornings, run by The Church over the Summer, have now gone back to being organised by Sharon Collingwood for the next few months. These events happen on the first Wednesday of each month from 10.30 to 11.30 with proceeds going to the Hall. Plenty of Coffee, Tea, Cake. and Company to be had.

Laura Galvin is running a weekly Yoga class each Wednesday evening at 7.15 in the Hall at £7 a session or £60 for 10. All takings for this are most generously donated to The Hall and The Church. If you're interested, why not drop in and have a chat with Laura.

On the events front, September saw a grand Caribbean night with exotic foodstuffs, rum punch, and themed decorations. Flags of all the Caribbean Islands are still brightly decorating the Hall. Greatly enjoyed by those who attended (especially those who sampled the punch)!

In October the annual Quiz took place with questions set, and wittily posed, by that master of all Quizmasters Francis Wellerd. Generally agreed to be the most challenging one yet, the evening was a great success and thoroughly appreciated by all. Adam Clarke's famous Pasties were better than ever, and a quite extraordinary number of bottles of Red Wine were consumed. The general feeling of all present was that The Quiz is the big night of the year - the one people really look forward to. It was a delight to see so many villagers simply enjoying each other's company.

In November, but after the deadline for this report, The Hall will once again become the Leaky Roof Pub for the night with a well-stocked bar, pool, darts and table games. Adam, having recently obtained a couple of fryers, will be adding a Fish 'n' Chips element to the night - with takeaways too. I'll let you know how it goes.

Friday December 19th is the Carol Service in the Church, an evening when that lovely building with all its weight of history, decorated and lit, becomes very special, even for the sceptics among us. For afters there will be mulled wine, mince pies, and a chance to warm up in The Hall. There will also be a Christmas Raffle in aid of the Church - watch out for tickets.

Into 2026 can I flag up our Annual General Meeting, open to all, at 7.30 on Tuesday January 27th. I do so particularly because The Committee needs refreshing from time to time (parts wear out as with any machine) and we are currently recruiting. It takes a lot of time and effort for volunteers to keep a community hub like the Hall going, both in terms of activities for the Village, and maintaining the structure and facilities. Help, either as a Committee Member, or as a volunteer to assist with events and projects is greatly welcomed. If you think you might be interested, contact enquiries@poughillvillagehall.com with your details.

Hopefully see you at something in the Hall during 2026 but, for now, Compliments of the Season to you all!

St Michael and all Angels



# Christmas Hamper Raffle

**To be drawn after the 6pm Carol Service on Friday 19th December during refreshments in the Village Hall.**

**Raffle tickets available at the Pub Night Fish & Chips on Friday 28th Nov, after the Carol Service or contact stmichaelandaa@gmail.com**

## St. Michael & All Angels

**Carol Service** December 19th at 6pm followed by refreshments in the Village Hall. This year the proceeds from the Christmas Hamper raffle are being donated to the Church. Tickets are available at the Pub Night Fish 'n' Chips on Friday 28th November, after the Carol Service or contact stmichaelandaa@gmail.com, and will be drawn during the refreshments on 19th December.

**Christmas Eve** celebration (communion) service December 24th 9pm.

Poughill church services are usually held on the third Sunday of the month at 9:30am. Please note there will be no normal third Sunday service in December due to the Christmas calendar.

The Cross Country Magazine has now gone digital. It gives information, support and advertisements to members of the local group of parishes and is to be called "Crediton Rural Ministry Hub Post". It is available by email from our Team Vicar, Janet May. If you would like a copy emailed to you, please contact her and ask to be included in the email list.

Revd Janet May
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# **Walking the Walk (3) - Ups and Downs** - *Polly Colthorpe*

Modelling for the fashion and design students at the local art college wasn't a popular job because, the other girls at the agency told me, everybody fainted sooner or later. I'd never fainted in my life so I was more than a little apprehensive as I set forth to catch the bus that first morning. It was winter and the weather was miserable so, over an outfit on which I had expended much anxious thought, I was wearing a (very fashionable) 3/4 length rabbit fur coat to keep out the cold. The college wasn't far from the bus stop and, after a couple of false starts, I found the right studio and introduced myself to the tutor in charge. 'Oh yes,' she purred happily, ' Do keep the coat on - such an interesting texture for the young people to draw,' and, having posed me to her satisfaction, she pushed a chair up close, said 'Sit down as soon as you feel faint,' and hurried off to fetch a glass of water. I got very hot in my rabbit fur coat but I didn't faint and in fact that day proved to be the first of many.

The college had booked Bristol's Arnolfini Gallery for the annual diploma show, the painting 'The Marriage of the Arnolfini' (Jan van Eyck 1434) having been given as a resource for the students to reference in the clothes they designed and made for their submissions. The gallery is now down on the Quay in much more spacious premises but when it was first established (in 1961) it was over a business on the Triangle at the top of Park Street and it was a lot smaller. Our runway was a narrow strip of carpet with chairs crowding in on both sides and space backstage was limited, not to say cramped. In it, as well as five rails of clothes, there were five models, five dressers and five hair stylists, all with their own kit and all getting under each others' feet, while out front the feet and legs of the audience threatened every step we took, despite repeated pleas from the commère.

There were a lot of changes in that show and the short runway didn't give us much time so, to keep the pot boiling, we had to change quickly. Some of the student creations, however, were not designed for speed. Charming in palest pink silk chiffon, a Hamlet-style shirt I wore with a long black taffeta skirt had the difficult combination of wrist-to-elbow rouleau loops and fabric-covered buttons and there were more of the same (quite a lot more of the same) down the back. Three dressers wrought mightily with those loops and buttons but, before they'd finished, the next girl out, with an eye to the gap in the curtains, was hissing urgently 'Tish has already been down twice. Will you be ready if I go now?' and she went.

Miraculously we got through all the changes without anyone missing their turn or falling over the feet and legs and arrived, breathless but suitably joyful, at the bridal scene - always a popular way of closing a show. As 'friend of the bride' I should have been wearing a primrose outfit, chosen to blend with the cream and old lace of the wedding dress, but Primrose had gone awol - withdrawn because its student creator hadn't finished it as it turned out - so my quick-witted dresser had laid out my own street clothes to make up the numbers. I've often wondered whether anyone recognised C.& A.'s flamingo pink, military-cut trouser suit from several seasons earlier; having gone a tad baggy about the knee in the meantime, its trousers had been inexpertly abbreviated to knee breeches, so perhaps nobody did.

At the other extreme was the show we did at I.C.I. Severnside for the annual open day, with staff and families invited and tea afterwards. Not perhaps at first sight the most obvious venue for a fashion show, I.C.I. had been among the early developers of man-made fibres ('Crimplene' in the 1950s) and had bought British Nylon Spinners in 1964 so somebody whose voice mattered had chosen a fashion show as an entertaining way to demonstrate what could be done with some of their yarns.

I'd never been inside Severnside's gates before and the site was enormous. In fact, every aspect of the I.C.I. show was enormous. The hall was enormous; the catwalk was enormous - above the heads of the (enormous) audience, it was wide enough for three or even four of us to walk abreast and felt about a mile long when you were out there by yourself. The one thing which wasn't enormous was the collection.

Assembling it can't have been easy because the clothes came from a variety of sources, among them more than one Parisian fashion house. There was a little black dress, rumoured to be by Dior (originator of the l.b.d.) and cunningly devised so that it could be worn short as a cocktail frock or long as an evening gown. Don't ask me how the engineering worked but there was an extra tier concealed within which somehow let down like a venetian blind. Fittings came to a standstill while everyone had a closer look and, of course, everyone wanted to wear it. Madame decreed that blond Lizzie should be the lucky one and there was no arguing with that because she looked stunning in it. I was lucky enough to wear a tremendously chic safari suit by one of the other French houses - the film of Born Free* was winning awards and filling cinemas everywhere just then so the look was top of the fashion pops and the song (sung by Matt Monro) won an Oscar.

As it happened, I met the little black dress again at a fitting for a show in Oxford later that season. By then the design was being produced for the market by a select high street chain which had a reputation for acquiring designs by Dior so the rumour circulating at Severnside may well have been true. Whatever its origins, there was the l.b.d., now shorn of its extra tier and minus a few inches of hemline as well - which made it just the right length for me and, this time around, I did get the chance to model it.

Unusually, neither the clothes in the Arnolfini show nor those at I.C.I. Severnside were for sale - the first because they were made to showcase what the students had learned and would ultimately be part of the process which decided their final exam results; the second because they were borrowed for the occasion from other producers working with I.C.I.-made materials. We did something similar for International Woolmark, all the clothes being made from wool but by different designers and producers. That show took place at the Colston Hall and afterwards one of the other models offered me a lift home. Her boyfriend turned up to collect her driving his brother's silver Rolls Royce and, as Mel and I had to struggle through crowds of homeward-streaming Bristolians to reach it, we may have inadvertently endorsed a myth or two about the model's lifestyle!

**Book by Joy Adamson, published 1960; film directed by James Hill released 1966 with screenplay by (blacklisted) writer Lester Cole under the pseudonym Gerald L.C.Copley*.

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# **The Perceived Evidence of Onbserved Species Numbers Vs Reality -** *Derryck Morton*

When I was a boy, I decided to collect butterflies in the Victorian way, with net, gassing jar and pins. I loved butterflies and so disliked the killing process but having 'one of each' which I could look at at any time, study their anatomy and enjoy their colours, seemed irresistible; and after all, how many different butterflies were there in England? 20 maybe? It wasn't going to be a killing spree that would last for ever. I remember successfully pinning Large White, Small White, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral and a Peacock. I even had a Dot Moth, Silver Y Moth and a Six-spotted Burnet; I was doing well – just a few to go then. Oh, the innocence of youth.

It is unlikely that any of us will see all 59 species of British butterfly in our lifetimes. I have seen perhaps 38 and photographed 21; and that is when looking for them. Moths, on the other hand, are far trickier. They are mostly nocturnal or crepuscular, with only a few being daytime fliers. Also, there are around 2500 species of moth in the UK which is daunting. Then there are the migrant butterflies and moths which visit the British Isles but do not stay or survive the winter and innumerable variants of some

I went on to have ambitious thoughts of catching and mounting one of every British species of insect. But after a lifetime of admiring, studying and observing arthropods (invertebrates that possess an exoskeleton with a cuticle made of chitin, a segmented body and paired jointed appendages), I am happy to not reinvent the wheel and so leave the collecting of physical specimens to the research centres and type-specimen halls of our great museums. Besides, casual collecting from the wild has a negative consequential impact on species numbers and is unacceptable.

The sustainable answer came to me when I started photography in my teens. I began collecting butterfly photographs! Anyone can throw a net over an insect but to focus, compose and capture in good light, a photographic image of a free-living animal, that is pleasing and informative, is far more difficult. I now can pursue my young dream of finding and securing additions to my collection, one of every UK species of insect, and doing no harm in the process. Creeping up on an unidentified insect in long grass, woodland verges and bushes has become my pastime of joy. Capturing the perfect image is only half the job; then comes the identification. Books are my go-to source, the internet and sometimes Google Lens have their place, although the task is not easy as the differences can be subtly slight. On-line clubs and associations are another font of knowledge and expertise which help in differentiating similar species.

Globally, well over one million species of insect have been described to date with many more to discover. There are over 24,000 species in Britain: perhaps 4,000 species of beetle, around 7,000 flies, 6,700 native Hymenoptera (bees, wasps and ants), 1700 of Hemiptera (a diverse group with piercing-sucking mouthparts), 57 native species of dragonfly and damselfly, 30 of Grasshoppers and Crickets, 50 species of Mayflies, 5 of Earwigs, and so on. This is where my boyhood knowledge was lacking. The ratio of observed species against the actual number of species is unknown to the uninformed and an assumption is made based on our own experiences which is reinforced with further fragmentary observations. This confirmation bias leads us to believe our own assumptions, that we know something for sure, even though we are wrong.

It isn't always our fault that estimates of one thing or another are at variance with reality. For instance, the fossil record provides a view back in time of extinct life on Earth; however, fossilisation is rare and the chance discovery of a chance preservation is not an holistic representation of timepoint biota. It is estimated that the fossil record contains about 0.1% of all species. I have a feeling that even this figure is far too high.

I will never achieve my objective in my photographic campaign, but that doesn't matter; knowing that there is an almost unending supply of insect challenges makes the journey more interesting. Every time I see a new specimen, the excitement floods in and the game is afoot. Thank goodness my boyhood comprehension of an achievable goal is wrong; and in the words of Darwin, "endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved". Now he was a wise man.

# YOGA CLASS

## Poughill Village Hall



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Proceeds to the Village Hall and Church

**More Info:**

satyayogatruth@gmail.com

## Pyncombe Poughill Educational Foundation

The objects of the Foundation are to promote the education (including social and physical training) of people resident in Poughill parish under the age of twenty-five years, and in need of financial assistance.

Applications are dealt with sympathetically and in the strictest confidence. The charity is run by seven trustees who meet three times a year. The date of the meeting is advertised on the village noticeboard and on the village website. Grant applications are welcomed from anyone meeting the criteria of the charity. The amount awarded is decided by the Trustees – so please supply as much information as possible. It is possible to apply for more than one grant.

Application forms are available at the back of the Church. The next deadline for receipt of applications is **9th February 2026**.

If you have any queries please contact Helen Morton (Secretary) 866038.

## Yoga - Wednesdays, 7.15pm - 8.45pm, Village Hall

Yoga with Yoga Teacher Laura Galvin. Bring your own mat and wear comfy clothes. £7 per session or £60 for 10 sessions. Proceeds to the Village Hall and Church. For more information email satyayogatruth@gmail.com.

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# **Tales from the Old Bill : 10** - *Simon Gibbons*

It was at Seaton that I was to deal with my first dead body. Sadly, it was to be the first of a countless number of others that were to follow. True to tradition the 'old boys' laid in the groundwork with their tales over the morning break. Several years before my arrival there had been the case of the missing vicar. At least I think it was vicar, he was certainly something to do with the local church. It matters not. What does matter is that he was an extremely corpulent man and fond of walking two small dogs on the 'Undercliffs' that ran between us and Lyme Regis, about ten miles to the east. This was an extremely broken and fissured bit of the coast caused by colossal landslips at the end of the last century.

One winter the dogs came back but he didn't. An extensive search was mounted for him but to no avail, which was hardly surprising given the terrain. Several months passed and time moved to a hot summer when two hikers came into the station. They had been walking the Undercliffs, and led by an overpowering smell of death and decay had discovered what they had presumed to be a very dead horse at the bottom of an extremely sheer fissure. Apparently, there were looks all round before all the old boys turned out after first arming themselves with industrial cans of disinfectant and extra strong mints. The latter as I was to discover was the one essential one always carried on such occasions.

After tramping a few miles with the hikers as guides they located the place, and yes indeed it was the missing man, or at least what was left of him. They drew lots as to just who was going to have the unenviable task of climbing down into the defile and trying to get a tarpaulin under the remains. It seemed it fell to one PC Ken Horne who described it in detail whilst launching into his second doughnut. Having got most of the remains into the tarp as best he could it was hauled up to the top on ropes. They then had to figure out how to shift what was basically fifteen stone of gelatinous mass the few miles back to the nearest road where a hearse could get to. With some ingenuity they constructed a carrying device with the materials at hand by lacing the tarp into a roll and sliding a willowy sapling through it. With this they made their way over the extremely broken terrain to the rendezvous point.

In general, it worked with a couple of blokes at each end but of course when they went downhill the remains of the poor man tipped over the carriers at the front and the reverse when they went up hill. Very soon this turned into a sort of game with carriers at either end holding their end as high as possible so as to incur the least spillage, whilst cursing their 'unsporting' colleagues on the downward end. By the time they got to the top there wasn't really that much left of him and the poor officers stank so badly from the fallout that no one would come near them for days.

As a little aside they added of course that on the plus side, you could still put a claim in for handling very decomposed bodies.

Apparently, it amounted to a pound or two.

# *Pennymoor Singaround*

**Song and Music Sessions**

**Song Sessions**:
1st Thursday – noon The London Inn, Morchard Bishop,
Contact: Jon 07840 524318
3rd Thursday 7.30pm The London Inn, Morchard Bishop, Contact: Jon 07840 524318

**Music Session**:
Last Sunday 12 noon Half Moon Inn, Cheriton Fitzpaine,
Contact Claire 01884 860023

Visit Facebook: Pennymoor Singaround
To confirm updated venues or contact:
Biddy: 01271 373305 biddy.mallabone@outlook.com
Jon: 07840 524318 – jon_shapley@hotmail.com

**Also run by Pennymoor members:**

1st Sunday 8.00pm The Devonshire Inn, Sticklepath
Contact: Derek 01837 840316

1st Tuesday 8.00pm The Lamb, Sandford, Nr. Crediton
Contact: Hazel or Paul 01363 776275

Last Tuesday 8.00pm The New Inn, Coleford
Contact: Dave 01363 84914

4th Wednesday – 8.00pm Stoke Canon Inn, Nr. Exeter
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# **Dream of the Menin Gate** - *Simon Gibbons (11/11/2018)*

They are all meticulously marshalled
No need for 'dressing' here
In lines as straight as a bayonet blade,
They have stood for a hundred years.

And not one man has fallen out
And not one move they've made
For the fifty-four thousand,
Eight hundred and ninety-six
Are still upright on parade.

So step up the blazing Sergeant Major
All slashed peak, crease and dash
His campaign medals burnished brightly
Over the sideways scarlet sash.

And across that mighty multitude
He roars out "Parade…..Parade, shun."
And all those pairs of mud mired boots
Crash down like they were one.

And every ear is straining hard
Till at last like an Angel's kiss
Comes that final barked command…..

"Parade….Parade… DISMISSED."

And every squad and every line
Swings smartly to the call
And every man makes his right turn
And marches three paces off that wall.

The kitbags are stuffed and hoisted high
The last Woodbine makes the round
And fifty-four thousand,
Eight hundred and ninety-six
Of the Empires son's
At last, are homeward bound.

*There are 54,896 names engraved of the walls of the Menin Gate, of the men who simply disappeared in the carnage and were never found. (Different sources give slightly different numbers). It seemed to me that the lines of meticulously recorded names are like soldiers on parade.*
*'Dressing' is a parade ground procedure whereby the troops equally distance themselves by raising the right arm and touching the shoulder of the man next to him.*
*A 'slashed' cap peak is one that has been altered so as to have a marked downward slant over the eyes.*
*When a parade is dismissed, all turn to the right and march three paces before breaking up to go their separate ways.*

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The Poughill Village Hall 100 Club is a great way for you to support the Village Hall with the added bonus of the chance of winning a cash prize every month! Here's how it works…

Simply complete and sign a membership form and return it with your payment to the address at the bottom of the form.

This buys you one or more membership numbers which will be entered into the monthly prize draw. Each number costs just £1 per month. Please note all participants must be age 16 or over.

The monthly draw will take place at the Poughill Village Hall Committee meeting (usually the first Tuesday of the month).

The total prize money will be 50% of the membership fee taken that month. The remaining 50% goes to the Village Hall. The more numbers we sell, the higher the cash prizes.

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