



stretewise

The Village Magazine



MELRO - DE - SMITHES WOOD
"BLACKBIRD WOOD"
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Cover photograph
by Nick Shepherd

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www.stretewise.com

stretewise@outlook.com

The Dartmouth & District Friends

Fashion and Fizz @The Flavel on Wednesday 3rd December at 7pm

A fundraising event for Children's Hospice South West and The Flavel Arts Centre

The independent boutiques of Dartmouth will be taking to the catwalk for an evening of fun, style and chic.

Tickets include fizz, posh canapes, music, fashion show, gift stalls and an insight in the influence of fashion through the decades and in film. Raffle of glamorous boutique items and stunning Christmas wreath for Otok.

Boutiques: Escape to the Coast, Juste Moi, Sally Brown, Fashion Alchemy, Dartmouth Silver, Foxx Exchange, Starburst

Tickets: £20 from the The Flavel Box Office.

Christmas Fair on Saturday 6th December in The Old Market, Dartmouth from 10am until 3pm

Join us for what is now a great tradition- the Christmas Fair in support of Children's Hospice South West.

We have gifts, crafts, jewellery, delicious cakes and Christmas themed goodies!

Dartmouth Rock Choir are performing at 11am and of course we have our raffle of stunning prizes.

Come and support this important charity which has three hospices within the South West for children with life limiting conditions and their families.

Making the most of short and precious lives across the South West

The advertisement features a red background with white illustrations of pine branches, snowflakes, and Christmas ornaments at the top. The word "stretewise" is written in a large, white, lowercase sans-serif font, preceded by a white owl logo. Below the title, white text provides subscription details. At the bottom, there are white silhouettes of evergreen trees. The overall design is festive and clear.

Subscriptions for Stretewise 2026 are now due. Stretewise Vol 35. 1 to 6.

Starting February - March. To order your six issues of Stretewise please complete the subscription slip enclosed and hand the slip and payment to Monica and Andy at the Strete Post Office and Stores.

Payment for six magazine issues for 2026 = £4.00 which includes delivery in Strete.

We thank you in advance and hope for your continued support for the village magazine.

*Book!
Now!*



THE KINGS ARMS NEW YEAR'S EVE



2026

BACK TO THE 80S **MOVIES & TV FANCY DRESS** **PARTY!**

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Strete Chapel

We are continuing to meet every Sunday at 11am in the chapel building.

A big thank you to all who contributed to the Harvest Thanksgiving service and lunch that followed.

Also, a big WELL DONE to the children who performed their action song 'Our God is a great big God' and showcased their art work during the service. It was a good reminder to all that we have a God who loves and cares for us and can conquer anything.

Please join us for our next big service which will be on 21st December at 11am. This will involve singing carols, hearing the word of God, prize giving and a drama prepared by the children.



Young Searchers children's club

This term we are learning about the meaning of Christmas whilst practicing our drama for the carol service. There is lots of fun to be had in interpreting the shepherds reaction to a host of angels appearing! Please come and support the children's efforts at our carol service.

If you are a school age child and interested in learning more about the bible through stories, craft and games then please join us on a Thursday from 5-6pm in the chapel building.



Christmas Carol Service

21st December 2025 at 11am

Speaker: Peter Squires

Strete Chapel

Tea, coffee & mince pies

St Michaels Church, Strete

Some Christmas Thoughts.

Recently I found myself struggling to sleep and at 5am I got up and went for a walk, I headed down a path near the Rectory in the pitch black. It was so dark I struggled to see my feet. There is no light pollution in this rural area. I made my way carefully along the track, praying that I wouldn't discover a puddle. Suddenly the sky brightened ever so slightly, like a gentle glow. It was the dawn. In that moment I made sense of the saying 'the night is darkest before the dawn' (Thomas Fuller, C17th English historian).

This got me thinking about life, how when we find ourselves in trouble or a bad situation, we try to resolve things before they become 'too dark'. Often, we cannot stop it happening. However, the reality is there will always be a dawn. Eventually light will come. As we enter this Christmas season, we remember that the son of God entered the world in darkness. Mary and Joseph faced rumours at home of creating an illegitimate child, Next, they faced a very long arduous journey at the worst time of a pregnancy. Then they had nowhere to go. Finally, Mary was in the start of labour. Things could not get darker. Would Mary have to give birth in the street? Things were beyond bleak. Then hope came. A kind inn keeper saw the severity of the situation, the brokenness of the young couple and gave the little he had. He provided a safe, quieter, dry space for Mary to step into the next part of God's master plan. Suddenly the darkness was broken - a slither of light and hope - followed by the most beautiful and magnificent gift, a child, and not just any child, but the light of the world. Now things couldn't have been brighter in that stable. A brightness arrived that has since travelled the world, been told in so many languages and spoken to so many hearts. The best bit is that Jesus is STILL the light of the world and He is always willing to shine his love and light in all our situations no matter how bleak or dark they feel. There will always be a dawn. My prayer this Christmas is that you will discover this for yourself. As you hear the familiar words of the nativity, I pray that God will show himself and his light to you.

Rev'd Matt Gorton (Vicar)

Services December - January

Dec 7th 11am Morning Worship Dec 14th 11am Holy Communion with Rev Matt Gorton
Tuesday Dec 16th 6.30pm Carol Service with Strete Voices
Dec 21st 11am Carol Service at Strete Chapel Dec 24th 4pm Crib Service with Matt Gorton
Dec 25th Christmas Service at Strete Chapel
Jan 4th 11am Morning Worship Jan 11th 11am Holy Communion with Rev Matt Gorton
Jan 18th 11am Morning worship Jan 25th 11am Morning worship with lunch
Please join us in our worship. All are very welcome.



Village Hall Christmas Market: Saturday 15th November

What a wonderful event this turned out to be!

There were 8 trade stalls plus 2 from the Hall and 1 run by some children from the village who were selling items they had made.

Thank you to those who came to support and an extra special thank you to those who helped. These events don't just happen, much hard work goes into them, but it is always worthwhile to see so many from our lovely village enjoying themselves and creating an amazing atmosphere!

A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL!

Village Hall Annual Quiz: Saturday, 11th February

Jonathan will be our Quiz Master and it will be interesting to see which team can beat 2025 winners: Heather's Heroes.

Don't forget there is a very valuable trophy to be won!

DID YOU KNOW

There used to be a very active folk dance group that met regularly in Strete Village Hall and on 2nd April, 1960 a certificate from The English Folk Dance and Song Society was awarded to the Strete Group.

Later on, 23rd June, 1964, the British Broadcasting Corporation invited dancers to take part in a filmed session. Doors would open at 7.00pm; a rehearsal would follow at 7.30pm and the recording would take place at 8.30pm.

The programme would then be broadcast in the Home Service on Wednesday, 9th September at 12.00pm

THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE WISH YOU ALL

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

AND

A GOOD, HEALTHY 2026

MOVE AND STRETCH

Strete Village Hall Tuesday 7.30-8.30pm

A COMMUNITY EXERCISE GROUP FOR ALL ABILITIES

Small charge to cover the cost of the hall (depends on numbers).

Dates: Nov 25th Dec 9th Weekly from Jan 6th 2026

If interested please contact Debby 0751166910

(Qualified exercise and Pilates teacher EMD UK)

ALL WELCOME - Bring a mat, small cushion and water bottle

Christmas MARKET

at
Strete Village Hall



Thank you Nick for the pics.

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NEWS FROM THE KINGS ARMS

As colder weather settles over Strete and the crackling fire becomes a gravitational pull once again, the Kings Arms has been busy in all the best ways — lively events, neighbourly kindness and a real sense of momentum as we head into December.

October brought us a truly fabulous Harvest Supper, with an outstanding feast prepared and provided by Helen Kenny and Paul Green of Landcombe House. The food was stunning and the room filled with laughter; the evening delivered a village moment to remember.

Then came our Annual Members Meeting attended by shareholders and subscribers. For the first time since the pub reopened, we did not need to ask the community for additional financial support - a milestone made possible entirely by our regular subscriber community. It is your steady monthly contributions that are keeping the pub afloat through the quieter months, and we cannot thank you enough. The meeting itself was constructive, honest and full of shared purpose, a clear reminder of how deeply people care about keeping our village pub open and thriving.

On World Kindness Day, a team of volunteers joined us to help put the pub garden to bed for the season - clearing, sweeping, trimming and organising with gusto. The difference they made is visible every time you look out the window. And while we're talking improvements, a huge thank you to our neighbour Andy Milne for installing the elegant new "Kings Arms" garden gate. It's beautiful, practical, and rather a smart addition.

December brings its own traditions and one extra-special new one. On Thursday 5th December, we host our Christmas Community Afternoon Tea - our gift to the village. Our third this year! Expect bubbles, bakes, a festive raffle with seasonal treats (including a Fortnum & Mason Tea Time hamper) and a couple of hours of warm company. It also happens to be International Volunteers Day, so we'll be hoping for a sprinkle of help from our baking and serving elves to make it truly memorable, but no expectations, just festive cheer and neighbourly goodwill.

You may have noticed that we are not offering Christmas lunches this year. The simple truth is that we do not receive enough bookings to make it viable - we can't compete on scale - so instead we've put our energy into a festive cornucopia of events designed to bring joy, sociability and a little sparkle to the village. The Afternoon Tea is one such treat; there are plenty more.

In January, the pub will be closed from 1st–20th January, reopening on Wednesday 21st January with our Big Quiz of the Year - always lively, competitive and great fun. And just a few days later, we'll be hosting another Burns Night, following the huge success of last

December



3rd December 7.30pm



4th December 7.30pm



FREE

Pull up a chair and join us for sandwiches, bakes, tea and bubbles.

A Christmas Kindness Community Afternoon Tea

5th December 3-5pm

Christmas

QUIZ & FIZZ

10th December 7.30pm

Christmas Opening

BAR ONLY

Monday 22nd	Closed
Tuesday 23rd	Evening
Christmas Eve	All Day
Christmas Day	12-3pm
Boxing Day	Closed

Christmas

open JRG

Pub vibes!
Enjoy making music?
Your stage awaits!

11th December 7.30pm

Christmas

QUIZ & FIZZ

17th December 7.30pm

Christmas

KARAOKE

18th December 7.30pm



Kings Arms Winter Promotions

1st December - 28th February

PLEASE JOIN US
— For —
DRINKS
o/s
SELECTED DISCOUNTS



Friday

5 - 7 pm

Happy Hour x2

Sunday

4 - 6 pm



Please empty our barrels!

year's celebration. Prepare for poetry, pipes and plenty of good humour.

Meanwhile, our **New Year £1000 Prize Draw** is open on Crowdfunder. The draw will take place **at 9pm on New Year's Eve**, and after our last jackpot winner, **Brian Blakemore**, there's every chance your name could be next. Look out for the poster in this issue.

We've updated our winter wine list too with lovely new reds, whites, rosés and even a Crémant behind the bar. Perfect for the season.

Our **Friday Happy Hour(s)** and **Sunday** 'help drink our barrels dry' **Sundowner** offer relaxed, affordable moments at each end of the week, and our renowned **Wednesday quiz nights** are in full swing. On **10th and 17th December**, when our Artisan Pizzeria friends can't join us, we'll be making those evenings extra-special with **Quiz & Fizz** — a little sparkle in the glass and a little sparkle in the room.

And finally, congratulations to **Peter Hales, Bryce Blacker, Ron Howell**, and **Nick Findlay** our latest **Feast for Four** winners. Your meal on the house awaits.

Thank you, as ever, to everyone who walks through our door, helps in ways big or small, supports through subscription or simply brings warmth to the room. The Kings Arms remains the beating heart of Strete thanks to you.

Wishing you all a joyful December and a bright, sociable New Year from everyone at the Kings Arms.



**THE KINGS ARMS
COMMUNITY PUB**

New Year
£1000

PRIZE DRAW OPEN

**£20 A TICKET
£50 FOR THREE**

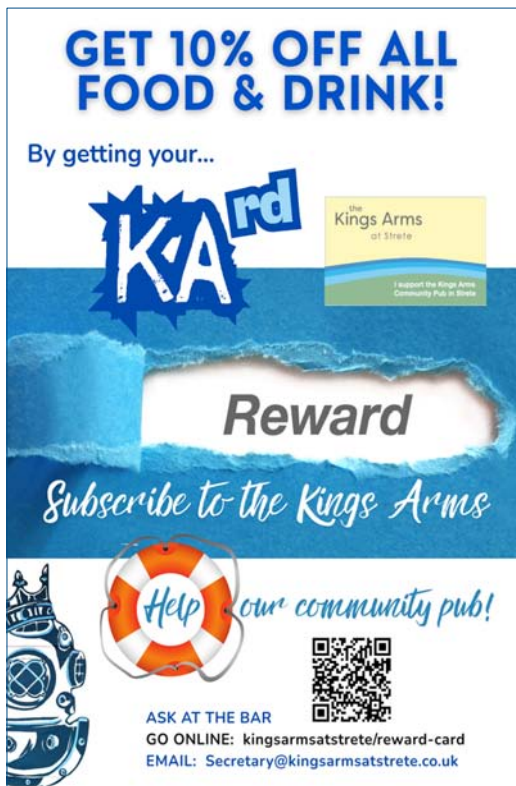
SCAN THE CODE TO ENTER
OR CLICK [HERE](#)



**DRAW DATE
31ST DECEMBER**

EVERY TICKET SOLD
HELPS KEEP OUR PUB OPEN

Images of champagne glasses, a cork, and a crown are also present.



**GET 10% OFF ALL
FOOD & DRINK!**

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Reward

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our community pub!



ASK AT THE BAR
GO ONLINE: [kingsarmsatstrete/reward-card](https://kingsarmsatstrete.com/reward-card)
EMAIL: Secretary@kingsarmsatstrete.co.uk

Images of a crown and a pub sign are also present.

New
Year's
Eve

HERE COMES...

2026



**BACK TO THE 80'S
MOVIES & TV
FANCY DRESS PARTY**

£1000

Will be won!
31st December 9pm



2026
JANUARY

**SORRY
WE'RE
CLOSED**

1st - 20th January

**QUIZ
NIGHT**



21st January 7.30pm

**BURNS
NIGHT**

24th January 7.30pm

**QUIZ
NIGHT**



28th January 7.30pm





$$\text{Green gift} + \text{Green gift} + \text{Green gift} = 9$$

$$\text{Red gift} + \text{Red gift} + \text{Yellow gift} = 4$$

$$\text{Yellow gift} + \text{Green gift} + \text{Yellow gift} = 7$$

$$\text{Green gift} + \text{Yellow gift} + \text{Red gift} = ?$$

$$\text{Tree} + \text{Tree} = 10$$

$$\text{Tree} \times \text{Gift} = 35$$

$$\text{Light} + \text{Gift} = 20$$

$$\text{Tree} + \text{Light} + \text{Gift} = ?$$

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Spot the Difference



RNLI Christmas cards created by Carl Giles's with his trademark cartoon style and humour are available from the Royal Navy Lifeboat Institution information center & gift shop 9 S Embankment, Dartmouth TQ6 9BH. 01803 832423.

When you buy Christmas cards from the RNLI you are helping to fund the lifesaving service and give the crews everything, they need to save lives at sea.



FREE

The Kings Arms wishes everyone...

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Join us for a Christmas community afternoon tea
with cakes, bakes, sandwiches and bubbles!

5th December, 3 to 5pm

Expect music, laughter and a Christmas raffle!
Christmas jumpers optional.

Book
now

Prizes include a
Fortnum & Mason
tea time hamper
and more!

Sponsored by
Lisa & Jackie

Jon's QUIZ



Our very own Kings Arms quiz master Jon Ward will be setting a regular round of Strete-wise quiz questions. Find all the answers on the inside back cover.

1. In which year was the first ever Christmas Card sent. 1830, 1838, 1843 or 1850?
2. What was Frosty the Snowman's nose made out of ?
3. Which famous scientist was born on Christmas day 1642 ?
4. The Japanese, traditionally eat which takeaway food on Christmas Day?
5. Which Christmas dinner vegetable has over 110 varieties?
6. What are known in Scotland as "Kilted Soldiers"?
7. Which UK monarch made the first ever Christmas broadcast?
8. Which Christmassy song was the first song ever broadcast from space in 1965?
9. In Which Christmas movie does Donald Trump make a cameo appearance?
10. The Grinch attempts to steal Christmas from which fictional town?
11. Which of Santa's Reindeer comes last alphabetically ?
12. How many 'la's are in the song 'Deck the Halls'?
13. In which country did eggnog originate? USA, Britain, Germany or Austria?
14. Which direction should you stir your Mince Pie mincemeat for good luck?
15. How many different flavoured chocolates are there in a tin of Quality Street?
16. What is the name of Bing Crosby's character in the film A White Christmas?
17. Which country is the largest exporter of Christmas trees?
18. How many ghosts appear in Charles Dickens A Christmas Carol?
19. On what day of the week does Advent commence?
20. What time will The Kings Arms be open for drinks on Christmas Day?



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Out and About



The traditional Crab Pot Lights will be lit in Coronation Park

December 12 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

A lovely Christmas feature organised by the RNLI crew and volunteers.

The Crab Pot Lights will be lit at 6pm

A shanty band playing at 7pm.

Stall and Santa until 8pm

The Concert Band of Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth

Bringing the holiday spirit to life at the Flavel with a celebration of festive music and cheer. The annual Christmas concert, features a heart-warming blend of traditional carols, festive favourites and exciting seasonal arrangements to delight audiences of all ages. An evening of musical entertainment not to be missed.

December 13 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm



St Saviours Church, Anzac St, Dartmouth

December 20 @ 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Family Christmas Concert Handel Messiah Choruses, In the Bleak Mid Winter and Carols for all Adults £10, Children Free Tickets available in advance www.britanniachoir.org or on the door



Christmas Party! Stokeley Farm Shop

Bring your party to our party! Sat 13th December 7pm.

Think classic buffet & disco. £15 per person.

Bookings Only. Book Now bookings@stokeleyfarmshop.co.uk

Carols Round the Tree Stokeley Farm Shop

Monday 22nd December 2025 6.30pm.

Join us and sing along to some Christmas classics led with music & singing from Abi Tucker.



"I've always had a strong interest in high quality, healthy food"

My wife and I have been together since university and it's fair to say that our love of good food is what brought us together. I have baked bread off and on since we were at university. It's not always easy to fit bread baking into a busy schedule, so there have been times when I've taken a rest.

For example, when we started our own business and were bringing up three kids, bread baking didn't happen that often. In the early 2000s we went to California and found that by far the best bread there was the San Francisco Sourdough loaves. These have a lovely crisp crust, an open smooth texture and a tangy taste. Much better than traditional mass-produced American bread which is sweet and pappy. I did a lot of research into sourdough baking but decided it was not for me. It's a slow process with multiple stages and I decided it was too complex for me to manage so I continued baking with traditional yeast.

This all changed after the Beast from the East in 2018. During that storm my father who was 90 had a fall and was never able to live independently again. He moved in with us and would fall asleep every evening in front of the TV. I was thinking through ideas of how to spend more quality time with him when I got home from work and decided that I would bite the bullet and teach myself to become a sourdough bread baker. This would enable me to chat to my dad in the kitchen while I was working on the bread. Sourdough all revolves around having a starter instead of using baker's yeast. This is simply made from flour and water and incorporates the natural yeast from the air around you. It took me a week to get my own starter going. I called "him" Gussy. He lives in a glass jar either in the fridge or on the kitchen counter depending on whether I need him for baking. Gussy is still alive and well and moved happily from Kent to Devon when we came to Strete.

A typical sourdough loaf takes 24 – 48 hours to make. Once the flours, Gussy, water and salt are combined the dough goes through four or five stretches over about a 2 – 3 hour time frame. This is instead of the traditional kneading process. The good news is that you can leave the dough to sit and develop by itself. You don't need to pay it much attention during this time. You then refrigerate the dough for a day or two and bake it when you want it. Refrigeration slows the fermentation (rising) process. The slower the fermentation the stronger the "sour" notes in the overall bread taste will be.



“My favourite recipe is actually quite simple”

- **500g of flour** (you can mix plenty of different types of flour to get different textures and tastes)
- **100g of Gussy**
- **340 g water**
- **8-10g salt** (depending on how I'm feeling about the combination of ingredients)

You mix it all up and let it rest for at least 30 minutes, then do 4 – 5 stretches every 30 minutes or so. It doesn't matter if you need to go out for a bit. Just start again when you come back, the dough doesn't spoil. You can add whatever combination of ingredients such as seeds, nuts, dried fruit, olives etc you want. I normally add these after the first stretch. They then get incorporated evenly with the remaining stretches. A good combination is walnut and cranberry with some rye flour in the mix.

You can either shape the dough into a basket and then refrigerate it or leave it in the bowl and shape it after it comes out of the fridge – for example if you want to make a plait.

Bake the bread for 15 minutes at 240 degrees fan then turn the oven down to 210 for a further 23-25 minutes.

Make sure you get some steam into the oven. The steam helps give a good brown, crisp crust. If baking from the fridge make sure you slash the dough before putting it in the oven. This is to prevent the crust splitting. You should get “oven spring” which will more than double the volume of the bread while it cooks.

Other great recipes I like baking include Focaccia, baguettes, ciabatta and bagels. The sourdough versions have wonderful textures and flavours.

I have also run small sourdough bread baking courses at the house. These are great fun and a wonderful way to get more people baking and eating wonderful, healthy homemade bread.



And God Created Mothers

When the good Lord was creating mothers, he was into his sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared and said "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one".

And the Lord said, "Have you read the specifications on this order? She has to be completely washable but not plastic ... have 180 moveable parts, all replaceable ... run on black coffee and left overs ... have a lap that disappears when she stands up ... a kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair, and six pairs of hands".

The angel shook her head slowly and said "six pairs of hands? No way".

"It's not the hands that are causing me problems", said the Lord "It's the three pairs of eyes that mothers have to have".

That's on the standard model? Asked the angel.

The Lord nodded. "One pair that can see through closed doors, when she asks, "What are the children doing in there? when she already knows. Another in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn't, but what she has to know. And of course, the pair in front that can look at a child when he gets himself into trouble and say "I understand and love you" without so much as uttering a word.

"lord" said the angel touching his sleeve gently, go to bed, tomorrow is another...

"I can't, said the Lord, I'm so close. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick, can feed a family of six on 1lb of mince and can get a nine-year-old to have bath"

The angel circled the model of the mother very slowly.

"It's too soft" she sighed.

"But tough" said the Lord excitedly. "You cannot imagine what this mother can do or endure".

"Can it think?"

"Not only can it think, but it can reason and compromise" said the Lord.

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek.

"There's a leak," said the angel.

"It's a tear"

"What's it for?"

"It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness and pride"

"You are a genius," said the angel. The Lord looked sombre.

"I didn't put it there"

Contribution from
Joan Kendall



Festive

WORD SEARCH

F E B E L L S C E N A S V L I V Y B A T
B R O T D G W B H W H M T T O E M A Y M
T W A S S A I L W R B E L A C L E U T O
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Mistletoe
Myrrh
Gold
Aperitif
Turkey
Goose

Candles
Carols
Bells
Wreath
Festive
Angel

Elf
Reindeer
Presents
Star
Stocking
Firtree

Epiphany
Santa
Christingle
Manger
Shepherd
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Bauble
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Fun fact: Koi fish
always travel in
groups of 4.

If attacked, Koi
A, B, and C will
scatter, leaving behind
the D koi



Christmas Cheer

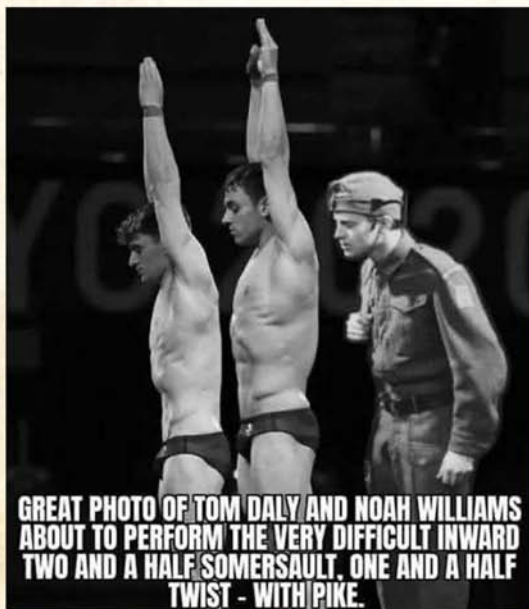
I wish I could
fly.



I wish I could
walk.



I wish I could
swim.



Life really
does begin at
forty. Up until
then, you are just
doing research.

- Carl Jung

Winter Warmers

Broccoli & Stilton soup

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 Leek sliced
1 onion, diced
1 stick of celery
2 heads broccoli, chopped
2 potatoes, peeled and cubed
1.5pt chicken stock
4 ounces Stilton cheese

Method

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and add the finely chopped onion.
Cook on a medium heat until soft.
Add the sliced celery stick, sliced leek, diced medium potato and a knob of butter. Stir until melted, then cover with a lid for 5 minutes.
Add the chicken stock and the broccoli.
Cook for 15-20 minutes until all the vegetables are soft.
Transfer to a blender and blitz until smooth.
Stir in 140g crumbled stilton, leaving a few lumps.
Season with black pepper and serve.

Parsnip soup

Ingredients

1½ pints (900ml) vegetable stock
1 large cooking apple
1 ¼ lbs (600g) parsnips
1 medium/large onion
1 tablespoon oil (I use olive oil but sunflower quite OK)
3 or 4 cloves of garlic
2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon turmeric
Salt to taste

Method

Warm the stock over a low heat. Peel apple and parsnips, core apple and cut apple and parsnips into chunks. Peel and chop onion.
Gently fry onion until soft and golden. Chop garlic, crush with back of a knife and add to onions together with the three spices.
Fry for a further couple of minutes with heat turned up and stirring to release the flavours. Add stock, apple, parsnip and salt to pan and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.
Process or blend the soup to a smooth puree and serve.
Parsnip soup contribution by Roger Sinnott



Strete Social Club

STRETE SOCIAL CLUB AUTUMN-WINTER PROGRAMME 2025

Meetings are usually held in Strete Village Hall on alternate Tuesdays at 2.30PM		
October	14th	Kiwis in Torquay - David Hinchcliffe
	28th	Halloween Party
November	11th	Outing to Flavel Cinema for Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale
	25th	Land Girls in Devon in World War One - Becks Pearson
December	2nd	Christmas Stall and Talk on Chocolate - Graham Jackson
	16th	Christmas Party with Wine and Mince Pies

30th September: On a beautiful afternoon we met in the village hall for our fortnightly afternoon. We were pleased to have guests with us who had seen the posters put around the village and by word of mouth.

Karen led the meeting and after all the business had been dealt with our speaker Mr. John Walters was welcomed back. He was last with us in January and by popular request he was booked to come again.

A brief history of himself was given. In 1980 he attended art college and studied graphic designing. He has appeared with David Attenborough and as well as his excellent photographic skill he has written books and always takes a sketch pad when he goes out with his camera and



sketches a lot of the wildlife, he sees which he then turns into cards many of which he had brought along this afternoon.

He uses three cameras and carries an ultra violet torch with him.

WE saw many varieties of spiders and their life circle plus other insects including beetles. One of the spiders he showed is only found in Plymouth. We saw beautiful pictures of monarch butterflies, migrating moths, cabbage whites which we have seen a lot of this summer but are now migrating to northern France.

Locusts have been found in Andrew's

Wood, near Loddiswell

He then went on to show and talk about various birds many that had been blown from Antarctica on their migration.

He had some lovely footage on harvest mice darting around in the foliage and his last talk was on Rissole dolphins which are seen on our coast. When in Cornwall he saw and filmed hump back whales.

Joan gave the vote of thanks and tea and meringues, little biscuits, made and served by Carol and Chris were enjoyed..

14th October: Our Tuesday fortnightly meeting soon came around and this was taken by Joan as Karen was away at a school reunion.

There was not a lot of business to deal with. A reminder to the members who are going to see Downton Abbey in the Flavel with a soup and scone in the café at the Flavel to bring their money to the next meeting.

It was the month of two of our members birthdays so we all Sang “Happy Birthday” to them. Our speaker for the afternoon was introduced a Mr. David Hinchcliffe of Torquay who came to tell us about the Kiwis in Torquay in the first world war.

No, it was not about the native bird of He used a very old picture to illustrate his talk.

A person of authority was looking for a Depot for these men to await their return. He looked at several places but on coming to Torquay said this is the place it is very much like New Zealand and they will be at home here. Several Grand Mansions were taken over to billet these men in, one being Torquay Town Hall. Sadly, where these beautiful mansions stood now blocks of flats are in their place.

Around 30,000 Kiwis passed through the Depot in the 30 months that it was open.

Agatha Christie was a nurse in one of the hospital establishments.

They had to find something to occupy the men and a good thing was to do gardening which the men liked very much taking over a lot of land to grow potatoes. They mixed with locals and were very much liked. Of course, ladies became very interested in these handsome New Zealand Men and several of them married and had children and returned to New Zealand with them.

In a Churchyard in Torquay are buried some of the New Zealanders who did not return and stayed and lived out the rest of their lives in Torquay.

He was thanked by Chris Burne after which our cups of tea and biscuits were served by Lisa and Dorothy.



Strete Social Club

28th October: Well it was not quite Halloween but three of our members wore suitable bits to depict this. Lisa had on the most colourful suit adorned with ghostly skulls, Karen our leader donned a witches hat and Maura had a head band of black bats which moved as she turned her head.

Karen as usual went through a small amount of business reminding us of our imminent visit to the Flavel at Dartmouth to see Downton Abbey and enjoy a bowl of soup and cheese scone early November. She then introduced our speaker, although she did not need this as it was one of our members, Heather Robinson, who gave us the most interesting talk which she had a sequence of photos to illustrate her talk through the various points. Heather lived on the banks of the River Dart quite near to St. Petrocks Church and she had the vision to place a statue of a mermaid on the rocks at the bottom of her garden.

After going through all the legal dealings she had a sculpturer from Totnes to make a model of the mermaid which was then bronzed. When this was completed it was securely placed on a rock which when the tide came up was actually sitting with the water surrounding her.

This image of the statue has been in several books of Dartmouth, had a calendar with her depicting one of the months and Kevin Pyne composed a poem for Heather about the Mermaid.

Heather did this to show appreciation of the wonderful times that she had had on the river and living in Dartmouth. ***Do take the ferry to the castle and you will see Meranda as Heather named her, sitting there on a rock. Many tales are told by the pleasure boat captains which go past her, not always true facts!!!!***



One of the residents of Strete when travelling on the ferry told her little granddaughter that the little house by the waters edge was where the mermaid went to sleep at night, which really made the magic of the mermaid come to life.

Karen gave the vote of thanks. We then enjoyed the usual cups of tea with spooky cakes.

One member had brought along a bottle of wine and non alcoholic drink which we all enjoyed whilst Heather was giving her talk.

Maura and Joan were the tea hostesses for the afternoon.

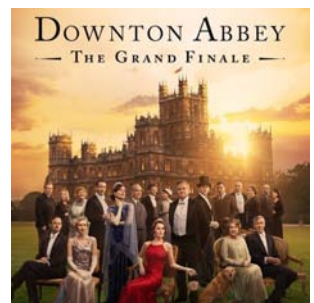
We welcomed two new members and we are always pleased to see folk come along to see what we are all about.

11th November: We ventured into Dartmouth for our meeting this week.

First, we all enjoyed a bowl of soup and cheese scone at the Flavel Café before going up to the Cinema to watch the film 'Downton Abbey'.

Karen had kindly arranged this outing for us for which we thank her for all the organising she did. It was enjoyed by all with many a tear shed.

We try to have an outing in the summer and again if a suitable film is being shown in the Flavel we venture into Dartmouth.



Wild West Country
30th September



Heather's Miranda the Mermaid
with a touch of Halloween
28th October



Strete Social Club
picture round-up



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New Zealand War
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Kiwis in Torquay
14th October





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- Joint pain
- Brain fog
- Digestion problems
- Constipation
- Low immunity
- Blood sugar instability
- Allergies
- Weight gain/loss
- Movement difficulties
- Acne

If you see symptoms that relate to you, then perhaps I can help?

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Our volunteer team was established in 2024 and during that time some vehicles were recorded travelling as high as 58 mph.

— —

The village lacks pavements and have many elderly residents and young children all of whom need to be kept safe when moving around our village.

Our aim is to educate local communities and visitors of the need for safe travel through our village, especially as we are a connection hub for Dartmouth, Torcross and routes to Totnes.



CAN YOU HELP AS A VOLUNTEER?

Could you please spare 2 hours a month and join our Speedwatch Team?

The task sessions are very simple and you would be joining our experienced operators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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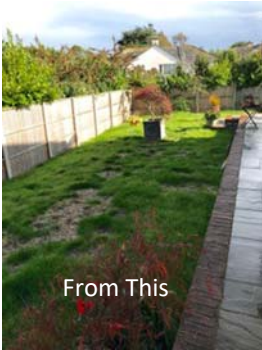
Stoke Fleming Village Hall.

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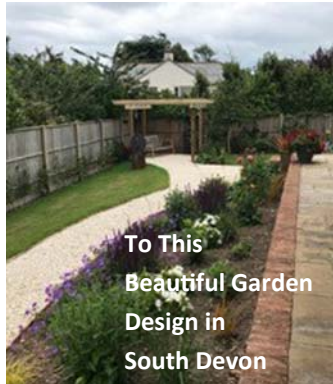
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Mistletoe

A kiss for Christmas

Using mistletoe as a Christmas decoration, in Britain, became popular in the 18th century. It was widely believed to bring good luck and ward off evil spirits. With snow white berries and evergreen leaves, mistletoe is a distinctive plant with a romantic reputation. The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe is what this plant is best known for.

Across the world there are more than 900 mistletoe species.

Viscum album is the only species native to the UK.

Its evergreen leaves and ability to bloom in winter mean the plant has long been seen as a symbol of eternal life and vitality.

Mistletoe unlike a normal plant is parasitic, growing on other trees to survive.

A mistletoe seed germinates on the branch of a host tree or shrub such as lime, poplar, hawthorn and predominantly cultivated apple and in its early stages of development it is independent of its host. Like many plants it produces its own food using photosynthesis, but it also extracts minerals and water from the host tree.





The Greeks used mistletoe for medicinal purposes, and the Romans saw it as a symbol of peace and friendship. In Celtic tradition, the Druids considered mistletoe sacred and used it in rituals to symbolize life and fertility.

Most mistletoe seeds are spread by birds who eat the 'seeds'. Of the many bird species that feed on them, the mistle thrush is the best-known.

While the Mistletoe berries are good food source for wildlife, with birds eating the berries and bees, butterflies and other insects consuming the nectar, be aware, caution should be taken as the berries are toxic to humans dogs and cats.



The tradition of kissing under the mistletoe, which started in 18th-century England, became very popular by the Victorian era. The custom being that a berry be removed from the Mistletoe with each kiss, and when all the berries were gone, the kissing had to stop.

When Charles Dickens was a little boy, the season of Christmas started on Christmas Eve and lasted until Twelfth Night.

Charles Dickens wrote his first Christmas story Christmas Festivities in 1835, describing how the grandfather tells his grandchildren that he kissed their grandmother under the mistletoe when he was still a boy.

Dickens included a mistletoe scene in *The Pickwick Papers* (1837):

They all three repaired to the large kitchen, in which the family were by this time assembled, according to annual custom on Christmas Eve... From the centre of the ceiling of this kitchen, old Wardle had just suspended, with his own hands, a huge branch of mistletoe, and this same branch of mistletoe instantaneously gave rise to a scene of general and most delightful struggling and confusion.





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Remember — when you purchase a Christmas tree, you will receive a £10 Gardentime New Year Voucher, which can be used throughout January and February at Gardentime in the Garden Centre, Farm Shop and Café too.

Our Tree Team is here to help you pick your perfect tree, net it, and carry it to your car — or you can let us take the strain and have your tree delivered. Why not take advantage of our Christmas tree delivery service? It's FREE throughout the South Hams. We are happy to look after your chosen tree for collection or for delivery at a later date.

We will be hand-making festive wreaths again this year and would love to create your bespoke decoration. Alternatively, you may prefer to choose from our wide selection on display. If you're feeling artistic, there's everything you need to craft your own door wreath or floral decoration.

We also have indoor and outdoor lights in a choice of colours and styles, including battery and solar options. Explore a magical collection of Christmas decorations, gifts, and seasonal treasures. From traditional glass baubles and ribbons to charming felt and nature-inspired wooden designs, there's something for every style.

When you've chosen your tree, you might like to warm up and relax in our Café, where we have freshly prepared food available all day, every day! Our Farm Shop is stocked with Christmas treats and fine, locally sourced food.

Gardentime is open every day — weekdays from 9am to 5.30pm and Sundays from 10am to 4pm. We will be open on Christmas Eve too.

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REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE By Nick Shepherd

Despite the inclement weather, there was a very good attendance at the remembrance service which was led by the Saint Michael's vicar, the reverend Matt Gorton.

The laying of the wreath was undertaken by the chairman of our Parish Council, Ralph Clark. Commander Nicola Cullen represented our armed forces and also read one of the lessons. The wind seemed to pick up during the 2 minutes silence and it was a wonder that everyone managed to hold onto their umbrellas. Philip Harris managed to keep the audio equipment dry and the Last Post was played without complication. The church was beautifully decorated with poppy arrangements and one of the metal enamelled poppies from the former Tower of London display lay on the altar. This was kindly given to the church by Professor Malcolm Hollis, a former editor of our village magazine. Matt Gorton in his address reflected on the significance of truth contained in a reading given by Joan Kendall. The beautifully moving hymns were sung heartily by the congregation and were led by organist Karen White. After the service, coffee and biscuits were provided and it was nice to have a chat with everyone, especially our friends at the Chapel who joined us in the remembrance and thanksgiving.

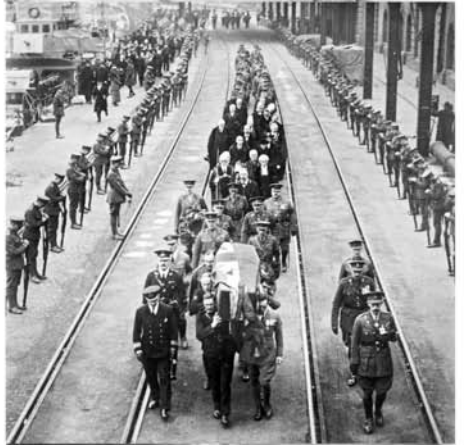


The Story Behind the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior By Nick Shepherd

Each year, on the 11th of November, we pause to remember those who gave their lives in war — and at the heart of that remembrance lies the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. The idea came from Reverend David Railton, an army chaplain who had served on the Western Front during the First World War. One day he noticed a simple grave marked only with a rough wooden cross bearing the words "An Unknown British Soldier." It moved him deeply. After the war, he suggested that one unidentified British soldier should be brought home and buried among the nation's heroes — to represent all those whose bodies were never identified.



BENEATH THIS STONE RESTS THE BODY OF A BRITISH WARRIOR UNKNOWN BY NAME OR RANK BROUGHT FROM FRANCE TO LIE AMONG THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS OF THE LAND AND BURIED HERE ON ARMISTICE DAY 11 NOV: 1920, IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE V HIS MINISTERS OF STATE THE CHIEFS OF HIS FORCES AND A VAST CONCOURSE OF THE NATION THUS ARE COMMEMORATED THE MANY MULTITUDES WHO DURING THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-1918 GAVE THE MOST THAT MAN CAN GIVE LIFE ITSELF FOR GOD FOR KING AND COUNTRY FOR LOVED ONES HOME AND EMPIRE FOR THE SACRED CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND THE FREEDOM OF THE WORLD THEY BURIED HIM AMONG THE KINGS BECAUSE HE HAD DONE GOOD TOWARD GOD AND TOWARD HIS HOUSE



In November 1920, the plan was carried out in complete secrecy. Four unknown British soldiers were exhumed from the battlefields of Ypres, Arras, the Aisne, and the Somme.

Brigadier-General Wyatt and Colonel Gell selected one at random; the others were reburied.

No one knew, and no one would ever know, which soldier had been chosen.

The body was placed in a coffin made of oak from the grounds of Hampton Court, topped with a crusader's sword and a shield inscribed:

"A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914–1918 for King and Country."

The coffin was escorted with great ceremony through France and across the Channel on HMS Verdun, met at Dover with a nineteen-gun salute — an honour normally reserved for field marshals. It was then taken to London, resting overnight at Victoria Station before being carried in solemn procession to Westminster Abbey on 11th November 1920.

There, among kings and poets, the Unknown Warrior was laid to rest. Draped with the Union Flag once used by Reverend Railton as an altar cloth at the front, the coffin symbolised every lost husband, father, son, and brother who never came home. The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior remains one of the most visited and most moving memorials in Britain. It reminds us that remembrance is not about glorifying war, but about honouring the courage, sacrifice, and loss of so many.

As the words from the poem say:

"At the going down of the sun,
and in the morning,
we will remember them."

A special reminder of the ultimate sacrifice which service personnel paid for our country has been seen in the form of a post-box topper situated outside our village shop. Created and designed by the craft club, each member had been tasked to make a particular element prior to assembly. The air man was created by Heather, the sailor by Janet and the soldier by Hilary. Joan, Penny, Heather, Andrea and Lynn crafted the poppies with Lorraine, Derek and Maura doing the rest. It was certainly a very ambitious project, and an incredible amount of work was involved. Well, done to all concerned.

Apparently, something special for Christmas is lined up by the Craft Club, so keep an eye out next to the shop. (Nick Shepherd)



The Strete Craft Group have excelled again with a Remembrance Day post box topper. "Lest We Forget"



Dart Gallery

Discover a brand new collection filling the gallery this winter!

Winter 2025

This winter discover beautiful new work by many of our artists, including (clockwise from top left);

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Harry Brioche

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The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

As the end of 2025 approaches, the thoughts of Probus members naturally turn to family matters with the festive season and New Year celebrations. We have a final lunch meeting for 2025 scheduled for Wednesday 10th December in Stoke Lodge Hotel, commencing with coffee at 10.30. Our speaker on this occasion will be distinguished academic commentator John Dobson, who will deliver a talk entitled 'Putin's Russia, Trump and Ukraine' - an up-to-the-minute analysis and insight into world events. This event will also include the Club's Christmas Lunch with a special menu.

The Probus Club will then fall quiet over the festive and new year celebrations, re-opening on Wednesday 21st January 2026, with a lunch meeting at the Stoke Fleming Hotel, again commencing at 10.30. Our speaker at this meeting will be David MacVeigh with his talk on 'How Britain became an Island'. David was due to visit the Club with this talk back in October, but had to postpone due to illness, so we are pleased to welcome him for this revised date. The event will also incorporate the Club's Annual General Meeting, where programme arrangements for the remainder of 2026 will be finalised.

The Probus movement has branches all over the UK and is a form of social club aimed at retired gentlemen from business or commerce who wish to remain socially active. We are very keen to attract new members, and a warm welcome will be extended to any eligible gentleman wishing to come along and try one of our meetings. If you would like to attend, please call Peter Hales (Club Secretary) on 01803 770739 to discuss the Club and book a place. Alternatively, simply come along to an event and see for yourself!



The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

Where friendliness matters above all else

A lunch meeting will be held beginning at 10.30am at the Stoke Lodge Hotel, Stoke Fleming on

Wednesday 10th December 2025

The meeting will commence with coffee, followed by a talk by John Dobson entitled

Putin's Russia, Trump and Ukraine

An up to the minute overview by a distinguished academic commentator



After the talk the bar will be open and an optional 2-course lunch will follow. The club is keen to attract new members and a warm welcome will be given to guests. If you would like to come along and be a guest please contact our Secretary Peter Hales on

01803 770739

<https://stokeflemingprobus.wixsite.com/stokeflemingprobus>



The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District

Where friendliness matters above all else

The Club AGM and lunch will be held beginning at 10.30am at the Stoke Lodge Hotel, Stoke Fleming on
Wednesday 21st January 2026

The meeting will commence with coffee, followed by a talk by David MacVeigh entitled

How Britain Became an Island

Were the Brits always an island race?

...lets find out!



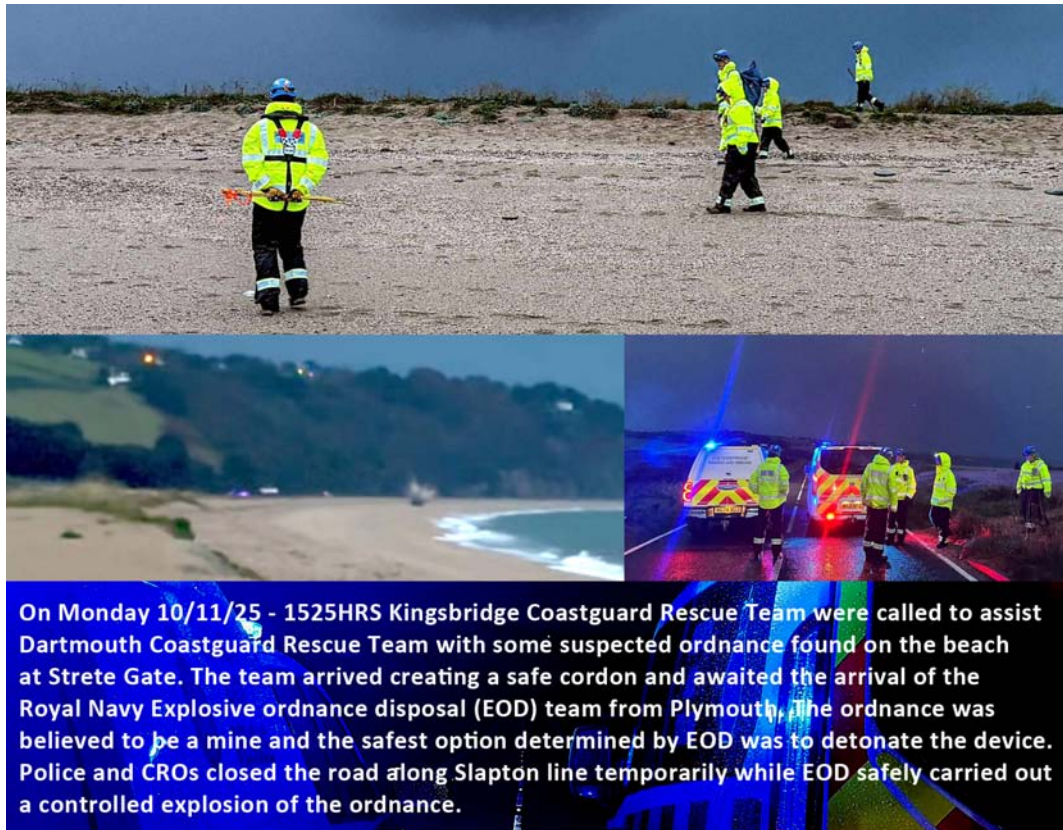
After the talk, drinks will be available at the bar.

The AGM will follow on at about 12.30 with lunch at 1.15

The club is keen to attract new members and a warm welcome will be given to guests. If you would like to come along and be a guest please contact our Secretary Peter Hales on

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On Monday 10/11/25 - 1525HRS Kingsbridge Coastguard Rescue Team were called to assist Dartmouth Coastguard Rescue Team with some suspected ordnance found on the beach at Strete Gate. The team arrived creating a safe cordon and awaited the arrival of the Royal Navy Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team from Plymouth. The ordnance was believed to be a mine and the safest option determined by EOD was to detonate the device. Police and CROs closed the road along Slapton line temporarily while EOD safely carried out a controlled explosion of the ordnance.

STRETE VOICES

About Us

We are a dedicated group of individuals who share a passion for singing an eclectic mix of songs and musical pieces. Our repertoire spans popular musical theatre numbers, folk songs, select classical pieces, and a variety of tunes—many of which harken back to our school days, with others added

Rehearsals

Our choir gathers every Thursday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the village hall. We are fortunate to be led by Karen, an accomplished pianist and experienced teacher.

Community Engagement

We have previously visited the local Hynetown care home, where we performed for residents, many of whom are living with dementia. We look forward to returning for future visits. Each year, we also take part in the Christmas carol service at the church in Strete.

Join Us

If you are interested in discovering what we do, we warmly invite you to attend one of our sessions. For more information, please contact:

- Karen White: 07487 255134
- Kerris Petransky: 07970 688130

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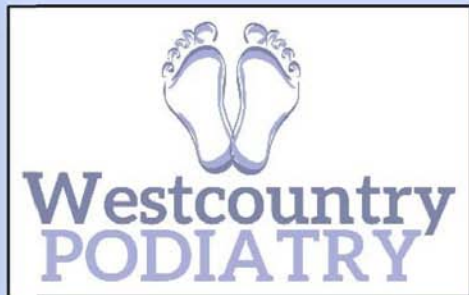


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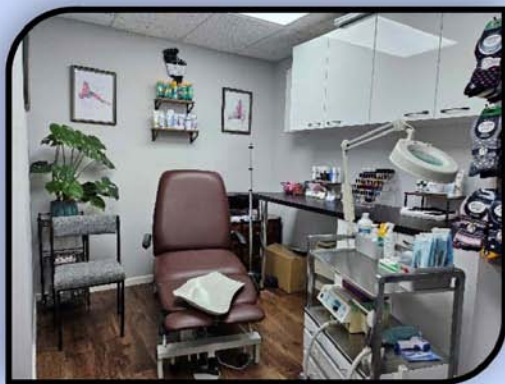
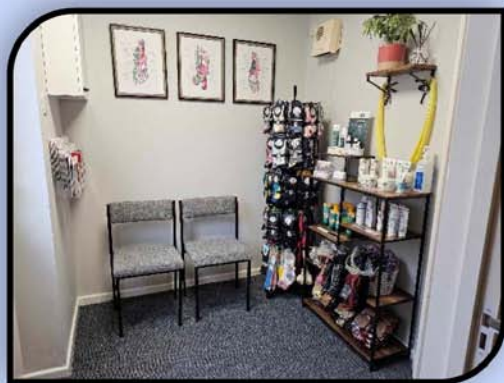


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Parish Council Clerk	Hannah Iles	01548 580449
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Village Hall Committee	Penny Penhale (Chairman/Bookings)	07976 176748
Village Hall Committee	Danni Brien (Treasurer)	07841505797
Probus	John Light	johlight1@gmail.com
RSPCA		01803 859695
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St Michaels Church	Rev. Matt Gorton	01803 906861
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	Andrew and Lesley Kemp	07774 431109
Stretewise Editor	Dave Jones	01803 770059
Totnes Ring and Ride		01803 867878
Tree Warden	Ian Cumberlidge	01803 770020

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Emergency Fire, Ambulance, Police and Coastguard	999 or 112
Non-emergency contact with emergency services	101
NHS Direct	0845 4647

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All editorial contributions to the magazine are welcome:

Recipes, Crosswords (not cryptic) Articles, Letters. However, the editor reserves the right as to whether to include, edit or adjust the content. Contributions should be sent to stretewise@outlook.com or hard copies of contributions can be left at the to the Post Office or delivered to the Editor: Stretewise, 27 Start Bay Park, Strete, TQ6 0RY.

Copy deadline for the next issue of Stretewise February-March will be 23rd January.

Stretewise is either £1 per copy purchased from the shop or £4 for a yearly subscription of six issues. To subscribe for six issues of Stretewise 2026 pay £4 at the Strete Post Office or send £4 to the editor Stretewise 27 Start Bay Park, Strete, TQ6 0RY. Please provide your name, address and the date you paid.

Stretewise Advertising: Contact stretewise@outlook.com or Dave Jones 01803 770059.

Jon's Quiz Answers

1. 1843 2. A Button 3. Isaac Newton 4. KFC, Kentucky Fried Chicken 5. Brussel Spout
6. Pigs in Blankets 7. George V 8. Jingle Bells 9. Home Alone 2 10. Whoville 11. Vixen 12. 96
13. Britain 14. Clockwise 15. 11 16. Captain Bob Wallace 17. Canada
18. 4, Jacob Marley, the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future 19. Sunday 20. 12 noon until 3pm



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