



# DUNCHURCH VILLAGE MAGAZINE

MARCH 2025

ISSUE 26



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PRODUCED BY FRIENDS OF DUNCHURCH SOCIETY

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## Welcome

A very warm welcome to our first magazine issue of 2025.

As we start a new year, many will have made a new year's resolution. The idea of committing to make a positive change may be traced

back to as early as 2000BC when the Babylonians celebrated their own new year during a 12-day festival. During this time, they would make promises to pay their debts, and one common resolution was the returning of borrowed farm equipment. It is probably a pretty safe bet that the latter resolution will not be shared by many reading this magazine!

At the start of a new year we may also be looking at ways of improving our health, and what better way than getting out into the fresh air and walking off some of those winter calories? As you do so, you might like to take more notice of the plants around you, and in this



*A large crowd came out to join in with the annual outdoor nativity*

issue, we are delighted to be starting a new regular feature about foraging. Our thanks to Leanne Warren for sharing her knowledge on this fascinating subject.

If you should need inspiration for your foraging walk, pick up a copy of Mike Judge's excellent *Dunchurch Tree Trail* booklet which takes you on an interesting walk around the village. Further details are on page 35.

During the course of this year, we look forward to bringing you lots more up-to-date news about our village as well as a wonderful insight into our past. With this in mind, we are indebted to Philip

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*Front cover: Early morning view from the churchyard courtesy of Leanne Warren*

Edmondson (the son of the much-respected Dr Edmondson) who has sent us some wonderful memoirs penned by his late mother, and over the course of the next few issues we will be including them in a 'looking back' series. Indeed, a 'heads up' that our June issue will look quite different and will mainly focus on Dunchurch during World War II. This special edition magazine will form part of the village celebrations to commemorate the end of that turbulent time in our history. Linked to this, we have BIG NEWS! There will be a major village event on the 10th May organised by the Parish Council with the support and expertise of other village groups. See page 13 for further details and be sure to make a note in your diary.

Following on from the mention of Dr



*Just one of seven beautiful, handknitted toppers that decorated the staddle stones at The Old Holt*



*Lord John received a makeover and became Bluey for a few weeks*

Edmondson, we wish Dr Ian Czerniewski well as he retires after 34 years' service from the Dunchurch Practice at the end of March. As well as attending to our ailments, you may remember Dr Czerniewski also took time out from his busy GP life to pen the wonderful magazine series about Doctors in Dunchurch. This has been saved for posterity and may be found on the FODS website under archive and people/family history. We thank Dr Ian for the legacy he has left both at the surgery and for future generations who may be interested in our village history. Enjoy your well-earned retirement Dr Ian.

Finally, we leave you with just a few images of our village Christmas just past and take this opportunity to wish you all a belated and very Happy New Year.

# Dunchurch Festival Group – Who are we?

By Fiona Stevenson

For 50 years, the Dunchurch Festival Group has been raising money for the village of Dunchurch, helping many village organisations fund a variety of projects. Although we raise money from several events, our main fundraiser is the village fete, which this year will be held on Sunday 22nd June, with the theme being '100 Years of Television'.

In the meantime, read on for details of an exciting opportunity for a child from Dunchurch.



*Santa helped us to distribute £7,550 to 15 different village organisations and groups. This amount was raised from the fete and other fundraising activities last year. In December, Santa also helped us go round Dunchurch, giving rides to children on his sleigh and raising £600 for Rugby Myton Hospice. A huge thank you to everyone in the village who donated*

## Dunchurch Youth Ambassador

It is important to give the younger members of our village a voice, and the search is on for this year's Dunchurch Youth Ambassador, who will be required to carry out some important duties. These include opening the village fete, switching on the village Christmas tree lights, drawing our grand raffle and perhaps the occasional interaction with the press. If you live in the parish of Dunchurch and are 10–16 years old during this school year, and would like to be considered, please write:

- a sentence on why you would like to be our Dunchurch Youth Ambassador, and
- a sentence on what new things you would like to see/have at the Dunchurch Fete this year.

With parental permission, please email your reply to Fiona Stevenson [fionac-stevenson@btinternet.com](mailto:fionac-stevenson@btinternet.com) by 27th April 2025 and include your age, address and a parent's contact phone number.

We would love to hear from you and hear your ideas.

If you would like to find out more about our forthcoming events, including our quiz on Friday 28th March (see page 29) log on at [www.dunchurchevents.org](http://www.dunchurchevents.org).



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# Dunchurch Parish Council

## Traffic survey

Further to our traffic and speeding article in December's village magazine, Dunchurch Parish Council (DPC) is now able to share the results of the surveys carried out over a consecutive two-week period in September 2024.

The surveys were commissioned by DPC and performed by Warwickshire County Council on Coventry Road, Daventry Road, Northampton Lane, Southam Road and Rugby Road. In summary:

- A total of 533,981 vehicles across the five roads were recorded during the two-week survey
- Of those 254,049 vehicles, or (48%) were recorded doing 30mph and above
- 1,852 vehicles were recorded travelling over 50mph

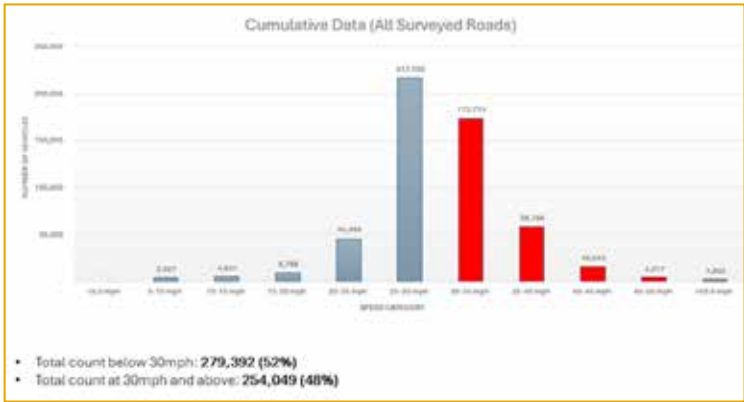


Whilst the Parish Council has limited powers to authorise speed prevention measures, which are ultimately the responsibility of WCC and the Police, we will use the data to promote our concerns and push for the implementation of meaningful and lasting measures to improve safety and driving behaviours throughout the parish.

We can also confirm that the data has been shared with Rugby Councillors John Keeling, Jon Bennett and Jill Simpson-Vince and Councillor Dale Keeling for Warwickshire County Council. In addition, the DPC will be submitting the data to Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership Central Reporting System (CRS) as we look to get support in making our community safer.

Tackling motorists who speed is critical, not just for our safety, but for the long-

term preservation of our community. The DPC, like our fellow parishioners, firmly believe that being able to navigate safely through our village should be our right – not our privilege.



## Youth Activity Club

**D**iscover the Youth Activity Club at Dunchurch Community Library and Hub.

If you're looking for an exciting, engaging, and educational activity for your children aged 6 to 11, look no further. The Youth Activity Club, supported by Dunchurch Parish Council and led by the Rugby Play Rangers, offers the perfect opportunity for children to connect with their peers, develop skills and interests, and enjoy a range of enriching activities.

Now hosted at the Dunchurch Community Library and Hub, the free sessions provide a welcoming and accessible space for young adventurers. Held every Thursday evening during term time from 5:30pm to 7pm, it's an ideal mid-week break for children to enjoy creative and interactive play.

The Youth Activity Club focuses on supporting children's emotional well-being and physical health through engaging activities like instructional games, team-building challenges, multisport, and creative sessions. From arts and crafts to nature-inspired adventures, there's something for every child to love. The indoor location ensures the fun continues no matter the



weather, with ample space for a variety of activities.

There's no need to book in advance – just bring your child along on a Thursday evening, and let the fun begin. Whether your child is a budding artist, a great den builder, or simply looking for a new adventure, they're sure to find something they love at the Play Ranger sessions.

For more information, contact **hub-officer@dunchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk**. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to let your kids play, learn, and grow in a vibrant community setting.

## Beloved parish tree felled for safety reasons

Dunchurch residents may have noticed the removal of one of the village's cherished trees recently. While such decisions are never made lightly, the Parish Council acted to ensure the safety of everyone in the community.

The red oak, which stood proudly on Stocks Green, was found to be infected with *meripilus giganteus*, a fungus that can severely weaken trees by attacking their root systems. Known as the giant polypore, this fungus can make trees unstable, increasing the risk of them falling without warning. After careful inspection by tree experts, it was determined that the tree posed a potential danger to nearby residents and visitors.

"We know how much this tree meant to our community," said Councillor Coomber. "It's always heartbreaking to lose a tree that has been part of our village for so long. However, the safety of our residents must come first, and leaving the tree in place would have been too great a risk."



The Parish Council worked with tree experts to explore every possible option before the decision was made. Unfortunately, by the time the fungus's fruiting bodies are visible, the damage to the tree's structure is often too advanced to reverse.

Plans are already being developed to plant a new tree in the same area, choosing a species that will thrive and provide shade, beauty, and habitat for wildlife for generations to come.

"We want to reassure everyone that we're taking steps to replace what has been lost," added Councillor Coomber. "The new tree will honour the memory of its predecessor while continuing to make Dunchurch a green and welcoming place for all."

The Parish Council encourages residents to stay engaged with the care and management of the village's green spaces and trees. If you have concerns about any trees or would like to contribute to replanting efforts, please email [clerk@dunchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@dunchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk). Together, we can ensure that Dunchurch's natural beauty remains a source of pride for years to come.



## Our library: the heart of the community

At the heart of our village, the local library serves as more than just a place for books—it's a hub of knowledge, creativity, and connection. A recent survey has highlighted how deeply valued the library is by our community and suggested exciting opportunities to make it an even stronger resource for all.



The survey confirms the library's invaluable role in our community while revealing the potential to make it even more impactful. By working together to address barriers, expand programs, and enhance communication, we can ensure the library remains a welcoming

space where everyone feels inspired, connected, and valued.

We are also fortunate to have access to the small garden and planters at the front, a natural space for all to enjoy – look out for ways to get involved!

Visit the library today or follow us on social media to learn more about upcoming activities and events. Let's continue to grow and celebrate this cherished community resource.

## Nature action plan

Support DPC in preparing a local nature action plan – see the poster below and get in touch with Ann Coomber to find out more.



# Pantomaniacs

By Sue Protheroe

Another successful run of the annual village pantomime finished with the DAFTA awards. Forget the BAFTAs, the Dunchurch Amateur Footlight Thespian Awards are the real deal and the one that any self-respecting, amateur actor/crew member covets! These 'tongue in cheek' awards recognise greatness of another kind with such categories as 'the sartorial elegance award' won by Musical Director Barry for his piano keyboard tie, 'the getting your teeth into a part award' won by

Puddlesey the dog or even the 'flexibility award' won by Sandy for doing the splits during the interval!

This year's production of Beauty and the Beast carried on in the fine tradition of our home-grown script writing and there was little doubt on which village the setting of Funchurch was based! With plenty of local references, the audiences were keen to join in and much amusing banter ensued.

However, there is so much more to the





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Dunchurch Pantomaniacs than the performance itself. We are proud to be a community group at the heart of our village and we welcome people of all ages. We work hard to create a happy and caring environment for all to develop and flourish. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing one of our younger members grow in confidence and then use it in their other pursuits. As one proud father said, 'the Pantomaniacs grow people.' So, if you are looking for a fresh challenge, or just want to make new friends, please get in touch. We have plenty of opportunities and not just for those who want to 'tread the boards.' We have an excellent backstage crew who are the backbone of everything we do and you too could be a part of that team.

Of course, success doesn't just happen without clear leadership and we

have this in the form of our Director Paul Le Poidevin. We would argue that a more patient man has never walked this earth! Those involved in am dram will know, sometimes a calm and clear head is needed and Paul has this in 'bucket loads.' A genius of the spreadsheet, every i is dotted and every t crossed and nothing is missed. A master of his craft and we salute you sir.

At the end of the day, The Pantomaniacs work to give enjoyment to others and to raise money for charity. Of course, within that, is the huge amount of enjoyment we take from it and the security of being supported as part of a wonderful team. So come on, take a leap of faith and reach out to us to find out more. Contact Paul [paul.lepoidevin@btopenworld.com](mailto:paul.lepoidevin@btopenworld.com) or Sue [sueprotheroe@ymail.com](mailto:sueprotheroe@ymail.com). We really would love to hear from you.

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## VE Day celebrations in Dunchurch

By Councillor Ian Grogan

**T**he New Year has arrived and the countdown to the Dunchurch VE Day celebrations begins.

In the December 2024 edition of the magazine, we outlined that Dunchurch Parish Council was working with FODS and other groups within the village to lay on an ambitious event to celebrate the end of World War II. The date for everyone's diaries is Saturday 10th May.

So, what's happening exactly? Put simply, Dunchurch is going back in time, 80 years to be precise, to celebrate a turning point in British and indeed world history, the end of one of the worst wars the world has ever seen (although many brave British service men and women were still paying a heavy price as the fight drew to a conclusion in the Pacific).

To commemorate and celebrate this occasion there will be WW2 tanks, 25 pounder artillery pieces, jeeps and half tracks from the Normandy campaign, a full arsenal of WW2 weapons including Bren guns and Lee Enfield rifles and much more armour.

We have permission to close the whole village square down for the day and road restrictions will be in place. There will be plenty of WW2 music, Dunchurch Voices, Dunchurch Band, singers and an

excellent show (repeated several times) loosely based on *Dad's Army* and stories of the time. A piper will be there to provide super bagpipe music and the music and shows will go on into the night in the Dunchurch Social Club. We will have maypole dancing from the children of a village school and the Mayor of Rugby will kindly be opening proceedings. There will also be some great historical insights about Dunchurch in the 1940s.

Our wonderful WI ladies will be serving teas, and there will be hog roasts provided by the Huntsman Carvery and fish and chip meals all afternoon from Dunchurch Fish Bar. Both village coffee shops will be open to provide further refreshments and the Dunchurch Social Club has a licence to serve beer and wine throughout the day – in other words, there will be something for everyone. Oh, and we nearly forgot to mention that the Kilsby ice cream van will be with us all afternoon in The Square.

The programme is well advanced but still evolving and it promises to be a special day. Look out for more communications in March and April and join us on Saturday 10th May for what should be a truly memorable occasion.



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## Dunchurch in Bloom

It is that time of year when FODS thoughts turn to floral planting to enhance the centre of our village. Would you like to join with likeminded folk and have a trough for planting? The troughs may be left in their original state or, if you prefer, decorated before planting up. Over the past few years, these troughs have brought so much colour and variety to the village and the trough gather in June is a great opportunity to meet up and admire each other's work in a social setting. Please contact Sue on [fod-news1@gmail.com](mailto:fod-news1@gmail.com) for more details.



*Just some of the troughs brought to the trough gather last year*

## Dunchurch & Thurlaston WI

**By Anne Gilbert**

Members of our WI are looking forward to a year of enjoyable events. We have interesting speakers booked for 2025 including Walking the Millennium Way, History of a Northamptonshire Farmhouse, First Lady Bus Driver in the 70s and the Mysterious Death of Amy Robstart. We have a fashion show by Wanda's in June and we are looking forward to help running refreshments for the VE celebrations in May.

Our hall is used regularly by a pilates class, a pop-mobility class, Dunchurch Photographic Society and Dunchurch

Silver Band, and now we have a new martial arts group who are looking for youngsters and adults to join and learn this contact sport – contact [info@tenchumartialarts.com](mailto:info@tenchumartialarts.com) for more details.

For more information about the WI, email us at [marion.gordon@btconnect.com](mailto:marion.gordon@btconnect.com) or phone 07813 973772. Remember our meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 2pm at the WI Hall, Mill Yard, Southam Road. You are always welcome and we would be delighted to see you.





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# Dunchurch Allotment Communal Orchard

**By Paul Sanders, Secretary**



**T**his year, our communal orchard, named Hodgy's orchard, celebrates its 10th anniversary. It was planted in an area of the allotment site that had become overgrown with brambles and was unusable as an allotment plot due to shading from large trees.

At the time, it was decided to plant heritage fruit varieties, which were purchased from Bernwode Fruit Trees, a fruit tree nursery in Ludgershall, Buckinghamshire. This nursery is dedicated not only to preserving historic tree fruit varieties but also to identifying and reviving those thought to have been lost. When Simon and I visited Bernwode in 2015, the passionate owners, Derek and Judy Tolman, were busy in the greenhouse grafting scions (the part of the

plant to be propagated) onto rootstocks (the plant's root system).

Bernwode's catalogue boasts about 600 apple varieties out of an estimated 2,000 in the UK. During our visit, we left with approximately twenty saplings, including a few pear trees and a couple of plum varieties.

Because apples do not breed true, planting an apple seed will not get you a tree much like its parent. Instead, for thousands of years, people have used grafting to hang on to apple varieties they like, taking a cutting from an old tree and growing it onto a new set of roots. That means that each apple tree is a clone of a long-ago progenitor. Some of these fixed genotypes are presumably as old as the Roman period. The Romans,

when they invaded the British Isles two millennia ago, are said to have brought domesticated apples with them.

Grafting is a widely used method for propagating apples and other top fruits for several reasons. Grafted trees typically produce fruit within 2–3 years, whereas trees grown from seed may take 5–10 years. Additionally, grafting allows growers to combine



*Clearing brambles for the orchard*



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desirable traits, such as improved disease resistance. Choosing the right rootstock influences a tree's growth rate, size, and overall health. Our trees were grafted onto M9 rootstock, which produces dwarf-sized bushes.

The term 'heritage' or 'heirloom' apples refers to varieties that originated at least fifty years ago or more. These apple varieties have been carefully preserved and passed down through generations. In contrast to the hybrid apples commonly seen in markets, which combine attributes from multiple varieties, heirloom varieties remain in their original, natural forms. By planting heritage trees, we help preserve these unique varieties that might otherwise be lost.

Each variety we planted has its own history, with many dating back hundreds of years. For example:

- **Gilliflower:** A culinary/dessert apple and one of the oldest English varieties, dating back to 1629. It was grown from Cumberland to Kent.
- **Lemon Pippin:** A dessert/culinary apple thought to be English or Norman in origin and known to exist in England before 1685. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was dried for tarts



*Ethelbert Oakenful laden with fruit*

and also enjoyed as a dessert apple.

- **Nancy Lee:** A dessert/culinary apple that likely originated as a 'wilding' from a discarded core or dropped apple. It was adopted by Dr. Alexandra Freeman in Oxfordshire and named Nancy Lee after her grandmother.

Not all the trees we planted ten years ago have survived the challenges of time. Some succumbed to extreme weather patterns, while others, like the Ethelbert Oakenful apple, suffered structural damage. Last year, the weight of its abundant fruit caused its extended branches to split back to the main trunk.

Looking ahead, our intention is to replace the trees that have died with young heritage saplings, ensuring the orchard continues to thrive for future generations.

## Foraging 1: Cleavers

**By Leanne Warren, RGN and assistant lecturer at Coventry University**



I am a Dunchurch resident and local forager and I'm passionate about re-wilding and rediscovering lost ancient wisdom and connection with our beautiful local environment.

Cleavers, sticky weed, goosegrass, sticky willy, bedstraw, Galium aparine

– most of us will be familiar with this native annual 'weed' which grows

abundantly around

Dunchurch, covered in tiny, hooked hairs and stirring childhood memories of the hilarity of sticking a bunch of sticky weed to an unaware victim!

Lush and green early in the year, signalling the first signs of spring, it grows tall and straggly, clinging, climbing, and clambering up other plants as the summer progresses.

You may view cleavers as just a garden pest or a pet owner's nuisance, spending hours detangling seeds from dog's fur. But did you know that all parts above ground are entirely edible and thought to be rich in vitamin C and antioxidants such as flavonoids? Once used as a pot

herb, early spring leaves and stems can be chopped and used in stir fries, soups and stews (don't worry the hook-like bristles soften when cooked!) It belongs to the

coffee family and its seeds can be dried and ground to make a mildly caffeinated 'cleavers coffee'. Its dark red roots were once used as a dye.

Cleavers are also a valuable wildlife plant providing food for the caterpillars of many butterfly and moth species including the barred

straw moth and the hummingbird hawk moth. It's loved by rabbits and guinea pigs and can provide a good alternative and free greens for their diet.

In traditional home remedies it was used as a cleansing herb thought to have mild diuretic properties, stimulating the lymphatic system and flushing out built up toxins and pollutants. Studies have shown it to be an immunostimulant.

In symbolism cleavers are thought of as the herb of connection to others and is a cooling herb linked to the water element.

In folklore it was believed that if you drink cleavers water three times a day for nine weeks you will become so





beautiful everyone will fall in love with you instantly!

Perhaps reading this you have learnt a few new things about this amazing common weed. So, next time you come across it on a stroll or in the garden, I invite you to reach out; touch it, smell it, taste it. Perhaps you won't be so quick to pull it out of the garden when weeding and maybe even consider a wild corner to help sustain and support wildlife. I hope you see its magical beauty in a completely new light, as I have.

### Cleavers spring tonic

Firstly, make sure you are 100% sure of your identification. Pick a large handful of cleavers. Wash thoroughly then add to a jug or bottle of water with a slice of lemon. Leave to infuse overnight in the



fridge then drink and enjoy throughout the following day. It has a refreshing and pleasant green pea shoot like taste and is said to support the immune system after a long winter.

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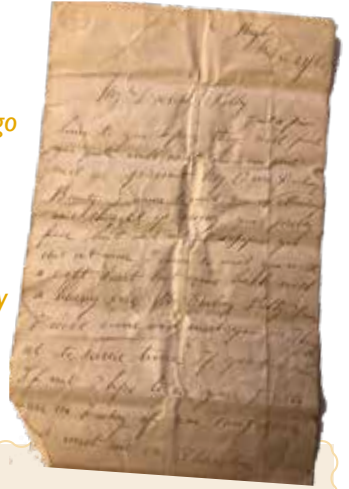


## A love letter from the past

by Paul Sanders

It was during renovation work in our house a few years ago that a folded letter was found in the dust, debris and old straw littering the floor. On investigation we appeared to have stumbled across a love letter written to Polly from W Beason 156 years ago. We imagine that Polly had tightly folded the message and concealed it from others by stashing it away in the flooring boards.

Transcribed as written.



Rugby Dec 21/68

My Darling Polly,

Just a few lines to you hoping they will find you quite well as it leaves me quite well at present. My own darling beauty I came to meet you on Monday and thought of seeing your pretty face but did not. I suppose you did not come. I came to meet you with a light heart but left with a heavy one. My darling pretty dear I will come and meet you on Thursday at the same time if you can come. If not I hope to see your pretty face on Friday if you can't come and meet me on Thursday. I will come up by the plots and by your house at three o'clock. My own dear Polly I enjoyed my walk with you on Sunday last very much indeed for I do love you with all my heart and when you tell me that I go with and one else it grieves me very much. My Darling Polly please when you write to me will you tell me whether your father said anything to you for going with me. When I got back they asked me whether I had seen you and had a walk with you and how you was and I told them that you sent your love to them and they thought it was very kind of you to think of them and they said they would be very happy to see you any time that you come. I hope you won't forget to call on Tuesday if you come over. My darling beauty you soon had another young man after I left you. I don't think that you love me much as you would not talk with so many. But my darling I will freely forgive you it.

My Darling Polly I don't know that I have more to say this time so I must conclude with all my very very best love to you if you will except it. Je suis your ever loving friend.

W Beason



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## A village turned black

(Phyllis Edmondson  
1900–1996)

On Wednesday January 3rd 1935, at 6pm, a lorry containing 22 barrels of lampblack entered Dunchurch. As it slowed down opposite our house, The Old Bell Inn, its front axle broke and friction with the road caused the carburettor to ignite. Fire spread to the petrol tank which exploded and sheets of flame shot 20 feet into the air.

One by one the barrels of lampblack rolled slowly off the lorry onto the road where they too caught fire, burning with such intensity that the whole road surface was soon ablaze. Fortunately, the driver managed to scramble from his cab unhurt and telephoned the Fire Brigade who came at speed from Rugby.

Meanwhile, the smoke from the lorry and barrels had turned into a dense black swirling fog with lumps of soot and burning wax falling like satanic snow all around the village. Black greasy powder penetrated every window and door and the heat cracked glass panes and blistered paint. Water from the brigade's hoses filled the gutters with waves of



*The site of the crash*

black powder which swept like the tide down the street. A large crowd had gathered but soon they were covered from head to foot with lampblack.

After two hours the Fire Brigade returned to Rugby leaving us all to try and clean up all the mess although that took many days of washing and scrubbing.

One interesting result of the fire was that the ivy covering the front of our house became scorched and had to be pulled off. Underneath it was revealed an old sign painted on the wall: BELL INN. POST HORSES and alongside this hung a metal 'Fire Mark' indicating that in its coaching days the house had been insured by the Sun company.

When, four years later, the house was hit by a bomb, lampblack could still be seen around the splintered window frames.



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*Additional information provided by Freda Bennett, from a Rugby Advertiser report 25th January 1935.*

'Luckily, Mr Birch the lorry driver managed to escape his vehicle without suffering any injury and a car following behind the lorry had to be smartly pushed to safety from the flaming road.

The Rugby Fire Brigade was called and used both water and chemical extinguishers to help put out the blaze. Two policemen driving nearby hurried to the scene and organised the road to be blocked and all traffic diverted.

Needless to say, there were black footprints in homes and local businesses

for some time'.

NB: Lampblack, made by burning oil in a lamp to produce a finely-powdered black soot, was used chiefly as a pigment for paints, enamels and printing inks.

### Contact details for our area elected councillors

#### Warwickshire County Council

Cllr Dale Keeling, Leam Valley,  
dalekeeling@warwickshire.gov.uk

#### Rugby Borough Council

Cllr John Keeling, Dunsmore,  
john.keeling@rugby.gov.uk

Cllr Jill Simpson-Vince, Dunsmore,  
ill.simpson-vince@rugby.gov.uk

Cllr Jon Bennett, Dunsmore,  
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📧 📷



# Leamington Hastings Bowls Club – 40 years and counting

By Sue Turner

**A** warm welcome awaits newcomers from Dunchurch.

Forty years ago, work started to create the LHBC bowling green. Under the supervision of Fred Cox, Leonard Ellward, Pat Toole and the club's first president Manton Dimbleby, a few club members began digging out levels, rolling, measuring, making gates, fencing, laying turf, watering, seeding and mowing (the list is endless!). Club members continue to help with the maintenance of the green and grateful thanks go to anyone, past, present and future, who has played their part and continue to play their part in sustaining the club.

We play indoor short mat bowls from September–April every Wednesday from 2–4pm in the Leamington Hastings Parish Hall. Outdoor lawn bowls is played every Wednesday from 6pm, April–September on the bowls green next to the hall.

Some benefits of bowling include improved physical and mental fitness, improved coordination and concentration, increased confidence and, at LHBC, lots of fun and laughter! We have already been joined by

residents from Dunchurch and many surrounding villages. We welcome anyone of any age or ability. We have bowls you can borrow and you can play three times for free before you decide to join. Just wear loose clothing and flat shoes for indoor and outdoor bowling.

We are a non-league club and play friendly matches with local clubs and inter-club matches for trophies and the pride of winning. We are a self-funding club and hold annual fund-raising events. (Our skittles night has to be experienced to be believed). The club has also raised thousands of pounds in support of Myton Hospice.

If you would like to come and try indoor and/or outdoor bowling, whether you are a novice or returning to bowls, you will be made very welcome. We have a Facebook page for anyone interested or if you would like to make an enquiry. Alternatively please call 01788 336913.

What a fantastic facility and a great legacy to have in the community and may the club continue to go from strength to strength!



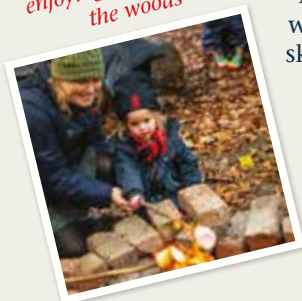
# Open Day 8th March 2025



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## Winter Wonderland

A new venue at the village hall but still with the same winning format raised £675 for village projects, and FODS would like to thank everyone who came along in support.

We are most grateful to Cllr Simon Ward, Mayor of Rugby, who gave up his

time to come along and officially open the event, Dunchurch Band and Dunchurch Voices who both gave a wonderfully festive performance and of course Santa and his elves who took numerous Christmas orders in their grotto. A winning addition was the Pantomaniacs tearoom which served mulled wine, mince pies and hot dogs along with the essential tea and coffee. This provided a relaxing environment for those who had visited the fabulous array of



(top) Mr Mayor, Cllr Simon Ward, greeting Santa with Dunchurch band in the background, and (left) Craig and Linda, our welcoming raffle elves!



trade stalls in the main hall where there were some beautiful handmade crafts available to buy.

Thank you to all of our FODS helpers, their friends and everyone who contributed to making this event such a happy and successful event. We look forward to doing it all again later this year on December 14th.



(top left) Santa in his grotto with festive reindeer, (top) many braved the awful weather to attend and take advantage of the beautiful crafts on offer, and (left) festive songs rang out with Dunchurch Voices

# Wanda Fashions



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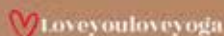
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# The Dunchurch Tree Trail

By Mike Judge, MBE

It was with a profound shock that I realised that 1st January was the 25th anniversary of my retirement. I had not thought much about what I would do in retirement but since I had so many community commitments, I just carried on for most of the next 20 years, gradually shedding the more onerous responsibilities in favour of continuing village interests.

In my career and voluntary work, there was nothing really to suggest I become an 'author' in my eighties. However, I read a piece in the local paper about 'The Queen's Canopy' and that quickly morphed into The Dunchurch Oak Line. With lots of sponsorship and support from FODS, the DFG and other village groups, the original ten oaks were planted in a wonderful crescent on The Heath and soon supplemented by The King Charles III Coronation Oak. Thereafter was born the idea of *The Dunchurch Oak Line* book. The hard copy is currently available in the library and an e-version is available free on the FODS website, courtesy of our photographers, editors

and computer wizards, Eric and Jane Ewington.

*The Oak Line* book had greatly expanded in scope to include narrative and photographs of other spectacular trees and historic sites in the village and thus a guidebook to a gentle ramble through the village to see them all gradually developed. That guide, *The Dunchurch Tree Trail*, has now been printed and is entirely sponsored by the Festival Group, to whom I give much thanks. Copies of the *Dunchurch Tree Trail* booklet will be sent to all the village organisations who originally sponsored the trees, including the schools.



Janet Beaumont designed the guide and used the same printers as this village magazine achieving the fantastic quality we have come to recognise. Thank you, Janet.

Eventually, we hope the guide will be available to buy for just £2 from the library, one or two shops or through your contacts at the Pantomaniacs, the Festival Group, FODS or me.

I hope you enjoy both publications from this unexpected author!





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If you're looking to minimise your carbon footprint while still savouring the joys of travel, a narrowboat escape might be the solution. There is no expensive air travel – this alone makes canal boating a staggering 20 times more environmentally friendly than hopping on a plane. With eco-conscious choices in mind, you'll find that all your boat's power comes from engine-generated electricity. And with bases like Union Canal Carriers in Braunston easily accessible via public transport, the stress of airport crowds and traffic jams is eliminated.

Boating gives you freedom to go where you like; there is no pressure to get anywhere. There are no parking fees or fuel expenses, as diesel and gas are included



in hire prices. And with no weight restrictions you can bring along everything you need – even your four-legged friend.

Although many boaters enjoy visiting the numerous canal-side pubs, there are other ways to spend your time without spending your cash. Working the locks, geo-caching, painting or photography, family games time onboard, walking and immersing yourself in the local wildlife or sharing your experiences with fellow boaters won't cost you a penny!

Pricey insurance policies and medical expenses aren't necessary with UK narrow boating as boats are normally insured for accidental damage and 3rd party cover.

Holiday local! Embrace the adventure of narrow boating, the perfect way to support local businesses and do your bit for the environment. Memories are made whether working the locks, visiting a canal-side pub, or an outdoor barbecue on the tow path under the stars.

Union Canal Carriers is offering a special discount for those who reside near Braunston, so now is the perfect time to try a narrowboat holiday.

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## Dunchurch Boughton C of E Infants Academy and Nursery

By **Suzanne Marson, Headteacher**

**W**e have had a great first term. It is hard to believe that by the time you read this, we will have had our half term break and be almost halfway through the school year! There continues to be a buzz of enthusiasm around the school, with happy engaged children who are a joy to be around.

Over the past term, we have had various trips and visits on offer for the children in addition to the usual classroom learning experiences. The whole school visited Warwick Arts Centre to see The Smeds and the Smoos, year two visited St John's Museum to experience a Victorian Christmas and we visited St Peter's to take part in a Christmas service. We have also enjoyed taking part in and supporting local activities such as the Christmas lights switch on.

We are very grateful to the Boughton Trust who are providing a significant

contribution towards our library improvement project. Work is underway and will be totally complete by the end of February, creating a large library space for all children in school to use. We look forward to sharing pictures with you once it is completed.

Are you interested in your child joining us? We have three nursery classrooms within school, providing an excellent educational start for our children. Since the Government has introduced further free funding for nursery education, we have seen an increase in demand for our school nursery places. If you are interested in your child joining our nursery, we would advise registering with us and booking a place as soon as possible.

Email us: [office.infants@dunchurch.covmat.org](mailto:office.infants@dunchurch.covmat.org) or call us: 01788 810292



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## Dunchurch band

By Louise Balsom

**D**unchurch Band rehearse on Tuesday evenings at the WI Hall, Southam Road, Dunchurch from 7.30pm to 9.30pm.

We have a vacancy in the bass section and would love to hear from any bass players (BBb or Eb) interested in joining the band. Other brass instrument players welcomed also and instruments can be provided. Please contact us for more information or come along to a rehearsal and meet the conductor, Mr Paul Whitmore and the band members.

Over the last couple of months, the Dunchurch Band have been rehearsing a piece called I, Daedalus by Andrea Price for the Midlands Regional Championships 2025 competition held at the Bedworth Civic Hall on Sunday 9th March. The Band have also been learning lots of exciting new music for our spring and summer 2025 concert programs including a lovely Beatles medley. The Dunchurch Band will be performing their new music programs at Daffodil Sunday at Monks Kirby from 1pm on 6th April and at Abington Park Bandstand in Northampton from 2pm on Sunday 27th April.

### Dunchurch Training Band

The Dunchurch Training Band (launched



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 Dunchurch, CV22 6GH

For more information  
 Tel: 07548 276993  
 Facebook icon Dunchurch Band  
 email: dunchurch.band100@yahoo.com

in September 2024) is going from strength to strength and we have been delighted to welcome new members to the group. The Training Band is for both adults and children (seven years of age and over) and is suitable for complete beginners and learners grade 1–4 or similar standard. The band has instruments that learners can use and provides tuition for beginners.

If you would like to learn or already play a brass instrument and would like to have fun playing as part of a band we would love to hear from you. Please contact us for more information – see above for details.



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## Are you our new vicar?

**By Veronica Lowe, Joint Churchwarden**

**T**he search for a new Church of England vicar for St Peter's Dunchurch and St Edmund's Thurlaston is now on, following Revd Pat's retirement. We hope to start interviewing in the near future, having drafted a detailed Parish Profile which sets out the many attractions we have to offer, including our thriving villages and historic churches.

In the meantime, what and who are we looking for? A round-up of characteristics brought the following suggestions: 'Energetic, enthusiastic, approachable, outgoing, sociable, inclusive, spiritual and pragmatic. An empathetic team-player, not simply with church volunteers but with the Dunchurch Boughton Academy CofE Schools, the host of local organisations and charities such as FODS and the Festival Committee, and fellow Ministers'.

The Junior School children added 'a smiley, friendly story teller who helps us to come to church', and Lyra from the Infants School drew who she expected to see.

If this is a tall order, we have stressed that we aren't looking for perfection – rather a warm spiritual human being who as vicar, will immerse themselves in the heart of our communities.



*Picture by Lyra Hallahan who is looking for 'a trendy new vicar with striking hairstyle and nail varnish!'*

Until we're able to welcome our new vicar, the team of volunteers at St Peter's and St Edmund's look forward to being of service to the churches and community, and to spring!

### Dates for your diaries

Ash Wednesday marking the start of Lent on 5 March at 6.30pm in St Peter's

Joint Communion Service for both churches at St Edmund's at 10.30am on 30th March

Palm Sunday with Junior Church at 10.30am at St Peter's on 13th April

Maundy Thursday Joint Service with the Baptist Church at St Peter's, 7.30pm on 17th April

Good Friday Walk of Witness with the Baptist Church starting at 9.45am on 18th April at the Halifax Memorial on The Heath followed by the raising of the Cross, and hot cross buns in St Peter's

Last Hour at the Cross at 2pm on Good Friday

Easter Sunday celebrations, 20th April

Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 27th April.

# Dunchurch Baptist Church

**By Reverend Alistair Jones**

**T**his time last year I was introducing myself to you as the new Minister at Dunchurch Baptist Church. A lot has happened since then. We have a new government, as do the Americans. There has been the joy of our family increasing to include a new granddaughter. We have also had the sadness of saying goodbye to friends who have died during the last year, and we have just witnessed a ceasefire in Gaza, following over a year of fighting. Big mole hills are appearing in some of the fields around the village, as plans are made for new homes. Lots of things have changed; some for better, some for worse.

It is fun to watch our new granddaughter growing up. Her three brothers adore her and give her plenty of hugs and cuddles, along with the odd playful mauling as they are quite a bit bigger than she is. It will be interesting to see how the relationship with their sister develops once she is able to move and interfere with what they are playing with. I suspect that the novelty factor of a new baby will blend with the reality of what it means to have another member of the family. There will be that transition in relationship. Our three children bought my wife a hoodie the other year with the words 'Sibling referee.' I suspect



*A significant change for the Baptist Church. This is how we used to look*

that will be our daughter's role in the coming years.

We all experience these transitions in life, where things change over time. It is a natural development and can bring joys as well as challenges. We are in that period between Christmas and Easter. From a time when we remember Christ coming into the world as a helpless baby, to His death on the cross followed by His resurrection. Just as our grandchildren grow up, so did Jesus. Growing from that baby, into adulthood, and the ministry God gave Him to do.

I find it helpful to remember that God is in all of life. He experienced everything we go through, so can come alongside us in our times of trouble. Jesus has been through the whole of life, from birth to death on the cross. Therefore, He is able to help us in our time of need. As we journey through Lent to Easter, it is good to know that Jesus is with us and able to help us if we ask Him.



## Baptist Church diary dates

Saturday 5th April from 10.30am to noon: Easter craft and Easter story event

17th April at 7.30pm: Maundy Thursday Communion at St Peter's

18th April: Good Friday walk of witness starts at the Canadian Airmen Memorial at 9.45am

Easter Sunday, 20th April, starting at 10.30am: family service at the Baptist Church

All are welcome.

## Magazine Pick-up Points

Extra copies available at:

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| • Anne-Marie's Florist | • Rugby Road       |
| • Baptist Church       | Newsagents         |
| • Library              | • Village Hall     |
| • Post Office          | • Wanda's Fashions |

## Advertising rates

Professionally delivered to homes and businesses in Dunchurch Village including Toft, Lime Tree Village, Dunchurch Hall and also Onley Park. Over 1400 copies distributed each quarter, with an estimated readership of 3000.

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Deadline for June 2025 issue: 30th April 2025

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# Dunchurch Community Directory

Badminton Group	Dunchurch Village Hall, Monday 7.30pm	judge.patricia@googlemail.com Pat Judge 01788 810253
Beavers	Boys and girls aged 5¾ – 8 Mondays & Tuesdays, Scout hut, Done Cerce Close	www.dunscout.org.uk join@dunscout.org.uk
Cubs	Boys and girls aged 8 – 10½ Wednesdays at the Scout hut, Done Cerce Close.	www.dunscout.org.uk join@dunscout.org.uk
Dunchurch Allotment Association	Situated on Coventry Rd	www.dunchurchallotments.org.uk admin@dunchurchallotments.org.uk Secretary Paul Sanders 01788 811744
Dunchurch Bellringers	St. Peter's Church. Sunday Service ringing 9.50-10.30am, Practice, Wed 7.45–9pm	Tower Captain Simon Benton, 07890 325434 simon.j.benton@gmail.com
Dunchurch and Bilton Cricket Club	Based as Dunchurch Village Hall Rugby Rd.	https://dunchurchbilton.play-cricket.com
Dunchurch and Thurlaston WI	Meetings 2nd Thursday of each month, 2pm, WI Hall, Southam Rd.	Anne Gilbert 01788 811837 annegilbert1@hotmail.com
Dunchurch Band	Senior and training band	www.dunchurchband.co.uk dunchurch.band100@yahoo.com
Dunchurch Baptist Church	Baptist Church, Coventry Road.	www.dunchurchbaptistchurch.org.uk Minister: Rev Ali Jones, minister@ dunchurchbaptistchurch.org.uk. Church Secretary Sarah Coulon, sarah.c@ dunchurchbaptistchurch.org.uk
Dunchurch Boughton CofE Infant Academy & Nursery	Nursery children are taken from aged 2yrs 9months. Other year groups, Reception, year 1 and 2	office.infant@dunchurch.covmat.org 01788 810292
Dunchurch Boughton CofE Junior Academy	Primary education situated in Dew Close	office.juniors@dunchurch.covmat.org 01788 811028
Dunchurch Community Library	School Street Open Tues, Thur, Fri 10am–5pm and Sat 10am–noon	www.warwickshire.gov.uk/dunchurchlibrary dunchurchcommunitylibrary@btconnect.com 01788 811355
Dunchurch Festival Group	Organise fete and other events. Meetings third Monday of each month 7.30pm at the village hall	www.dunchurchevents.org Chair Guy Watt gwattdfg@gmail.com Secretary Julie Peters juliepeters91@ hotmail.co.uk
Dunchurch Girlguiding including: 1st Rainbows 3rd Brownies 1st Guides	GirlGuiding girls have fun, adventure and space to discover their potential Age 5 – 7 yrs. Wed 3.45 – 4.45 pm Age 7 – 10 yrs. Wed 5.00 – 6.30pm Age 10 – 14 yrs. Wed 6.45 – 8.15pm	www.girlguiding.org.uk is where parents/ carers may express their daughters' interest in joining. Adult volunteers welcomed.

Dunchurch Health Walks	Tuesday 2pm, Friday 10.30am Meet at war memorial	
Dunchurch Pantomaniacs	Organise and perform village panto in January. Rehearsals begin October.	paul.lepoidevin@btinternet.com sueprotheroe@gmail.com
Dunchurch Parish Council	PC office based in the Library. Open Tuesday and Thursdays 10am – 1.00pm	https://dunchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk clerk@dunchurchparishcouncil.gov.uk 01788 817550 or 07474 705061
Dunchurch Photographic Society	Meetings held at WI Hall, Southam Road	www.dunchurchps.com secretary@dunchurchps.com
Dunchurch Surgery	Dunsmore Heath (off Rugby Rd)	www.dunchurchsurgery.warwickshire.nhs.uk 01788 522448
Dunchurch Village Hall	Rugby Road	bookings@dunchurchsportsandvhall.co.uk 01788 522444
Dunchurch Voices	Ladies choir meets Wednesdays, 7.30pm at the Baptist Church, Coventry Road	Barbara Davies 07890 659857
First Dunchurch Scout Group	Fun, challenge and adventure for boys and girls aged 10½–14. Done Cerce Close on Thursdays	www.dunscout.org.uk join@dunscout.org.uk
Friends of Dunchurch Society	Organises Britain in Bloom and Winter Wonderland Produces the village magazine	friendsofdunchurch@gmail.com
Heart of England Bridge Club	EBU Affiliated. Three pairs sessions and one practice session weekly. Lessons and courses also offered. Held in club room, Dunchurch Village Hall.	www.heartofenglandbridge.co.uk heartofenglandbridge@gmail.co.uk 07710 467023
Knowing Stillness Meditation	Dunchurch Library 10am Wednesday	Jim Hesketh 07899 948551
Live Music Memories	Supporting Playlist for Life and the Alzheimer's Society	ann@annchristinacoomber.co.uk
Rugby About Turn	Newsletters on local development	richardallanach@aol.com
St Peter's Church		Churchwardens: Veronica Lowe 01788 815861 Celia Jones 01788 314564  St Edmund's Thurlaston Deputy Churchwarden: Brian Bowsher 01788 812094 dunchurchstpeters@gmail.com

To make any amendments or to add your Dunchurch-based, non-commercial club or organisation, please email [friendsofdunchurch@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdunchurch@gmail.com)

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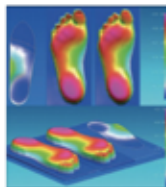
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