Poughill Parish Newsletter



Issue No 76

March 2026 - May 2026

Next Newsletter June 2026

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

Note from the Editor

It's great to hear that the village hall is safe for another year, with three new members having joined at the AGM in January.

A polite request that if you donate something to the phone box, please check back a couple of weeks later to see if it is still there and take it home with you to dispose of responsibly or donate elsewhere if it is.

As ever I would like to encourage budding authors to come forward with articles for the newsletter. All contributions will be very gratefully received.

Karen Wellerd k.wellerd@poughillparishcouncil.org.uk

Next Issue - Editorial Copy Deadline: Monday 18th May 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:
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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/

January 2026

Finance – The Current Account balance at 3/1/2026 was £3201.15, plus £1684.31 in the Instant Access Savings Account. The Budget and Precept (£3,733) for 2026/27 was approved. A new Financial Reserves Policy was adopted, with the General Reserve level for 2026/27 being set at £2,000. The Earmarked Reserves for 2026/27 will be agreed at the start of the next financial year, as will the purchase of a replacement bench for Poughill Community Garden.

Streetlight No. 6 Consultation - 10 responses were received out of a possible 90. There was no clear preference for any of the proposed options. The clerk will contact DCC to ask if the light can be switched off an hour earlier at 11pm.

District Councillor Report - New Warm Homes grants are available. Mid Devon is to reintroduce a day permit option for car park users. We will be losing the Police and Crime Commissioners over the next couple of years.

Next Meeting – 5th March 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.



Bag It and Bin It!

Residents have been commenting on the increasing number of dog poo deposits on the roads heading out of the village, especially between Poughill Village Cross and Crediton Cross.

Just because there are no pavements along our roads it doesn't mean you don't have to clear up after your dog.

Please bag the poo and take it home to put in your black bin or place it in the public bin in the village hall car park, it's not difficult and makes such a difference.

Thank you!



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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Tales from the Old Bill : 11 : One In One Out - *Simon Gibbons*

Wednesday the 17th March 1982 dawned bright and clear. I was on an early turn and so had to be up at about 5.30 am to be at the station for 6am. By then I had a bike and as it was all gently down hill it only took me a matter of a few minutes to get there. Even earlier Debs had been telling me that she felt a 'bit funny' which, missing all the signs as usual, I put down to the fact that 'officially' this was the day the baby was supposed to be born and suggested it was probably all just psychosomatic. Deborah wasn't quite so sure but I went to work anyway. (Yes, even I agree in retrospect it wasn't a good or proper thing to do, but it's what happened so I can't exactly say it didn't).

It was a beautiful sunny day and I had only just got the kettle on when there was a loud knocking at the station door. (in those days it was almost on the seafront.)I answered it and found a man there who had been walking along the seafront with his little dog. He had found some clothes and things on the sea wall and thought I better come and take a look. I did, and found a ladies handbag and a cardigan, neatly folded and sparkling in dew, on top of the wall that backed the sea promenade. The two of us looked at the bundle and then out at the dead calm sea that was on its best behaviour and whispering up the shingle in small wavelets.

I found out who the lady was from the contents of the handbag and was on the point of driving around to the address when Debs phoned to say I better come home quickly as the baby was on its way. Luck had smiled on me as dear old Ken Horne had just popped in for his early morning cuppa and so I passed it all over to him and pedalled home as fast as my legs would go, trying desperately to remember if Fred (Police First Aid instructor) had said anything about babies and fully expecting to find Debs on the floor having the baby there and then. Much to surprise she wasn't. What she was doing was washing her hair and putting the last few things in her hospital bag that, in true Girl Guide fashion, she had had ready and waiting under the bed for several weeks.

Fortunately the little red post office van had been sold off by then and we now had a bronze Ford Capri with gold wheels and a ridiculous whiplash aerial about eight feet long. It drove well and we shot over to Honiton hospital along the ruler straight road that crossed the common. I might have even gone over my customary fifty miles an hour. We went straight up to the labour ward in the lift. It was a nice hospital, not too big or small, with staff who knew their business and were polite enough to remember just what a momentous occasion this was for us. With Debs quickly in her new nightie she was popped up on a high table for the midwife.

"Oh yes, baby's nearly here." She announced brightly, like we had all been waiting for a train to arrive. She, (Debs not the midwife) had a few puffs of gas and air which I was keen to share in even though she told me it made her feel very sick, and after about half an hour Adam Solomon Gibbons entered the world and promptly widdled all over everyone. They counted all his toes and fingers, found they added to twenty and told us we had a perfect baby son, which we could see for ourselves. It was an event that was so huge and sweeping in its magnitude it reduced me to tears and I find it impossible to express adequately in words.

The Lady? Never seen again. Her poor husband, in clinical shock, had told Ken that she had been terminally ill with an untreatable cancer. She had always liked swimming.

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Village Hall Report - *Julian Wild*

As is becoming my habit for this issue, here's the Report from the AGM in January.

2025 was a quieter year in many ways, after the busy maintenance year of 2024, but contained many good things while, also, seeing the Village Hall more than paying its way over the 12 months.

Probably the highlight was that remarkable day in May when the Hall was packed for the V. E. Day celebrations indoor street party. Splendid decorations and music, fabulous party food, plentiful drink and the Village en fete. A special one.

We also held a Big Breakfast in January, Curry Night in March, Cider Tasting with Rull Orchard in July, and a Caribbean Night in September.

There were three variations on Pub Nights at The Leaky Roof, in February (bar snacks), June (pie and mash), and November (Fish & Chips). The last one was a great success and will definitely be revisited now we have the fryers. That was the night that saw a remarkable sell-out run on Devon Red Cider!

Special mention has to be made of that pinnacle of the year's events - Quiz Night. In October the amazing Francis Wellerd came up with yet another clever set of questions on an evening which saw a roomful of people simply enjoying each other's company and consuming astonishing quantities of Red Wine.

The year was concluded with Mince pies, Sausage rolls and Mulled Wine in The Hall after the Church Carol service.

Meanwhile, in the background there have been regular monthly Coffee Mornings run by Sharon Collingwood and, during the Summer, by the Church for their funds. Such fundraising for the Hall is significant, and we thank Sharon for that. There have also been regular Yoga sessions run by Laura Galvin raising funds for both the Hall and The Church - sterling work, and some Tai-Chi sessions with Diana Rossiter, again for The Hall. Thank you both.

The Hall has also been booked for a few private parties and the Local Elections.

Early in the year the Committee decided that plans should be drawn-up to redecorate the Hall and re-vamp the Kitchen. Progress has been slow and steady with new dado rails put in down to the front door and the whole nether-regions painted Brussel Sprout green. This is work-in-progress, with the main walls (in need of repair) yet to be painted in Almond Sugar, and the angled beams also to be greened.

Phase one for the Kitchen will be plumbing and replacing the hot-water tank and slow discussions are proceeding with the Plumber. With the Youth Club now wound up and the contents of their cupboard moved on, we have more scope for storage ideas. Adam and Tina Clarke also executed a deep Autumn Clean of the Kitchen. Thanks to them. Further leaks to the Kitchen roof have been sorted.

Outdoors we've been involved with seeing to the cutting back of the bank below the Community Garden, clearing undergrowth and falling trees out the back of the field (with help from Ashley Cheriton), clearing Ivy off the back wall, and (with the bench there broken and removed) sorting out the little garden by the church gate. The Parish Council plans to fund the new bench. Karen Wellerd organised another cheerful Living Advent Calendar in December.

Over the year Rob Taylor and Hannah Johnson have stepped down from the Committee, and Liam Barker, Paul Mapp and Aubrey Mizen have stepped up. Thanks to Rob and Hannah for their contributions. As always, there's much to be done.

In addition, by the time you read this we'll have had another Curry Night on February 20th. Plans are in place for**:** Friday March 20th a Pub Night with Fish & Chips, and on Sunday 26th April, a Buffet Breakfast. Hope to see you there!

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Past Intelligent Civilizations in Prehistory - *Derryck Morton*

Humans, as we are, Homo Sapiens, left Africa in multiple stages from 270000 to 60000 years ago, spanning the entire globe except for Antarctica. The earliest known intelligent human civilizations emerged around 4000–3000 B.C. in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, China, Peru, and Mexico, laying the foundations for urban life, writing, and technology. These and the hunter-gatherer communities occupying the rest of the global populations developed art, religious and symbolic structures and tool use. The agricultural societies, particularly in the Fertile Crescent (an historically significant region in the Middle East spanning modern-day Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and parts of Turkey and Iran), developed pottery, irrigation, bronze tools, and complex social structures. Mesopotamia (a large geographical region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, within the fertile crescent), often called the "cradle of civilization," pioneered irrigation, the potter's wheel, bronze tools, and early writing. Ancient China developed one of the oldest continuous cultural traditions and their emigration to the Americas founded independent cradles of urban societies, the Aztec, Maya, and Inca being a few.

There is archaeological evidence to support these theories backed up with scientific dating techniques and DNA mapping; but how do we know that there were no previous similarly intelligent animals before humans? Were there ever complex societies and technology in other animal communities before we arrived on the scene? Well, there are social ants, wasps and bees. Tool use is seen in the corvid birds, dolphins, apes, monkeys, otters and even elephants. However, none of these come close to the question I am posing. Was there ever a species capable of intelligent society with technological capability similar to our own?

It has been suggested that the branch of theropod dinosaurs which includes the famous Velociraptor was capable of higher reasoning and that if their demise 65Ma (million years) ago had not happened, they might have developed into a social, technological presence which would have ultimately prevented our own existence.

If the entirety of life on earth is represented by a timeline of 4.28 billion years the width of this page, our modern human lineage would be represented by a length of six microns at the end (0.006mm), the size of a bacterium.

4.28 billion years

Might there be places along this line where species became sentient and creative with an influential effect on the planet. If so, where would we look and what might we find? Life on earth started very early after the formation of the planet and fossil evidence shows that little changed for a long time, so intelligent life certainly didn't take off quickly then disappear. No evidence of any vertebrate life shows up until around 530 Ma with the appearance of fish. For a long time after that, it's fish all the way until at about 380Ma when four-legged animals made a living on the land. It's unlikely a civilization could exist until major physiological changes had diversified from the fish-like body plan into terrestrial life, releasing the forearms for use in grooming, tool use and expression. The fossil record might therefore hold clues from about 240Ma when evolutionary explosions had allowed diversification after extinction events, one at 250Ma and another at 200Ma. The fossil records have not released any signs of creative living; the status quo being bones and footprints. We have found no evidence of any impact that a civilization would leave in the land such as unusually high concentrations of artificial or out of place materials.

The last extinction event 65Ma ago removed the reign of large carnivores allowing mammalian expansion. Warm blood and fur coats allows for expansion into diverse climatic areas. Time for evolution to play its role after the 65Ma event means mammals take the stage and hold promise for showing fossil evidence of early intelligence and technology. Scientists looking for "techno fossils," such as unusual isotopic ratios, microplastics, synthetic chemical traces in sediments, radiation or manufactured objects have failed to find any pre-human, or early human industrial activity. The death knell to the possibility of former techno-beings having used the planet before us, is that all carbon stores are intact when we find them. All coal seams, oil fields, tar pits and gas reserves are undamaged and are complete. So are mineral deposits, and metal ores. There is no sign of previous exploitation. It would be a puzzle indeed if a civilisation was to have created an environment of social life without the use of metal ores and coal. We appear to be the only animal that has availed itself of the earth’s riches and with no evidence to the contrary, no doubt the first technically advanced social creature.

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Poughill Village Hall



With Yoga Teacher
Laura Galvin

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Bring your own mat and wear comfy clothes
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Proceeds to the Village Hall and Church

More Info:

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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 **1st June 2026**.

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

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

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Walking the Walk (4) - …and Round and Round - *Polly Colthorpe*

Back in the upstairs front room of the agency, Phil - the photographer favoured by Madame - gave us the lecture on photographic modelling which was part of our course. It turned out that he lived just round the corner from my parents so, in my case at least, he also took the photographs which were the basis of my portfolio – the pictures an agent holds to show to prospective customers. Later, when photos of you appear in print, you or your agent will collect them in a 'guard book' which will also (you hope) impress those all-important people. I still possess the scrap book which my mother kept for me. Most of its contents are black and white press cuttings which my mama or her friends came across in our local papers and they have aged badly - looking back, I wish I'd bothered to buy some proper prints.

Spotting your photographs is a haphazard business at best. Much of the photographic work you do will have been commissioned - not, sadly, by a Parisian fashion house but rather more prosaically by somebody who wants an advertisement for a temps agency or a range of milking parlour equipment. The client may contact your agent directly or may employ an advertising agency but either way the photographer is probably the only person you will meet and, while he (and back in the 60s it nearly always was a 'he') might promise to let you have prints or a contact sheet, the copyright almost certainly lies elsewhere along the chain - which is why those pictures won't actually be forthcoming. Nor is it anybody's business to let you know where or when the ad.will be published so, unless perchance you come across a familiar face while leafing through a dog-eared magazine at the doctors/dentists/vets, the chances are that you will never see the end result - and may not recognise yourself if you do!

From the model's point of view there were two types of photographer. There were those who said 'Just move', fired off frame after frame at high speed, said 'Great – terrific!' a lot and got through any amount of film and several cameras in a morning's shoot. The advent of digital will save them hours in the dark room as well as a fortune in film and developer. The other type carefully positioned you from head to foot, arranged and re-arranged every fold you were wearing, changed the backdrop and the lighting (several times), checked the light levels (several times) and then, just when you thought the shutter might finally click, would put the camera down with a sigh and ask if you'd brought some other earrings. In an earlier life, Phil had been a set photographer in Hollywood and, since the whole purpose of set photography is to make sure that any scene can be exactly re-created if further takes are needed after the event when the set has been struck, he had a good bit of the former, a dash of the latter and was very easy to work with.

We became good friends and when work was slack he'd give me a ring, I'd chuck some clothes into a suitcase and we'd spend an afternoon playing in his studio. What was known in my family as the 'Vogue' photograph came about on one of those occasions; a black and white photo of me perched on the end of Phil and Gisela's sofa, wearing a beach frock I'd made myself and looking round because the telephone was ringing out in the hall. Phil thought highly enough of it to include it in a portfolio of work he sent to 'Vogue' hoping it might get him a commission. Unfortunately, I don't think it did, but the photograph gave my parents a lot of pleasure and it lived in a frame on their bookshelves for many years.

One of the jobs Phil and I did together was 'The Great Roll of Polystyrene'. The company which made the polystyrene was aiming for a big national campaign and an ad. agency had been employed to come up with some ideas. The one the manufacturers chose involved a large roll of 'the product' with two models, a blonde and a brunette, sitting on it, swathed or draped in lengths of the stuff to demonstrate how warm and cosy it was*. Long hair was a requirement and, as none of the blondes at my agency had long hair, another agency had been asked to provide someone who had. She proved to be a Danish girl called Danae, possessor of the most spectacular golden tresses I have ever seen - pure, unalloyed gold and so long that, even with some natural curl, they still fell below her waist. My own entirely unremarkable brown hair just about reached my shoulder blades but I got the job because nobody else at the agency even came close – long hair simply wasn't ***in***.

When the day of the shoot came we were joined - unusually - by representatives of both the clients and the ad.agency. Coffee and introductions over, Danae and I climbed on to The Great Roll (it was about six feet across and three feet high) and, while the visitors watched, she and I dutifully tried to swathe and drape and Phil snapped away like David Hemmings in Blow-up#. The visitors only stayed a few minutes and then left us to it which was just as well because it hadn't taken us even that long to discover that polystyrene swathes not, neither does it drape – it breaks. Phil found some sellotape and we tried again but when it came to swathing and draping that polystyrene simply wasn't having any. Two hours later, helpless with laughter and covered in sellotape and bits of broken polystyrene we gave it best.

Phil must have found something he could submit to the ad.agency but the result, after a protracted pause, was a bit of a surprise. The commissioning company still liked the basic idea but they didn't think the fair hair showed up very well against the white polystyrene and could we please shoot it again without the blonde girl. Phil and I shot it again but the polystyrene still refused to co-operate and, after another pause, the company announced that they had decided to scrap the roll altogether and settle for something along the lines of the Kodak girl – a life-sized cardboard cut-out made so that it could hold an actual-size roll of the retail product. We didn't have a roll of the retail product (which was about the size of a fat roll of wallpaper) so we cut a length from The Great Roll and shot some more pictures with that. They proved to be the last act in the saga and I don't think even the cardboard cut-out was ever produced – my father loved a good hardware shop on a Saturday morning but he never came home reporting that he'd bumped into a cardboard cut-out of his elder daughter at the end of the D.I.Y. aisle!

**The austerity of the war years carried on well into the 1950s and people were desperate for more comfort. Expanded polystyrene (developed in the U.S.A. in 1954) under the wallpaper was a cheap and easy form of insulation and gave you a little more warmth for your money.*

#'Blow-up', directed by Michelangelo Antonioni and produced by Carlo Ponti, starred David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave and Sarah Miles and won the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1967.

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Song Sessions:
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3rd Thursday 7.30pm The London Inn, Morchard Bishop, Contact: Jon 07840 524318

Music Session:
Last Sunday 12 noon Half Moon Inn, Cheriton Fitzpaine,
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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
Contact: Paul and Alison 07709 324836

St. Michael & All Angels

Mission Community Service, Poughill, Palm Sunday 10:30am.

No decision has been taken yet on whether Poughill will have an Easter service and what the frequency of the regular services will be. Details will be posted on the Church noticeboard once known.

Thank You for Supporting CHAT

At the carol service we held a collection for Churches Housing Action Team and have subsequently received this response.

Thank you for supporting CHAT
I'm writing to thank you for your generous donation to CHAT.
This time of year can be especially challenging for many families and individuals across Mid Devon, but your kindness brings hope when it's needed most. Thanks to your support, we're able to offer practical help, comfort, and reassurance to those struggling to make ends meet.
Your generosity is a reminder to the people we help that they are not alone, and that their community truly cares.
Kindest regards,
Holly Reid

Thank you also to those who donated to the Food bank; this small action made a big difference to those in need.



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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.

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 – B Avery (£32.40), T Collingwood (£16.20), V Moon (£5.40)

January – P Colthorpe (£32.40), E Hilton (£16.20), N Moon (£5.40)

February – P Hilton (£32.40), S Burnand (£16.20), Karen Bulled (£5.40)