

BUCKNELL NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026

No. 48



BIRDLIFE SPECIAL EDITION
Pages 20-21, 25, 33-34.

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BUCKNELL NEWSLETTER ~ Summer 2026



From the Editor

I do hope everyone receiving the spring edition was pleased with the content. For this quarterly issue your fabulous contributions have enabled us to get to a magnificent 40 pages.

If you are thinking of posting articles or information on Facebook, do please consider those people within the community who do not have access to social media. Send your articles to me as well so that I can include them, where considered appropriate, within the Bucknell Newsletter.

Unfortunately, no-one has yet come forward to offer to help Peter Barron and myself with sub-editing and overseeing distribution, despite the plea in the spring edition for volunteers for the posts of Distribution Coordinator and Assistant Editor.

Apart from the copies delivered to residential properties in Bucknell and Bedstone, small bundles of five to twenty newsletters are left at places where people can take a copy. These include Craven Arms - Tuffins supermarket and the Discovery Centre, Knighton advertisers - currently Restorella and McCartneys, Clun - General store, Chapel Lawn - roadside stall, Leintwardine - Griffiths Garage, Brampton Bryan - Elmerwood Books and Forge Hair salon.

If you know of anyone else who would like a small bundle for their customers to read or to take a copy, please let me know.

Please mention the Bucknell Newsletter when contacting our advertisers.

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WEST MERCIA POLICE - Bishops Castle & Rural

Your Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) are:

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- PC 21989 Daryl McWatt
- PC21006 Simon Wilkey
- PCSO 40516 Calvin Brown
- PCSO 6160 Shaun Culliss

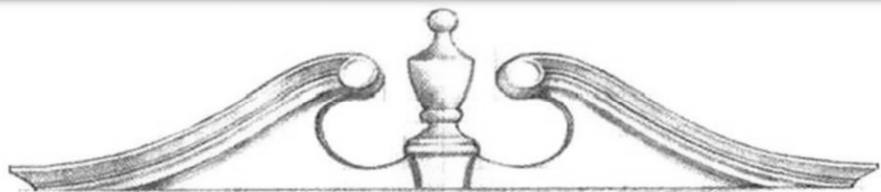
Team email: bccar.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

See the Bedstone and Bucknell parish website for the latest monthly police newsletter which gives much more information and lists local crimes.



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The start of a new year for us – a new President, new memberships paid up for everyone and a feeling of new growth in the air! Meetings are at the Memorial Hall, 3rd Wednesday of the month at the usual time of 7:15pm. Potential members welcome (first two visits for free). Visitors £5 to include refreshments.

June's meeting is looking at our Roman past, but from the perspective of the women who lived at Wroxeter instead of the usual stories of Roman soldiers in battledress.

Women of Wroxeter will be presented by Cameron Moffett on 17th June.

On July 15th we'll be hearing about the Spirits of Shelton, the name of a hospital which used to strike fear and dread in anyone who was admitted, or had family admitted. Nothing terrifies me more than the thought of visiting a lunatic asylum. Imagine walking the dimly lit corridor listening to wails, grunts and the echoes of the past.

The hospital's mental health facility has now moved to a site just outside the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital's grounds – "The Redwoods Centre is a whole new way to deliver in-patient mental health services via a care village concept which moves away from the former Shelton Hospital institutional feel and offers a high quality, comfortable caring environment." The old site has been redeveloped into luxury apartments and renamed Leighton Park. This talk, however, is about the myths and legends surrounding the old Shelton Hospital, known previously as Shelton Lunatic Asylum. Author Kate McLanachan will be telling us all about the dread of working a night shift in its eery wards!

August will see us out on a visit to Monkland Dairy – an educational trip to see how small scale cheese production is carried out, but really a lovely day out with a well-deserved lunch!

Not sure what the WI is really about? Come along and find out, no obligation, but it takes a couple of meetings to get a flavour of our friendliness and sense of fun.

Marion Cox - 30th April 2026

WI Plant Sale - 16th May 2026

Bucknell WI held our annual plant sale this month, which was bigger and better than ever. The event has been extended to include home bakes and makes, selling jam, cotton hats, bags and cards as well as cake and garden produce. The plants are all raised from seed or cuttings by our members, using donated pots and recycled labels.

The Sitwell pub next door opened for breakfast baps, which improved our custom and theirs on a grey and cold May morning. Fortunately, the weather defied the forecast and remained dry right to the end. As always, the best part was chatting to our customers, locals and visitors who browsed and bought in equal measure. It is a great way for the village to see the WI out and about, working hard and having fun.

Any unsold plants went to the 'honesty table' which stays up for a further fortnight, for which a little rain has been welcome!

WI Plant Sale 2026



Mic Blake (WI President) - 22nd May 2026

Shaun Dutton - Electrician

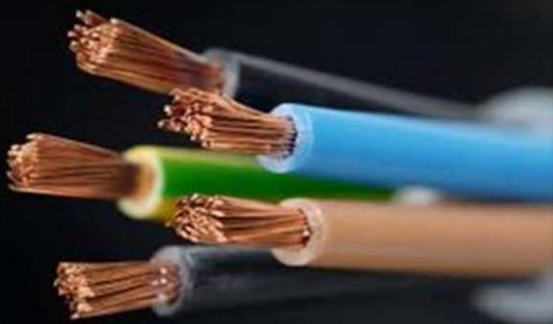
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Proud to be printing and supporting the Bucknell Newsletter

Mothering Sunday 2026, St. Mary's Church, Bucknell.

On Mothering Sunday, the service at St. Mary's included the traditional distribution of posies of flowers to those present who were mothers. We drew a wide definition of 'mother', acknowledging that 'to mother' is also a verb.

We prayed for those who were new mothers, but also those who'd lost a child; for those who'd had a poor relationship with their mother and for those who'd lost a beloved mother; for those who'd had an abortion, and for those who are unable to bear a child; and also those who foster and adopt.

The posies were prepared on the Saturday afternoon and Pia helped to distribute the flowers. Baby Piper, who was baptised here in May, was also in the congregation.

The Mothering Sunday service is always a joyous service, set in the middle of Lenten fasting as we turn our faces towards the celebration of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus.



Jenny White

THE BUCKNELL LITTER PICKING GROUP



In March, we took part in the Great British Spring Clean which brought us our best turnout yet. Nine wonderful people showed up to help tidy the village, proof that many hands really do make light (and slightly less grubby) work.

As turnout isn't always quite so spectacular, here are a few gentle reminders:

- 1) A litter picking session only takes about an hour and a half, less time than it takes to watch a film or argue about what to have for tea.
- 2) You can help in other ways too, such as taking full bin bags from us and popping them into your own bins.
- 3) And finally, a simple "thank you" when you see us in action goes a long way.

We hope to see you at our next session. If you have any questions, feel free to call me on 07861 206 400.



Sandra Gill-Mol - 3rd May 2026

REGULAR DATES

	Days	Event	Venue & Time	Contact
WEEKLY	Monday	Bedstone Art Group	Bedstone Village Hall 10:30 - 13:00	Anne Holding 01584 874 857
	Wednesday	Grumpy Old Men's Club	The Sitwell 20:00 - 22:00	Just turn up for a chat about anything!
	Wednesday	Pop In Café Bucknell	St. Mary's Church 10:30 - 12:00	Sue Fenlon 07375 042 350
	Thursday	Boules May - August	Daffodil Lane (opposite side to the playing field)	Sylvia & Derek Meredith 01547 530 422
FORTNIGHTLY	Monday	Bucknell Walkers	Lych Gate St. Mary's Church 09:00 - sharp!	Mike Starr 01547 530 179
	Wednesday	Mobile Library Service	Belmont Garage end of the Causeway 14:15 - 14:35	Shropshire Library Service 01743 255 024
	Thursday	Skittles September - May	Memorial Hall 19:30	Sylvia & Derek Meredith 01547 530 422
MONTHLY	First Wednesday	Bedstone and Bucknell Parish Council	Variable venues - see parish notice boards 19:30	Carol Davies Chairman 07774 428 373
	Third Wednesday	Women's Institute	Bucknell Memorial Hall 7:15pm	Mic Blake 07835 386 335
YEARLY	Bucknell Show 2027 TBA			

Please keep me informed of any changes or additions to the above activities and venues. Editor

Last update 22/05/26



Bucknell Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Contact Jim, the scheme coordinator, if you would like to join the scheme by telephoning him or sending him an email.

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or Email: hughes_jim@msn.com

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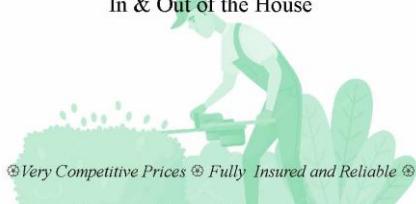




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Build Back Together

Local Flood Resilience with Communication, Technology and Action

On Friday, 10 April 2026, Chapel Lawn Village Hall filled with conversation, ideas, and shared experience as residents gathered for a workshop led by Associate Professor Namrata Bhattacharya Mis from the University of Chester. She heads the Build Back Together project, funded by the Severn Valley Water Management Scheme (SVWMS) and the River Severn Partnership Advanced Wireless Innovation, which focuses on helping rural communities better prepare for flooding.

The workshop encouraged open discussions about how flood information is shared before, during, and after events in the Redlake and surrounding areas. Many spoke about how messages currently spread through word of mouth or social media, often without much official guidance. The group agreed that sharing clearer, more consistent updates could make a real difference when floodwaters threaten homes, roads, and connections between villages.

A key part of the session looked at the new Radar LoRaWAN® sensors recently installed to measure local water levels. These sensors send real-time data about rising water, but participants were keen to understand how that data will actually help during a flood. Researchers from the University of Chester together with the sensor company are still checking that the system runs smoothly and that the information (via dashboard) it gathers is reliable. Once it's ready, the plan is to make the data available for everyone to use, putting practical tools in local hands.

The session also heard from two community flood groups. Bucknell's Flood Group described an overview of flood issues in the area, highlighting the specific challenges residents face and the key flood events that have shaped local experience. They emphasized the importance of shared responsibility, local knowledge, and collective action in preparing for and managing flooding. They will be working collaboratively with the University and the sensor company to coordinate flood warnings and prevention efforts in their village, despite limited resources. Another local flood group from Herefordshire, who have been tackling similar challenges for several years, shared what they've learned about using real-time sensor technology such as FloodAlert systems. Their experiences showed both the benefits and the barriers, technology can be powerful, but it works best when it's paired with strong local organisation.

By the end of the evening, there was a real sense of shared purpose. Together, attendees began shaping a roadmap for future action, a plan that will be developed further in the months ahead with input from communities, flood groups, and the University team. The goal is simple but important: to make sure that any future investments or innovations are grounded in real local experiences, not just good intentions.

Workshops like this show how much can happen when people come together to share stories, ask questions, and find solutions. Flooding remains a challenge, but with collaboration, technology, and local know how, our communities are building resilience one conversation at a time.

For more information, you can contact the writer of this article: Dr Namrata Bhattacharya Mis
Email: n.bhattacharyamis@chester.ac.uk



Building Flood Resilience Together at Chapel Lawn (Bucknell)



What's Happening?

Bucknell Skittles & Boules Club: Boules started on Thursday 28th May at Daffodil Lane. This is a weekly event, so anyone interested in playing, or just watching, do please come along. We start at 7pm. Cost is £1.00 each to play, just bring a chair to sit on and any refreshments you want to consume. See Regular Dates on page 10 for more details. Proceeds go to Midlands Air Ambulance. Have fun!

Bucknell Memorial Hall 2026 - See Who's Who for contact details.

Friday 19th June Quiz starting 7pm. Teams of four. Tickets £5 per person. Bar

Saturday 19th September Tamsin Ball 7:30pm £10.00

Saturday 21st November Innocent Criminals 7:30pm £10.00



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The Fraud & Scam Bulletin - MAY 2026

Your periodic update direct from West Mercia Police on the latest scams and frauds

GIFT CARDS: Despite the addition of warning notices by several retailers now on Gift Card display stands, criminals are still successfully getting victims to make payments by Gift Cards under various pretexts, and the reports of losses through Gift Card scams continue to come in. Some retailers are also restricting the value of a single purchase of Gift Cards.

As the name suggests, Gift Cards are a useful way to send a gift to a friend or relative. However, they are an equally handy way for Fraudster to extract money from an unsuspecting victim, and there is very little chance for a victim to get any reimbursement of the money lost.

What are the commonest types of Gift Card Frauds?

1. Emails claiming to be from Government Agencies such as HMRC, DVLA, or a Utility company demanding overdue payments with immediate reimbursement of the sums due by Gift Cards, would such an organisation really accept payment by Gift Card?
2. Urgent email or text from a person claiming to be a family member or friend by cloning their identity. They may spin out a hard luck excuse for a reason they cannot get out and buy the Gift Card themselves so ask you to purchase the card, then pass on the code off the back of the card to them. First, double check with that person by contacting them on a trusted number to make sure they had actually made that request.
3. Romance Fraud victims are often asked to send money via Gift Cards after the Fraudster has spun out some hard luck story to gain the victims sympathy, and once again asks them to then pass on the code off the back of the card.
4. Fake Prize Draws/ Competitions - you have won a major prize! You are then asked for a payment by Gift Card to cover the delivery costs of this fake prize, and once again your money is lost.

Always remember!

- The criminal does not need the actual card to redeem the money, just the code scratched off the back of the card.
- Never make payments by Gift Card to someone you have never met.
- Always check that the Card has not been tampered with when you purchase it and always ask for a receipt for the value of that card. Unscrupulous retailers may also switch the card at point of payment and hand over a valueless card.
- You can always report the fraud to the Gift Card company, but you are only likely to have any chance of reimbursement if the fraudsters have not used the card details and drawn down the funds using the code sent to them.

Please share these messages with any vulnerable friends, relatives or neighbours.

If you have fallen for a fraud.

Report it to Report Fraud (formerly known as ACTION FRAUD) on 0300 123 2040 or via reportfraud.police.uk Scam Text messages can be forwarded to 7726 to help phone providers take prompt action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks.

You can also report Scam mobile calls by texting 7726 with the word "Call" followed by the fraudulent caller's phone number.

Forward Fake Emails received to report@phishing.gov.uk

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, then use the short phone number - 159 - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.

COMMUNITY MESSAGE BOARD

This is a new feature for residents of Bucknell and Bedstone to post their own messages to the local community and for volunteer groups to reach out as well. Editor

In memory of Karie Hughes: A huge thank you for all the messages, cards, flowers and donations that we received during this very sad time. We are all so touched by the love and support shown to our family. A special thank you to the staff of Bucknell and Clunbury School and the Governing body of the Blue Hills Federation. The total donations received for St. Michael's Hospice was £4,500. Thank you, Lel, Kira, Keavey & Family

Mortimer Medical Practice News

- **Holiday Vaccinations:** Appointments are not available to book via Anima. Due to demand the practice requires at least six weeks notice. We can no longer give Yellow Fever vaccinations.
- **Practice News:** We will be saying goodbye to Anita and Ivone from the nursing team. Practice Manager, Fiona Harper, will be leaving us in mid-May and last but by no means least, our Senior Partner, Dr Corbett will be leaving us in August.
- **Prescription Delivery Service:** We will no longer be able to provide prescription deliveries to local shops and garages due to medico-legal guidance. This service ended on the 1st June 2026.
- **Coming soon:** Are changes to our telephone system, so if you need help completing the online Anima form, you will be able to select option 1. This will place you in a queue to speak with a dedicated member of our team who can support you in submitting your form.
- **Tuesday 14th July:** The Kingsland practice will be closed for annual training from noon and will be open again from 4pm.

Information supplied by Christine Moore of the Patient Participant Group

Knighton and District Rotary Club

We are a small group who share fun and friendship while supporting our local communities around Knighton, Presteigne and villages of Hereford, Shropshire and Powys.

We are currently looking for new members and organisations to join our team who can bring with them new perspectives and ideas. Together we really do make a difference in people's lives. Contact : knightonrotary@outlook.com or find us on social media.

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Birds, birds, birds!

A neighbour politely put her coffee cup down when I said, 'Phillipe usually drops by for his tea around three.' As she got up to leave, I reassured her she should stay and we could look out for him. I explained Phillipe is a pheasant and likes his oats. He was a regular last winter; dodging the guns and the road traffic and it was lovely to watch him lead a very nervous hen pheasant here one day, to share his food.

When I lived for a decade in Brampton Bryan, I had a regular visiting Blackbird (Firenze) who favoured chopped up pears and blackcurrants (he stripped a bush of the juicy fruit while I was at work). After a few practices, if I reached my arm far enough out of the kitchen window, with half a grape on the flat of my hand, making a clicking sound, he'd fly across and snatch the treat at the speed of light.

Needless to say, I love birds. I remember the exact moment I saw my first Puffin. It flew through the sky, above the small boat, bobbing on the sea in Pembrokeshire. It's clown-like face and parrot-like shape a complete shock.



Watching the Puffin parents fly back to their chicks on a small Welsh island, beaks alive with shiny sand eels, it was painful to also watch them bravely try to dodge the Black-backed Gulls as they bombarded them like missiles, hungry to take out their catch.... but that's nature.

In Bucknell I've spotted a Sparrowhawk twice. Once, wings covering its recent kill (a plump Pidgeon) by the river, and secondly, skilfully swiping a sparrow from the bird feeder outside. There has been some negative press about bird feeders recently, how not keeping them clean can spread disease etc. But I see the feeding station (hanging fat balls and oats on the ground) as a kind of fast-food fly through. Birds work blooming hard in the Spring; all that singing and courting and nest building and I want to help.

I like their simplicity, their routines, their freedom, their dedication to raising their young. Their survival against all the odds if they can avoid filthy feeders and predators. They are also incredibly handsome. The sapphire flash of a Kingfisher's feathers in the sun, blood-red Robin's breast and orangy-scarlet bulbous Bullfinch. The emerald head feathers of the pheasants and purple mottled Starlings. The mostly Canary-yellow Blue Tits and powdery pink Long Tailed. Waking early, especially in Spring, it's impossible not to hear them herald the dawn.



Continues ...

They guard their habitat with high notes or soulful song. From the meadow I can map out my walk by the cackling Corvids in the conifers or Rookery (loud) the Sparrows chattering in hedges and holes in the stone walls. Pigeons, Collared Doves and Starlings seem to favour telegraph wires and poles, Thrushes sing from the tops of trees.

Blackbirds are mostly just very busy filling their bright yellow beaks, aiming to bring two broods into the world. I hear the Wren before I see it, spot the pair of Dippers skimming the surface of the river if I'm lucky, and looking up, there will most likely be the gliding Red Kites, that seem to be thriving. If I'm really lucky, up in the forest, the Goshawk may appear as if by magic.

Recently, I started to use the 'Merlin' app on my phone. It's great for recording and identifying the sounds of birds. I wouldn't have known there were Goldcrests in the Forest, or Redwings in the fields for example. Yellowhammers on Offas Dyke above Knighton. I can now tell the difference between the call of a Chiff Chaff and a Great Tit and know the song of the Skylark, well before spotting it as a fluttering winged dot, way up high.



Michelle Slark - 15th March 2026

Illustrations © Michelle Slark 2026



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Welcome to our church!

We were delighted to welcome three new members into the church following their baptisms earlier this year. We wish Jordan, Connie and Piper all the best on their Christian journey.

Congratulations also to Joanne and Dale who were married at St Mary's on 16th May 2026; the church looked an absolute picture. It is at times like these that people really appreciate their village church being there for them.

If you would like to come and experience the company and fellowship of our worship community, please do come along one Sunday. You can be assured of a warm welcome and lots of interesting chat over coffee and biscuits afterwards!

Our weekly service cycle runs as follows:

Weekly services each month at ST. MARY'S BUCKNELL

1st Sunday : Morning Prayer at 10.30am

2nd Sunday : Holy Communion at 11.15am

3rd Sunday : Morning Prayer at 10.30am

4th Sunday : Morning Prayer at 10.30am

We also have a Prayer Group (with Chapel Lawn) and are in the process of setting up a Bible Study Group – good ways to engage in reflective and spiritual activity outside the formal worship cycle. Details from Eileen Lloyd (PG) alanlloyd@gmail.com and Isabel Clamp (BSG) isabelclamp39@gmail.com

Quinquennial Inspection 2026

You may well ask what is this?? Well every five years church buildings must be inspected by a suitably experienced and qualified professional, appointed after consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The role of the latter is to make sure church buildings are always kept in good repair.

Bucknell's Quinquennial Inspection is due this year and will be carried out in June. An architect approved by the Diocese will carry out an inspection of the whole building, the churchyard and outbuildings and report back to the PCC on any issues requiring attention. The necessary works invariably come at a cost, so if anyone is interested in contributing to the bill in due course, they will be very welcome!

There is a Parish Giving Scheme: details from Janet Hartin janet.hartin@gmail.com or Stuart Fairclough fairies772@yahoo.co.uk

Church picture courtesy of Carol Davies

Continues

Bucknell's Big Ben!

One very visible presence of our church in the community is our clock. Last month this landmark feature was serviced by Stuart, from the Cumbria Clock Company.

While he was here one of our PCC members asked how he got involved with clocks. Apparently at the age of 16 he applied to Smith of Derby, clockmakers since 1856, to join their apprenticeship scheme.

He later joined the Cumbria Clock Company, which, in 2017 was chosen to undertake the major disassembly, conservation and restoration of Big Ben. So our clock is truly getting the attention that it deserves!

The photograph shows the two modern looking units above the clock which are part of the automatic winding mechanism. This saves us from having to climb up a ladder into the tower each week to manually wind the clock.



Sue Demont - 20th May 2026

SCARECROW SUNDAY

2ND AUGUST 2026

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BUCKNELL STATION PLATFORM GARDENS



For many, many years, members of Bucknell WI have carefully tended the Station Garden at Bucknell Railway Station. The garden covers both sides of the track and consists of a variety of planters and borders.

In the past, work days were organised and a large group would spend a morning or so planting bulbs in the autumn to flower in the spring, then digging them up in the early summer and planting displays of bedding plants, which would create such a lovely show over the summer.

This was admired by passengers on the trains as they passed through Bucknell on our very own Heart of Wales line as well as by local people, visitors to the village, and the drivers and conductors on the trains.

Sadly, that large group has dwindled over the years and I am now appealing for help once again. You don't have to be a member of the WI, but merely to have an interest in keeping this garden tidy, presentable and attractive. We aim to meet up for a couple of hours or so, once a week, usually from April to November, weather permitting. There is always plenty of variety in doing the usual gardening tasks whether that is planting plants, dead heading, weeding or pruning the various shrubs.

If you can spare an hour or so and would be interested in helping to continue to maintain this important asset for Bucknell and the Heart of Wales line, please phone **Anne Cummings** on **01547 530977** and I can explain more about what we do and answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Anne Cummings - 13th May 2026

Swifts, Swallows and House martins

Swifts, Swallows and House martins need your help!

Our Swifts, Swallows and House martins are amazing! They are iconic birds of our summers and every year they fly all the way back from Africa to make a nest and raise their young. That's about 7000 miles one way!

They are insectivorous – they only eat aerial insects – and are really important for the planet, managing our insect populations naturally so that our food can grow, and protecting us from certain diseases.



Swift picture courtesy of Roger Wyatt

Swifts and House martins are Red Listed (Critically Endangered) and Swallows will be too when the next review is published. Based on the current rate of decline this means that by 2050 they may be extinct in the UK.

In the modern world they depend on us and our buildings to give them places to nest. As renovations happen many of the nesting places have disappeared leaving Swifts, Swallows and House martins with no place to lay their eggs.

They are faithful to their own nest sites and so if access to their nests becomes blocked, or worse, access becomes blocked whilst the birds are breeding, they then cannot raise their young and may even die trying to get to their nests.

We can do lots to help our Swift, Swallow and House martin populations here in the UK.

There are solutions to most renovations that will enable you to create the home you love but also a place for Swifts, Swallows and House martins to continue to breed.

Before you are having work done on your home such as re-roofing, loft insulation / foam insulation, or replacing soffits and fascias, you can contact organisations such as **Action for Swifts** and **Swift Conservation** for advice.

Websites for further information.

<https://www.actionforswifts.com/> and <https://swift-conservation.org/Contents.htm>

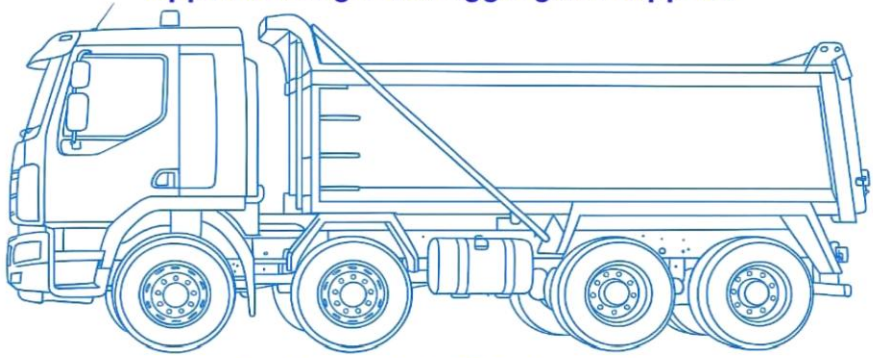
If you are interested in the Swift population in Bucknell, please contact me, **Julie Cowley** to discuss further, on **07580 159 183** or email me at juliecowley463@gmail.com

Thank you.

Julie Cowley, Shropshire Ornithological Society - Swift species champion - 3rd June 2026

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Council Matters

The past few months have been a busy and important period for Shropshire Council, with a continued focus on stabilising finances, maintaining essential services, and planning for the county's long-term future. The government approved Shropshire Council's request for "Exceptional Financial Support", which meant that we could deliver a viable budget for 2026/27. After many months of work, this was formally agreed at February's council meeting and we're now working to deliver it and break the cycle of overspend that has existed for many years previously. There have also been changes to how the council operates politically. In April and May, a reshuffle of Cabinet roles and scrutiny committees introduced a stronger emphasis on housing, financial recovery, and transparency. As part of these changes, councillors from Reform have been given the responsibility of chairing two committees. For the many years that the Liberal Democrats were the main opposition group at Shropshire Council, they were denied this opportunity. Now we control the council we believe it is essential that opposition parties are treated fairly and respectfully, and that we give them the power to properly inspect and challenge the work we are doing.

Highways continue to be a key issue for residents. We're starting to see potholes getting filled after a bad winter and I will keep putting on pressure to ensure that our little bit of South Shropshire gets its fair share of the repairs. A couple of bigger pieces of highways work are planned for the summer. The second half of July will see Chapel Lawn road closed above Chapel Lawn village so that a collapsing retaining wall next to the river can be repaired. Later in the summer the bridge on the A488 at New Invention will be having major maintenance work, which means the Knighton-Clun road will be closed for several weeks. Dates are still to be confirmed, but closure late August to early October currently looks likely. I will share more information as it becomes available.

In social care, which makes up a large proportion of council spending, the focus remains on early support and prevention. An updated "Support Finder" has been launched to help residents access services and community support more easily, reflecting a wider aim to help people stay independent for longer. Overall, while challenges remain, particularly around finances, the council is taking steps to strengthen its position, improve services, and plan for the future of Shropshire's communities.

Sam Walmsley - 25th May 2026



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Bucknell's New Village Hall - Project Update!

We are now almost at the stage when funders can be approached for grants to build the new Village Hall. **Firstly**, funds are required to complete the final stages of detailed design and regulatory approvals such as Building Regulations. This will involve the appointment of external consultants, structural engineers, heating and ventilation engineers and the like. **Secondly**, to meet the costs of construction, fit-out and external works. This process is likely to take many months. No part of the cost of construction will fall on the Council Tax payers but there may be some local fundraising for furniture and furnishings as the building nears completion.

We have to provide a Cost Plan prepared by a registered Quantity Surveyor to support funding applications. This Cost Plan is based on the approved plans and discussions with the Architect. The estimated cost of the Building and External Works prepared by the Quantity Surveyor on this basis is around £2million plus fees. Our funding applications have to be based on this Cost Plan figure at this stage but there are contingency sums and other items included which the Architect considers excessive, so the final cost is likely to be less.

Funders are likely to take into account a number of factors when considering our applications including sustainability and our ability to manage this project both pre and post completion. The New Hall has been designed to be more than a mere replacement of the Memorial Hall in that it is larger and designed to allow a broader range of activities many of which can be held at the same time. They are likely to regard this as a prestige development enhanced by the involvement of Liverpool University School of Architecture in the design and planning process.

The New Hall will open as a community asset and its “drop-in” facility will be a novel way to use a Village Hall especially in a rural area. Grant applications will be made showing this building as the Bucknell Community Hub to distinguish it from a replacement village hall.

FRIENDS OF THE MEMORIAL HALL The Memorial Hall has functioned throughout its life with the support of a dedicated team of volunteers. This loyal group has been the backbone of the Hall in so many ways and it is difficult to imagine how the Hall would have survived without them. However, there is an ongoing need for new and perhaps younger volunteers to come forward - please help if you can. You don't have to be a Trustee or serve on a committee!

The new Village Hall, which is planned to be opened in 2029, will be opened as a “drop-in centre” during the day in addition to providing facilities for pre-booked use. There will be a large foyer with casual lounge furniture situated next to the kitchen area. This room will be heated to comfortable temperatures and will provide a safe, warm space for users to meet and socialise, particularly in winter. The success of the New Hall run on these lines will depend largely on the ability to establish a pool of volunteers from within the Village. Prospective funders will want to be assured that this is possible.

Is there anyone out there who is willing and able to take on the role of coordinator of this group? Further details from Mike Alderton on 07376 126 087

Annual General Meeting. Whilst you have your diary open, please make a note of the date of 15th September 2026 for the Charity's Annual General Meeting. This will be the first AGM of the Bucknell Memorial Hall & Recreation Ground CIO at which seven Trustees are to be elected. Nomination forms, may be obtained from the Secretary (Jim Hughes 07980 883785) and must be returned to him between 10th and 31st August for registration.

Memorial Hall Events. Whilst you wait patiently for the New Hall to become available it's important for you all to continue to support the Memorial Hall whenever you can. We are open to new ideas and would welcome your suggestions. So come on Bucknell. It's **your** Village and **your** Community, so let's hear from you please.

Mike Alderton - 07376 126 087 - bucknellvillagehall@icloud.com



On completion the New Hall will take on the name of the New Memorial Hall and will be dedicated to the memories of Bucknell's young men who died fighting for their Country. The logos for this project are from designs created by the children of St. Mary's School Bucknell and will be used on the new website and elsewhere wherever possible.



Mike Alderton - 25th May 2026



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Volunteers are wonderful!



I have been thinking about how much there is going on in our village, more than we might think, and all run by volunteers. Our community would be impoverished without them. I'm just going to mention a few.

I always read the posts and admire the good work done by the litter picking group. Have you driven into Ludlow or Leominster or Hereford and been horrified by the amount of rubbish at the side of the road? It's really disheartening to see. So I am glad that there are people here willing to give up their time and to tackle litter even if it is a shame that there is a need for it. They make Bucknell look smart.

I am also glad that there is a youth club, even though each of my boys is too old for it now. We read in the media about disenfranchised youths, without enough to do and no places to mix outside of school. The variety of activities that the youth club puts on is inspiring.

One of the most wonderful assets of Bucknell is the Pop-in-Café. It's a marvellous meeting place and all of the work involved is done by volunteers. They make amazing looking cakes (and I assume that they taste equally good) using their own ingredients and electricity. Others set up, serve and wash up. The volunteers also do an excellent job vacuuming the church carpet for us. It always looks so good.

We also have a parish council meeting once a month, conscientiously making the best decisions they can for our villages of Bucknell and Bedstone. I imagine that they get little thanks for it, because most of us don't know about the decisions they make despite the public being able to attend.

Of course, there is also this Bucknell Newsletter, compiled and distributed entirely by volunteers. I always look forward to its arrival and there is always something that interests me to read in it. The adverts are useful too.

We are lucky to have a memorial hall committee. I know that there is a lot to do looking after the finances, fund raising, liaising with architects and probably a lot more. I notice that they organise an impressive variety of entertainment.

What I know more about, of course, is the church. I am so glad that we have this beautiful building in the centre of our village. It has been here for hundreds of years and hopefully it will still be here for many hundreds of years to come. An individual structure like this needs cherishing and protecting from the elements. We rely on volunteers.

There are many jobs that occasionally need doing, such as keeping the heat pump going is an important one as the church is kept at a comfortable temperature, sorting out the clock and bells when they go wrong, clearing ivy from the stonework, widening the paths when necessary, monitoring the utility bills. There are budgets to set, funds to raise as we have to contribute to supporting the benefice, there are services to arrange, reports to write, bring & share meals to organise.

Continues

We have our Quinquennial inspection of the church taking place in June and we have had to choose a suitably qualified architect to carry it out and deliver a detailed survey of the whole building. We anticipate there may be some remedial work that we will need to undertake.

There is a wonderful team of people taking part in the services from leading worship, writing the prayers, reading the passages from the bible, providing refreshments, being sidesmen to arranging the flowers that make the church look so attractive and we have amazing Joyce choosing the hymns and playing the organ.

I love the fact that there are so many different voices taking part in the services. If you would like to take part too, let Stuart Fairclough know.

You all have different gifts, skills, expertise. It feels good to find a way to use them, especially for the good of our village.

Janet Hartin - 30th April 2026



Please keep your fabulous articles coming in for me to publish. Plus any personal messages you want to post, details of forthcoming events, promoting local volunteer groups and charities, church and school news, front cover pictures, etc. etc. Editor



I have recently finished my training to become a volunteer for Feed the Birds.

The good news is that we now have another new recruit in Bucknell and the Shropshire based charity is keen to find us clients to support.

Feed the Birds is a unique befriending charity for bird and nature lovers.

The volunteers visit clients to provide a bird feeding station and much appreciated companionship.

Recent research has shown a decline in some garden birds due to a disease called trichomonosis which can spread where birds gather in large numbers, such as at bird feeders. Feed the Birds is following the recommendations below from the RSPB, to minimise the risk of disease.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/how-to-help-garden-birds>

If you know of someone who would benefit from a Feed the Birds befriender or you would like to be a volunteer please contact Diane Monether, Feed the Birds Coordinator **07497 451 838** dianem@feedthebirds.org.uk www.feedthebirds.org.uk

FEED THE BIRDS

Tackling loneliness through bird feeding

Bird
feeding
advice

Feed the Birds is a unique befriending charity for bird and nature lovers. Our volunteers visit every week to provide a bird feeding station and much appreciated companionship.

Recent research has shown a decline in some garden birds due to a disease called trichomonosis which can spread where birds gather in large numbers, such as at bird feeders. To continue to provide the well-documented benefits to mental health that come both from befriending schemes and connecting with nature, Feed the Birds supports the following recommendations from the RSPB, to minimise the risk of disease:

1 May to 31 October

- Pause filling bird feeders with seeds or peanuts.
- Offer small amounts of mealworms, fat-balls or suet.

1 November to 30 April

- Resume feeding birds a range of bird foods, including seeds and peanuts.



Feeding station hygiene is important throughout the year so where possible:

- Clean bird feeders and water baths at least once a week.
- Place bird feeders in a different spot every week.
- Avoid putting feeders under places where birds roost, such as under trees.
- Don't use bird feeders with flat surfaces, such as bird tables.
- Feed in moderation.

Encourage the planting of natural food sources

such as fruit, berries, hips, sunflowers, knapweed and teasels. Holly, hawthorn, ivy, rowan, honeysuckle and dogwood all provide food and attract insects.



For more information visit
www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/how-to-help-garden-birds

Thank you!


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Feed the Birds Charity Registration number 1208199

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Who's Who - See also Regular Dates



Bucknell Memorial Hall CIO

Chair: Mike Alderton - 07376 126 087
 Secretary: Jim Hughes - 07980 883 785
 Treasurer: Dorothy Edwards - 01547 530 252
 Bookings: Christine Price - 01547 530 249
 Event Coordinator: Leonard Barrett - 07973 548 220

Bucknell Women's Institute

President: Mic Blake - 07835 386 335
 Email : michelblake17@gmail.com
 Secretary: Christine Aplin
 Treasurer: Jane Pallet - email : j.s.willis@live.co.uk

Bedstone & Hopton Castle Village Hall

Bookings : Chris & Margie Savery 01547 530 282
 Email: bedstonehoptoncastlevh@hotmail.co.uk

Bedstone and Bucknell Parish Council

Chair: Carol Davies - 07774 428 373
Vice Chair: Sam Walmsley - 07974 707 932
Clerk: Nancy Adams - 01588 641 154

BUCKNELL

Councillors: Viv Dodd - 01547 530 478
 Nigel Hartin - 07583 962 292
 Anne Cummings - 01547 530 977
 Colin Cummings - 01547 530 977
 Plus one vacancy currently.

BEDSTONE

Councillor(s): Chris Savery - 07855 885 309
 Plus one vacancy currently.

For further details (yet to be updated) please see:
<https://bedstoneandbucknell.org/parishcouncil/>

St. Mary's Church, Bucknell - part of The Middle Marches Benefice for Bedstone, Bucknell, Chapel Lawn, Clungunford, Hopton Castle, Llanfair Waterdine and Stowe.

Priest-in-Charge: TBA
 Bucknell Churchwarden(s): Two vacancies currently.

Church enquiries to Margie Savery please.

Contact: Margie Savery on 01547 530 282
 or 07929 145 042

Email : office.middlemarches@gmail.com

Bedstone Art Group

Anne Holding - call or text 07528 536 760
 Email : anneholding89@gmail.com

Bucknell Nurseries

Andrew & Nick Coull - 01547 530 606

Lance Phillips Quality Butchers

01547 530 233

Bucknell Post Office

Klaus Steffes - 01547 530 201

Bucknell Youth Club

Jim Hughes - 07980 883 785
 Email : Hughes_jim@msn.com

Bucknell Allotment Association

Chair: Colin Carter - 07952 147 627
 Secretary: Claire Carter - 07777 137 394
 Treasurer: Sue Greenan

The Sitwell Arms

Andy and Sarah Knight - 01547 530 213

Community First Responders

Nicky Edwards - 07973 563 829
 Samuel Winter - 07779 335 996

Clun Valley AED Scheme (Defibrillator)

Ian Owen - 01547 530 616

Bucknell Flood Action Group

David Webb - 07545 544 208

St. Mary's Primary School, Bucknell

Head Teacher: Anna Cook - 01547 530 264
 Website: www.bucknellprimaryschool.org

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Sam Smith - 07528 633 450 (Hair salon)

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Member of Parliament for Ludlow

Stuart Anderson MP - 0207 219 7731
 Email : stuart.anderson.mp@parliament.uk

Shropshire Council - Clun Division

Councillor Sam Walmsley - 07974 707 932

The Bucknell Newsletter

A dedicated team of volunteers look after the interests of the Bucknell Newsletter.

- Chair Peter Barron - 01547 530 206
- Editor and Treasurer Beverley Stone - 07484 280 259 (Voicemail available)
- Proof-reading and distribution A band of loyal volunteer helpers - thank you all.

The deadline for inclusion can vary so please contact me ASAP for details.

We aim to print in early March, June, September and December so articles, photographs, parish information and new advertisements for inclusion need to be received by the third week of the previous month at the very latest. Distribution will commence shortly after the print-run.

To contribute, please send news, articles, events, relevant photographs, stories, other items of interest or advertisement enquiries to: beverley2019@gmail.com

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