

STONELEIGH AND ASHOW NEWS



MARCH 2026



“The Heart of Stoneleigh Defibrillator”

In the phone box on The Green

Coordinator David Ellwood

07785 284482

Text if no reply

Trained Volunteers

John Churchley 07885 496795

Laura Elliot 07738 222969

David Ellwood 07785 284482

Richard Hancox 07596 276829

Ian Huston 07974 237331

Sharron McEldowney 07760 101775

Claire Neale 07557 675842

Martin Smith 07958 955629

Mary Taylor 07890 535506

Remember: Always ring 999 first!

**** A second defibrillator can be found in the Village Hall ****



Film Night

March's film will be:
Six Minutes to Midnight

Background to the story:

Six Minutes to Midnight is set in Bexhill on Sea where Eddie Izzard's family is from and where he spent a lot of time as a child. His connection to the town and his success led the Bexhill Museum to ask him to become a patron. On Eddie's first visit to the museum the curator there, Julian Porter, showed Eddie the school badge from the real Augusta-Victoria College for girls, sparking the whole idea for the film. A cross in the right-hand corner and a union jack in the left-hand corner got Eddie thinking. Through conversations with local historians and the museum he discovered the school was a finishing school for daughters and God-daughters of important Germans.

Stars: Eddie Izzard, Judi Dench, Jim Broadbent

Friday March 13th 2026

In Stoneleigh Village Hall

Meet 6.45pm for a 7pm showing

Please can you bring a cup and plate.

Coffee, tea and pastries will be served in the interval.

Entry price £4.00, to cover refreshments and room hire.

To reserve a place and a pastry call Jane on 01926 858315 by

Wednesday March 11th



Stoneleigh Community Orchard

A busy schedule of work has been maintained with orchard pruning starting to approach a conclusion. Our plans for the Orchard “Spring Festival” scheduled for Saturday 16th May at 2.00pm are also currently under development and continue to gather pace (see flyer for details). In addition to the above, artwork has been undertaken along with villager Jules Storer to design a label for our Stoneleigh Brandy. We hope to report on this in the next edition of the S&A News.

This month’s article focuses on the excellent research undertaken by fellow Orchard Director, John Churchley, who investigates the water quality of the local river system. This research has considerable environmental relevance given the proximity of the orchard and meadow to the River Sowe.

Research Report by John Churchley

Samples of river water in the Stoneleigh area have been taken for a second year at roughly monthly intervals and tested for four water quality parameters. Results have been fed into the Angling Trust Water Quality Monitoring Network and compared with data from many rivers in England and Wales. The biggest influences on water quality are rainfall, geology/topography and the amount of treated sewage effluent discharged to the river. Sampling points used have been Bubbenhall on the Avon, Baginton and Stoneleigh on the Sowe (upstream and downstream respectively of the Finham STW treated effluent discharge), and Ashow on the Avon (downstream of the confluence with the Sowe).

The downstream sites (Stoneleigh and Ashow) show higher levels of ammonia and nitrate than the upstream sites, but lower levels of phosphate. The latter is due mostly to the advanced phosphate removal process at Finham. On two occasions, a spike in ammonia at

Stoneleigh has resulted in contact with Severn Trent Water to ascertain the cause. On the latest occasion we were told that the ammonia spike was the result of over-dosing of ferric sulphate (used for phosphate removal).

Pressure continues to be applied from the Angling Trust nationally on the water companies to reduce phosphate and nitrate levels generally. However, our local monitoring does serve to highlight hiccups in treatment and demonstrates that we are keeping a close eye on what happens at our local sewage treatment plant.

Pete Freeman

Orchard Friends' subscriptions and yearly renewals for 2026 will cost £10 and can be made to Pete Freeman as Chairman or to Richard Hancox as Treasurer. Cheques should be made payable to Stoneleigh Village Community Orchard. However why not become a long term Friend and set up a direct debit.

Pete Freeman (Chairman), 5 Church Lane, Stoneleigh

Petefreeman773@gmail.com

Richard Hancox (Treasurer)

Richard.Hancox@nationalhighways.co.uk



Stoneleigh WI

Peter Walters gave a very interesting talk at our last meeting about the history of Coventry. Afterwards we had a discussion on the future of Stoneleigh WI which has been in existence for 108 years. After some discussion it was decided that we would 'soldier on' for another year! (See appeal on page 12)

At the March meeting we have a talk from the Carers' Trust given by Hollie Williams. You are all welcome to come and join us on March 2nd at 2pm.

Liz Sykes

Showcase Your Creative Sustainability!



Are you a talented upcycler who transforms discarded materials into beautiful, functional art?

We're looking for creative vendors to display and sell their one-of-a-kind upcycled creations at the **Stoneleigh Orchard Spring Festival on May 16th!**

Whether you craft furniture from reclaimed wood, fashion jewellery from vintage materials, create home décor from re-purposed items, or design clothing from thrifted fabrics, we want to celebrate your eco-conscious creativity.

Reserve a pitch for just £10.
Or if you only have a few items to sell, we will arrange a shared space with other artists.

Contact Amanda Smith: asmith@goingclean.co.uk

Stoneleigh Village Club



COFFEE MORNING **Thursday** **March 19th**

10:00am - 11:30am

*Come along, enjoy a hot drink
and catch up with friends.
Everyone is welcome!*

£1 donation



Lent, Chocolate, and the Radical Act of Saying Thank You

by Revd Petrică Bistran

Lent has a bit of a reputation problem. Mention it and people look worried, as though you've announced six weeks of spiritual gloom, dry toast, and the permanent confiscation of joy. But Lent isn't meant to make us miserable. Quite the opposite. It's an invitation to draw nearer to God — and one of the simplest, most powerful ways of doing that is through the discipline of gratitude.

Yes, gratitude. That deeply spiritual, wildly underrated phrase: "Thank you."

We often treat gratitude as something that happens when life behaves — the car starts, the Wi-Fi works, and no one has eaten your secret stash of biscuits. But Christian gratitude is far braver than that. It dares to say "thank you" even when life is chaotic, inconvenient, or slightly... Lent-shaped.

Take giving something up, for example. Many people bravely surrender chocolate every year — a heroic act I observe with pastoral admiration. By Day Three, chocolate has mysteriously taken over the universe. Ads become temptations. Other people's snacks become moral challenges.

And that's where gratitude sneaks in: going without reminds us how much we normally take for granted. That first piece of Easter chocolate becomes nothing short of a resurrection moment.

Lent invites us to practise noticing — the warm cup of tea, the kind word, the quiet moment, the body that still carries us through the day. Even life's frustrations can teach us: the slow supermarket queue, the rain — reminders that God shapes character in mysterious ways.

Gratitude shifts our focus. Less "What is missing?" More "What has been given?" Every "thank you" becomes a tiny prayer. Every act of noticing becomes an act of trust.

So this Lent try something wonderfully simple: say thank you to God. Often. Generously. Even stubbornly. Because Lent isn't about losing joy — it's about learning to see how much joy we've already been given.

Mobile Library Service



The mobile library will visit the following locations in 2026:

- Wren Day Nursery, Stoneleigh Park: 1:40–2:10pm
[Mobile Libraries : Locations - Show -355](#)
- Stoneleigh Village Hall: 2:20–2:45pm
[Mobile Libraries : Locations - Show -355](#)

Visits will occur on the following dates:

- 9th March • 10th April • 8th May • 1st June • 29th June
- 27th July • 24th August • 21st September • 19th October
- 16th November • 14th December

The library provides lift access and offers a diverse selection of books, including large print editions, audiobooks, and children's literature.

For further information, please contact the library via email

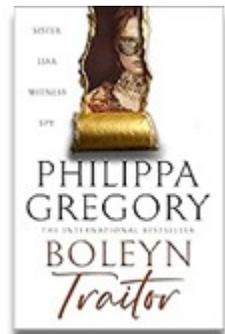
mobilelibraryservice@warwickshire.gov.uk

or telephone 01926 851031.

This month's pick is **Boleyn Traitor** by Philippa Gregory. A thrilling story of ambition, power and the dark side of the Tudor court.

Any recommendations for a book that we could feature in next month's magazine would be greatly appreciated.

Email sanewsletter30@gmail.com



Stoneleigh History Society

We began 2026 with two successful presentations in January from both Adrian Clarke and Nora Blagburn, and had rather ambitiously planned to have *three* talks in February! In the end we decided to restrict this to just two, equally fascinating, subjects, holding over the third for another time. It's good that we have members prepared to share their researches and to do so with such enthusiasm!

In March we begin our meeting with our AGM, and this will be followed by a return visit from one of our favourite speakers, Richard Churchley, who will give us "Songs the Victorians Sang". This will no doubt be a lively and entertaining evening, and all visitors will be welcome to join us; no doubt there will be a singalong! Come along to the Village Hall on March 24th for a 7.30pm start.

On February 9th we remembered the centenary of the death of Edward Langley Fardon, whose life we marked in December 2024 with a plaque on The Forge. He is just one of many Stoneleigh people whose stories we have researched in our fifteen years of existence as a history society. Head to www.stoneleighhistorysociety.org.uk to find out more – and you can now read the *Stoneleigh & Ashow News* there too, along with fifteen years' worth of back copies! Why not bookmark the site for quick reference?

Sheila Woolf

Despite the record rainfall the crocus still manage to poke through the leaves in Coventry Memorial Park!

Cover photo taken by Sarah Ballinger





AN APPEAL

By Nora Blagburn on behalf of the WI

Stoneleigh branch of the WI has been an active part of village life since 1918. However, now its existence is teetering on the edge of closure due to lack of members. We are down to 15 elderly ladies (though bright and chatty) who cannot carry on unless more ladies join us.

It's not just for the elderly, so if you are at home on the first Monday of every month from 2-4 pm why not come along and give it a try? You don't have to live in the village, as lifts can be arranged, or be good at cake or jam making!

The programme includes a wide variety of subjects and speakers. During this past year for example there have been talks from the first lady bus driver (so entertaining), the Lowland Rescue, chocolate making, how the Melton Pork Pies are made, a flower arranging and card making demo, as well as talks about Mary Dormer Harris, George Eliot and a Little History of Coventry. We always hold a raffle and serve tea, coffee, biscuits or cake, and there is always time for chat.

In addition to the monthly meeting, there are also coffee mornings and lunches at various venues and the Christmas Lunch at the Stoneleigh Golf Club.

After our last meeting, it was agreed that we continue to meet for another year then if no one else is inspired to come along, this WI must close, thus ending a great tradition in the village. Please don't let this happen! For more information - contact Chris Ward 02476 459664

SUPPORT YOUR STONELEIGH WI

Stoneleigh Ladies Choir

Stoneleigh Ladies Choir is preparing for a very busy season of events. Rehearsals are in full swing for the first event on Thursday 23 April when the choir will perform at the Waverly Day Centre. The following evening, Friday, 24 April is the popular Quiz Night with Fish and Chip Supper. Tickets will be £10 and available from any member of the choir or contact number below.

A very special event is taking place during the afternoon of Sunday 3 May. Stoneleigh Ladies Choir will join forces with four other choirs and the Coventry City of Culture Orchestra for a Massed Concert in Butterworth Hall at Warwick University to celebrate the life of our late Musical Director, Seb Farrall. This promises to be a very special afternoon. (More information in the April edition). Tickets are currently available from Warwick University and cost £19 (adult), £9 (under 16's) free for children under 12 months.

Two more dates for your diary are 16 May when the choir will take part in the Stoneleigh Spring Orchard Festival followed by our own Summer Concert on Saturday 25 July.

Information and contact details may be found on our website www.stoneleighladieschoir.org or by telephoning 07817 899091.

Pat Wightman

This edition of Stoneleigh and Ashow News was compiled by Sarah Ballinger, who would like to thank all contributors.

The online colour version can be viewed on the **Stoneleigh village Facebook page** and on the Stoneleigh History Society website (<https://stoneleighhistorysociety.org.uk/>).

The **April 2026** edition will be compiled by **Mike and Bernice Evans** sanewsletter30@gmail.com
Copy deadline: 16th March 2026



Stoneleigh Village Club

www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub
stoneleigh.villageclub@gmail.com
Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh,
Warwickshire CV8 3DH

Does anyone know when the rain will stop...? Thankfully there are signs of Spring all over the village and I am sure we will all be grateful for some sunshine. The Club has continued to tick over since Christmas. Members are currently enjoying a drink whilst watching the Six Nations and there has been great attendance at regular events such as the quiz and bingo nights. Many thanks to everyone for their continued support.

You may have noticed some changes behind the bar as Fletch and Jo have created an area for the wine, and everything is clean and sparkling. There are also several new drinks available for you to try. The committee are currently talking to Fletch about how we might establish a long-term plan for the Club, ever mindful that the building needs regular upkeep. We will let you know our thoughts when plans are more developed.

Look forward to seeing you soon at the Club

Ann Lowe on behalf of SVC committee.

Dates for your diary – March - April 2026

March 7th	Rugby Six Nations
March 14th	Rugby Six Nations
March 13th	Chippy night (Place your order at the bar)
March 21st	Quiz night
March 28th	Eyes down for SVC Bingo!
April 4th	Come and decorate your Easter bonnet to wear on Sunday 5 th for the Easter Egg hunt 4pm-6pm.

Look out for posters promoting upcoming events.

Codewords

24	⁶ R	26	26	16	3	23		16	4	26	26	15
20		¹ N		² U		11	3	13		17		23
12	20	25	3	12	3	4		20	² U	13	26	⁶ R
² U		3		21		8	23	5		26		9
16	3	¹ N	16		13			15	23	¹ N		² U
		22	23	19	² U	5	15	16		13	26	26
¹ N			7		⁶ R		20		24			13
20	15	13		26	¹ N	10	20	8	26	25		
13		7	3	¹ N			⁶ R		7	3	5	15
12		26		13	23	11		20		16		² U
21	23	4	14	26		² U	¹ N	18	¹ N	20	7	¹ N
26		14		⁶ R	20	25		⁶ R		7		12
16	26	26	15	16		16	13	23	² U	¹ N	12	21

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

How to Play Codewords

Codewords are crosswords with no clues! Instead, every letter of the alphabet has been replaced by a number, the same number representing the same letter throughout the puzzle.

All you have to do is decide which letter is represented by which number! To start you off three letters have been revealed, you should have enough information to start guessing words and discovering other letters.

Answers: turn to page 16

Stoneleigh Community Orchard Spring Festival

Saturday 16th May 2026. 2.00 - 4.30 pm



Show your country crafts and activities and sell your produce at the annual Spring Festival in Stoneleigh Orchard's beautiful riverside location

Core attractions for visitors include guided tours of the Orchard, children's activities, cider tasting and sales, plant sales, photographic competition (details to follow), tea & cakes, Morris dancing and live music

Exhibitors confirmed so far: Gatward Country Crafts, Fabrics by Nina, Nora's Plants, Cheese on the Green, Anna Clarke Art, RNLI, Stoneleigh History Society, Warwickshire Metal Detecting Club

Calling all upcyclers. Exhibit and sell your creations. If you only have a few items to sell, we will arrange a shared space with other artists.

£10 to reserve your pitch

If you would like to participate in the Stoneleigh Orchard Spring Festival, please contact Amanda Smith at asmith@goinglean.co.uk

Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir

The choir held its annual dinner on Saturday 31 January 2026 at Stoneleigh Village Hall. It was a very joyous occasion, enjoyed by everyone who attended. We were delighted that our president Alan Biddle was able to join us. The food, provided by Charlotte Stanton of Naturally Dippy, was delicious.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 21st March - The choir is looking forward to its mini show and concert in aid of Prostate Cancer UK which will take place at Stoneleigh Village Hall.

Wednesday 25th March - Choir AGM

The date in April/May for the lunchtime concert at St. Oswald's Church, Bilton, Rugby is to be confirmed.

The choir's rehearsals take place on a Wednesday evening from 7.30pm in Stoneleigh Village Hall. If anyone is interested in joining the choir please come along to one of our rehearsals or contact Philip Jones 079102 40453, 01926 853511 or kathryngjones@hotmail.co.uk for further details.

Philip Jones.

Codeword Answers

F	R	E	E	S	I	A		S	L	E	E	P
O	N	U		B	I	T		X				A
C	O	D	I	C	I	L		O	U	T	E	R
U		I	H	Y	A	M		E				Q
S	I	N	S		T			P	A	N		U
		G	A	Z	U	M	P	S		T	E	E
N			W		R	O		F				T
O	P	T		E	N	J	O	Y	E	D		
T		W	I	N			R		W	I	M	P
C		E		T	A	B		O		S		U
H	A	L	V	E		U	N	K	N	O	W	N
E		V		R	O	D		R		W		C
S	E	E	P	S		S	T	A	U	N	C	H

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
- N U I L M R W Y Q J B C T
- 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
- V P S X K Z O H G A
- 24 25 26
- F D E

Bill Crofts, S&A News Treasurer

If you value the **receipt of a paper copy** through your door, and you require information on making a donation to S&A News, please consider the following options.

1. Payit™ by NatWest

Scan the QR code and make a payment directly from your chosen bank account. Please remember to **clear the reference box on the payment page** and **add your name as the reference** so I know who you are. Alternatively, use the link below:



<https://paymentrequest.natwestpayit.com/reusable-link/50e33bcd-518d-4b6d-8da5-ffe2cdcad697>

2. BACS or Cheque

Alternatively, please email me at sanewsletter30@gmail.com. I will then send over bank details for a BACS transfer or my address, should you wish to send me a cheque.

Placing an advertisement in Stoneleigh & Ashow News

Our page format size is A5. Rates **per annum (10 editions)** are:

Full page (13 x 19cm) £100

Half page (13 x 9.5cm) £ 50

Quarter page (6.5 x 9.5cm or 13 x 5cm) £ 25 **Rates**

for advertising in a single edition are:

Full page (1 edition + £10 each extra edition) £20 Half

page (1 edition + £5 each extra edition) £10

Quarter page (1 edition + £5 each extra edition) £10

To place an advertisement, or for general enquiries, please email the Treasurer, **Bill Crofts** (sanewsletter30@gmail.com)

Please state:

- The size of the ad you would like to place
- The editions in which you would like your advertisement to be published.

Once artwork has been received and size/dates agreed, you will be invoiced based on your request. Please note that, in order to have each edition ready for printing, we need to complete the above by the 16th of the month prior to your first requested edition, e.g. 16th August to publish in the September edition. We are happy to provide help with any advertisement requests.)



Dr Tait
Dr John
Dr Imray

jill@warwickshireprivategp.co.uk
www.warwickshireprivategp.co.uk

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**THE UNITED BENEFICE OF
THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY,
ASHOW
and
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STONELEIGH**



SERVICES FOR MARCH 2026

Sunday 1	11.00 am United Holy Communion at Bubbenhall
Sunday 8	9.30 am Holy Communion Service at Ashow 11.00 am Morning Praise Service at Stoneleigh
Sunday 15	9.30 am Mothering Sunday Service at Ashow 11.00 am Mothering Sunday Service at Stoneleigh
Sunday 22	9.30 am Village Service at Ashow 11.00 am Holy Communion at Stoneleigh
Sunday 29	9.30 am Palm Sunday Service at Ashow 11.00 am Palm Sunday Service at Stoneleigh

Contacts

Priest in Charge: Reverend Petrica Bistran 07572 193260
email: revpbistran@gmail.com

Churchwardens:

Ashow: Kate Jones 01926 853511 and Anne Gregory 01926 713066

Deputy Warden: Peter Shrimpton 02475 096477

Stoneleigh: Gordon Gatward 07776 211276 and

Ashley Toogood 07771 888618

Deputy Wardens: Richard Ashley 07708 097187, John Woodward

02476 418272 and Paddy Bryniarska 07947 472297

Or please contact the Parish Administrator,

Jackie Cubitt, 02476 415506 email: stoneleighchurch@hotmail.com

Office Hours Wednesday 9.00 am to 12.00,

Thursdays 9.00 am to 1.00 pm

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12964 for Stoneleigh
www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12954 for Ashow