

East Coker Society Newsletter



October 2023

Free Issue No 192

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East Coker Society News

East Coker Society AGM - Wednesday 25 October 2023, 6.30pm, Dampier Room, East Coker Hall. All welcome.

Newsletter copies

Printed copies of this Newsletter will be made available at Goose Slade Farm Shop, the Helyar Arms, St Michael and All Angels' Church, the Village Café, and East Coker Hall.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of the Newsletter will be in **January 2024**. Copy, please, to Lesley Lindsay at l.lindsay@eastcoker.com by **Wednesday 3 January 2024 or sooner if possible**.

Village Clubs and Organisations

EAST COKER CHARITY CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The East Coker Charity Christmas Lunch is returning to East Coker Hall on **Saturday 16 December**. This festive event will be fundraising for Yeovil Hospital's dedicated Breast Cancer Unit.

The three-course Christmas Lunch, with all the trimmings, choice of starter and dessert and tea or coffee will cost £15 (adults), £10 (children under 12).

Please bring your own wine.

There will be two sittings: 12.00pm and 2.00pm.

Tickets will be available from Monday 2 October on a first come (with payment), first served basis.

Contact Mary on 07816 475339.

EAST/WEST COKER ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

We will be holding our Annual Poppy Appeal Coffee Morning on **Saturday 14 October** at West Coker Commemoration Hall between 10.30am and 12noon.

Tickets are £3 and will be available on the door, to include coffee and cake/biscuits. There will be a cake and produce stall, the usual raffle, and various items of Legion memorabilia.

We do rely on your support, so please come along and enjoy the chance to spend some time with friends and family.

All proceeds will go to the 2023 Poppy Appeal, to provide life-long support to serving and ex-serving members of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependents through hardships, injuries, and bereavements.

Best regards

Dave Giles, Chairman

THURSDAY BADMINTON

We are looking for some new members to join our friendly group on Thursday afternoons for social badminton at East Coker Hall.

Please contact Sally, 01935 824238 if you are interested in joining us.

EAST COKER WI

The local WI welcomes new members for monthly get-togethers to hear interesting speakers on a variety of different subjects both educational and amusing. Meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at East Coker Hall. The talk is given before a refreshment and gossip break and a quick session of announcements. We usually finish by 9.00pm.

A fun competition is held each month, usually having some connection with the speaker's subject. The money raised is sent to the WI head office from where it is distributed to women in deprived countries. They are given the means to raise money themselves to help feed their family; this might be, for example, a hand worked sewing machine to make or mend clothes or to provide a goat to produce milk for their own consumption or to sell.

Our next speaker will give an illustrated talk on a trip to Borneo, with the competition being 'monkey business' (October). This will be followed by a 'hands on' demonstration of making Christmas wreaths (November). In December we shall have our traditional Christmas lunch at the Royal Oak, Hardington. In January 2024, we will be given a small wine-tasting with emphasis on how food affects the taste.

We also hold Whist Sessions on the third Thursday of the month at 7.00pm in the Dampier room at East Coker Hall, with a break during the summer months. The next one is being held in October.

BINGO NIGHT

To help raise funds for our WI, we are holding a Christmas Bingo night on **Saturday 11 November** at 7.00pm. Unfortunately, this will be cash only as we are not allowed to hold a bank card. There will be, as usual, some very good prizes. Refreshments will be served during the interval.

Any further enquiries, please contact secretary, Pauline Gubbins, tel 864430

Joyce Pryor

Diary dates

Thursday 19 October	Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Thursday 26 October	A trip to Borneo	7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Thursday 16 November	Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Thursday 23 November	Christmas Wreath-making	7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Thursday 21 December	Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall

EAST COKER WINE CIRCLE

East Coker Wine Circle meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 8.00pm in East Coker Hall, unless otherwise stated.

Subscriptions of £20 are due in August, and visitors pay £5. Hope to see some new faces bring a glass and enjoy.

Sarah Rashley

EAST COKER VILLAGE HALL CHARITABLE TRUST

Many of you will be familiar with East Coker Village Hall. This is one of the largest in the area, with excellent parking and good facilities. Built in 1979/1980, the hall was officially opened in 1981 and is now beginning to show its age. Regular maintenance and repairs as well as various improvements have been carried out over the years. This autumn, the installation of new main entrance doors will improve security, ease of access and improved insulation for users. During the 2022 financial year, the hall cost just under £20,000 to run and maintain. During the current financial year, these costs have amounted to some £18,000 to date.

Well used by a wide range of groups, clubs and classes, the Hall is run by a committee of trustees. To ensure that the Hall continues to be a valued community facility, the current trustees would welcome new committee members to assist in the running of it. You should be committed and be prepared to take on the responsibilities associated with acting as a trustee. If you are interested in helping to ensure that the hall remains a community facility, please make contact via the website email echbookings@btinternet.com. We will be happy to discuss what is involved, as well as the responsibilities of acting as a trustee.

Helen

EAST COKER GARDENING CLUB

A mixed bag of weather this summer, ranging from very hot to very cool and a lot of rain. Well, of course it's well known that gardeners are never totally happy with the weather conditions. The grass has grown apace and we've too many French and runner beans. However, we should be grateful that we haven't experienced the wildfires and earthquakes that other countries have faced, or the floods recently suffered here by many.

Over the last few months, as well as the meetings at East Coker Hall, we enjoyed an afternoon visiting some local gardens, followed by tea and cakes, thanks to our members. The talk in August about Ascension Island, which several visitors attended, proved very interesting. Our September meeting was held at Brimsmore, when a member of staff spoke about plants for autumn colour. Following the talk, members had the opportunity to take advantage of the 25% discount shopping evening. We now enter the autumn and winter months, with longer evenings - time to get out the catalogues and plan next year's sowing and planting. Bulbs will be distributed at the October meeting, courtesy of the Gardens Group, which will need planting up and cossetting, ready for judging in March/April.

The fuchsias distributed in March were judged at the August meeting. Our members had grown some superb specimens. A voucher for the Gardens Group was awarded to the winner.

We were delighted that some of our members exhibited very successfully at East Coker annual Flower and Produce Show held in August – congratulations to all of them.

The programme for the remainder of 2023 is as follows:

Thursday 12 October	Gardening in the 'goldilocks' period	Brian Hesketh
Thursday 9 November	Winter is not just snowdrops	Christine Skelmersdale
	Followed by the Annual General Meeting	
Thursday 14 December	How to grow to show	by show judge Claire Hart

We try to provide a varied programme during the year. We are always happy to welcome visitors and new members; whether you are interested in gardening or would just like to join a group of friendly, sociable people. *The Propagator*, a free newsletter containing Club news, notes of gardening events, tips, etc is distributed via email, with hard copies available at each meeting for those not on email.

During the growing season, there is a produce stall, stocked by members with plants and produce. Vouchers offering discounts on seeds, seed potatoes, young plants and seedlings are available during January and February, with offers on spring bulbs and overwintering onions and shallots come summer. Bulk order discounts are available to members during January with special order forms for sundry goods, such as compost. Twice a year, there is a growing competition. Bulbs will be distributed in the autumn for the competition to be held next spring. Day trips are arranged to places of interest.

We are a friendly lot – why not join us for an enjoyable, sociable evening? You do not need to be good at gardening; talks cover a wide variety of subjects. The annual subscription is currently £20, with subs of £2 per meeting. Visitors £5. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, commencing at 7.30pm in East Coker Hall, Halves Lane, East Coker unless otherwise indicated.

For further information, please contact Helen Styles 01935 862447. There is a page on the East Coker Hall website for the Gardening Club. If you have access to the web, please do go to <http://eastcokervillagehall.co.uk/> and look at the Gardening Club page.

In the meantime, if you would like to know more, do please phone 01935 862447)

Helen

EAST COKER FLOWER AND PRODUCE SHOW

The Show, held this year on Saturday 19 August at East Coker Hall, was very successful. 69 exhibitors entered, with a total number of 444 entries in the various classes. In spite of the difficult growing conditions this year, there were good exhibits in the vegetable, fruit and flower classes.

Entries for the children's classes were up on last year. It is always a pleasure to see the results of the imaginations and skills of the younger exhibitors – we look forward to welcoming them again next year, when hopefully more children will be encouraged to enter.

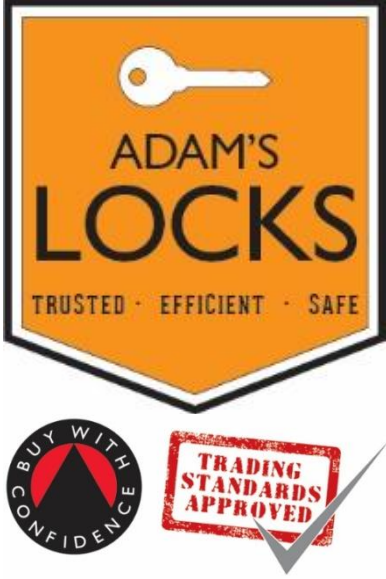
Entries in the "Homecraft" section were good, with numerous cakes, scones, bread, jam, etc, all looking and smelling delicious. The 'Art and Craft' classes displayed the various, and numerous, skills of many local inhabitants from drawing, painting and sketching to needlework and other handcrafted items. 'Photography', as always, had good entries. Sadly, entries in the 'Floral Art' and 'Wine' classes were very disappointing, and the Committee will be reviewing these.

Trophies awarded this year:

Trophy	Winner	Total points
Maudsley Silver Challenge Cup for most points in show	Linda Mayne	65
Archie Neville Memorial Cup for most points in Fruit & Vegetable Section	Sarah Owen	42
League of Friends Cup for most points in Flower section	Linda Mayne	36
Ralph Eacott plaque- Best vase of dahlias	Annette Beardsley	
Pittard Rose Cup for 5 roses	Helen Broom	
Mrs Newman Cup for Gladioli	Helen Broom	
Jane Harvey Pot Plant Salver	Mary Foster	
Don White Challenge Cup Best fuchsia in show	Ruth Hann	
Molly Kettlewell Herb Cup	Jackie Glover	
Miss Keefe Cup - Most points in Floral Art	Linda Mayne	23
Drake Memorial Cup Most points in Homecraft	Debbie Raines	22
Eileen Doye Memorial Cup - Best jam	Brian Geary	
Joan Williams Cup for Most points in Jams & Jellies	Debbie Raines	13
Christine Mead Cup for best Craft	Squirrel Lewis	14
Mrs Wilcox Posy Bowl - Novice Art	Not awarded – no entries	
Society Photographic Trophy	Helen Broom	25
John Whittock Memorial Challenge Cup For judge's favourite (photo)	Sophie Pennock	
Olive Sharman Photographic Award	Emily Barnes	
East Coker Gardening Club Cup Children's classes – under fives	Poppy Saunders	
Gloria Mead Cup Children's classes – 6-10 years	Fred Raines	18
Miss E B Drake Challenge Cup Children's classes – 11-15 years	Charlie Pennock	18
Doreen Bates Cup for most points in children's classes	Fred Raines	

Thank you to everyone who exhibited and to all who visited the Show in the afternoon. Thanks must also be given to those without whom the Show just simply would not happen: the Committee members, who now start work on the 2024 Show; the volunteers who assist with heaving the tables, who help to set up, steward, run the raffle, the tombola and the auction, organise the refreshments, and many other tasks; the Village Café and Goose Slade Farm for hosting the entry form collection boxes. The Gardens Group kindly provided the exhibitor and prize cards. Thank you also to Jacqueline Clough for presenting the trophies and to the owner of Devonshire Cottage for continuing to kindly store the tables.

Date for your diary for next year: **Saturday 17 August 2024** when we very much look forward to welcoming you again. It would be good to surpass the number of exhibitors in 2019, when 105 people entered.



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EAST COKER POETRY GROUP

Tuesday 31st October - The Uncompetition

Our own Competition this year is the Uncompetition in October.

No prize, except the expert critique from other entrants which is, of course, priceless.

Anyone who enters will be a winner on this evening.

The subject is 'Flags' – any style length or interpretation.

At the Village Café, 7.30pm.

Tuesday 28th November - Porches and Poems

An Audio-visual presentation by Gini Astley.

During lockdown, Gini and her twin sister Alison, a conservation architect, visited many local churches and although not able to enter, found inspiration in their porches.

Gini's poems and Alison's drawings have been put together to make a unique record of these visits.

email info@eastcokerpoetry.org.uk

website www.eastcokerpoetry.org.uk will carry details of meetings when they are confirmed

David Cloke

FILM NIGHTS at EAST COKER HALL - 2023 - 24

Doors open at 7.00pm with tea and coffee available. Tickets are remaining at £7 each. Booking is not required, and everyone is very welcome. Films begin at 7.30pm.

Dates so far are as follows:

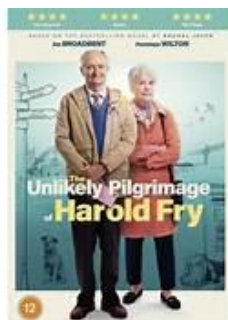


Wednesday 25 October - The Old Oak (2023) – a Ken Loach film, which had its World Premiere at Cannes this year.

The Old Oak is a special place. Not only is it the last pub standing, but it's also the only remaining public space where people can meet in a once thriving mining community that has now fallen on hard times after 30 years of decline. T J Ballantyne (Dave Turner) the landlord hangs on to The Old Oak by his fingertips, and his predicament is endangered even more when the pub becomes contested territory after the arrival of Syrian refugees who are placed in the village without any notice.

Wednesday 29 November - Empire of Light (2022) – this is a romantic drama directed by Sam Mendes.

Set in an English coastal town in the early 1980s, the film is about the power of human connection during turbulent times. It stars Olivia Colman, Michael Ward, Toby Jones and Colin Firth.



Wednesday 31 January 2024 – The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry (2023)

This film is based on the novel of the same name by Rachel Joyce. Directed by Hettie Macdonald.

The film tells the story of pensioner, Harold Fry (played by Jim Broadbent), who goes out to post a letter in Devon to an old friend (played by Linda Bassett) and decides to go on walking to deliver it in person – in Berwick upon Tweed.

Gill Evans

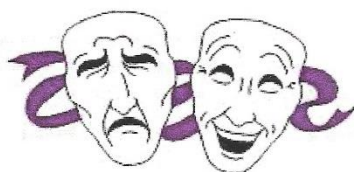
MOBILE LIBRARY

The Mobile Library visits East Coker on Tuesdays every four weeks from 11.50am – 12.10pm outside the Helyar Arms. There is a wide selection of books – fiction, non-fiction, large print, DVDs and audio books for adults and children. You can borrow up to 20 items. The stock is regularly refreshed, and you can order books there or online.

To use the service, you must be a member of Somerset Libraries, so remember to bring your membership card. You can join by filling in a membership form with proof of your name and current address, for example., utility bill or a driving licence. Do use this valuable service.

The next visits are 17 October 14 November 12 December

For information about this service, contact Somerset Direct, tel 0300 1232224 or visit www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries



EAST COKER PLAYERS PRESENT
A PANTO WITH PIRATES

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO PETER PAN?

WRITTEN BY JON MARGETTS

EAST COKER VILLAGE HALL

FRIDAY 1ST DECEMBER AT 7.30 PM

SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER AT 2.30
PM AND 7.30 PM

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AUTUMN TERMS 2023 BEGIN:

TUESDAY CLASS 5TH SEPTEMBER - 13:05 -15:05
WEDNESDAY CLASS 6TH SEPTEMBER - 13:30 - 15:30
SATURDAY CLASS 9TH SEPTEMBER - 10:00 - 12:00

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enquiries@eleanorfarr.gallery



Young People

EAST COKER PLAYGROUP. FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: EAST COKER PRESCHOOL

Thank you to everyone who supported our Golden Jubilee Event in June. Our records go back to 1973 but we have been reliably informed that the Preschool was on site at the Pavilion a little before 1973. It was a beautiful day and the temperature cooled a little in the afternoon which made it a very pleasant afternoon. (I never thought I would write that a cooler temperature would be beneficial on a June day!). There were many photos to look at, cakes and refreshments to enjoy, raffle tickets to buy, a Golden Trail to follow and many opportunities to catch up with past, present and future families. It was amazing to see you all, and we raised £675.

There are copies of the Golden Jubilee Cookery Book available to buy, priced at £5 each, please get in contact if you would like one. They will be available at the **Winter Fair on Saturday 25 November** in East Coker Hall from 11.00am-3.00pm. Stalls are available, please email office.ecplaygroup@gmail.com for information and booking form.

Our renovated planters have provided the children with many learning opportunities. The amazing June weather has meant that the strawberry flowers have made sweet strawberries. We put a net over the plants

to protect the fruit from the birds and watered the garden regularly. The children have enjoyed searching for red strawberries, picking them, washing them and eating them at snack times. Runner beans were not as successful on germination, but a donation of climbing French beans means the tripod was covered and the children enjoyed observing how far the bean plants travel along the fence. Our four pumpkin seeds germinated, and we have pumpkins! We also gratefully received a donated cucumber plant and autumn fruiting raspberries. The cucumbers were picked, washed and eaten fresh from the garden for snacks.

Children can join us from the age of 2 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 the Childcare Choices website which makes it easy to find out what's on offer.

Monday	8.00-9.00	12.00-1.00	3.00-4.00
Tuesday	8.00-9.00	12.00-1.00	3.00-4.00
Wednesday	8.00-9.00	12.00-1.00	3.00-4.00
Thursday	8.00-9.00	12.00-1.00	3.00-4.00
Friday	8.00-9.00	12.00-1.00	3.00-4.00

Children staying for lunch need to bring a packed lunch.

Baby and Toddler Session @ East Coker Playgroup Friday 9:30-11:00 £2/family. We have a playroom full of resources and outdoor space to facilitate playing and learning. Pop along and join us for play and chat.

To find out more information, please visit our Facebook page East Coker Preschool.

For more information and to register your child/children for East Coker Playgroup, please contact us 07503 751133 or email office.ecplaygroup@gmail.com.

EAST COKER SCOUT GROUP

Over the summer, Faye, Charlie and Emily headed off to South Korea for the World Scout Jamboree.



After their non-stop flight from Heathrow, they used the underground system to get to Seoul for their hotel and then regularly thereafter as they travelled around Seoul.

During the first three days in South Korea, they tried out the local cuisine and the whole UK Contingent visited the Demilitarised Zone with North Korea.



They arrived at the Jamboree in Saemangeum on the day of the Opening Ceremony. Having found and walked to their campsite, they headed off to the ceremony. Unfortunately, they were not allowed in as the arena was too small for the number of scouts at the site. This was an initial indication of the issues to come over the next few days.

The Jamboree organisation did not deliver the site and conditions expected of a World Scout Jamboree. Many of you will have seen the international news items about the conditions at the campsite. Our scouts spent 5 nights at the Jamboree site and, fortunately, avoided the



worst conditions. They demonstrated considerable resilience and continued in the spirit of scouting with a day of water activities, a coach trip

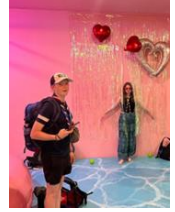


offsite for a tea ceremony and meeting up with many scouts from other countries - swapping badges, t-shirts and scarves as they went.

The decision was taken by the UK Contingent that the conditions at the Jamboree campsite were insufficient for a safe experience and, hence, all the UK scouts were withdrawn and moved back to Seoul. Many, many buses were shuttling scouts to Seoul. Our scouts briefly ended up in a ballroom whilst waiting for rooms to be allocated; bags piled high.



A revised Jamboree programme of activities was established to ensure the scouts continued their cultural experiences and the people of Korea opened their hearts to them.



The Closing Ceremony was re-arranged to be held within the Seoul World Cup Stadium and this allowed all of the scouts from around the world to come together again. After a formal Closing Ceremony, an amazing two-hour K-pop concert was performed to close out the Jamboree.



The World Scout Jamboree in South Korea certainly was a jamboree of paradoxes. Whilst it was not what Faye, Charlie and Emily had expected, it certainly provided a multitude of new challenges.

They met many scouts from around the world, experienced Korean culture, became more resilient, made it home safely, had a wonderful time (in spite of everything), and left the traveling Jamboree as more connected and engaged world citizens.



Thank you to everyone who helped support them and enabled them to have this adventure.

Another international experience was undertaken over the summer. Ruby went to Iceland for her Explorer Belt Award. This requires a 10-day expedition as part of a team outside of the UK. Ruby and the team chose to travel to Iceland. They met up with local scouts and stayed in Reykjavik at a scout hut. Over the ten days, they visited thermal springs, geysers, hiked across the hills, completed the Elemental Badge at an Icelandic national campsite and walked behind a waterfall.



To complete the Explorer Belt Award, Ruby and the team presented their planning, budgeting, organisation and the expedition itself to an audience upon their return.

International opportunities are highlights for anyone within scouting. Faye and Charlie have now signed up for Roverway 2024 – this will be held in July / August and involves an exploration phase, a main camp experience in Stavanger and then two days after the event in Copenhagen.

Coming back to East Coker, our beavers have a new leader. We are pleased to welcome Stuart (Weasel) who is already finding his feet with the Fun and Friends ethic within our colony. Last week, the beavers were learning a few words of Welsh to play a game as part of learning about the United Kingdom. The cubs started the term out at Pendomer cooking in the woods and have an active programme planned for the rest of the term.

The scouts built catapults (in the end in the dark) and then the following week tried to launch water sponges at each other – with varying levels of accuracy! The scouts first event will be a Backwoods weekend in October where they sleep under a tarpaulin and prepare / cook survival food.

Our Young Leaders continue to provide superb support within each section – Faye (beavers/cubs), Emily (cubs) and Charlie (scouts). Faye has now completed her Young Leader training and is awaiting its award.

Thank you for all your support.

David Webber, Group Scout Leader
eastcokerscouts@gmail.com



EAST COKER PRIMARY SCHOOL



Respect, Determination & Courage, Compassion & Collaboration, Independence & Creativity

It has been so lovely to welcome back everyone to East Coker Primary after the summer holidays, as well as welcoming our new families who have joined us this term.

As we begin a new academic year, it is always interesting to reflect on the successes from the year before. There have been quite a few highlights for us over the last academic year. Our School Council did a fantastic job making huge improvements to our lunchtime play. We have created zones with many activities available to the children to learn about teamwork and leadership, and it has significantly reduced lunchtime behaviour issues and has provided a family feel to lunchtimes as different ages work together to create dens and role play on our Viking longboat.

During the year, we also had writing moderation from the local authority and an Ofsted inspection in May. We were really pleased that the inspector recognised the following features and strengths of the school:

- Pupils, staff and governors are proud to be part of East Coker Community Primary School
- Parents and carers speak highly of the support which the school gives their children
- Leaders and governors have high expectations for all pupils
- Pupils work and play well together
- Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful.

The following areas came out as strengths:

- Leadership
- Safeguarding
- Special Educational Needs

We look forward to continuing to build on these areas as we move into the new academic year.

As seems to be the normal in schools at the start and end of the term, we have been exceptionally busy and have achieved lots already, considering it is still only September.

Our children are settling in well to their new classes, getting to know their new teachers and teaching assistants as they get used to the different expectations as they move up through the school. We currently have seven classes and will be moving to single aged classes over the next several years starting from reception. This is due to the drop in birth rate. This means we have been able to transform a classroom into an Art and Design Hub where art and design and technology lessons can be taught by our very experienced higher level teaching assistants.

This year, our themes are Once Upon A Time for the autumn term, with a focus on WWII in juniors and Space in infants. This is followed by Save The Planet in the spring term focusing on sustainability and climate change, and in the summer, we will be looking at the Olympics through our Superheroes topic. We have a very exciting year ahead!

The Year 4 children are visiting the Bristol Hippodrome this week to watch Charlie and the Chocolate Factory as part of their art curriculum. Our Year 6 pupils will once again be camping at Great Wood for the week while they experience archery, climbing, grass sledging and tackling the high ropes as well as many other activities around teamwork and leadership.

We pride ourselves in offering a well-rounded education, and our wide range of after school clubs continues to help promote this amongst our pupils. This term, we offer photography, art, choir, rugby and football in addition to many other clubs.

Our School Council, Year 6 Ambassadors and House Captains have all been elected and are fully embracing their new roles within the school. The School Council will be taking the lead in creating an outdoor reading area and make further improvements to our outdoor lunchtime provision, such as creating music and art areas and further improvements to our 'wheel' zone.

Once again, over the holidays our site manager has been busy making improvements to our school building with lots of painting and repairs around the school. Our infant block toilets have had a brand-new makeover which is fantastic! We have also had all our windows replaced in the infant block and drain improvements led by the local authority. In addition to this, our staff have been very busy as many have moved round classes and there has been lots of tidying up and clearing out!

Following a hugely successful seven years of chairing, including two very positive Ofsted inspections, the last one in May 2023, we say thank you to Mrs J Bickerton who is stepping down as chair this year. Thankfully, Mrs Bickerton will still be helping out in school and supporting our library ambassadors. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you for all her hard work over the years on behalf of everyone in our school community. We have made significant improvements to the school during this time and that is due to the ongoing support of the governing body under Mrs Bickerton's care.

As we move into the next cycle of school improvement under the guidance of our new chair Mr Ian Haig-Brown, we will continue to review our school provision and look to gather views from our school community, as we work to create a plan to prepare our children for the challenges they will face in their own futures.

If you have young children and are looking at schools over the next term, you may wish to come and see us during our special open morning for prospective parents for Reception children starting in 2024 on **Saturday 14 October from 10am-12pm**. Please come along if you are looking for a place in Reception in September 2024. This will be a great opportunity to have a good look around the site to see what we offer. Parents are then welcome to book a personal tour during the school day to see what it is like in action and have a chat with the head teacher.

Our school website is full of information regarding life at East Coker Primary School and our recent Ofsted inspection. Please do visit our website to see what we have been up to. www.eastcokerschool.co.uk

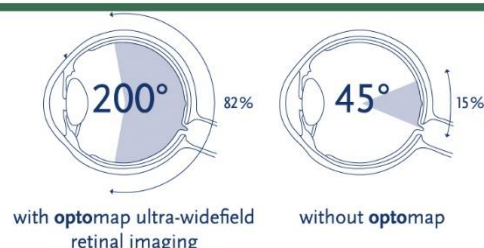
Jane Hesketh-Williams
Head Teacher



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We are happy to collect any unwanted glasses for us to use in our eye testing work in Kenya.

The Churches

ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS' CHURCH

Unexpectedly, the Benefice Rector, Colin Simpson, has been reassigned to a new post as Rector of Wellington and West Buckland, and so has left us. We will miss Colin and Sandie and wish them every happiness and success in their new venture. The affection in which they became held by congregations across the Coker Ridge Benefice was illustrated by the terrific turnout we saw at a farewell tea party held for them in West Coker, and later in a full St Michael's Church for Colin's final service.

Colin's departure means that we enter a period of vacancy (otherwise known as interregnum) while we recruit a new priest – something that can take time. Though the Bishop has set out an ambitious timetable, which sees interviews being conducted in March 2024, we will need to manage without a Rector until the spring of next year at the very earliest, and we must be prepared for a longer vacancy if things don't go as planned. We are lucky to have a number of 'PTOs' (retired priests with Permission to Officiate) and Lay Worship Assistants in the Benefice, so hope that our schedule of regular services will continue.

Information about services at St Michael's can be found online on the 'A Church Near You' website <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11025>, on the notice boards in the church porch and in the paddock, or via the Benefice Newsletter which is emailed out on a weekly basis; to get on that distribution, e-mail the PCC Secretary, Christine Vince, on christinevince2@btinternet.com.

We will also post news and notices on Facebook – St Michael's Church has a page www.facebook.com/East.Coker.Church which you can like/follow to stay up to date. If you have any specific questions or concerns, please get in touch with our Churchwarden, Toffer Beattie, whose email is tofferb@gmail.com.

For baptisms, weddings, funerals and pastoral care, contact the Benefice Coordinator, Barbs Hampshire, on 01935 864574 or officecokerridge@gmail.com (office hours Wednesday 9.30am. - 4pm.)

Recent highlights at St Michaels include an adult baptism, a couple of summer weddings, the Annual Leavers Tea Party for pupils moving on from East Coker School, and a Harvest Thanksgiving Service which was followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

In addition to our regular services (see above for where to find information) there will be two special services this year:

- Our Annual Remembrance Sunday Service will be held on **Sunday 12 November** at 10:45am
- The Christmas Carol Service will be held on **Sunday 17 December** at 6.00pm.

Both services will be followed by refreshments. Last year we served Gluhwein after the carols which seemed to go down very well, and I am sure we will do something similar this year!

Finally, **Project Beacon**. We held a very successful briefing session in East Coker Hall recently where we shared our vision of putting St Michael and All Angels Church at the heart of village life by making it a more accessible and flexible community space.

As well as being able to share our ideas, we got some very useful feedback and comments from those that attended. St Michaels is such an important part of the village, and so it is essential that Project Beacon is understood and supported by the community.

The best way to keep up to date with the project, and to make suggestions and give feedback, is via the newly set up Project Beacon website www.projectbeacon.info

Toffer Beattie, Churchwarden

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To book a treatment or for more information contact Sarah:
07583 039744
sarahnewdigate@gmail.com
www.sarahnewdigatemassage.com

Member of



THE CHAPEL AT EAST COKER HALL

We meet at East Coker Hall, 11.00am on Sunday mornings. We are always happy to welcome anyone to join us, even if just to see what goes on!

Our services are very relaxed and informal and always followed by tea and coffee. We have a variety of speakers, our own worship band, and a large number of children of all ages in the 'Kids Church'.

Café Church is held on the first Sunday of each month; fresh coffee, croissants, and bacon rolls are provided, and we have an even more informal time.

On Tuesday mornings in term-time, the Toddler Group runs from 10.30am – 12.00pm. This is aimed at mums, dads, grandparents, and child carers and incorporates a café area as well as plenty of play space and equipment.

Contact us on 863735 or via our website www.eastcokerchapel.com where you will find our email address and the mobile numbers of our leadership team and more information about our church.

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GOOSE SLADE FARM SHOP

Lots of people are making the most of the fantastic weather and our outside seating area with a great takeaway coffee from our newly installed Rijo Coffee Machine. Takeaway cakes, tasty traybakes and cream teas are also available to enjoy.

Our Farm Shop is as usual full of delicious food as well as our well stocked meat fridges with our homemade burgers, sausages, steaks and joints from our home-produced animals.

Our butchers are always happy to provide the cuts you would like.

We have an array of good home-made delights, made on the premises including our very popular meringue roulades, lemon or lime crunch, varying flavours and sizes of quiches and unusual, tasty traybakes to name but a few.

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am – 5.00pm, tel 01935 863735 www.thegoosefarm.com

Liz & Phil

NEW BOOK CELEBRATES THE WRITER DAVID FOOT

Mark Foot has sent these details: “A bumper collection of the work of award-winning West Country journalist and author David Foot, **Footprints** spans the full range of his work – from cricket, football and boxing to theatre, local history and murder. With an observant eye, a fascination with human nature and a felicitous way with words, David Foot – who died in 2021 at the age of 92 – wrote with insight and freshness on a wide cast of characters: from cricketer Viv Richards and rugby star Carwyn James to actor Peter O’Toole, politician Harold Macmillan and poet Siegfried Sassoon.”

Mark says that the book mentions East Coker and Yeovil's famous cup win!

Many villagers will remember David Foot and his parents. The new book (to be published in October) is a collection of David Foot’s writing from his long career in journalism.

Mobile Foot Health Practitioner

Lucy Harwood Dip. FHP

07596 630200



EAST COKER PARISH COUNCIL

Councillor vacancy

We said a sad farewell to Cllr Binny Bennett in August. He has been with us since 2009 and has been a great asset to the Parish Council, with an amazing knowledge on planning, conservation and all things Coker. He is a huge loss to both the PC and the Village and will be greatly missed, but we wish him well in his new life.

We are also losing Cllr Tania Wikins in October. She has been on the Parish Council for three and a half years and has helped with many projects including logging signage for all the footpaths in the Parish. She will also be greatly missed.

Cllr Huxley Cowen was voted on as our new Chairperson at the August meeting, which is very much appreciated as there has not been a permanent Chairperson since May 2021. We also welcomed a new Councillor, James Walker, and look forward to working alongside him in the future.

So, the Parish Council now has two vacancies. If you have experience in planning, project management and fundraising this would be an advantage, but please don't be put off if you do not have this sort of experience. If you feel you can offer a few hours a month to become a Councillor, please email the Clerk at clerk@eastcokerparish.com. Key duties include: attending monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of the month, looking at local planning requests, discussions on village matters, wellbeing, Parish finance and budgeting, and joining PC working groups.

Village signage

Most of you will know that the new village stone which was on Yeovil Road was badly damaged back in June and had to be removed. There continues to be a delay in manufacturing a replacement and the other two stones. Sadly, this is out of the Parish Council's hands, but hopefully they will all be completed in the not-too-distant future.

Stick to the footpaths – please!

Now autumn has arrived, the farmers have begun to plant their winter crops. Please be mindful of this, stay on the footpaths and do not allow your dogs to run through the seedling crops. This can cause a lot of damage to newly sown seed.

Village bins

It has been brought to our attention that a parishioner has been depositing their household food waste and dirty cat litter into the village bins. The worst affected ones were at the recreation ground, where the bins have now had to be removed as animals were getting in and spreading the contents all over the recreation ground. Can we request that the bins are used for rubbish only!

East Coker Pavilion modernisation

As some of you may know by now, we are planning to modernise the East Coker Pavilion at Long Furlong Lane. It's been 20 years since we last fundraised and built the Pavilion, but now it is time to modernise it

and bring the changing rooms and showers in line with new standards. The Playschool is staying but the rest of the current building will be demolished and rebuilt.

This will provide a more improved, modern, spacious building which is better equipped for the groups that currently use the facilities, but also to entice new ones.

We will be embarking on a fundraising campaign in the coming months and hope that you will be able to contribute to making our village Pavilion the best it can be for the use of everyone, whilst having a great time at the events.

We are hoping that we can entice a new cricket team to our grounds, and also provide fun sports opportunities for all. You will be able to hire the new entertainment area for your parties and functions and make use of the outside space we have to offer.

Coker post

Would you like to receive the 'Coker Post' Newsletter? We send emails to our mailing list on an ad hoc basis when we have Parish Council news and events to share.

Email addresses are not shared with anyone else.

It's very easy to be added or removed from the mailing list immediately upon request. If interested, please email sandi@eastcokerparish.com.

100 Club

The East Coker Parish Council is looking to resurrect the old 100 club in the village!

Referred to as a 100 or 200 club, (depending on the number of subscribers) you can buy numbered tickets at £10 per ticket – as many as you wish - that are entered into a monthly draw paid for via a standing order over 12 months. If there are too many applicants, we will hold a waiting list.

Participants pay a fixed subscription for their number (or numbers), and the profits will go into the Pavilion fundraising account.

The winners will be chosen via a random number generator at the monthly Parish Council meeting and winners will be notified soon after.

The monthly prizes will be 1st prize - £120, 2nd prize - £60, 3rd prize - £20. These will be paid directly into your chosen bank account, and winners contacted and numbers announced on the Parish Council website and Coker Post.

So, are you prepared to have a bit of a flutter in the name of a good cause?

Then just email me to let me know you are interested, and more details will follow, including all the rules and regulations.

Village ranger

Our ranger, Karen, visits the village every Tuesday. Please contact Cllr Bridget Sugg, 07907 621106 (no calls after 5.00pm or at the weekend please), if you see any jobs which need her attention.

Highways

We have received a complaint about properties not keeping their trees and bushes cut back properly. Can we request that if you have a property bordering any of the roads in the village, that you remain vigilant and cut back any vegetation which is growing over the road.

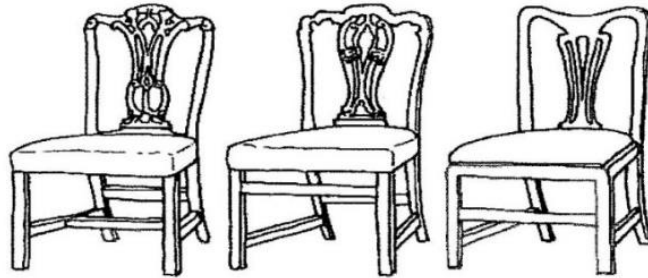
Pumpkin carving competition

To enter your pumpkin, please either pick up an entry form from East Coker Café or contact sandi@eastcokerparish.com or 07971 860494. There will be prizes awarded for both best child entry and best adult entry. Judging will take place on 8 November and winners will be announced on 9 November via email.

Clerk@eastcokerparish.com

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ECAG LETTER ASKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Please see the letter from Sandi Wintersgill on the next page.



Hi

We are the East Coker Action Group

We were formed in 1986 by villagers who made voluntary donations in order to buy the field known as 'Pin Cushion Corner' opposite Goose Slade Farm. These volunteers became group members and some, committee members.

At the time of purchase, we procured the field to avoid this green field site being developed.

In Jan 2023, we decided to plant this field with trees into a small woodland with 750 trees and shrubs, with the help of the Woodland Trust, the East Coker Parish Council and parishioners. This was in support of the Queens Jubilee Green Canopy Scheme - A living legacy of over three million trees planted across the United Kingdom in honour of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The committee of this team is:

Chairman & Trustee - Rob Mead

Secretary - Sandi Wintersgill

Treasurer & Trustee - Matthew Hodge

Trustees - David Mead, Michael Mead

Alex Bickerton, Ken McIver

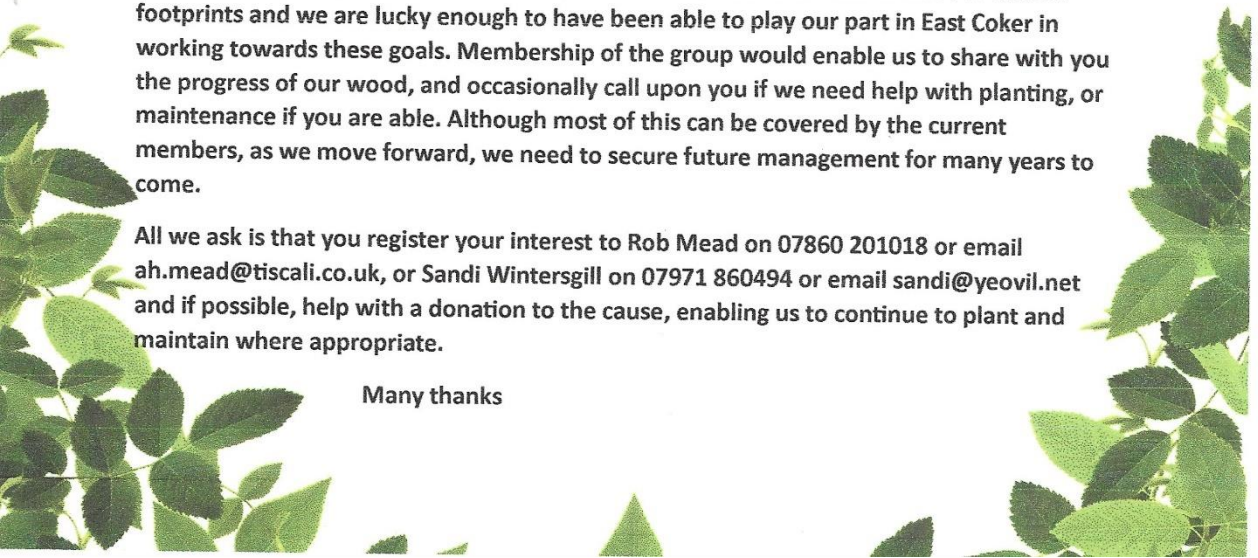
Over the years, membership of the group is diminishing due to varying circumstances and we, as a committee, feel that we need to secure the management and maintenance of the wood for the future.

To do this we are asking if anyone would like to join the East Coker Action Group and help to maintain the future of our woodland into the years ahead.

I am sure we all appreciate the need to protect our environment and offset our carbon footprints and we are lucky enough to have been able to play our part in East Coker in working towards these goals. Membership of the group would enable us to share with you the progress of our wood, and occasionally call upon you if we need help with planting, or maintenance if you are able. Although most of this can be covered by the current members, as we move forward, we need to secure future management for many years to come.

All we ask is that you register your interest to Rob Mead on 07860 201018 or email ah.mead@tiscali.co.uk, or Sandi Wintersgill on 07971 860494 or email sandi@yeovil.net and if possible, help with a donation to the cause, enabling us to continue to plant and maintain where appropriate.

Many thanks



QUARTERLY VILLAGE DIARY OCTOBER 2023 – DECEMBER 2023

Thurs 12 Oct	Gardening Club – Brian Hesketh	7.00pm – 7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Sat 14 Oct	RBL - Poppy Appeal Coffee Morning	10.30am – 12.00pm	WC Mem Hall
Tues 17 Oct	Library	11.50am – 12.10pm	Helyar Arms
Thurs 19 Oct	WI - Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Wed 25 Oct	Film Night – The Old Oak	7.00pm – 7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Wed 25 Oct	East Coker Society AGM – Dampier Room	6.30pm	East Coker Hall
Thurs 26 Oct	WI – Borneo Trip	7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Sun 29 Oct	British Summer Time ends	2.00am	
Tue 31 Oct	Poetry Group – ‘Uncompetition@	7.30pm	East Coker Cafe
Wed 9 Nov	Gardening Club – Snowdrops & AGM7	7.00pm – 7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Thurs 11 Nov	WI - Bingo	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Sun 12 Nov	Remembrance Service	10.45am	St Michael's Church
Tues 14 Nov	Library	11.50am – 12.10pm	Helyar Arms
Thurs 16 Nov	WI - Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Thurs 23 Nov	WI Christmas Wreaths	7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Sat 25 Nov	Playgroup – Winter Fayre	11.00am – 3.00pm	East Coker Hall
Tues 28 Nov	Poetry Group - Porches & Poems	7.30pm	East Coker Cafe
Wed 29 Nov	Film Night – Empire of Light	7.00pm – 7.30pm-	East Coker Hall
Fri 1 Dec	The Players - Pantomime – with Pirates	7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Sat 2 Dec	The Players Pantomime – with Pirates	2.30pm & 7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Tues 12 Dec	Library	11.50am – 12.10pm	Helyar Arms
Thurs 14 Dec	Gardening Club - How to Grow	7.00pm -7.30pm	East Coker Hall
Sat 16 Dec	Charity Christmas Lunch	12 pm and 2pm	East Coker Hall
Sun 17 Dec	Carol Service	6.00pm	St Michael's Church
Thurs 21 Dec	WI – Whist Drive	7.00pm	East Coker Hall
Wed 3 Jan 2024	Copy for January Newsletter		

Art Classes Autumn term, see page 5:

Beginning Tues 5 September	1.05pm – 3.05pm	East Coker Hall
Beginning Wed 6 September	1.30pm – 3.30pm	East Coker Hall
Beginning Sat 9 September	10.00am – 12.00pm	East Coker Hall