

# Witheridge Voice



Summer 2025

Issue 61



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### Advertising in Witheridge Voice

Advertising rates to include the next 4 quarterly issues of the magazine are:

Full page £119

1/2 page £65

1/3 page strip £49

1/6 page box £29

Email:

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## Editorial

Witheridge has certainly been busy over the last few weeks.

St John's Fair was a great success, and the sun shone— which was an added bonus. As I write this, the National British Cycle race hasn't taken place but with nearly 200 cyclists it will certainly be a spectacle; let's hope the inconvenience of limited parking isn't too bad.

Look out for the information from The Sports Club, on page 49, of what's happening there and their opening times.

It's good to see a contribution from the Witheridge Warriors (page 47) and we wish them every success in their forthcoming matches.

We collected a rescue dog at the beginning of March, you may have seen us taking him for a walk. This has meant that we're seeing the village from a different aspect, walking rather than driving, it's then that we noticed how glorious the flowers look. Big thank you to carol Northam and her Witheridge in Bloom team !!

### **Deadline for articles for the Spring Issue is 4th September.**

Please let me have your articles, by email before that date, so I can edit the magazine and have it with the printers in good time.

It is important that this deadline is kept to 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.

Scarecrow Trail October 2025

Theme—holidays.

Contact Ruth if you'd like to take part.

## Parish Hall Update. Exciting Times for the Parish Hall!

We're hoping to give the Parish Hall a much-needed exterior facelift in the near future — it's a very exciting prospect! While nothing is confirmed just yet, we'll share more details as soon as we can.

In the meantime, the **interior is already looking fantastic**. A huge thank you goes to **Alan Thomas**, who completed all the painting single-handedly, and to **Carolina Blinds**, who provided and generously fitted the beautiful new blinds — all on one of the hottest days! The transformation is wonderful, we hope you'll agree.

### **Please continue to support the Hall.**

To keep improving this vital space at the heart of our village, we need your help — whether that's by hiring the hall for a party, attending an event, or even joining the committee.

If you have ideas for events or activities that could take place in the Hall, I'd love to hear from you.

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## Ladies Group.

A great meeting in April. June and Sue showed us how to paint on glass, using special paint pens and stencils. We all participated and found it a restful pastime. Some very artistic glass wares were produced. A new venture for us.

In May we again welcomed Steven Smith, on this occasion his talk was entitled 'The Headless Carriage!', he regaled us with the legends regarding ghostly headless coachmen driving headless horses. It was also very interesting to hear about the history of transport; from horse driven carriages, steam carriages, steam lorries, canal barges, plus trains, and onwards to the auto mobile with diesel, petrol and electric vehicles.

In June we enjoyed an outing to Tiverton (didn't it pour with rain!). We had an enjoyable lunch at Mrs Gill's in Market Walk, followed by a visit to the Happy Glaze Pottery in Gold Street. We chose an item of pottery and then proceeded to paint it, a very therapeutic occupation. The items will be fired and then collected. We can't wait to see our finished articles!

Our club also has a book club and lunch club. Why not come along to see what we are up to! A warm welcome awaits you.

We meet on the 2nd Tuesday in the month. Parish Hall 2–4 pm.  
Except in June, September and December when we meet elsewhere.  
Coral Simmonds



## Witheridge in Bloom

Hi Everybody,

**We have now installed our new raised beds both at Willow Rise and Juniper Way with the help of funding from Alison Homes and The Knights of Witheridge both of which have received our thanks.**

**Two volunteers have come forward to look after these beds. There must be others who are thinking 'shall I give it a go'. If you can spare a little time and are proud to call Witheridge your home , why not!!!**

**Contact me.**

**Carol Northam.**

**[carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk](mailto:carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk)**

**01884 860817**





The Rest A While is open Monday to Saturday from 10-12. Come in for a cuppa and a chat and mingle with like minded people. We have had a busy few months, as we are fundraising for our building and renovation fund.

A jumble sale was held in April which raised over £100. Marion and David Crane donated the takings from one of their popular bingo evenings at Thelbridge, on 21<sup>st</sup> May. This raised £190, so many thanks to them for their donation. We have also received £100 grant from the Knights of Witheridge which will go towards a filing cabinet. Many thanks to them

On the eightieth anniversary of VE day on May 8th, we celebrated in style. The Day Centre was decorated with flags and bunting. Free refreshments were provided including spam sandwiches!! and we played all the old wartime favourites and had a good old sing song. We raised £130 in donations which has been given to the charity Help the Heroes.

The Rest A While is now used for various activities.

**The Men's Den** takes place fortnightly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. of the month. All the chaps are given a warm welcome by Sean and Peter.

**A Bring and Buy stall** is held on the last Friday of the month offering seasonal produce and home made goodies.

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month we host **a live music session** with local musicians from 10-12. Always great fun.

(continued on next page )

A new activity now taking place here on Tuesday afternoons from 4.30pm -5.15pm is **Gentle Chair Pilates**.. The class is taken by Rebecca Cunningham, a very highly qualified, and experienced Pilates teacher. Such good gentle exercise and great fun. If interested please call Pat on 07505255096

If you have 2 hours a fortnight to spare, we are always looking for volunteers to join our happy band of helpers. We are a friendly bunch, so please contact Val tel no 860709 if interested.

**Unfortunately on the night of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June we had a flood in the Rest A While, which caused significant water damage. We were closed until 30<sup>th</sup> June to rectify the damage. Thanks to the help of our wonderful committee who organised professional cleaning and repairs, we are now up and running again. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused by the closure to our regulars and everyone who pops in.**

Pat Grant



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## Witheridge Golf Society



On May 7th we had a lovely sunny day for the Spring Trophy but sadly said goodbye to a long serving member Norman James who died end of March.

The Spring Trophy was won by Team D: Ken Ramsbotham, Jeff Souch, Peter Smith & Stuart Gedrim

The Wooden Spoon by Team C: Mike Merrigan, Tom Armstrong, Jacky Harvey,.

Nearest to Pin: Stuart Gedrim.

Thanks to Waterbridge Golf Club for a good days golf and a great meal afterwards.

The next meetings is Wednesday 10th September.

### NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Tel: Ken Ramsbotham 01884 861108 Mob: 07702226287

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## Film Club



Dear all Witheridge Film Goers! Thank you for your continued support, although lately numbers have been a bit lower. I hope this is because of the sunny evenings, so consequently we aren't showing films during July and August. If numbers continue to drop I might consider putting films on every other month. Quite a lot of effort goes into showing films, but if I am running at a loss I am reluctant to put that effort in.

We are not showing The Salt Path on September 13th because nobody is quite sure how truthful it is! Instead we are showing The Penguin Lessons starring Steve Coogan who rescues an orphaned penguin.

No film in October, but on November 15th we will be putting on Mr Burton, a biographical drama about Richard Burton starring Toby Jones and Harry Lawtey as Richard.

Dear David has got the chairs from the stage every film night, but feels he is unable to do this any more. Thank you David! I would be grateful if maybe a couple of people could volunteer to do this. It just means coming half an hour earlier to help put the chairs out. Thank you.

So, hopefully see you all on September 13th and thank you again to our stalwarts!

Margie

# WITHERIDGE PARISH HALL



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## Summertime Reflections

As the days grow longer and the sun warms both skin and spirit, summertime arrives as a welcome gift. For many, it's a season of rest, reflection, and re connection — with nature and with loved ones.

The fields turn golden, hedgerows buzz with life, and the gentle hum of tractors working under a wide blue sky reminds us of the rhythms of nature — and of the Creator who set them in motion. Gardens bloom in full colour, children's laughter echoes in the parks, and the scent of barbecues and fresh-cut grass fills the air. It's in these simple pleasures that we often feel closest to the beauty of God's creation. Summer invites us to slow down — to sit in the shade of a tree, take long evening walks, or simply enjoy the stillness of a quiet morning.

For our parish, summertime may bring a slight pause in our usual routines, but it also offers new opportunities. Whether it's creating a community picnic, volunteering at a holiday club, or offering a cool drink to a passerby, small acts of kindness shine brightly in the summer sun. Let this season be a time to renew not just our bodies, but our hearts. Why not try saying a prayer on a beach walk, or find God in the whisper of a breeze. As Psalm 74 reminds us, "You have made summer and winter." Each season is a gift, and summer's gift is joy. May this summertime renew our sense of peace and gratitude, and help us see God's hand in every field, flower, and friendly smile. Enjoy the laughter of the season and let us carry the warmth of Christ with us wherever we go

Adrian

## **The Little Library**

It has been lovely to see the library being used by so many members of the village. I try and change the books on a weekly basis, so please pop back if you don't find a book you like the first time.

We currently need books for little people to enjoy (birth to 6). If you have any books that your child/children or grandchildren have grown out of and happy to donate them, please pop them in the box next to the library.

We have had lots of book donations, many thanks, it wouldn't work without your support. Each book is given a sticker and placed either in the library or in storage ready to be put out. It's great to see some books being donated, read and donated again. Please just a quick reminder that we can only take popular fiction and children's books. I hope in the future to apply for grants or fundraise to buy new books for all to enjoy. If anyone can help with this, please let me know.

Sam 861092



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## Witheridge and District Garden Club

David Usher came to talk to us in April about the Care and Maintenance of Shrubs. David was Head Gardener at Hestercombe Gardens for over 20 years and gave us an informative and amusing talk. He brought with him a selection of tools and an assortment of cut branches to demonstrate how to cut and prune them properly.

When planting a new tree, always dig the hole big enough for the roots to be spread out and deep enough so the soil comes up to where the tree was planted in its container, make sure there are no rocks or large pebbles at the bottom of the hole, and if planting in winter add some bonemeal and some root feed. If at any other time of the year then Gromore plus root feed will be sufficient. It's a good idea to water the hole before planting the tree, as well as watering it in once planted. David's recommendation was to buy the best tools you can afford and make sure they are sharp, particularly secateurs and shears. A tree saw is a useful tool to have especially when it comes to removing dead or old wood right at the base.

At our May meeting, Dr. Cathy Horsely, who is the Wilder Communities Officer at Devon Wildlife Trust, gave us a very interesting and informative talk on how to get our gardens wildlife friendly. Cathy is an ecologist and worked at the Bumblebee Conservation Trust before joining the Devon Wildlife Trust. Their aim is to bring back wildlife which has worryingly declined since the 1970's – so far, they have had success with Beavers and Pine Martens. If all the gardens in Britain were put together, they would cover an area bigger than 6 Nature reserves.

The main points to consider in helping pollinators are food, water and shelter. Food comes from flowering plants providing pollen and nectar. In Spring when insects are coming out of hibernation, they need to feed and blossom is an important resource for them, daffodils also provide a rich supply of food. You can find out more about plants for gardens by contacting [www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk) - loads of information and leaflets available.

Another site is [wildercommunities@devonwildlifetrust.org](mailto:wildercommunities@devonwildlifetrust.org)

## Garden Club outing to The Garden House, June 2025

Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> saw a group of Garden Club members board the coach for a trip to The Garden House in Yelverton. The weather was fine on the way down, but just before we arrived it started to rain and continued to pour down for the rest of our visit, such a shame as the Gardens looked lovely. We moved from shelter to shelter, but in the end we gave up and went into the Café for very welcome hot drinks and food. I did try some photography and managed to get a few shots, but they certainly did not do justice to the many beautiful and varied plants.



These two are what we managed to see through the rain.



This is what we should have seen!!!



(continued on next page )

After lunch, we got back onto the coach and travelled about 2 miles to Wildside Nursery, run by Keith and Ros Wiley – Keith was a former Head Gardener at The Garden House. Those brave enough to tackle the elements again went into the Nursery.

At our June meeting, we had a return visit from Saul Walker who told us about his time as Manager of the S CHelsea FLower SHow.RHS Chelsea FlowerShow, Saul is currently Head Gardener at Stonelands House in Dawlish – and the Garden Club are planning to visit there next year.

He became the Show Manager in 2014. There is an 18 month planning cycle for the Show, which includes a number of planning meetings with the various gardeners to ensure they are meeting the brief, have the funding available – for example a “Best in Show” garden can cost up to one million pounds! The minimum cost for a Show garden is £250,000. There is a 6 week build in the run-up to the Show; the Show itself is on for a week and the exhibitors are then only allowed one week to dismantle their gardens. Most of the gardens are relocated elsewhere.

The Flower Show started over 100 years ago and was originally known as The Great Spring Show held at Kensington for twenty-six years but in 1888 the RHS decided to move the show to the Temple Gardens in the heart of London. It was then moved to the grounds of the Royal Hospital in Chelsea for a one-off event. It proved such a good site for an exhibition that the Great Spring Show was moved there in 1913, where it has been ever since.

### **Programme for the rest of the year:**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July Witheridge in Bloom. John and Carol Northam

### **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August Summer Show**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September Rosemoor. Jon Webster

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October Bees and Bee Keeping. Tiverton Bee Keepers

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November AGM, followed by a Quiz and Social Evening.

Jill Horwood

# Witheridge Garden Club

# Summer Show

Parish Hall Witheridge  
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## Parish council Report Summer 2025

I begin with an update on my annual report. The bow top railings have now been erected around the tots playground in the parish hall, a huge improvement to the old post and wire I think you will agree, and apart from a few snagging problems, which are being attended to by the contractor they are functioning well. These were funded by the 106 money from the developers of Willow rise. A replacement Springer "Betty Bee" has been newly installed and once the safer surfacing has hardened will be ready for the tots to play on. I would ask that bicycles are not be taken into the playground and ridden over the tots' adventure area. One child was injured last Saturday doing just that so please leave your bikes outside of the play park and let the young tots enjoy their play.

Your Parish council are one step closer to obtaining the Northern Open space at Willow Rise. Alison Homes have agreed to pay our solicitor costs and have covered the old sales office parking area with soil and seeded it. However the council will monitor the soil grading as it does contain lots of large stones and old broken bricks which need to be removed.

The bus shelter at Lakelands has finally been upgraded to make it now weatherproof.

The contractor has now commenced the renewal of the Parish toilet block roof. Scaffolding was erected on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and the work will take approximately three weeks weather permitting. I apologise for the parking area that has to be used but it will only be of short duration.

Another apology to the children that the skate ramps at the adventure playground have not yet been removed for repair. We were promised that they would be taken in the next two weeks about six weeks ago!! However will try to expedite it ASAP.

(continued on next page)

Nothing yet scheduled by county highways for the requested repairs to the B3137 through and out of Nomansland to Cruys Morchard also the back route to the Link Road along Farm Flowers hill. Subsidence is becoming a huge problem along the smaller lanes as the tractors become larger, heavier and wider breaking up the sides of the road thereby causing sunken sides with a prominent ridge on which the tarmac splits open and smaller vehicles are in danger of grounding. Please keep reporting the above and damaging potholes to the county highways via the parish council website.

Our new county council representative Mr Richard Hopley although not present at our July meeting emailed that he has requested a speed limit of 20mph to be enforced through the narrow part of Fore Street. Also there was representation by parishioners concerned with the speed of tractors along Church Street and vehicles passing the parish hall entrance in north Street endangering children who may be leaving from the playground. The Parish council will seek advice from highways/police on participating in the 20s plenty campaign and the erecting of local highways signage.

Mr Hopley also stated that the railings across the Bow, the passageway that leads from Fore Street to the Parish Hall, will be reduced to just one section to allow access for mobility scooters. This will alleviate the need for them to negotiate the narrows to give them access to the square. The parish council have been asking for this for nearly four years so let's hope now the work will be finally completed. The residents alongside the new Zebra Crossing lights in Fore Street suffering from the light pollution will be pleased to know that County will be installing light shields.

Councillor Mr Fox held a meeting in the Parish hall in May with the exiting idea of creating a community orchard on the strip of green land at Cannington Road .A green space that we could all use; all could nurture and benefit the whole community. To make it happen we were looking for a core group of local people who were willing to be part of a team of volunteers to take this forward. Using the land as a community

space with the fruit trees and picnic benches was necessary to secure funding for the project. It was a very successful and enthusiastic meeting resulting in at least twenty people leaving their contact details to enable the project to get off the ground. Disappointingly however the land was sold by Stags before our funding was secured from North Devon council. Our District councillor Mr. Jones has however identified a possible new site in the village that could become our new community space and is working on it becoming a reality.

I am sure you are all aware that not only has the church clock been rather sporadic at retaining the correct time but the quarter and strike have also failed. These automatic winding units are 23 years old and are now obsolete. The engineer's recommendation is that the two 240v epicyclic automatic winding units, quarter and strike, be manufactured in their workshops together with barrel sprockets and installed above the clock movement. The automatic winding units do come with a ten year guarantee. The Parish council agreed to accept Cumbria Clocks quotation at our July meeting and hope that the engineer can carry out the repairs soon.

The Parish council have an interregnum in August, however necessary and urgent items will be delegated to the chairman, vice chair and the clerk.

I hope you all have a good summer, the weather is certainly playing ball at the moment, let it stay for the school holidays please!

Jacky Harvey chairman Witheridge parish council

## Witheridge Rocks

This term the Year 6 & 7's have been meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month, and the Year 8's upwards on the 4th Thursday of the month.

Whilst some may be disappointed that they cannot come to youth club more often, I think you will agree that the atmosphere at both sessions is now much calmer. We will make our decision about the future during the Summer holidays and let you know via Facebook and/or email.

Our new pool table is getting lots of use, and our craft activities continue to be popular.

Recently you may have heard the Year 6 & 7's having a go at bell ringing. They all behaved well and learnt a lot. Who knows, maybe we will have some regular junior bell-ringers as a result. Our young people only rang the smallest bell. From the picture of the weights of the bells I'm sure you can see why.

A big thank you to the Knights of Witheridge for their donation which has enabled us to purchase lots of storage boxes, to keep our equipment dry and organised in the shed.



**East Worlington Primary School**, for children aged 2-11 years, is in the village of East Worlington, very close to Witheridge.

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Chulmleigh Academy Trust

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## Monday Club

The Monday Club is for over 60s and meets in the Rest A While. We have a variety of speakers and arrange coach day trips. Recent days out have been to Tavistock and Dartmouth, both were thoroughly enjoyable days.

Trips are advertised with posters around the village and on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/218235022064167> <https://www.witheridgevoice.org/what-s-on>, <http://nextdoor.co.uk>

Upcoming trips leaving from the Witheridge Square at 9am are:

11<sup>th</sup> August Buckfast Abbey & Newton Abbot

15<sup>th</sup> September Padstow

13<sup>th</sup> October Truro

Non-members are welcome to join us and do not need to be over 60!  
Anyone that would like to book a place on the trips, please call Sheila  
on 01884 860227



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## Knights of Witheridge

The purpose of the Knights is to raise funds to support clubs and organisations in Witheridge and the surrounding area. In the past year, the fortnightly Knights' Quizzes and Raffle have raised over £1300 and our Charity Shoot, courtesy of Eastway Farm, raised a further £1200. We also received a generous grant of £1500 from Allison Homes to fund the activities of the Knights.

In the last article of the Voice, and in the Village Facebook pages, we asked local groups to bid for support from the Knights. We had a fantastic response and received eleven applications (one of which was subsequently withdrawn). As a result, I am happy to report that, at the Annual General Meeting in May, the Knights were able to make the following grants:

    Nomansland Cricket Club £200 towards the replacement of  
        their batting nets

    Rest A While Day Centre £100 towards the purchase of filing  
        cabinets.

    Witheridge In Bloom £200 for new flower troughs for Willow  
        Heights.

    Witheridge Rocks Youth Club £200 for storage units.

    Witheridge Voice £400 to help offset the increased printing  
        costs of this magazine.

    Witheridge Parish Hall £260 to pay for the entertainer at the  
        2025 Children's Christmas  
        Party.

    Witheridge Academy PTFA £300 towards the costs of a Colour  
        Run & Summer Fayre

    St John's Fair £300 to sponsor a children's entertainer.

    Thelbridge Parish Hall £500 as a contribution to the restoration  
        fund.

    Witheridge Sports Club £500 towards the cost of music and a  
        children's entertainer at a  
        Summer event.



Some of these grants have already been distributed and the remainder will be given once the event is confirmed. In addition, we have been able to lend some of our fund-raising equipment to other organisations to help them in their own fund raising. None of this would be possible without the generous support of the people of Witheridge and the surrounding area, who come to our events or raise funds for us. On behalf of the Knights, I would like to say thank you everyone for your generosity. If you want to help us raise more funds, please come along to one of our events such as the fortnightly quiz in the Sports Club. The dates for the next quizzes are:

6 & 20 August,  
3 & 17 September  
1, 15 & 29 October

Finally, if you would like to join the Knights and help us to raise funds for local good causes, please call the telephone number in the back page of the Voice. The more of us there are, the more fund raising we can do.



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## Witheridge Methodist Church

In the Christian church the Day of Pentecost was celebrated, this year, on June 8th and is often thought of as the birth of the church.

For many churches this is seen as a time of growth and development.



At the Methodist church we continue to work on reaching out into the community, this isn't always easy as there aren't many of us. We've recently had to cancel our coffee morning, at the beginning of July, and then our community lunch in August. We do apologise for this as we know how both events are appreciated but, in each case we didn't have enough people to make it possible.

With **Christians in Witheridge** we try to plan special services and events that are aimed more at people who don't regularly go to church, or are happy to worship in a different way.

The next events are

Café church at the Parish Hall on Sunday 31st August at 4.30pm. This will be a short, family friendly, act of worship with tea and cake. Do join us if you can.

Then on Sunday 5th October we have our next Cider and Sing. If you saw any of the Glastonbury coverage of 'Assembly Bangers' it's a little bit like that. A chance to sing some well known hymns, listen to a short talk, buy a pasty and cider (other drinks are available) before singing a few more hymns. This will be the 3rd one of these we've held, and have been very enjoyable.

**Next events.** Aug 2nd, Sept 6th and October 4th Coffee morning and Jigsaw library, 10am-1pm.

Community lunch Sept 3rd and October 1st. Please book a place with Ruth 07980104347 or Carol 07901377411

## Witheridge C of E Academy Primary School: Summer Term Highlights

As the summer term draws to a close, Witheridge Primary School has once again been a hub of learning, enrichment, and community activity. From academic milestones to memorable trips and events, the past few weeks have provided plenty to celebrate.

### Academic Success

This term saw the release of Year 6 SATs results, and Witheridge pupils achieved an impressive combined score of **88% in Reading, Writing, and Maths**. This places the school at the top of the TEAM Multi-Academy Trust and significantly above both county and national averages.

Staff attribute these results to consistent, high-quality teaching from Early Years through to Year 6, as well as the dedication of pupils and support from families. Individual results have now been shared with Year 6 families alongside end-of-year reports.

### Sports and Activities

Pupils took part in a wide range of sporting events this term. Highlights included:



- **KS2 Football Tournament** – Witheridge boys' team placed first, while the girls' team gave a strong performance and showed great teamwork.
- **Sports Day** – Held in warm weather and supported by parents and carers, the event was a great success.

**Netball and Cricket Tournaments** – Class 4 pupils represented the school with enthusiasm and team spirit.



Younger pupils also enjoyed their FSU Sports Day, with older children stepping in as leaders and helpers to support the morning's activities.

## **Enrichment and Learning Beyond the Classroom**

Enrichment has continued to play a key role at Witheridge this term:

- **Spirited Arts Week** gave pupils the opportunity to express their ideas creatively through art.
- **Class 4's DT Day at Blundells** provided hands-on experience in design and technology.

**Beach visits and museum trips** offered valuable real-world learning experiences.

**Wildside Residential** is taking place for Class 3 pupils, offering outdoor education and team-building.

These activities are part of the school's ongoing effort to provide a broad and engaging curriculum.

## **Transitions and Staffing**

Transition arrangements have been underway to prepare pupils for the next academic year. Children spent time in their new classes during a whole-school Transition Day, and feedback from pupils and staff was very positive.

Staff also met for a handover session to ensure a smooth start in September. Parents will be invited to “Meet the Teacher” sessions at the beginning of the autumn term.

Staffing for 2025–2026 has been confirmed, with Miss Coles joining Class 1. The school also bids farewell to Mr Booth, who is moving on to a role in a specialist SEND provision. He leaves with thanks for his contribution and best wishes for the future.

## **Community and Events**

The school has continued to engage with the local community.

Highlights included:

- **St John’s Fair** – Pupils participated in the village parade and performed at the Village Hall.
- **Church Coffee Morning** – A well-attended event supported by parents and hosted by the local church.
- **Reception Starters Evening** – Welcoming new families to the school for September 2025.

## **Looking Ahead**

As the term ends, the school is preparing for:

- **Class 4 Performance and Rocksteady Concert**
- **FSU Graduation**
- **Year 6 Leavers’ Service at the Church**

## **End-of-Year Awards Ceremony**

## **Thank You**

The school would like to thank parents, carers, and the wider community for their ongoing support this year. It has been a busy and rewarding term, and staff look forward to welcoming pupils back in September for another successful year of learning and growth.

Kind regards,

*Miss Ratcliffe*

*Head of School*

*Witheridge C of E Academy*

*Part of TEAM Academy Trust*

*01884 860518*

*<https://www.witheridge.devon.sch.uk/>*



# 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](http://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](mailto:parishclerk@witheridgepc.org)

**Website:** [www.witheridgepc.org](http://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.



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## **ANOTHER YEAR OF PROGRESS FOR THE MID-DEVON MESSENGER**

The local charity of many years standing, Mid Devon Messenger (MDM), held its 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting at the Mid Devon Indoor Bowls Centre recently when its Chair, Helen McIntosh reported another year of progress. Around 70 listeners, volunteers and guests attended.

MDM originated as a talking newspaper for the visual impaired and while it continues to benefit those affected, it is now available to people who are print disabled by other medical reasons such as stroke, Parkinson's Disease, Motor Neurone Disease, rheumatoid arthritis, dyslexia and the early stages of dementia.

Free access is by mail, email, online or smartphone and a volunteer visitor with a technician is available to meet with potential listeners in their own homes. There are also now social groups that meet regularly each month including indoor bowling, macular support, a walking group, a book club and friendship groups.

Helen said she had been thrilled with the feedback received from listeners but she emphasised that issuing the weekly editions of the MDM newsletter could not be done without a tremendous input from the many volunteers - reading the local news, recording and producing the editions and getting them out to around 100 beneficiaries. "I'm always in awe of our volunteers and their commitment to MDM" said Helen and that included those organising the "tea and cakes" occasional get-togethers of listeners and volunteers and the appetising refreshments at the AGM. Sue Herniman is due special mention as Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Specific mention was made of Yvonne and Nigel Tupman, who have visited all new listeners and fixed their technical glitches where necessary while Jenny David has successfully renewed our Facebook page. MDM has benefitted from Carol Brown's long involvement as Listener's Representative and from Rod Sparkes as long time Lead Producer.

(continued on next page)

Helen was delighted to announce that MDM is a finalist in the BBC Radio Devon “Making a Difference” project. Listen in for the result! Treasurer Rose Chanin reported a healthy financial situation. Following a legacy of £2500 and further donations totalling £1300 from the Antediluvian Order of the Buffaloes plus £300 from Tiverton Town Council. However all donations large and small are very much welcomed.

As to the Officers, there were no changes for Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary (Mike Kelly).

Attendees were entertained by local musical group. “In Harmony” comprising the trio of Kathy Welden, Lyn Taylor and Lynne Guest who sang songs popular in the sixties and seventies much to the delight of their audience. They were warmly thanked by Helen as Chair.

The whole event was very enjoyable as all those involved with MDM had the opportunity to spend time with each other and, in some cases, meet for the first time either as listeners or volunteers.

For more information about MDM go to <https://middevonmessenger.org.uk/> or look up the MDM Facebook page “Mid Devon Messenger”

Photo by Nigel Tupman



# WEST COUNTRY PICTURES



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Sarah Vertigan on 01884 860844  
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## WITHERIDGE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

We start off with some night-time fireworks – meteor showers. The Alpha Capricornids are yellow slow fireballs active until the 15th August, the Delta Aquariids are active until the 23<sup>rd</sup> August, and the Perseids can be seen peaking on the 12<sup>th</sup> August with many bright fast meteors with trains and associated with Comet Swift-Tuttle. Also, this month look for the Milky Way as it meanders through Cygnus. Sweeping along the Milky Way with binoculars will reveal a treasure trove of stars, far too many to count.

September provides us with a good opportunity to observe Neptune, the furthest planet in the Solar System. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> it will be at its closest, but a telescope will be needed to see the planet at mag.+7.7, located 2.5° to the left of Saturn. Also look out for a total lunar eclipse on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The Moon rises just as totality is ending (7.53pm) with the eclipse ending at 8.56pm.

October provides us with more meteor showers. The Draconids on the 8<sup>th</sup> Associated with Comet 21/P Giacobini-Zinner, and the Orionids on the 22<sup>nd</sup> but visible for most of the month and associated with Comet Halley.

With the onset of autumn, we have a good opportunity to see our nearest giant neighbour, M31 the Andromeda Galaxy. It is 2.5 million light years away from us, which means that when we look at the M31 we see it as it was 2.5 million years ago. It is a spiral galaxy much like our own and has twice as many stars as our own galaxy, but the total mass is about the same. M31 is approaching us on course for a cosmic collision, the outer fringes of the two galaxies are already touching. The main merger will happen in about 4 billion years' time.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> October British Summer Time ends, and the clocks change by going back one hour.

The Witheridge Astronomical Society meets monthly at 7.30pm on the third Thursday 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. If you have an interest do come along and join us. No experience or knowledge is needed. We have kindly been given some telescopes which are available to borrow.

Steven Smith

## Police Advocacy Surgery - dates and times

The surgery is held in the Witheridge Parish Hall Committee Room. The door will be wide open unless it is pouring down. Do feel able to call in. An Amnesty Box will be present should you wish to dispose of knives, etc.

Monday August 4<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 7pm

Thursday August 14<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Thursday August 28<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Monday September 1<sup>st</sup> from 6pm to 7pm

Thursday September 11<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Thursday September 25<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Monday October 6<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 7pm

Thursday October 9<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Thursday October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11am to 12 noon

Have you been a victim of crime, seen something and wish to report it, or any other police related matter, please feel able to come along to a surgery to talk to me about your concerns. I act as a 'middle man' between the public and the police. If your issue is of an urgent nature ring 999 immediately. Many had the opportunity to listen to the talk on Cyber Crime by Mike Harrison. Should you wish a copy of his notes let me have your email and I shall send them on.

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## WITHERIDGE WARRIORS YFC

Witheridge Warriors is a brand-new youth football club providing coaching and teams for boys and girls from the ages of 5 (year 1) through to age 10 (year 6). We aim to provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment in which children can flourish both on and off the pitch. Located in the heart of Witheridge, and affiliated with Witheridge AFC, all our coaches are fully DBS checked, first aid, safeguarding trained and hold FA level 1 coaching badge which allows us to provide structured group sessions tailored to the individual needs of our players. We provide a clearly established pathway from children's age group football all the way through to men's football. As a club we encourage an ethic of teamwork and camaraderie through our words and actions and provide an environment that allows the children to grow and develop not only their footballing ability but also some important life skills. We cater to all abilities and aim to provide additional coaching for goalkeepers as well as separate age group sessions. We pride ourselves on being a friendly, family-oriented club with our members forming strong lifelong bonds. If you are interested in bringing your child along, or you'd like more information on what we offer, please reach out to us at

[Witheridgewarriorsyfc@gmail.com](mailto:Witheridgewarriorsyfc@gmail.com)



(Continued on next page)

First 2 weeks free, then an annual sign up fee of £30, you will receive a free training kit on your first sign up (t-shirt, shorts and socks), a weekly £2 training fee and when games are played a £2 match fee. Training is on Thursdays 6:00pm - 7:00pm, every week excluding 2 weeks over the Christmas period (and any cancelled sessions due to pitch preservation).

Current team contacts:

U7's Tommy Butcher 07969485366

U10's Michael Woolacott 07908204243

Safeguarding officer Phoenix Griffith 07471016820

Enquiries [witheridgewarriorsyfc@gmail.com](mailto:witheridgewarriorsyfc@gmail.com)

Links:

Sign up (inc training kit sizes). <https://forms.gle/7DZP7cZvzG2V75rt9>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560352928333>

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# Witheridge Sports Club

A welcoming community run members sports and social club. We support Witheridge AFC and other sports clubs in the area, as well as regularly holding music and games events for all ages.



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](mailto:WitheridgeSportsClub@gmail.com)  
or just pop in and see us!

## Our regular opening hours

Mon	5 - 8pm
Tues	Variable
Weds	7 - 11pm Quiz nights
Thurs	6 - 11pm
Fri	5 - 11pm
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Residents' well-being is paramount at The Firs. We've appointed a dedicated Well-Being Coordinator who curates a comprehensive 7-day activities schedule. This includes a range of engaging group events, one-on-one activities, and even the planning of major events like our annual summer fete.



*My mother was taken into hospital last week. I was walking out of the cubicle when a nurse asked in which care home my mother was a resident. I said The Firs and the nurse said to me "I am not surprised it's The Firs as you can see that your mother is so well cared for, her skin is soft and she is clean and well kept." Christine.*

If you think you can make a difference to our residents at The Firs and change their lives and yours for the better, apply online here: [www.southwestcarehomes.co.uk/apply](http://www.southwestcarehomes.co.uk/apply)



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## 1<sup>st</sup> Witheridge Brownies and Guides



Brownies and Guides have had a busy term, they have been working hard on badge work and have had a presentation evening when they all had their badges presented and several girls said their promise. They also took part in the parade for the St John's Fayre. We ended the term with a treasure hunt and have had several nights when we can go outside. The Guides are off to camp next weekend and are joining with 3rd Tiverton Guides.





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WHERE QUALITY COMES FIRST

## **District Councillor Update – July 2025**

What an incredible summer it has been so far! There have been some wonderful community events throughout the ward, including the St John Fayre in Witheridge. A huge well done and thank you to those who make these important local events happen!

### **Update on Affordable/Social Homes at Benson Grange, Witheridge**

More social and affordable rent houses have been released, with the majority going to those with a local need. If you've been unsuccessful in previous bidding rounds, do keep trying—there are likely more properties than local demand in most categories, the exception to this may be one beds where there is a high demand for limited properties. Ensure your application details are correct, as errors may have led to missed opportunities. Once Witheridge needs are met, applications will open to neighbouring parishes and then to North Devon, so please spread the word.

### **Local Grants**

L&G, which has taken ownership of the new development, is offering £15.5K in community grants. Details are on my Facebook page. This is in addition to the £15.5K awarded to local groups at the end of last year from Allison Homes.

### **A New County Councillor**

County council elections took place on the 1st of May. As your District Councillor, this did not impact me, I remain your District Councillor until 2027.

County Councillor Jeremy now takes his well-earned retirement after 25 years of serving his community. Thank you, Jeremy, for representing your community in a challenging and often thankless position.

Your new County Councillor is Richard Hopley. You can contact Richard at [richard.hopley@devon.gov.uk](mailto:richard.hopley@devon.gov.uk). He is your contact for issues relating to the County Council, including roads and transport, social care, and education, to name just a few key areas.

.(continued on next page)

## **Land at Cannington Road and Community Orchard Project**

In May, a public meeting was held by Parish Councillor Woody Fox to form the initial group interested in a potential community orchard project. Amenity land at Cannington Road was on the market, and with Section 106 open space funding available for such a project, plans were quickly made to look at purchasing the land.

Unfortunately, despite positive conversations, the owner chose to sell the land to an unknown party. Despite this setback, the community orchard project has new shoots of hope. I am in discussions with North Devon Council about the use of land adjoining the new public open space at Willow Rise.

### **Issues Relating to the New Development**

Many of you have contacted me about issues relating to the footpaths resulting from the new development. Concerns included excess water and drainage issues, the length of the proposed closures, and the possibility of re-routing.

I have been liaising closely with the developer to relay concerns and bring improvements where possible. This has included the re-routing of one section.

I have also received concerning reports of flooding and severe drainage issues. There is an ongoing Council investigation to look further into these issues.

### **Local Government Reform**

A public consultation is taking place to hear your thoughts on the proposals to merge District Councils and the County Council, creating a unitary authority.

I am deeply concerned that this will impact the services we have and reduce the voice of local communities, with fewer local representatives. More info is available on my Facebook page. Do feedback to the consultation.

## Buses

Some improvements have been seen, however there have been recent issues, including connection problems in South Molton. Do use the post on Facebook to log any issues—it is vital we have a record. And do pass on your concerns to County Councillor Richard.

## Section 106 Projects

I'm pleased to share that applications are now being submitted for the Section 106 community fund, which is money available from the development.

Funds will be awarded for updates to the village hall, to improve and preserve the facilities for the coming years.

The Sports Field Committee working group is developing a project to improve facilities. The Parish Council is investigating the feasibility of a state-of-the-art skatepark. An update and refurbishment of the existing pump trail is also anticipated.

## Here When You Need Me!

Like and follow me on Facebook to stay up to date. You can contact me via Facebook Messenger, email me at [Peter.jones@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.jones@northdevon.gov.uk), or call/WhatsApp me at 07708 187 305.

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Contact: Terry Brown – (01884) 861268



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## **Devon Open Studio – Visit local Artist Jenny Nash at her studio in September**

Jenny Nash lives in Witheridge and paints seascapes and landscapes, inspired by the coastlines of Devon and Somerset, local farmland and the Exmoor and Dartmoor national parks.

Jenny sketches, draws and photographs whilst out walking to provide a reference for larger abstract works in acrylic or oil with pencil or ink markings.

Painting large seascapes that capture the sense of movement and power of the sea and smaller seascapes or landscapes reflecting the mood created by the quickly changing skies, Jenny says

*“The sea, in particular, makes me feel before I really see; I try to capture my emotions in my paintings and use the view to provide structure and composition.”*

Recently Jenny has been working in collage and watercolours which has introduced a new energetic look and feel and an increased colour palette.

After successfully exhibiting in several Devon exhibitions Jenny is opening her studio, near Witheridge for the first time during **Devon Open Studios from September 6 to 21**. Visitors can meet Jenny, see her works and the farm and gardens that inspire some of her paintings. There should also be tea and cake!

For more information about Jenny or Devon Open Studios please visit [jennynash.co.uk](http://jennynash.co.uk)



Art by Jenny Nash



## ***Badminton***

The Badminton club meets on Fridays at 8pm and the cost is £3.50 per session.

Anyone interested in coming along should contact Linda Williams 07966131522



## ***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 thereafter

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

## ***Table tennis***

Come and join our small friendly group for adults aged 16 or over. 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.

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## What's Happening

## In the Village ?

Parish Hall Chair		Clare Spicer	860135
Parish Hall Bookings	(meetings are free)	Steven Smith	861037
Allotment Society	David Williams	07811	979488
Art Group	Parish Hall- Wed 7.30pm	Eileen Curtis	860564
Badminton	Parish Hall Fri 7.30pm	Linda Williams	0796613 1522
Brownies and Guides	Witheridge School	Carole Chapple	855329
Charity Bingo	Thelbridge Parish Hall-alt Wed 7.30	Marion Crane	860530
Bell Ringers	Belfry Thursday 7.30 pm	Ken Ramsbotham	861108
Dog Training	Parish Hall Mon 6pm	Jackie McDevitt	01769 550155
Film Club		Margie Cosker	861695
Gardening Club	Parish Hall Last Wed 7pm	Jill Horwood	861323
Knights of Witheridge	Chairman	Ian Tench	860770
Ladies Group	Parish Hall 2nd Tues 2pm	Coral Simmonds	0775 9845052
Methodist Church	Sunday 10.30am	Ruth Towers	0798 0104347
Monday Club	Rest-a-while Alt Mon 2pm	Val Dickinson	860709
Rest-a-while Mon-Sat 10-	12 Bingo alt Fri, Bring + Buy last Fri	Val Dickinson	860709
Short mat bowls	Parish Hall Tues 6.30pm. Thur 2pm	Greg Henderson	860819
Table Tennis	Parish Hall Fri 11-12	Greg Henderson	860819
Tennis Club	<a href="http://www.witheridgetennisclub.com">www.witheridgetennisclub.com</a>	Sarah Vertigan	07939 241025
Taekwondo	Parish Hall Thurs 6-7pm	Kevin Raven	07804 471165
Astronomical Society	Committee Room 3rd Thurs 7.30-9	Steven Smith	861037
Witheridge in Bloom	carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk		860817
Witheridge Golf Society		Ken Ramsbotham	861108
Witheridge Parish Church	Sunday 9.30am	Rev Adrian Wells	861383
Witheridge Primary School	& Preschool	Head of School	Miss Ratcliffe 860518
Witheridge parent and Toddler group	Witheridge school Wed 1.45-3.30pm	Rebecca +Nick	07875127064
	Fridays 9-10.30am	Robinson	
Witheridge Ploughing Association	Gill Gilbard		
	<a href="mailto:gill@helebaronfarm.co.uk">gill@helebaronfarm.co.uk</a>		
Witheridge Young Farmers	Emma Gilbard	<a href="mailto:emma.gilbard@">emma.gilbard@</a>	markalengroup.com
Witheridge Youth Club	Parish Hall 1st &3rd Thurs 7-8.30pm	Andrea Court	860815
Witheridge Striders	Edward Fyson 07517 148284	Janet Ashelford	860234
Worlington Photographic Group	Worlington Parish Hall 3rd Tue 7.30	Terry Brown	861268

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