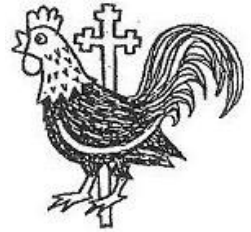


# East Coker Society Newsletter



January 2021

Free Issue No 181

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## East Coker Society News

### HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

Normally at this time of year, I would be reporting on the success of East Coker Society Winter Fayre. Sadly, this had to be cancelled last October, together with so many other events, as a result of restrictions imposed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Our Exhibition last February was our last community get-together. It was such a pleasure to see hundreds of you appreciating all the photos and memorabilia on display and enjoying refreshments with your friends. Let's all look forward to such joyful times again.

East Coker is a resourceful community, and it has been uplifting for us to participate in outdoor activities and events which could still go ahead - the commemoration of VE Day in May, the Scarecrow Competition, and the Christmas Lights and Decorations, to name just a few.

As we reported last year, our Newsletter is now distributed entirely by email and is available on our website. We had intended to make some printed copies available at Goose Slade Farm Shop, Helyar Arms, St Michael and All Angels' Church, the Village Café and East Coker Hall, but due to the current lockdown this won't be practical. Hopefully, this will be possible when we publish the April Newsletter.

Please think of your friends and neighbours who don't have access to a computer by providing them with a copy of this Newsletter. As usual, we are more than happy to increase our email distribution – you can contact Lesley at [l.lindsay@eastcoker.com](mailto:l.lindsay@eastcoker.com) with your email address. These personal details are not shared with anyone else, in accordance with our Data Privacy Notice.

Please continue to keep in touch with those who live alone or are vulnerable to offer help where safe and practical, particularly with shopping and medical supplies.

Keep safe and well.

Sarah Owen  
Secretary, East Coker Society

## Village Clubs and Organisations

### TIME TO SHARE

Well, Time to Share have moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with regular Zoom Meetings! We have had a few funny moments, with views of ceilings, half heads, and no audio, but on the whole it has been amazing and has brought some of the members back together again on a weekly basis - even one member who is still in Spain, following a trip last year when we suddenly all went into lockdown, and she has been there ever since!

It is lovely to see everybody, and for those who do not Zoom, we are in regular contact by telephone or postcards and letters. We keep going because we must! But we do miss the home made cake!

Sandra

## EAST COKER WI

We managed just one monthly meeting last quarter in October, which should have been an open evening, but it was felt too risky (due to Covid-19) to include anyone outside the the Institute. This was a shame, because the speaker was highly amusing about her experiences when venturing into the world of farming as a complete novice. We did hope to hold a Christmas Special in December instead of our usual meal at a restaurant, but unfortunately the speaker phoned the day before to tell us that her daughter had sat next to another pupil who had tested positive for the virus.

Hey ho! We must look forward to 2021 with the vaccinations already taking place and hope that in the not too distant future we can resume our programme.

In the meantime, we must obey the current restrictions but also check that those who live alone are contacted regularly to make sure they do not require any help.

Stay safe. Happy New Year

Anyone wishing to contact the WI with a thought of joining when we restart, please contact our secretary Ruby Rollo, tel 475010.

## THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION EAST & WEST COKER BRANCH

### Poppy Appeal 2020

Covid-19 restrictions meant we were restricted to 15 Poppy boxes this year as opposed to the usual 60, distributed between East Coker, West Coker, East Chinnock, Hardington and Barwick and Stoford. Last year we raised £6,500, but this year with just a quarter of the capacity, we have raised a total of £3,548. Huge credit and our sincere thanks must go out to local businesses, schools and those personal donors who have made this year such a success.

As at 10 December 2020, the National total was £9,096,535.65, which included local donations:

- Somerset £205,646.10
- Bristol £18,869.54

**Telling our Story.** As a lot of you will already be aware, the formation of the Legion took place on 15 May 1921. Dependant on the current Covid-19 restrictions, we will be celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May 2021. Branches are being asked to help celebrate the occasion.

From its very beginnings in 1921, our members, volunteers and staff of the organisation have been at the heart of the Legion. East Coker Branch was formed in 1928, becoming a member of the British Legion in 1931. West Coker Branch, formed in 1934, amalgamated with East Coker in 1999.

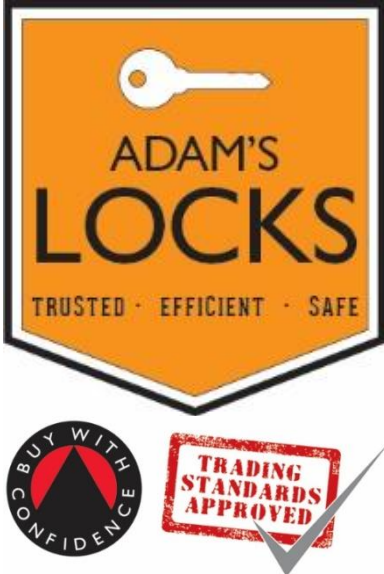
To kick off the centenary commemorations, the RBL is asking us to "Tell our Story". Do you have any artefacts, photographs, letters etc, commemorating key events and anniversaries, bringing the community together, or simple stories of the day to day events in the area? No story, item or recollection is too small. The items will be captured in the RBL Digital Library, our story can then be told for another 100 years.

If you have anything of interest to help us celebrate this special occasion, please get in touch with myself or Marilyn Smith. Items will be captured in the RBL Digital Library. I will be personally responsible for loaned items and their safe return to donors.

Thank you all for your continued support.

David Holland Chairman, tel 862782, email [d.holland632@btinternet.com](mailto:d.holland632@btinternet.com)

Marilyn Smith Secretary, tel 863944, email [mazza1944@outlook.com](mailto:mazza1944@outlook.com)



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### **EAST COKER PLAYERS**

Happy New Year to you all.

We hope you are all keeping safe and well. We were all disappointed that we were unable to put on the Annual Pantomime in November. We had hoped to put a previous one on YouTube for all to enjoy, but found we could have been in breach of copyright.

Due to the recent tier changes leading to the closure of the East Coker Hall, our AGM was held on Zoom on 11 January 2021.

If you would like to join us, please email [eastcokerplayers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:eastcokerplayers@yahoo.co.uk) and an invitation will be sent.

We have started discussions on this year's programme, but nothing finalised yet.

Let's hope this year will be better for all of us, and laughter and songs will once again be heard in the Hall.

For further information, contact Chairperson Anne Hartley 862060 or Secretary Hazel Giddings 429163.

### **EAST COKER WINE CIRCLE**

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year and hope for the future.

We as a Wine Circle have not been active due to Covid-19. We did manage to hold a summer get-together outside; it was a small affair with social distancing in place. Thank you to the hosts.

Hopefully, the Wine Circle is back in business virtually, with a tasting in the comfort of your own home. This has been in place and set up before the lockdown was announced and will carry on as it will be done via Zoom. The evening will be like "Call My Bluff" with samples of 6 wines, 3 white and 3 red. Each wine will be described by a panel of 3 committee members who will give either a 'true' or 'false' descriptions. We also have quiz evenings lined up via Zoom.

Take lots of care and stay safe.

**See you at the bottom of a glass!**

Sarah Rashley

**From the Sublime to the Ridiculous**

A Poetic Presentation lead by Amelia Bennett

If you wish to 'Zoom in', you will need to contact Diane Summer via the East Coker Poetry Group website contact page [www.eastcokerpoetry.org.uk](http://www.eastcokerpoetry.org.uk). She will then send details of the log in code and start time.

Best wishes

David Cloke



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**EAST COKER GARDENING CLUB**

Well... no meetings have taken place since the lockdown at the end of March 2020, and it would appear that we are very unlikely to meet again for several months more. The Committee Members have made great efforts to continue to prepare and distribute 'The Propagator', our monthly newsletter, and contributions from our members have been much appreciated. This has been edited and distributed via email by Linda. The December issue was printed, and the Committee Members then distributed it by hand to our members. We hope that members have enjoyed reading it. We know, from speaking to our members, that the monthly meetings are much missed. They not only inform, but they are a very sociable, enjoyable evening.

A considerable amount of time was, sadly, spent cancelling, obtaining the relevant refunds and then calculating and distributing refunds to those who had booked on the annual holiday and on the day trips. We have Stan to thank for obtaining a full refund for the annual holiday. Over the years, we have managed to build up a good reserve, so for the moment our finances remain healthy.

For the time being, meetings are on hold. There is a page on the East Coker Hall website, which I shall endeavour to keep up to date; if you have access to the web, please do go to <http://eastcokervillagehall.co.uk/> and look at the Gardening Club page. We will continue to produce **The Propagator**, which Linda will send out via email to as many members as she can. If you don't have access to email, please let us know and we will try to get a hard copy to you.

We look forward to resuming our meetings in due course, and to seeing, and welcoming, our members again. In the meantime, if you wish to speak to us, please do phone me 01935 862447 or Stan Shayler (01935 42029).

Take care, keep well and safe.

*Helen Styles*

## EAST COKER HALL CHARITABLE TRUST

Yet again, due to Coronavirus (Covid-19), the Hall is closed until further notice and keycards have been disabled. In accordance with Government guidelines, the Hall may be opened for some specific reasons. Committee members will continue to carry out checks on the Hall and ensure that it is cleaned and maintained.

At the beginning of September 2020, after an enormous amount of time and effort by a small group from the management committee to ensure that it was 'Covid secure', the Hall was re-opened. Guidelines, risk assessments, sourcing of PPE, hand sanitiser, organisation of flow systems, notices, ascertaining which groups could, or could not, in accordance with Government guidelines, use the Hall - the work seemed never-ending! However, we got there, thanks to our Health & Safety committee member, who spent much time interpreting the guidelines (which seemed to change on an almost daily basis) and writing up the risk assessments. We were greatly assisted by the Community Council for Somerset, of which we are members, and ACRE.

Our income for 2020 was, obviously, greatly reduced and we were fortunate to receive a grant to help with the day to day running expenses of the Hall.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank our Bookings Clerk and our cleaner, both of whom do an excellent job and without whom we would not be able to run the Hall. We receive numerous very positive comments about our Hall, many of which are as a result of the work and dedication of these two people.

Although this year has not started as well as all of us would have wished, we must look forward to the time when a more normal lifestyle will resume and we can, once again, enjoy meeting at our hall.

### East Coker Hall website

The Hall has a website where you can find information about the hall, availability and various events. <http://eastcokervillagehall.co.uk> We will do our very best to keep the website up to date, so do have a look at it.

Remember to heed Government advice, look after yourselves and keep an eye on your neighbours.

*Helen Styles*

## Young People

**EAST COKER PLAYGROUP** Find us on [www.eastcokerpreschool.co.uk](http://www.eastcokerpreschool.co.uk)

Happy New Year to everyone. East Coker Preschool would like to extend a massive thank you to the children and families who confidently engaged with the Covid-19 changes that were implemented in the Autumn Term and settled into new routines. We will continue to follow the Covid-19 guidance, updating operating systems as required to keep everyone safe and well.

The preschool was extremely busy in the last few weeks before the Christmas holiday. The children made a snowman Christmas card. They carefully dug up a self-seeded poppy plant from our garden and placed it into a pot to give to their family. This year, the children could not perform a live Christmas show to their parents and carers, however, a recording of their singing was made to share with their families. On the last day of term, the children enjoyed a wonderful party.

Children can join us from the age of 2½ years. We accept 2 year old funding, 15 hour Universal Early Years Entitlement, Extended Entitlement 30 hour free childcare, Tax Free Childcare and Childcare Vouchers. For more information on support with childcare costs, please visit [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk), the Childcare Choices website which makes it easy to find out what's on offer. We are open during term time at the following session times:

- Monday 9.00-12.00 & 1.00-3.00
- Tuesday 9.00-12.00 & 1.00-3.00
- Wednesday 9.00-12.00 & 1.00-3.00
- Thursday 9.00-12.00 & 1.00-3.00
- Friday 9.00-12.00 & 1.00-3.00

Children staying for lunch need to bring a packed lunch.



Please enquire about extended opening hours, 8.00am-4.00pm.

### **East Chinnock Under Fives Preschool**

Following Covid-19 guidance and updating operating systems as required to keep everyone safe and well:

#### **Places available now**

If you are seeking childcare for your 2-year old, East Chinnock Under Fives Playgroup accepts children from their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday to starting school. The setting has a large outdoor space and a cosy playroom full of resources to facilitate playing and learning.

East Chinnock Under Fives Playgroup is a smaller group, and this can be a great benefit to the younger children.

### **Baby & Toddler Session – still suspended due to Covid-19**

As soon as allowed and safe to do so, we will commence our Baby and Toddler Session:

East Chinnock Under Fives Playgroup run a Baby & Toddler Session on  
Thursday afternoon from 1.30pm to 3.00pm.

Pop along and join in the social distancing fun, everyone is welcome.

To find out more information, please visit our Facebook page East Chinnock Playgroup.

**For more information and to register your child/children for either East Coker Playgroup or East Chinnock Under Fives, please contact Kay Strobe on 07503751133 or email [ecplaygroup@aol.com](mailto:ecplaygroup@aol.com).**

### **EAST COKER SCOUT GROUP**

We made a return to face-to-face scouting in December; and now, in the New Year, we are back to virtual scouting for the latest lockdown.

With our Covid-19 risk assessment approved and the Scout Association 'Back Together Safely' Readiness Level at Amber, we were allowed to restart outdoor and indoor activities late last year.

All our sections enjoyed games on the recreation field and walks around the village. Their energy and enthusiasm reflected their excitement at being back together outside with their friends. The enjoyment was as much as being able to return to scouting activities as it was to be able to run around and meet their friends from different schools.

The Cubs and Scouts had an activity using glow sticks and wrote messages in the dark. This simple tool created amazing shapes and effects – including our name:



The Scouts had planned to visit Mike's Woods, but the wet weather meant we spent the time in the hut. It didn't stop us having S'mores – marshmallows and chocolate biscuits!

We will now be on Zoom each week providing a variety of activities for each section.


At the hut, the roof replacement was finished in October and looks so much better. Unfortunately, the new guttering, despite being changed to metal, was damaged by footballs within two weeks; this is an ongoing problem for the Scout Hut, and as well as the guttering, the wood boarding is suffering. Fortunately, the

Parish Council is looking to provide a protection solution for the guttering for which we are incredibly grateful.

Fund raising has been impossible since Covid-19 started and we are not planning Jumble Sales or newspaper collections at present for this year. However, we are determined to run the Village Quiz as soon as we can - even if that is in October!

We really hope you will be seeing us out and about safely again soon.

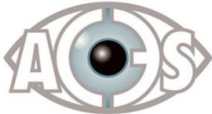
David Webber, Group Scout Leader  
[eastcokerscouts@gmail.com](mailto:eastcokerscouts@gmail.com)



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## The Churches

### ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

Christmas has passed, and for most of us it was like none other that we have experienced. Covid has caused havoc with our Services and activities, but we have not been defeated though often disappointed. For much of the season, our Churches in the Cokerridge Benefice have had limited access and singing has not been permitted. Numbers have been restricted, and risk assessment has often caused planned Services to be cancelled. We celebrated Harvest Thanksgiving in muted style, but just reading the words of our favourite hymns perhaps made them more meaningful.

Monica Whipp, our Lay Reader, conducted the All Souls' Service with the aid of one parishioner, and a very simple Remembrance Day Service took place on 11 November when the British Legion was able to lay a wreath on the War Memorial within the Church.

Alas, no singing so no Carol Service, but not all has been negative; we were thrilled that East Coker School's children were able to accept the Church's gift of Chocolate Advent Calendars, explaining the true meaning of Christmas. Our Young Family & Children's Worker, Deborah Wootton, worked tirelessly to create a Virtual Messy Church and a Star Trail in St Michael's leading to our very beautiful Crib, with a chance to hang a Prayer star on the Christmas tree and see the Posada figures.

Very sadly, Monica Whipp was unable to organise the very popular Closworth Christmas Eve Nativity Service and, at the last moment, St Michael's planned Christmas morning Service, which would have involved many of the Congregation, became another casualty of risk assessment.

Throughout this period, our Rector has been convalescing from a shoulder replacement operation which developed very serious complications, but thankfully he is on the mend and we hope will be in action again shortly. Before his operation, he was 'streaming' Holy Communion services from the Rectory. Our Bath & Wells Bishop, Peter Hancock, is being treated for leukaemia and we pray that he will soon be restored to good health. We give thanks for visiting Preachers and all who have helped to keep the Church safe and clean and beautiful. We were so glad that many were present to witness a presentation made to Alison Charles on her retirement after many years of leading and encouraging our worship as our Choir master and organist.

So, what does 2021 have in store? Our House Study and Lectio groups continue to meet with the aid of Zoom, and we plan optimistically, with Mothering Sunday, Lent and that great Christian Celebration of Easter ahead of us. We hope the present lockdown will enable restrictions to be lifted so that we can truly share our celebrating with you all. In the meantime, please access [www.cokerridge.org](http://www.cokerridge.org) and the weekly Pew Sheet available from PCC Secretary Christine Vince (833429) to keep abreast of events and contacts for any needs - and keep safe!

**Owing to the latest Covid-19 lockdown, all services are on hold until further notice.** Please use the following contacts:

- Rev'd Colin Simpson, tel 01935 862429, email [rectorcokerridge@gmail.com](mailto:rectorcokerridge@gmail.com)
- Barbs Hampshire, tel 01935 864574 (office hours 10.00am-1.30pm), email [officecokerridge@gmail.com](mailto:officecokerridge@gmail.com)
- Monica Whipp, tel 01935 862834, email [m.whipp278@btinternet.com](mailto:m.whipp278@btinternet.com)
- Deborah Wootton, working days Monday and Tuesday, 9.00am-5.00pm and Wednesdays, 9.00am-4.00pm, email [childrensworkleader.cokerridge@gmail.com](mailto:childrensworkleader.cokerridge@gmail.com)

If you are not already receiving the Pew Sheet News with helpful thoughts etc, please contact Christine Vince, the PCC Secretary [christine.vince2@btinternet.com](mailto:christine.vince2@btinternet.com) or tel 863429.

The Benefice website is [cokerridge.org.uk](http://cokerridge.org.uk).

Take care and God bless.

Jacqueline

## THE CHAPEL AT EAST COKER HALL

We are pleased that, under the current lockdown rules, Churches can hold worship services, however we have decided that until circumstances improve we will sadly not be meeting in the Hall. We are keeping in touch through our website and Facebook page, where talks, Christian music and spiritual encouragement are regularly uploaded.

If you are wondering where God is in this current pandemic, take a look at this YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ghUW4WM0Tg>.

If you would like to get in touch or would like prayer, please go to the contact page on our website where you will find our email address and the mobile numbers of our leadership team.

[www.eastcokerchapel.com](http://www.eastcokerchapel.com)

## Village News

### PLANT AND CAKE SALE 29 MAY 2021 – 10.00am – 12.30pm

I hope to have a plant and cake sale again this year, restrictions permitting. It will be held at Walnut Cottage on Saturday, 29 May from 10.00am to 12.30pm.

As well as plants and cakes, I hope to have additional stalls and refreshments.

This event will of course, only take place if the Covid situation allows.

Any enquiries, please call Kate on 07796991592.



## STAMPS FOR CLIC SARGENT (Cancer & Leukaemia in Children)

A very big thank-you to everyone who saves their used stamps, these have been collected by the residents of East Coker since the year 2000 and possibly many years before.

When the Village Café reopens, they will accept them, so please save all your stamps for this worthy cause as they are reused to make money for this charity, which funds vital research into childhood cancers.

## THE VILLAGE CAFÉ

So, when we open again, we will still have the offer 🎉 fun in 2021 🎉, this is a chance to win a bottle of Moët.

### 🎉 Having fun in 2021 🎉

Customers will be given a ticket with every purchase at the cafe for one week (over 18 only) and the draw will take place on the Sunday of that week. First week's prize is a bottle of Moët (no dates at the mo).

We will be running 3 further draws thereafter for 3 weeks, with different prizes.

I hope this all makes sense 😊

Stay safe and take care.

Contact mobile 07577 448232 or Facebook page 'Village Café, East Coker'

Kiet ❤️❤️❤️ The Village Café

## GOOSE SLADE FARM SHOP

We would like to thank all our valued customers for their continued support and wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Now that we are past our very busy season, the shop is fully restocked. We already have Seville oranges in stock for marmalade making, amongst our large selection of fresh fruit and veg.

As always, the majority of our meat is produced here on the farm, and our busy butchery can prepare any cuts you may require. We make all our own burgers and sausages in a large range of varieties and flavours, including goose and plum, lamb and rosemary, venison and leek - our current one is feisty pheasant. Gluten free also available.

During this lockdown our intention is to remain open if we can. We will continue to restrict numbers in the shop. However, if circumstances change, we may need to revert to serving customers at the door.

Regardless of whether the shop is open for customers or not, we are happy to take telephone or email orders for collection, or please use our very popular click & collect service on our website.

We look forward to serving you.

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## CULVERT - BLOCKAGE

As people living in the east of the Village will know, there are no underground rainwater drains in the stretch of road from the Paddock to Townsend Farm. This means that the stream which runs in the culvert by the side of the road is the only 'drain' for such water. It is prone to being blocked by refuse as well as by leaves and twigs.

Just by Slades Farmhouse the stream splits into two channels. One runs immediately underground and the other does so within about 30 metres. At these points, the risk of blockage is particularly high. Recently, there was a blockage caused by a combination of polystyrene packaging and large plastic bottles. As these floated, they were particularly difficult to clear when underground.

It seems likely that the plastic bottles at least had come from recycling boxes (it was collection day that day). Would residents in this area please make sure that such bottles are not placed in their recycling boxes in ways that make them prone to being blown off and into the culvert? Polystyrene shouldn't be in the recycling boxes at all, of course; even if it doesn't cause blockages, it doesn't degrade naturally (just breaks into smaller pieces), is unsightly, and is notoriously difficult to get rid of.

Thanks

John Cordwell

## **THE TRIANGLE**

It's good to see the bulbs beginning to peep through. Last autumn, a mixture of daffodil varieties sourced from de Jager & Sons was planted. They've been in business since 1868 and supply bulbs to Prince Charles, which is a pretty good recommendation. Crocus corms donated by Bridget were put in at the front of the bed.

Tulip bulbs were not lifted after flowering so they should come through again, as well as the mixture of perennial, indestructible grape hyacinths and Ipheion which edge the plot in spring. Hardy winter-flowering cyclamen always bring a welcome dash of colour at this time of the year. Cyclamen coum in shades of pale pink to magenta, and white, is one of the most reliable, as well as being a prolific self-seeder.

Kathryn Sturtridge

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE**

Neighbouring areas in Somerset have seen an increase in thefts from vehicles and non-dwelling burglaries (sheds and garages) in recent weeks. We are asking all Yeovil and South Somerset residents to be vigilant. Keep vehicles secure and free from valuables, keep outbuildings locked and secure and make use of CCTV and DASH CAMS. Please do not become complacent with security. Thank you.

Kind regards

Jackie Poole - Neighbourhood Police Constable 3573

Neighbourhood Team,  
Avon and Somerset Police  
Yeovil Police Station, The Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT

Tel 101

Email - [jackie.poole@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:jackie.poole@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

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## **BONFIRES - from SSDC website**

“Coronavirus (Covid-19): A message on bonfires during stay-at-home measures

It is understood that bonfires can be a quick and easy way of getting rid of garden rubbish. However, during the current Covid 19 crisis we are asking that you do not have any further bonfires. While we are largely confined to our properties, we are likely to suffer higher levels of nuisance from activities such as bonfires, so it is important that we all take responsibility to ensure that such nuisances do not happen.

Please be aware that people suffering from respiratory conditions including Covid-19 will be adversely affected by smoke. It could make their symptoms far worse meaning that they need to be hospitalised putting further strain on the NHS.

Alternatives:

- Most garden waste can be composted into a useful soil conditioner, saving you the cost of buying commercial products.
- Store the garden waste, turning it regularly. This will enable the waste to dry so that it can be transported to your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre when restrictions are lifted."

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**RICS** If you have instructed another agent on a Sole Agency or Sole Selling Rights basis, the terms of those instructions must be considered to avoid a possible liability to pay two commissions.

**The Property Ombudsman**

## EAST COKER PARISH COUNCIL

Well, it has been quite a year for the Council, as it has for all of us. But we look forward to 2021 with optimism and hope that East Coker will return to normal and we can once again see friends and family and enjoy some socialising in the Pub and the Café. The Friday market resumed on Friday 8 January as usual in the Playing Fields, with meat of all kinds on offer - **please remember the need for social distancing**. Gooselade Farm is open as usual and taking orders. Don't forget Hollis Mead Milk at Crystal Courtyard. As a Parish we need to support all of our local businesses if we can.

We now have a full Council at last, and welcome Laura Mills and Simon Bridgford-Whittick to complete the list. We look forward to working with you in 2021.

Households across Somerset will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021. The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

It will be the first census run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets.

"A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed. Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics, said. "This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That's why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help and paper questionnaires for those that need them."

Census day will be on 21 March, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March.

The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

For more information, visit [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk).

**Free trees for schools and communities!** The Woodland Trust is wanting communities to get planting trees! So, they are giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools, and community groups and organizations. Together, we'll get millions more trees in the ground!

For further information please visit. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>.

2020 went out with a real bang with so many of you decorating your houses and gardens. It was really hard to choose three winners. Then we had Santa Parade, which was great fun, and enjoyed so much by the younger generation. Thank you to everybody involved in this and helping to make it such a lovely, if a bit cold, afternoon of fun.

Unfortunately, over Christmas there have been some really bad incidents of dogs worrying sheep and cattle in the fields. Please keep your dogs on a lead where necessary, and don't forget to close gates.

**Highways - Pot Holes.** Please report any potholes to the Clerk or visit FixMyStreet <https://www.fixmystreet.com/>.

Grant Aids are available from the East Coker Parish Council for the benefit of East Coker Groups and Societies. If you have a parish group which would benefit, please contact the Clerk for further details or download the application form from our website.

If you see the Ranger, Karen, working in and around the Parish, a cuppa would be most welcome. If you see anything that needs her attention, please contact Chairman B Sugg, 01935 863435 (no calls after 6pm, please).

And finally, as one cheery Parishioner put it:

*"Happy New Year East Coker. 2020 has kept us apart but brought us together at the same time!"*

*Coker Corona Newsletters, A thriving Food Bank, Clapping for Carers on a Thursday evening, VE Day Celebrations, Scarecrows, Bus Stop Book Swap, Jumble Trail, Christmas Lights everywhere and a flying visit from Santa! WHAT AN AMAZING PLACE TO LIVE IN ANY YEAR, LET ALONE IN 2020!"*

### **Christmas Lights and Santa's Parade**

If you would like to see photos and slide show of the Christmas lights and Santa's Parade, you can view on Parish Council Website by using this link: <https://www.eastcokerparish.co.uk/parish-news/elementor-4285/>

Enjoy!

**British Summer Time** – Sunday 28 March 2021 – clocks go forward one hour.

### **NEXT ISSUE**

The next issue of the Newsletter will be in **April 2021**. Copy, please, to Lesley Lindsay at [l.lindsay@eastcoker.com](mailto:l.lindsay@eastcoker.com) by **25 March 2021 or sooner if possible**.

**PS: There is no quarterly diary in this issue.**