Witheridge Voice



Autumn 2026
Issue 66

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Editorial

It seems that Autumn is with us, we have chilly mornings and chilly nights.
If you read through the magazine, you'll find there is a lot for you to get involved with. It's good to see that several of our groups have been helped with donations from The Knights and Nomansland Beer Festival.
There is also the opportunity to give back by supporting Gifts of Kindness as they continue to support individauls, and families, in our village.

I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that the lighting of the Christmas Tree and Lantern Procession are taking place again this December.

Deadline for the Winter issue is 4th January.
Please let me have your articles, by email before that date, so I can edit the magazine and get it to the printers in good time. It is important that this deadline is kept as we have a very quick turn around with the printers.

This deadline also applies to advertisers, if they need to change any details on their adverts please let us know as soon as possible.

Parish Hall Update

The sharp eyed among you will have noticed that there was a public consultation about the lease that the Parish Hall trustees are entering into with the Parish Council.
There were no representations, so now the lease can be completed. This will be good news for everyone it ensures that the tots playground can continue to provide the wonderful safe play space it always has and that the Parish Council can access funds to help them update and improve the playground into the future.

On a completely different note Country Strong make a welcome return to the Parish Hall on November 28th.Come along and have a wonderful evening with a truly brilliant country band.



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Golf Society

On Wednesday 15th July 19 played for the Summer Trophy on a very warm day.

A good time was had by all. Thanks to Waterbridge Golf Club for an excellent meal.

The winning team: Tom Clow, Ash Mathews, Andrew Hanson & Matt.

The Wooden Spoon went to: Tony Harris & Frank Whitcomb.

On Wednesday 15th September 17 played for the Autumn Trophy. After a short shower the day was bright & sunny. The course was green again after the recent rain. Thanks again to Chris & Witheridge Golf Club for the meal afterwards.

The winning team: Ash Mathews, Lee Alderman, Matt

The Wooden Spoon: Paul Brooke, Mike Hillard, Geoff Evans, John Avens.

Nearest -to-Pin: Ash Mathews

Next Meeting 2nd December Christmas 2026

New members welcome.

Contact: Ken Ramsbotham: mob 07702226287 Land line:01884 861108



W**itheridge Ladies' Club**

At our meeting in July Sue taught us how to apply decoupage to glass jars/bottles. Sue had already painted the glassware with a white background and we then chose a design and applied it to the glass (not as easy as it sounds!). To allow the adhesive to dry we had a break and our tea/coffee and biscuits. We then carefully covered the design with adhesive, as well as the whole jar and waited for it to dry. We then chose a braiding to go around the top of the jar. A very interesting pastime, time for a new hobby?

In August it was great to see some new faces at our annual tea party. A time to relax with our cream teas and look round the various stalls. A good fund raiser for our club.

A disappointment in September due to our booked speaker cancelling her talk; instead we played board games and had a quiz, along with our tea/coffee and biscuits.

Our club also has a book club and lunch club. Why not come along to see what we are up to! We meet on the 2nd Tuesday in the month in the Parish Hall 2–4 pm, except when we have an outing.

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The Rest A While

With Autumn upon us, what better way to spend a morning than at The Rest A While with a hot drink in a warm friendly environment. If you are new to the area, or live alone come along and join us. You are assured of a warm welcome in our registered Warm Space.

The Rest A While is open Monday -Saturday from 10am -12 noon.
In recent months we have had a bit of a makeover and are thrilled with the results. The outside of the building has been repainted and looks very smart. At long last, the toilets have been renovated and updated, allowing access for people with mobility aids. Everyone using the new layout says how much better this is.

This has all been achieved by the generosity of donations from The Nomansland Cricket Club, who have made substantial donations to us from the proceeds of their yearly Beer Fest.
In August I received a phone call from Simon Preece on behalf of the committee of The Nomansland Cricket club, asking if we needed a donation for any projects. We explained that the toilets needed renovating, but we had had difficulty finding builders to do the work. Simon immediately offered to come with his builder friend Rob and look at the job in hand. We were totally overwhelmed when they said they would do the work, and that The Nomansland Cricket club would cover the complete cost.
The Rest a While was closed for 3 days while the work was expertly completed by Simon and Rob.
Such a lot of hard work.

We can't thank the committee of the cricket club enough for their generosity and overwhelming support of the work we do at Rest A While by supporting people in the community.
A very special thank you to Simon and Rob for all their hard work and expertise which they took on so willingly. It will never be forgotten.



The Men's Den takes place on the 2nd and 4th Wed. of the month from 2pm-4pm

There are live music sessions taking place on the last Saturday of the month from 10am-12noon

Our Bring and Buy sale is on the last Friday of the month from 10-12. There is always a raffle.

The Witheridge Art Group use the Rest A While for their meetings at 7.30pm

The Rest A While is a versatile space that is available to all groups and clubs in Witheridge, for a donation.
We are always looking for new volunteers to join our happy band, so if you have 2 hours to spare a fortnight, please contact Val on 01884860709

A small group of councillors are acting as coordinators to reactivate the well-received Lighting of the village Christmas tree. The School Head and their PTFA are actively involved and are planning the lantern procession with the children to the square. They will then sing to us before moving to the church to visit Santa. The North Pole have confirmed his presence on that date. We have a few more meetings to finalise the timing of events and choosing the child to perform the ceremony of the “lights switch on”, plus stalls etc. The date planned is Friday the 4th December and the timetable of events, once finalised, I’m sure will be placed on social media for your information.

I am delighted to say that the Nomansland Beer Festival Committee have donated £600 towards new tree lights as the present ones were old and weary and sadly liable to fail so our thanks go to them.

I have been harping on about any anti-social behaviour being seen by yourselves or being the recipient of, to be reported to the police, and I am informed that the procedure has now been made easier. You can log on to the Community Messaging page of the Police alert scheme. I urge you to do so as the police presence in the village is decided by the number of incidents that occur and subsequently knocks on to the numbers of police officers employed in South Molton.

The Parish Council has been allocated 106 money from the developers of Benson Grange, Alison Homes, to recreate a new concrete skate park on the site of the old one at the Adventure Playground. We have been in consultation with providers and the scheme is now moving on, as our tender is being placed on the Government website for skate park companies to present both their ideas and costings to us.

The Parish Council has now been given a twenty one year lease at a peppercorn rent on the Tot's playground at the Parish Hall. This was necessitated by current insurers demands and the ever present litigation threat. Our thanks go to the Parish Hall Chair, Clare Spicer, and the committee who had to jump through several hoops including the provision of a dedicated advisor and changing the existing land registry document from members that had either retired or had died to an official custodian, a long frustrating journey.

A final note if you need to consult us. The Parish Council has changed its meeting dates to the second Thursday in the month to accommodate both the County and District councillors who all had other commitments on the First Thursday.
A Happy Christmas to you all.
Jacky Harvey Chair Witheridge Parish Council




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St John the Baptist Church

While scrolling through Instagram, I came across a poet called Maxine Meixner, and I was instantly struck by one of her poems, I Hope You Make It, which she recites herself.
Five simple words: “I hope you make it.”

Five words that carry within them our wishes, our prayers and our hopes for people we know and even for people we don’t. Because life is full of moments when we quietly hope that someone will make it.
It might be the ordinary things: hoping someone gets safely to their destination, finds the right job, gets through a difficult day, succeeds in something they have worked hard for, or finds happiness in family life.
Sometimes it is much more serious. We hope someone makes it through the diagnosis they have just received. Through grief. Through fear. Through a time when life feels almost impossible.
Maxine speaks about a collective hope, a hope that, together, we can bring about change.

That got me thinking about the Church because surely the Church is called to be a community of collective hope.
Not simply a group of people who hope things get better, but people who believe that, through faith and through works, we can help make things better.

Our faith calls us to look beyond ourselves. To notice the person who is lost, lonely or struggling. To offer support when someone cannot find their way. To stand alongside those facing difficult times. To show generous love, not just in words, but in practical ways.
Jesus speaks again and again of a love that is active. A love that feeds the hungry, welcomes the stranger, visits the lonely, cares for the vulnerable and lifts up those who have fallen.

Perhaps that is part of what it means to be Church: to say to one another, and to the world around us: “I hope you make it.”
And then to ask ourselves: What can I do to help you make it?
A prayer, a listening ear, a meal, a visit, a kind word, a helping hand, a gift given generously or a voice raised for someone who cannot speak for themselves.
Hope becomes powerful when it becomes action.
Perhaps our prayer today is not only that we make it, but that we become people who help others make it too.
People who carry hope into places where hope is needed.
People who believe that small acts of love can make a difference.
And people who, together, through faith and works, can help bring about the change our world needs.

I hope you make it, and, by God’s unmerited favour, I hope we help you get there.
Adrian Wells
Vicar



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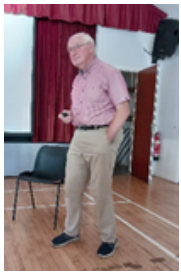
Witheridge Garden Club

Clive Lloyd came to talk to us in July about his 10 Favourite Cornish Gardens. Clive is a well known Orchid specialist and is a judge for the British Orchid Council.
He became fascinated by the wonderful plants in Cornwall and has visited many of the gardens. If you would like a copy of his list, please email me at horwood539@btinternet.com





A very interesting evening with lots of Clive's personal anecdotes. He also brought with him a small quantity of "unusual plants" which were quickly snapped up by the members, including me! One of the plants I had is called Furcraea longaeva which reaches a height between 3-6 metres (10-20ft) and after several years throws out a giant central flower spike reaching 4.5 – 7.5 metres (15-25ft) tall!! Watch this space!

Summer Show 1st August

A very good turn out despite the challenging weather conditions over the last few weeks. 300 exhibits all of very good quality with some really outstanding plants and vegetables. It was very encouraging to see a good number of exhibits from the children – the Guides and Brownies looked after some "orphan" plants left over from the plant sale at the Spring Show with very good results.

T**rophy awards:**
Gold Cup – Luke Harris-Williams
Ralph Tarr Cup - Ruth Cooper-Wedge
Margaret Leat Memorial Shield - Ruth Cooper Wedge
Heathcote Jones Cup - Margie Cosker
Children's Challenge Cup - Effy Drake
Ruby Piercy Memorial Shield - Zena Veal-Cox
Arthur Leat Memorial Shield - Gill Southan
Pat Housam Memorial Cup - David Williams
Edward Sweeting Memorial Cup - Zena Veal-Cox
Peter Jones Cup - Rachel Saint-Aggio
Millie Williams Memorial Shield - David Williams
RHS Banksian Medal - Ruth Cooper-Wedge

In September Becky Searle came to talk to us about "Growing a New Garden" – she has written a book of the same name full of hints and tips. She is also a very accomplished author and contributes to a number of garden magazines. She has worked with garden designers, and is an ecologist.

Becky has had a number of house moves over the years and dealt with some very challenging gardens – new, existing and some very old. Planning is the key to a successful garden – why do you want a garden? Important to measure the space you have, choose your priorities and understand where and how long the sunshine gets to your garden. Some essentials to consider – a toolshed, greenhouse, lawn, family needs and pets. Do you know your soil type – buy a soil tester and then get suitable plants, which will enable good interaction between the soil and plants. Adding organic matter is a good way to boost your soil. Plants breathe through their roots, therefore a good soil structure providing drainage and aeration is essential.

To help with biodiversity, the more variety you can get in your garden, the better it will be for wildlife and nature. Things like hedgehog houses, wood piles, a pond, bird feeders, and native wildflowers – note that a wildflower meadow won't be successful on clay soil. It will flower the first year, but then die out.
Repeat plantings will tie the garden together, blend colours and textures, green up walls and fences so they blend in, and leave space between plants so they have room to grow.

A very interesting and informative evening from a very good speaker.

Jill Horwood





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WITHERIDGE
GIFTS OF KINDNESS

Hello All

Our quarterly report starts with fantastic news: we have received our second grant from Nomansland Beer Festival. We will use the £ 300 to support the local community at Christmas. THANK YOU.

We're grateful to Sarah Griffiths and her team for letting us have a table at the Car Show during August. The Tin Can Alley Competition and Food Hamper Raffle raised £90.00, but more importantly, it showed the community's engagement in the group's aims. Broadclose Farm donated a veg box to the hamper, and a Christmas Pudding was given by Peter and Andrea, previous owners of the Two Moors Store. Our new banner was revealed at the event; it was purchased using some of the Knights of Witheridge generous grant money. Look out for it at future fundraising events.

The generosity of local businesses and individuals is amazing. Thank You

The monthly Farmers Market ensures the pennies keep rolling in. Thank you to those who regularly support us with prize donations or by buying raffle or tombola tickets. July's table raised £72, August's £59.50, and September's tombola improved the bank balance by £53.00.

This year's nomination forms are now available on our website. Paper copies can be picked up from our table during the monthly farmers' market. We expect more nominations this year, so please follow the group's Facebook page for the nomination

closing date and hamper delivery dates. With help from the local community, we hope to provide a hamper to all nominations.
Please note that all contact information will remain confidential.
We thank you in advance for your continued support and remind you all to check out the group's Facebook page for all upcoming events.
Gifts of Kindness Committee



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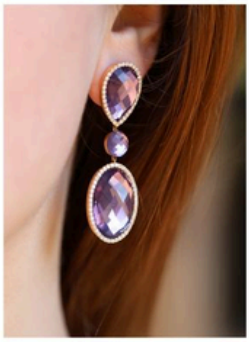

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🌟 A Wonderful Start to the New School Year at Witheridge C of E Academy

The new school year is well underway at Witheridge C of E Academy, and it has been wonderful to welcome all our children back, along with our new Reception children and their families. The children have settled beautifully into their new classes and routines, and there has been a lovely sense of excitement and enthusiasm around school.

Our school vision, “Encourage one another and build each other up,” is at the heart of all we do, and we have already seen many lovely examples of this in action. Whether children are welcoming a new friend into their play, helping someone who is finding something tricky, or cheering each other on, we are encouraging our pupils to recognise that small acts of kindness and encouragement can make a big difference.

Our OPAL playtimes have continued to be a particular highlight. The children have been making the most of our outdoor spaces, using their imagination to create, explore and play together. We are incredibly grateful to the local community for the wonderful donations we have received to support our OPAL provision and would be delighted to receive further safe, interesting items that can inspire imaginative play.

It has also been a busy start to our sporting calendar. Some of our children recently took part in a Cross Country event, supported by Mr Manning and Mrs Ware. It was particularly lovely to hear how the children encouraged one another and celebrated each other's efforts. Their determination and team spirit were a wonderful reflection of our school vision.

We have also been excited to begin taking our learning beyond the classroom. Class 3 visited Finch Foundry on Dartmoor, while Class 4 travelled to Bristol to explore the history of the slave trade. These experiences give our children valuable opportunities to encounter different places, people and perspectives, helping them to reflect on their own experiences and consider the experiences of others, both today and throughout history

.

Our wider curriculum continues to provide plenty of opportunities for children to learn, question and discover. We are fortunate to be a small village school where staff know our children well and where there is a strong sense of community. We are very grateful for the continued support of parents, carers and local residents in helping us to provide these experiences for our pupils.

We are now looking forward to celebrating our Harvest Festival at Witheridge Church, when the whole school will come together to give thanks and celebrate the harvest. We are also collecting food donations for those in our local community who may benefit from them, and we are very grateful for the generosity shown by our families.

As we look ahead to the rest of the autumn term, there is plenty more to come. We are excited about the opportunities, experiences and learning that await our children and look forward to continuing to build a happy, supportive and flourishing school community.

At Witheridge, we believe that education is about much more than what happens in the classroom. It is about learning together, caring for one another, discovering the wider world and having the courage to grow. We look forward to another fantastic year of doing exactly that.

Miss Ratcliffe
Head of School
Witheridge C of E Academy

Katie's

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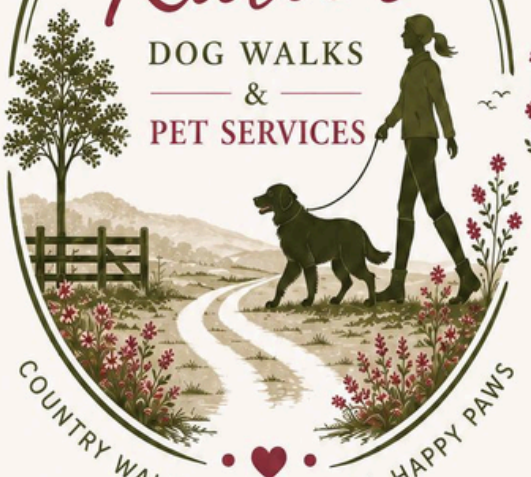

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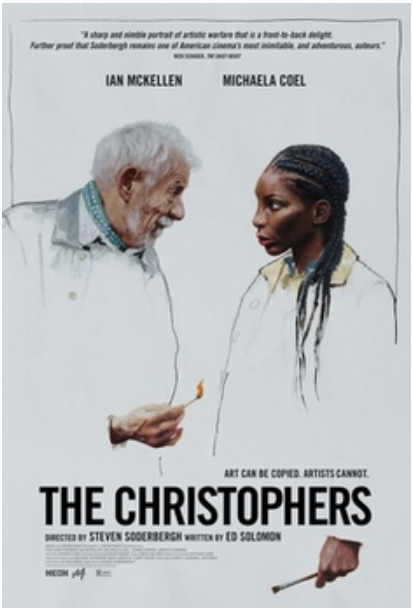

Film Club

The next film night is Saturday 14th November 7.30pm start. Doors open at 7pm.

The film will be The Christophers starring Sir Ian McKellen.

It is a comedy drama about the art world set in the current day in London, England.

The children of a once famous artist hire a forger to complete some unfinished, long ago abandoned canvases so they'll have an inheritance when he dies.



M**onday Club**

Since the last issue of the Voice, we have had a trip to Weymouth; it's always nice to get some sea air. By the time this is published we will have been to the Tavistock Goose Fair, which is the last day trip for this year.

On 19th August we had a talk about dreadlocks – amazing what the over 60s get up to! They have a very long history going back to at least ancient Egypt. The method for adding woollen extensions was explained and modelled by our speaker.

On 24th August we had a fascinating talk about Heathcoat Fabrics. Starting with the history of John Heathcoat who was apprenticed to a textile frame manufacturer in the 18th century. He was clearly very inventive and patented a Bobbinet machine in 1808 which produced lace that looked identical to the handmade variety; he also invented a steam plough. He moved to Loughborough and developed a partnership with Charles Lacy, then in 1815 moved to Tiverton onto the disused Heathfield Mill site, which had been built for the Napoleonic war, but then fell into disrepair. The Heathcoat house, that many people will be aware of, started being built from 1840, by the mid-20th century there were 400 houses.

In 1936 the factory was destroyed by fire and rebuilt then further disaster struck in 1960 with the Lowman and Exe flooding with the water rising by 12 feet and travelling at 40mph. By 1975 the company was losing money and in 1984 there was a management buy-out after which the focus turned from fashion textiles to technical ones.

The textiles are used in aerospace, airlines, vehicle engine belts, defence, healthcare e.g. negative pressure wound care, the new Royal Navy uniforms, parachutes for use on Earth and the Mars landers. Whilst there are still 2 million metres of bridal fabrics produced, this is a declining market.



There is the annual Christmas lunch in December to look forward to; details have still to be confirmed.
The Monday Club is for over 60s and would welcome new members. If you would be interested in joining then please call Steven Smith on 01884 861037.





It has been a quiet summer for the Knights, but we have not been completely inactive. Our fortnightly Wednesday quizzes in the Sports Club have generated a steady following and our meat raffle has also proved to be popular, producing a regular income to be given to local good causes.

Withyfest

In July we catered another Withyfest event, supplying hot dogs and burgers during the afternoon and lasagne in the evening, which raised over £230 for our charity.

Curry Nights

Building on their success as the chefs for Withyfest, Alison and Sue have started curry nights in the Sports Club. The first one was in September and proved to be very popular with the customers. We hope to hold them roughly once a month, with a take away option. Keep an eye on the Knights' Facebook page and the What's On In Witheridge Facebook page for dates.

Sports Club Bingo

The Knights would like to thank the Witheridge Sports Club for the donations from the profits from their Bingo Nights. Again, keep an eye open for the posters for the next night.

Pudding Quiz

In our last article we promised a Pudding Quiz at the end of September. Unfortunately, we never had enough interest in the event, so sadly we had to cancel it.

Grant Applications: Supporting Local Initiatives

The purpose of the Knights is to raise funds to support community events and local groups that support the village and the surrounding communities. We normally call for bids for funds at the start of the year and give grants around May. If you think your club or organisation would benefit, please look out for the calling notice. That said, if you need funding for a more immediate requirement, we may be able to help.

Future Events

Apart from the quizzes, meat raffle and curry nights, the Knights hope to be active participants in the Christmas tree lighting this year. To that end, we have funded a children's Christmas card competition at the school.

Join the Knights: Make a Difference in Your Community

Becoming a Knight is a great way to meet people, support local events, and make a visible difference in the community. If you are interested in joining the Knights and helping local good causes, please call the telephone number on the back page of the Voice. The more members we have, the more funds we can generate to benefit everyone.



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Witheridge AFC

Witheridge AFC have been making the most of the continuing great weather, with plenty of football being played across the club and some fantastic performances from both our youth and senior teams.

Our Warriors youth section continues to grow, with separate boys' and girls' training and matches for children from school Years 1–9. Our girls' section is going from strength to strength, with three age groups now training every Thursday, covering Years 1 through to Year 9, supported by a brilliant group of enthusiastic coaches.

Our U11 boys have begun their NDYL Cup campaign in exciting fashion, with their first cup game going all the way to penalties and Witheridge coming out on top! Our U8 boys have started their monthly round-robin fixtures, while our U10 girls recently enjoyed a fantastic friendly against great opponents Hatherleigh.

We've also introduced specialist goalkeeper training for our youth players, alongside strength and conditioning sessions, giving our Warriors even more opportunities to develop their skills.

Warriors training costs just £2 per player, and we never want cost to be a barrier to a child playing football. We can provide free training, match fees and registration for families who need it. Simply message Tommy or Eleanor for a completely confidential chat.

As we head into winter, we'll sometimes move Warriors training to 3G pitches during bad weather, so please get in touch before coming along for the first time to check the training venue.

Men's Football

Our Witheridge AFC Men's teams are also well into their season. Our philosophy is very much about encouraging local young lads to play for and represent their village, and all new players are very welcome.

The men train Wednesdays from 7pm, with fixtures published on our social media pages and website. And if you don't fancy pulling on your boots yourself, come along on match days and support our sides! From our youngest Warriors taking their first kicks through to senior football, we're proud to be building a club where local players can enjoy football, develop and stay involved in the game.

Want to get involved?

Men's teams – Sean: 07970 372419

Warriors/boys – Tommy: 07969 485366

Girls' teams – Eleanor: 07543 966288

You can also find Witheridge AFC on Facebook for fixtures, training updates and club news.















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Witheridge Youth Club

Witheridge Youth Club, organised by the local churches, provides a friendly and welcoming place for young people to get together, make friends and, most importantly, have fun!

There is plenty going on, including games, crafts, tuck, table football, pool, table tennis, badminton, cooking and much more. Activities vary from session to session, so there is always something different to enjoy.

We were sorry to say goodbye recently to Andrea, who has helped to lead the Youth Club for more than ten years. We are very grateful for all the time, enthusiasm and support she has given over the years.

At the same time, we are delighted to welcome Tania Mayes, who has joined us to help with the older group. Our other leaders and helpers include Jane Pembles, Chris Boyles, George Westcott, Owen Tonkins and Eden Ackland, along with myself.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to the Nomansland Beer Festival for the very generous donation from the proceeds of the festival. We plan to use the money to purchase woodworking equipment and to help fund craft activities for the young people. We are extremely grateful for this support.

When do we meet?

We meet at the Parish Hall from 7.15pm–8.30pm on Thursdays, with separate evenings for the two age groups.

Years 6 & 7 – 2nd Thursday of the month

12 November • 14 January

Years 8 upwards – 4th Thursday of the month

26 November • 28 January

🎄 Joint Christmas Special – 10 December 🎄

New members are always very welcome!

For more information, please contact:

Heather Westcott - Tel: 07484 316524 - Email: heatherjwestcott@outlook.com

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Our regular opening hours

Mon	5 - 8pm
Tues	Variable
Weds	7 - 11pm Quiz nights
Thurs	6 - 11pm
Fri	5 - 11pm
Sat	2 - 11pm
Sun	4 - 9.30pm

The Club is a Members Only establishment. Membership is open to all.

Details can be found on our facebook page, by contacting the club at WitheridgeSportsClub@gmail.com or just pop in and see us!



WITHERIDGE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY Nov - Jan

The Solar Eclipse did not let us down with only very light cloud. Now the eclipse is over what do you do with the solar glasses? Provided that you have looked after them and not pierced the film lenses, they can safely be used to view the Sun at any time. It may be possible to see sunspots. These are regions of the Sun's photosphere where there is a huge upwelling of gasses and plasma from within the Sun rising to the surface. Being a cooler temperature the region shows us as a darker colour. However, sunspots always occur in pairs. The rising plasma creates a flare with arcs over part of the surface of the Sun to fall back again. The two places where the flare leaves the surface and re-enters the surface create the sunspots we see here on Earth.

In the night sky we have the winter constellations appearing. One of the best and well-known is Orion. The constellation is made up of stars in the shape of a hunter holding his club up high. One star in particular is Betelgeuse, a red supergiant star, located at the hunters' left shoulder as we look at it. The star has been photographed, and we can see the star as it really is. Positioned about 600 light years away from us it has around 20 times the mass of our Sun but is puffed out to around 800 times the size of our star. The photographs show the star as being bubbly, like looking at a round shaped raspberry. At some time soonish this star will explode into a supernova. Soonish, well sometime in the next few thousand years.

The Society has seen an increase in membership. Our future meetings will contain material suitable for those who are looking for an introduction to Astronomy.

Our meetings are monthly at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday in the Committee Room of Witheridge Parish Hall. We are not a 'highbrow' society, our aim being to introduce people to the hobby/ science/ wonders of the night sky.

Steven Smith

POLICE SURGERY UPDATE

Many will be aware of the Police Advocate Surgery that I hold in the Committee Room of the Witheridge Parish Hall. It has proved to be popular with residents and quite a few different issues have been explored and, where necessary, passed on to the police.

Most Thursday morning surgeries I am joined by County Councillor Richard Hopley which will mean that anyone who has something that they would like to raise with the County Council will be able to call in and discuss this at the surgery. The Police Advocacy will operate at the same time.

Surgery dates and times. Please note that the Thursday morning time has now moved to a 12 noon start. The evening session has now moved to the 3rd Monday at 6.00pm. The next sessions are-

November
Thursday 12th 12 noon – 1.00pm
Monday 16th 6.00pm – 7.00pm
Thursday 26th 12noon – 1.00pm

December
Thursday 10th 12 noon – 1.00pm
Monday 21st 6.00pm – 7.00pm
Thursday 24th 12noon – 1.00pm

January
Thursday 14th 12 noon – 1.00pm
Monday 18th 6.00pm – 7.00pm
Thursday 28th 12noon – 1.00pm

Here is an opportunity for anyone to come and raise issues here in the village.

Steven Smith
Witheridge Police Advocate

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Witheridge Allotment Society

Another challenging year for allotments but as every so rewarding when you harvest your own produce. Please get in touch if you would like an allotment for next year!
Has your allotment got ahead of you? Here are some practical, tips to bring paths, beds and growing areas back under control and a simple maintenance routine you can realistically keep up with. Start by clearing one safe path so the plot feels manageable, then rescue any crops that are still productive by watering deeply and removing weeds from around their roots. Cut tall weeds back before digging out roots and cover unused ground with cardboard, mulch or weed membrane. Try and focus on one small area at a time. A simple two-week plan can turn an overwhelming plot back into a productive, manageable space.
Did you know - Excellent Epsom Salts… Not only are they good for us but good for plants too! Rich in magnesium Epsom salts encourage healthy crops and strong leafy growth and also prevent yellowing of the leaves, it's fantastic for your brassicas and other leafy crops as well as tomatoes and fruit trees. Before applying Epsom salt, however, it's a good idea to test your soil to determine whether it's deficient of magnesium. Also be aware that many plants, like beans and leafy vegetables, will happily grow and produce in soils with low levels of magnesium. Plants like roses, tomatoes and peppers, on the other hand, require lots of magnesium, and therefore, are more commonly watered with Epsom salts.

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE AUTUMN 2026

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR Over the summer I organised a meeting with Witheridge Parish Council, the Community Policing Team, North Devon Council's antisocial behaviour team, housing association representatives and our Police Advocate, Stephen. It was good to hear that the authorities understand the issues and are committed to helping. However, under-reporting remains a major problem, as resources are often based on reported incidents. Please report every incident. The more we report, the clearer the picture becomes.

A CHALLENGING TIME FOR OUR FARMING COMMUNITY My thoughts are with our farming community, who are facing a difficult period. The hot summer, Bluetongue and changes to farm support are putting extra pressure on farmers. Through the Council's Policy Committee, we have written to Government calling for greater support over Bluetongue. Farmers need practical help as many face rising costs and uncertainty.

THE NEW DEVELOPMENT Alison Homes are nearing completion and aim to be off site in November. The new play area should be completed later this month. I have been assured that the large stones will be removed from the track and that it will be rolled. L&G have confirmed they remain committed to selling the shared ownership homes, although sales are understandably slow.

PLANNING I recently abstained from a vote on changes to the Council's Constitution required by new national planning rules. More applications will now be decided by planning officers rather than councillors. This includes applications for 10 or more homes, 1,000m² or more of floorspace, or sites of 1 hectare or more.

This may mean there is no public Planning Committee meeting where residents can have their views heard.

TAW & TORRIDGE RIVER CHAMPIONS AND THE LITTLE DART I am really proud to be part of the Taw & Torridge River Champions, working with the North Devon Biosphere to improve river health throughout Northern Devon. We have launched our citizen science programme, training local people to test river health. Volunteers are already monitoring the Little Dart, and we plan to install 24 hour monitoring equipment to better understand our rivers. This is about pushing for change and making sure our children can enjoy a summer dip without becoming ill. If you are already testing your local river, or would like to get involved, please get in touch.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION The Government has paused plans to reorganise local councils. The move to new unitary councils may change significantly, and the current proposals could be scrapped. District council elections will take place in May 2027 on the existing council boundaries. Thank you to everyone who has encouraged me to stand again. I really enjoy being your councillor and feel very lucky to represent our communities. It is a role I care deeply about, but it is also a demanding one and I need to think carefully about the balance with family life before deciding whether to stand again in May.

HERE WHEN YOU NEED ME You can contact me by email at peter.jones@northdevon.gov.uk, by phone or WhatsApp on 07708 187305, or through Facebook Messenger on my councillor page.

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Witheridge Parish Council
Council Information

Council & Committee Meetings

Meetings are usually held monthly on the first Thursday with additional meetings scheduled as required, see www.witheridgepc.org for full schedule and any changes.

Agendas detailing venue and start time are published at least three days in advance on noticeboards located in the Square & Drayford Green, and on the council website together with minutes of meetings. Minutes of proceedings of a council and of its committees must be kept. They are intended to be formal records of official acts and decisions, not reports, still less verbatim reports of speeches.

Planning applications received after agenda publication will be dealt with owing to a 21 day limit on the council responding to consultations from the Planning Authority. The parish council is only a consultee, and does not determine applications.

Residents can make representations in writing to the clerk or in person during the public session held at the start of a meeting. Please note in accordance with Council Standing Order 3(h) a question shall not give rise to a debate or require an immediate response

Contacting the Council :–

Tele : 07922 926017

Email : parishclerk@witheridgepc.org

Website: www.witheridgepc.org

Chair : Cllr J Harvey Tel: 07751 974412

Parish Councillors are listed in the Register of Interests on the website.

Contact Details for the District & County Councils services and councillors can all be accessed via the parish council website **Council Contact / General Info.** page.

Links to report Highways issues (potholes, block drains etc), issues with overgrown trees are also available including "A-Z" links to other services.

We**dnesday Charity Bingo.**

We have had some very busy bingos, but very happy ones. On a sad note due to personal reasons Hayley is giving up the Bingo, we thank her for all she has done over the years, but I am sure she may attend occasionally.

An extra piece of good news we have nearly come to the end of our Sponsored Guide dogs and so we decided to sponsor three more, two for our bingo and one for Shapland and Searle who supply our lovely meat. Photo includes the three pups.

Dates November 4th and 18th.

December 2nd and 16th Christmas bingo.

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We wish you all a Merry Christmas and happy new year.

Marion, David and Suzi



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W**itheridge art group, in memory of our dear friend Hazel.**

Hazel joined our art group years ago and never looked back, she was immediately one of us.

She looked forward every week to her art work, painting scenic views, profile paintings, her love for painting animals never failing to impress.

Hazel loved to display her work on our Art Group display days and shared her love of art as she enjoyed talking to the visitors and discussing the creative work of other members, she would pay attention and encourage others to join the group.

Hazel will be missed for her warm smile and her open friendly attitude to life, always helpful and ready to help whenever she could,

Good night Hazel, Thank you for being such a big part of our lives, our thoughts and prayers go your family

It was our pleasure to have shared your life, thoughts and dreams with you every week

Love from all your friends at Art xx



Short mat bowls

We meet in the Parish Hall on Thursdays at 2pm. Club woods are available for those who have not played before. The first three afternoons are free and tuition will be given.

Green fee is £3.50 per session there after

Short mat bowls is open to residents of Witheridge and surrounding villages. Children over 10 and under 16 must be accompanied. by an adult at all times. Greg Henderson



Photo - Robin Thomason

Badminton

The Badminton club meets on Fridays at 7.30pm and the cost is £3.00 per session.

Anyone interested in coming along should contact Linda Williams 07966131522



Table tennis

Come and join our small friendly group for adults aged 16 orover. All equipment is supplied and we offer tea and coffee too. Come along and pass an enjoyable hour. All levels of ability, from beginners to Olympic contenders, are most welcome.

Friday 11.00am - 12.00 in Parish Hall
Greg Henderson

Witheridge in Bloom

Hi Everybody,

Firstly I have to thank the Nomansland Festivals Committee who have so generously donated to us this year. This enables us to continue our efforts throughout the village. See our latest endeavours near the Medical Centre. We have had to replace two rotten planters on the Mole Valley site which contain a hydrangea and an acer. Not an easy task but we never give up!

On a serious note, I would like to appeal to those of you who have a little spare time to give. A sense of achievement, proud to know that you are making a difference, abundant fresh air, and a sense of belonging – what's not to like!

Contact me and we can have a chat.

Carol Northam

carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk

01884 860817

South Coombe Country Cottages

Set in a beautiful location with an indoor swimming pool

South Coombe is the perfect location for a quiet getaway. Its tranquil rural setting and country charm make it an idyllic place to stay. With its indoor swimming pool complex (comprising sauna, gym and games room as well as a 10m x 5m pool), guests can relax and take some healthy exercise inside or out.

South Coombe offers high quality cottages that sleep from two to six people with one cottage having wheelchair access. The cottages are less than a mile away from the pubs and shops in Witheridge village.

South Coombe Farm
Witheridge
Tel: 01884 860302

Email:stay@southcoombe.co.uk
Web site: www.southcoombe.co.uk



Are you seeking heartfelt support and specialised care for your loved one?

The Firs is here to help.






INDIVIDUALISED CARE:
Each resident receives customised support tailored to their unique needs and preferences.

SKILLED PROFESSIONALS:
Our expert team creates a nurturing environment where residents feel valued and secure.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT:
We encourage family involvement through open communication and welcome their participation in their loved one's care journey.

STIMULATING ACTIVITIES:
Residents enjoy a variety of engaging activities and therapeutic programs designed to promote cognitive function and social interaction.

South West Care Homes
Where Quality Comes First

The Firs, 27 Fore Street, Witheridge, EX16 8AH
01884 860 679
southwestcarehomes.co.uk

Tiverton Wellbeing

Ways to Wellbeing Session Dates
Witheridge

A relaxed and welcoming group inspired by the Five Ways to Wellbeing: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give.

Each week explores a different theme through activities such as crafts, gentle movement, creative projects, mindfulness and social connection. Join us to meet new people, try something new, boost your wellbeing, and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee in a friendly and supportive environment.



Witheridge Parish Hall
3 North Street
Witheridge
EX16 8AG



10am - 11:30am



Thursdays
12th November
26th November
10th December

Phone: 01884 210438 (leave a message)
Email: d-icb.tivertonwellbeing@nhs.net
Website: www.tiverton-pcn.nhs.uk/services/tiverton-wellbeing

Witheridge Methodist Church

As we come into Autumn, and the weather starts to change, it's important that we keep an eye out for the vulnerable members of our community. There is always a welcome at our 10.30 Sunday service but, along with Christians in Witheridge, we also have other activities that we hope you can get involved with.

We have our coffee mornings, with jigsaw library, on the first Saturday of the month, where it's good to see both familiar and new faces.
On the first Wednesday we have our community lunches; you do have to book a place with either Carol 07901 377411 or Ruth 07980 104347.

Other events include a Family Beetle Drive, with jacket potato supper, Saturday 14th Nov, at 5.30pm.
On Sunday 29th November there will be Breakfast Church, at the Parish Hall, at 10am. We will start the Posada journey then, which will continue until Christmas Eve. For more information, or if you want to take part contact Ruth.

The weekend of Dec 4th-6th we are holding a Wreath Festival and invite anyone who wishes to bring a homemade wreath in for display. The church will be open on Fri 4th, 4-6pm; Sat 5th,10-4pm, and on the Sunday afternoon there will be a family friendly nativity service at 3pm. Refreshments will be available.

As we get closer to Christmas, a group of us will be Carol Singing around the village on Saturday 19th, starting at 6pm in the Square, please come and join us.

What's happening in the village.

Parish Hall Chair	Clare Spicer 860135
Parish Hall Booking	Steven Smith 861037
Allotment Society	David Williams 07811 979488
Art group Rest a While, Wed 7.30pm	Eileen Curtis 07874 746493
Badminton Parish Hall Fri 7.30pm	Linda Williams 07966 131522
Brownies and Guides Witheridge School	Carole Chapple 855329
Charity Bingo Thelbridge Hall alt. Wed 7.30pm	Marion Crane 860530
Bell Ringing Belfry Thur 7.30pm	Ken Ramsbottom 861108
Dog training Parish Hall Mon 6pm	Jackie Devitt 01769 550155
Film Club	Margie Cosker 861695
Gardening Club Parish Hall last Wed 7pm	Jill Horwood 861323
Knights of Witheridge witheridgeknights@gmail.com	Ian Tench 07946 845838
Ladies Club Parish Hall 2nd Tues 2pm	Coral Simmonds 07759 845052
Methodist Church Sunday 10.30am	Ruth Towers 07980 104347
Monday Club Rest a While alt Mon 2pm	Alison Jeatt 561683
Rest a While Mon-Sat 10-12pm	Val Dickinson 860709
Short mat bowls Parish Hall Tues 6.30, Thur 2pm	Greg Henderson 860819
Table Tennis Parish Hall Fri 11-12pm	Greg Henderson 860819
Taekwondo Parish Hall Thur 6-7pm	Kevin Raven 07804 471165
Astronomical Society Committee Room 3rd Tue 7,30-9	Steven Smith 860137
Witheridge in Bloom carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk	
Witheridge Golf Society	Ken Ramsbottom 861108
Witheridge Parish Church Sunday 9.30am	Rev Adrian Wells 861383
Witheridge Primary School & pre-school	Head of school Miss Ratcliffe 869518
Witheridge parent and toddler group Witheridge school Wed 1.45-3,30 Fri 9.10-!0.15am	jade.chorley5@gmail.com
Witheridge Ploughing Association Gill Gilbard	gill@helebartonfarm.co.uk
Witheridge Young Farmers Emma Gilbard	emma.gilbard@markalengroup.com
Witheridge Youth Club Parish Hall 1+3rd Thur 7-8.30pm Heather Westcott - Tel: 07484 316524 - Email: heatherjwestcott@outlook.com	
Witheridge Striders Edward Fyson 07517148284	Janet Ashelford 860234
Worlington Photography group Worlington Parish Hall 3rd Tues 7.30pm	Terry Brown 861268





THE MP AT NOMANSLAND

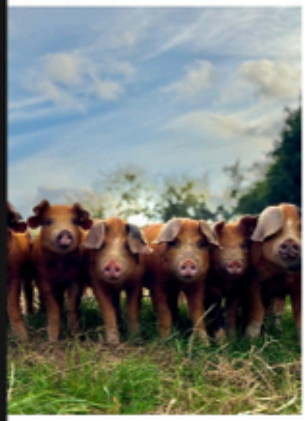
A cosy village pub, supplied by farms in and around Nomansland. From Aberdeen Angus beef, heritage woodland pork and Devon close-wool lamb at Woodscombe Farm to free-range laying hens, all within 1 mile of the pub.

Also working closely with Broadclose Farm Market Garden, bringing a vast array of fresh produce straight to your plate from only 150 metres down the road.

We bring you honest farm-to-pub meals wherever we can with something for everyone. It's never been so easy to eat local, and it's never tasted so good!

Come and cosy up by the fire or enjoy the sun in the beer garden and have a good hearty meal!







Visit our websites or find us on social media for further information and updates on what we are up to:

Broadclose Farm Market Garden
@broadclose_farm
menchine.co.uk

The Mount Pleasant Inn
Nomansland
EX16 8NN

www.themountpleasantinn.com
01884 860271

@themountpleasant