Poughill Parish Newsletter



Issue No 72

March 2024 - May 2025

Next Newsletter June 2025

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

Note from the Editor

Apologies for the Newsletter being a little later than usual, the copy deadline crept up on me unnoticed. I must have been distracted by all the beautiful Spring flowers that are starting to come into bloom!

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 'living advent calendar' this year, the village looked fab-u-lous as usual!

Karen Wellerd k.wellerd@gmail.com

Next Issue - Editorial Copy Deadline: Monday 19th May 2025

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@gmail.com

Poughill Parish Council Contact Information

Councillors	**Contact**
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Polly Colthorpe	pcolthorpe@middevon.gov.uk
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MDDC Way Ward	Polly Colthorpe pcolthorpe@middevon.gov.uk
County Councillor	Margaret Squires
Parish Council email	poughillparishclerk@gmail.com

Poughill Parish Council

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

January 2025

Finance – The Current Account balance at 02/01/2025 is £3,031.90, plus £1,67101 in the Instant Access Savings Account. The 2025/26 Budget was approved; the Precept was set at £3,547.00. A grant of £100.00 to the Poughill Village Hall Trust was approved to help with hall redecorating costs.

Correspondence - Poughill speed limits and signs – 'Please drive carefully' signs were preferred to '20 is plenty'. Clerk to obtain quotes for approval at next meeting.

Potential enforcement issue at field on road between Poughill Village Cross and Crediton Cross – No reply from the Enforcement Officer.

Next Meeting – 6th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

St. Michael & All Angels

Considering the Future of St. Michael and All Angels

Following the questionnaire sent out to houses of the parish, a meeting is to be held in church on **Wednesday 19th March at 7:30pm** where villagers can hear about, comment on and have questions answered regarding the church building in Poughill. If you would like to be involved in ensuring our parish church stays open, please mark this date in your diary. You can also email to stmichaelandaa@gmail.com or write and leave your communication in the post box in the church. We would appreciate your support.

Poughill church services are usually held on the third Sunday of the month at 9:30am.

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
Team Vicar Designate
North Creedy and Crediton Ministry Hub
Tel: 01363 779363
Email: janetmay69@gmail.com



POLICE CONTACT NUMBER
General Enquiries – 101
Crediton@dc_police.uk

Your Local Officers are;
PCSO Nikki Payne, PCSO Lisa McMillan, PC Neil Minehan and PC Dan Armitage

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Tales from the Old Bill : 8 - *Simon Gibbons*

As part of my ongoing training I was, from time to time, sent down to the Criminal courts simply to observe the goings on. The more I saw of the aforementioned "going ons" the more amazed I was that anybody got convicted of anything. Even the most simple case could be talked into so many knots, both legal and make believe, by the "Learned Gentlemen" that to apply the old "guilty beyond all reasonable doubt" maxim seemed next to nigh impossible.

To extend my education, one afternoon I was moved sideways into the Civil courts to see the difference between the two. Sadly I found none and both seemed equally inept at dispensing anything that remotely resembled justice. The case was one of unpaid maintenance money amounting to a few thousand pounds. (In those days it was a lot of money). The offender, who I met in the cells under the court, was a thin aged man in ragged clothes and plimsolls who had been found on a semi-derelict boat somewhere in Plymouth sound.

I duly led him up the steps and into the box and sat next to him as the case was dealt with. Having confirmed who he was he was asked why he hadn't paid the money to his ex wife for several years. He explained that following his divorce he had had a complete breakdown and had not worked since. Throughout that time he had been living on government benefit. Any money that he had possessed had all gone over to his wife on the initial divorce settlement.

It was put to him that if this was the case how was it that he was living on board a yacht. He agreed it sounded very grand but the boat in question was eighteen feet long, of wooden construction and been given to him by a friend as a cheaper alternative to having to pay for it to be chain sawed apart as it was so derelict. Having lost his home he had literally nowhere else to go so was obliged to live on it, mooring it up on various muddy inlets where no mooring fees were due. He had only recently been to see his ex-wife to ask her for money to keep the boat (and himself) afloat. He had located her cohabiting with a well-known city banker in a Georgian house with a long gravel drive sporting a couple of Mercedes. This being the case he was very puzzled how it should be that he was still expected to be paying her the hefty maintenance decreed by the court, and asked if the matter could perhaps be reconsidered.

He was told it couldn't and with the thudding of the gabble was sentenced to four months imprisonment. As he was still standing on his feet with the shock of it he was reminded that as these were civil proceedings and not criminal, the amount due would still be payable on his release. He was in tears when I took him back down and wanted to know what was going to happen to his boat. That I couldn't tell him and so I did the only thing I could and made us both a cup of tea, whilst I mulled over just what on earth was going on in the Great British Judicial system I'd always been brought up to believe in.

Supporting Loved Ones through Mental Health Challenges - *Janet Akins*

Watching a loved one grapple with mental illness can be a distressing and confusing time; when fear of doing or saying the wrong thing, or of making the situation worse, can render us unable to act. The temptation to play down the severity, to try to pull them out of it by the sheer force of your positivity, is compelling. Parenting a child with mental health issues adds an extra layer of guilt and can leave you questioning what you have done wrong. Wanting to avoid these uncomfortable feelings can lead to minimising your loved one's struggles and refusing to see the reality of their illness. None of this helps them, or you, and brushing their emotions aside can leave them feeling diminished and further isolated. Many factors lead to mental health challenges, including social, environmental, genetic and biological, so focusing on what needs to be done now, is more helpful than seeking blame.

The first step in supporting someone with their mental health is to meet them 'where they are' rather than trying to drag them where you wish they were. If they are anxious or depressed acknowledge their feelings and how difficult this must be for them. Allow them the time and space to just be, as they are, without any pressure to cheer-up, look on the bright side, or count their blessings. Chances are, they are feeling guilty about worrying everyone too, and showing you are a safe person they can express their true selves to, will alleviate the guilt that could otherwise fuel their negative thought processes. Sometimes just sitting silently beside them in their moments of anguish is enough.

The second step could include practical help, for example: offering a lift to medical appointments, helping to complete medical forms, writing down questions they want to ask when they get to the appointment etc. These things can be overwhelming for a person living with mental health challenges. The key is to listen to what they say they need. Being empowered to make your own choices, and indeed mistakes, is all part of the recovery process. Their path may not look like you hoped or expected, but it is theirs to choose and take.

Every rule does have its exceptions, and if you believe your loved one is at risk of serious harm there are specific actions you can take, for example: calling their GP, ringing 999 for an ambulance if the risk is immediate, or contacting the mental health crisis team (known as the Home Treatment Team (HTT) here in Mid Devon), either via their direct number if you have been given it, or via 111 if not.

The third step is to consider your own wellbeing. Taking care of others can be emotionally draining, and if you do not take care of yourself, not only is your health impacted, but you may not be able to continue supporting others. Set boundaries on the level of help you can give and share the load where you can. There are several organisations, both local and national, who support family members or carers. I have included a few below:

Devon Carers www.devoncarers.org.uk 03456 434 435

SANE www.sane.org.uk/support 0300 304 7000

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk 0808 802 5544

Bipolar UK www.bipolaruk.org 0333 323 3880

Please let me know if there are other organisations you think may be helpful and I will share them on the village website.

If there are any specific mental health issues you would like to see me write about in future editions, please contact me on openworldtherapy@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Janet 😺



Pennymoor Singaround

Song and Music Sessions

Song Sessions: 1st Thursday – 12 noon The London Inn, Morchard Bishop, Nr. Crediton
Contact: Jon 07840 524318
3rd Wednesday 7.30pm The Lamb, Sandford, Nr. Crediton
Contact: Jon 07840 524318
Iusic Session: Last Sunday 12 noon Half Moon Inn, Cheritor Fitzpaine, Contact Claire 01884860023

Visit Facebook: Pennymoor Singaround
To confirm updated venues or contact:
Biddy: 01271 373305 biddy.mallabone@outlook.com
Jon: 01363 83740 – jon_shapley@hotmail.com

Also run by Pennymoor members:

1st Sunday 8.00pm The Devonshire Inn, Sticklepath
Contact: Derek 01837840316

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 – 8.30pm Stoke Canon Inn, Nr. Exeter
Contact: Paul and Alison 07709324836



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 June 2025**.

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

Campaign Tales from the (Devon) Hills 4 - Who Does What - *Polly Colthorpe*

So you've been elected! Much to your own surprise you are now the elected member for Muddling South. 'Delighted', said the Association's lady chairman to the press; 'Gobsmacked!' privately remarked the Deputy Chairman Political to his wife. You get home at 4.30 a.m., treat yourself to a celebratory glass and fall asleep in front of the Rayburn with the dog on your lap and the events of the last few hours going round and round in your head. Some time later you wake up with pins and needles and a deep sense of unease - it has just dawned on you that you have absolutely no idea what you have let yourself in for!

Thus far it's all been plain sailing – the party held a 'Getting to Know You' session at which the process was explained, you were taken through the election timetable and the nomination papers ('What's an assentor?') and a copy of the party's 'Notes for Candidates' was given you. The following week you and several other new candidates were introduced to the local M.P. and photos were taken so that leaflets could be produced. A fortnight after that, in a car park 'somewhere in England', half a dozen or so heavy boxes were transferred from the boot of the Deputy Chairman Political's car to yours. There was also an envelope with maps showing the (approximate) boundaries of Muddling South and canvass cards listing by parish, street and road number the (approximate) political colours of your ward's electorate. Armed with these you had walked the village streets and toured the farms, delivering leaflets, chatting to residents and keeping an eye on the other candidates, familiar from their leaflets so helpfully delivered to your front door.

Apart from a misunderstanding or two (the canvass cards being somewhat in need of an update), the campaign has been straightforward enough and positively enjoyable in the bright spring sunshine. Diligently you updated the canvassed information where you could ('New residents - not on the electoral roll yet'; 'House empty – pile of ad-lit in porch'; 'Said they were Republicans!') and kept a list of 'issues raised' on which the word 'potholes' makes frequent appearances. An irate driver had insisted you inspect the pothole which had shredded one of his tyres; another had told you, heatedly, what 'they' should be doing about it; neither had been impressed by your promise to pass on their complaints to 'them'.

At the next meeting, the Association's lady chairman mentions potholes in her introduction, provoking a ripple of knowing laughter from some of the other candidates. You were not amongst the chuckling cognoscenti because – you go hot remembering it – you had never given the matter of 'Who does What' in an area where there is both a district and a county council a moment's thought. Covert reference to the district

council's website later reveals a number of other 'issues' on your list which do not feature amongst the district council's responsibilities. You hastily expunge them from your list; head a new page 'Issues to report to C.Cllr' and hope that this embarrassing lapse in your knowledge of local government went unnoticed by your potential constituents. The next time an indignant driver raises the subject of potholes you mention casually that, while 'Highways' aren't a district responsibility, you can of course pass on his complaint to the right quarters. Sadly, he is no more impressed than his predecessors.

Planning is another 'issue' to make multiple appearances on your list and you learn during the campaign that there is a very contentious application pending in an area all too visible from one of the prettier hamlets in your patch. When several outraged householders have explained it to you in more or less colourful terms, it begins to be borne in upon you that – should you be elected, of course – they will expect you to stand with them against the outrage. Considerably better informed than are you about the planning process, they had mentioned, among other things, that 'the ward councillor' has five minutes to speak at committee and, after your late night at the count and not enough sleep, it only filters through slowly that you were elected so you are now 'the ward councillor' referred to. What you know about planning would struggle to cover the back of a postage stamp, never mind an eternity of five minutes and, over a cup of strong coffee, you begin dimly to perceive some of the pitfalls attached to your new position.

Noises off suggest that you should have put the bins out but, of course, you hadn't being more than a little pre-occupied with the delivery of last minute leaflets and getting yourself to the count by 10.00 p.m. You decide that the rubbish can wait but, nonetheless, the clatter of a new day reminds you that Life Must Go On, the sun is shining and the dog, sitting hopefully at your feet, has been trying for some time to point you in the direction of breakfast. Outside, the May air is fresh and scented, your neighbour enquires civilly how the count had treated you and seems impressed when you tell him. The dog, enjoying the addition of bins to the landscape, proceeds slowly and, after reassuring the binman (sorry, waste operative) that no, your bins hadn't been overlooked, you notice, for the first time, that the logo on the wagon is that of your council, the one to which you have just been elected and of which you are a member: the local district council. But no – surely rubbish is dealt with by the county? Had you not sat in your car outside the local tip (recycling centre, you correct yourself hastily) for half an hour with nothing to do while a large vehicle manoeuvred ponderously within and had not the signs on the big metal gates in front of you clearly displayed the county's shield and chevrons? Note to self: further research required. N.B. Must remember to carry a pen and a notebook – why do these things always occur to me when I'm out with the dog?

Good luck, Councillor, and enjoy your term of office – you may well be the last district councillor to represent Muddling South!

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Village Hall Report - *Julian Wild*

A fairly quiet Winter on the Village Hall front, with two events to keep things ticking over and bringing a trickle of folk over the door-step. We also held our Annual General Meeting on the 28th January, and most of this report will be The Chair's Report from that meeting- oddly, written by myself; all will be made clear. Plans have been made for future events.

Sunday 18th January saw Adam preparing another self-service, buffet style Big Breakfast, and for Friday 21st February we re-visited our Pub concept, The Leaky Roof. Those who attended, and we understand that dragging yourselves out in the Winter is hard, thoroughly enjoyed both; the atmosphere in the warm, gently lit "pub" with its bar, food, and games was delightful. Looking ahead we have the ever popular Curry Night on Saturday 15th March, a Roast Dinner is planned for April, and some kind of VE day 80th Anniversary "Street Party" in early May. Remember to check the Poughill Village Facebook Page and the boards outside the Hall for details.

Chair's Report for 2024 : Poughill Village Hall AGM

Firstly, an explanation as to why the Secretary is delivering the Chair's Report, and why he's written it. In July, our elected chair, Vanessa Moon, sadly, had to step down from that role, and from the committee for personal reasons. Since that time we have been working with a rotating chair for our meetings (this is not to be confused with a revolving chair). We decided to wait till this AGM to choose a new official Chair.

2024 started with the relief of both the big tasks of the previous year- the roof and the playground wall, being signed off. Excellent jobs done on both by real craftsmen. We were left with much rubble and clearing up to be done outside, and evidence of damage to the kitchen roof, and ceiling mould patches in the Hall due to exposure while the roof was repaired.

We started to discuss the possibility of revamping the kitchen (after the roof was sorted) and decorating the hall - after all, everyone needs a project!

The Crwys Morchard Young Farmers came and cleared and tidied the playground, apart from the rubble which is now recycled somewhere underneath Paul Rogers' new car-port.

Builders came and builders went with all sorts of suggestions as to what was wrong with the kitchen roof, a variety of estimates, and rumours of asbestos. Time passed and then in October a builder, Henry Cooper no less, diagnosed the real faults- basically rotten boards and beams, and made a great job of repairing it all in November for a very fair price considering the work involved. This was partly covered by a Council Grant courtesy of CC Margaret Squires.

Also in November the Committee set up a scaffold tower in the Hall and the mould was removed and found to be only superficial. While we were at it we went over the whole place, cleared the strip lighting of flies, discovered that the worrying cracks on the front wall were actually cobwebs, filled a few holes and hung new ambient lighting to create the splendour you now see. We hope to apply paint this Spring.

On the events front, we kicked off with a Coffee Morning on the 10th February followed by a very successful Curry Night on the 24th. March saw the return of The Big Breakfast and April the St George's Day Roast. Food is something we do really well, thanks mostly to Adam Clarke's labours over a hot stove. May was a quieter month with just a rather low-key Coffee Morning, but in June we turned the Hall into a Pub- The Leaky Roof, with the Bar, Bar Snacks, and pub and table games.

A lovely night with much laughter and some unusual drinks choices; we still have the mats and the sign and plan to re-open the pub soon! In August the weather held good for a well-attended really villagey event, an outside BBQ complete with Pimms and a Bouncy Castle. September was more food, this time with a Spanish theme, before October saw the return of the ever-popular Quiz Night with quizmaster Francis, Adam's pasties, and, strangely, a record consumption of Red Wine! November 6th saw the first of Sharon Collingwood's monthly coffee mornings, but a planned Cider Tasting night for the 15th fell through and has been rescheduled for later this year. We rang out 2024 with mince pies and mulled wine after the Church Carol Service, and rang in 2025 with another Big Breakfast on 19th January.

We look ahead to an events full year and the continuing upgrading of this valuable building, but we can only do all this due to the sterling efforts of the Committee, and with the support of the Village. Thanks are due to Liz Rogers who is stepping back from the committee, her contributions will be much missed. The committee is always glad to welcome new members; actually, that's an understatement!

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Feathers - *Derryck Morton*

I remember the first time I held a dead bird. I was about seven years old and I found a song thrush dead at the side of the road. I picked it up and explored its coat of feathers. The first thing that I remember is that it wasn't soft; it was covered in stiff ridges – nothing like my eiderdown at all. Opening the wings gave me the thrill I still have. The shape is an engineering marvel. The feathers are held stiffly in place and coordinated such that as the wing opens and closes, the primary feathers all keep their regular place, forming a continuous flight surface with no gaps. The strength of the feathers comes from the tubular central shaft called the rachis. Coming off either side of the rachis are the veins or barbs, which have a series of barbules with interlocking connections that zip the fine structure together. The rachis and barbs make up the spathe. It was the rachis I had felt when picking up the bird, giving that ridged sensation. The base of the feather is called the calamus, which anchors the feather to the body and is moved by attached dermal muscles.

I keep hens and admire their personalities. They have good memories and can be trained to a timetable, but I have found it difficult to achieve a response to a spoken command. They will approach me when they hear my voice but not react to a command as would a dog. Last year, I made progress with a chick who would jump up on my hand if I beckoned her by flexing the fingers of an open hand. No voice command but still a response. It was whilst training her I noticed the new feathers growing in their quill sheaths. As an engineer, I find the construction of the feather very engaging. As far as I can ascertain, feathers grow like grass, from the base. But what is not clear to me is how barbs that are longer than the surrounding sheath, whose outer ends must grow first as disassociated features, then keep place such that they come together and join at the rachis at the right length at the right time. There seems very little information on the sequential growth details of the component parts of a feather (is anyone in need of a PhD subject?).

The 1993 film directed by Steven Spielberg, Jurassic Park, came out a few years too early for feather adornment in the prehistoric world to be popular knowledge. To date, there are around 77 dinosaur species identified as having had feathers. Most of these dinosaurs were theropods that walked on two legs and had three toes. Birds descended from a branch of the theropods which means dinosaurs never died out; just nearly did! The feathers seen in fossils of fine-grained stone show feather detail and the clarity of preservation allows the structures to inform us of not only the type of feather but also its iridescent character. Microscopic striations refract light to give us the beautiful iridescent palette seen on many birds; the blue/green on rooks and starlings, the peacock's

splendid tail and the spectacular hummingbirds. Pigment too is sometimes fossilized with feathers. Melanin, which is responsible for brown and black colours, can last for millions of years. Fossilized imprints of the shape of melanosomes, which are organelles that contain melanin pigment, indicates the type of melanin they contain and therefore what colour that melanin produced on the feather. Dinosaurs were colourful!

Sexual selection uses visual preference among other signals and so it would be rational to theorise that reptile scales, which became plumose to help regulate body temperature, presented a placard upon which to advertise health and vigour and hence a tool which governs natural selection. Once the stage was set, a rich adornment must have pervaded the taxonomy to whom filamentous body insulation was invested. Advertising your colours on stiffer advertising platforms which could be extended and waved in the face of an admirer was probably the necessary step which selected for the strong keratin structure of the rachis. Once flappy boards were to hand (or rather, to arm), there was a physical advantage to movement which was lacking from animals without. Again, a strong driver in natural selection.

Going back to my chick; when the wing feathers began to grow in their pennaceous feather sheaths with little tufts of barbs poking out of the ends, she was far more mobile than ever she was on legs alone. The 'arms' would open to use the fan-shaped growths to steady fast movement, turn quickly with a flap and jump higher than before. She couldn't fly or glide but there was an advantage applicable to survival. Again, in prehistory, another stage was set and with all the time in the world, birds got better and better at what they do very well indeed. And what of my chick? Oh, a dinosaur ate her. A crow.

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WELCOME TO THE POUGHILL VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB!

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.

If you are interested, please email poughillvillagehall100club@gmail.com for an application form and a copy of the full rules.

JOIN OUR 100 CLUB TODAY AND YOU COULD BE OUR NEXT WINNER!



LATEST DRAW WINNERS!

December – J Trenaman (£32.70), D Gibbons (£16.35), P Mapp (£5.45)

January – E Hilton (£32.70), J Trenaman (£16.35), H Martin (£5.45)

February – J Trenaman (£32.70), D Rossiter (£16.35), R Taylor (£5.45)