

---

# LOPEN *Life*

DECEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2025



Local  
Events &  
Diary



Festive &  
New Year  
Cheer


ISSUE 14

---

## Edit this...

Hopefully a case of less is more from me - a big thanks to the contributors, the stunning front cover image from Pauline Rook and an equally seasonal context from our friends in Hewins on the back cover. I have also added some local information sources at the back. Seasonal greetings and here's to an excessive new year!

**Chris Marsh - Editor - Email:** [chrismarshlpc@gmail.com](mailto:chrismarshlpc@gmail.com)

 /Lopen-Events-277018432630673/



Visit our village website: [www.lopenvillage.org](http://www.lopenvillage.org)

Join The Village WhatsApp Group for all the latest - Contact the Editor

### OTHER CONTACTS:

Council: Jo Roundell Greene - 07341 560016 - [jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk)

Member of Parliament - Adam Dance - 07767 224213 - [adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk)

Just Women - Pauline Rook - 240644 - [prook12@gmail.com](mailto:prook12@gmail.com)

Lopen Lads - Trevor Power - 07878 185537 - [trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com](mailto:trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com)

Neighbourhood Watch - Carron Richards - 242640 - [carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk)

Caroline McKendrick - 359201 - [carolinemckendrick@outlook.com](mailto:carolinemckendrick@outlook.com)

Police CSO - Mike Bell - Dial 101 and ask for PCSO 7954 -

[mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK](mailto:mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK)

# AUTOHOUSE CARS

Looking to sell your car?

Talk to a real local market professional

- Not a registration machine
- Free valuation & collection
- No admin fees or hassle
- I pay what I say - instantly
- Family business since 2007

**CONTACT - Chris - 07714 631007**  
**- 01460 419012**

## Lopen Parish Council - your village needs you...

For the latest on Parish Council matters, villagers are welcome to attend the monthly meetings, and the Parish Council are still looking for that most elusive of villagers - a new Parish councillor - or two! Please contact the Parish Clerk - Lisa for details. Even better, membership makes a perfect Christmas present for that caring individual!

The Parish Council are keeping a watch on all the local planning actions and an especially close eye on the development activities of the West Down Orchard Camping Park which although not in our Parish, borders it directly and influences footpath and security aspects of the village.

Check out the village website for the latest minutes and reports and if not a group member already - join the Village WhatsApp group for the latest updates. Contact Trevor Power on 07878 185537 or Chris Marsh on 07951 239110 to get invited. There is the open chat group and the notifications only group.

### NEXT LPC MEETINGS:

**Look out for the next meetings via the Whats App groups and the Lopen Life Diary - usually the last Monday of the month.**

### PARISH COUNCILLORS:

**Chairman - Nick Jones** - nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com - 01460 241643

**Stephen Crane** - scrane1@hotmail.co.uk - 01460 241412

**Jenny Feeney** - jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com - 01460 419569

**Chris Marsh** - chrismarshlpc@gmail.com - 07951 239110

**Caroline McKendrick** - caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com - 01460 359201

**Vacancy** -

**Parish Clerk** - lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com - Lisa Wilson - 07587 211150

# What's Up?

## **Sunday School Room Project Update:**

Following consent by the Local Authority for the floor replacement, tender documents were sent to six contractors. Three submitted bids which were considered by the PCC at its meeting on 19 November. The decision was to award the contract to Pipecraft Bennett with a proposed start date of the second week of January. The cost is within our budget of £25,000 allowing additional funds for other items. The replacement is likely to take six weeks followed by the installation of a new servery/kitchen and possibly new heating and lighting.

This means that the room will be closed during January, February and early March. During this time the church will be available for meetings, Coffee Stop, etc as long as they do not clash with services. Please liaise with Angela Naunton Davies (240921) re bookings.

The toilet in the SSR will remain available via the front door. We have offered our barn at Ballarat for storage of chairs, tables, etc, so we will be looking for volunteers to move the items the first week of January. The SSR Group is currently refining the new servery/kitchen layout and equipment taking into consideration suggestions made in the consultation document that was displayed in the SSR. Heating and lighting options were also considered by the group at its November meeting. Improved acoustics are also under consideration (three cheers I hear!).

To date just over £19,000 has been spent on the architect's fee and the new thatch. Funds raised/promised are within a whisker of £65,000 which will be boosted by 50% of the Christmas raffle proceeds.

**Steve Chapman.**

# All Saints Church

## SERVICE DATES:

### December Services:

Sunday 1st Holy Communion - 9.00am

Sunday 15th Parish Communion - 10.30am

**Thursday 19th Carol Service - 6.00pm**

Wednesday 25th Christmas Communion - 10.30am

### January Services:

Sunday 5th Communion for the Epiphany - 10.30 am

Sunday 19th Parish Communion - 10.30 am

**Rev Bob and Julia Hicks 01460 76406**

**bobhicks66@gmail.com**

**juliahicks1@gmail.com**

**Jonathan Delbridge**

**01460 240025**

**info@jonathandelbridge.com**

Please check the Church Porch  
notice board for latest  
information



## ROBERT FRITH OPTOMETRISTS

Experienced optometrists delivering outstanding eye care  
in a relaxed and friendly environment.

A wide range of products and services including tailor-made  
spectacle frames and lenses, emergency eye care and the  
latest in 3D eye scanning technology.

Introducing the New **optomap**  
ultra-wide field retinal imaging  
technology, giving us a comprehensive  
view of your eye health



with optomap ultra-widefield  
retinal imaging



without optomap

**28 Princes Street, Yeovil**

**01935 474333**

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

*What's Up?*

**Remembrance Day 2024:**

Thanks to Trevor Power for keeping the memories and the spirit of Remembrance in focus in these times, with some twenty or so Villagers participating in both the Sunday Service and Monday 11th Armistice Day Act of Remembrance.





## Lopen Orchard

Whilst the lease of the Orchard in Kitchen's Lane is now in solicitor's hands, progress is slowly ripening - the Parish Council are hopeful that positive news about securing this piece of land for the village will be in the next edition of Lopen Life.

In the meantime, a more enjoyable and fruitful opportunity arose to learn more about the history and health of the orchard. An introduction to the cider pomologist Liz Copas was made by Lopen resident Pauline, and the Clerk met Liz for an amble around the orchard on a damp, clear day whilst there were still some apples on the trees and a wealth lying beneath. Liz's long career in the cider industry included work at the Long Ashton Research Station in Bristol; she also has an apple named after her (Lizzy), and has authored books including *Cider Apples*; *the New Pomona* and *The Lost Orchards*; rediscovering the forgotten apple varieties of Dorset.

After taste-testing and inspecting the trees and apples on site, Liz packed some more samples of the fruit in paper bags to take away and verify at home. Her hand-drawn plan of the orchard detailed all the apple varieties that she identified. Liz's opinion is that the majority of the orchard was planted in the 1960's-70's, with the likelihood that saplings were sourced from the stock of the Taunton-based Cider Nursery. The apples range from the bittersweet varieties of Michelin, Harry Masters Jersey and the evocatively named Brown Snout to the sweet cider Bell, and the Improved Lambrook Pippin, which is a mild sweet/sharp cider. Two older bittersweet varieties (planting estimated around the 1940's - 50's) are placed near the right hand side of the gate; Bulmer's Norman was transported from Normandy to Hereford by Bulmer's (then H E Bulmer & Co) in the early 1890's. According to Liz, the orchard has been well looked after in the past, with trees in relative good health and many years of good fruit production still ahead. We've promised to invite Liz to any celebratory "opening" of the Lopen 'Community' Orchard, which we hope residents will be able to plan in the New Year!

<https://pomiferous.com/applebyname/bulmers-norman-id-6958>

<https://applesandpeople.org.uk/stories/michelin/>

Lisa Wilson

# December 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
Thursday's	Yoga @ ARK at Egwood 9.00-10.00 am	£5 Just turn up!
Tuesday 10th	Just Women Christmas Meeting 7.30 pm	Details to follow....
Wednesday 11th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Save the date	LOPEN LADS Christmas Meet	Details on Whats App group & Trevor 07878 185537
Thursday 19th	CAROL SERVICE 6.00pm All Saints Church Lopen 	Start Tuning Up!
Wednesday 25th	<i>Christmas Day Happy Christmas Everyone</i>	God Rest Yea Merry Gentlefolk...
Tuesday 31st	<i>New Years Eve</i>	<i>Happy 2025</i>



# January 2025 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Wednesday 1st	Happy New Year !	Welcome 2025
Wednesday 8th	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Tuesday 14th	JUST WOMEN Zoom Meeting 7.30 pm	Details to follow
Date TBC	LOPEN LADS New Year Ramble	Details on Whats App group & Trevor 07878 185537
Wednesday 22nd	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Monday 27th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
Look Out ...	<i>For Ark Activities</i>	All welcome

# S.I.D. Update ...



The village Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been busy since we reported in the last edition that a Police speed camera was deployed in the village on the 16th July (the first time in over 3 years). Our focus on specific concerns led to a second deployment of the Police camera on the 8th November, another positive step forward. We were made aware that the overgrown vegetation around the speed signs throughout the village had meant the mobile unit had not been able to be deployed for some months and that the Police had chased Somerset Council's Highways Department to address this. Fortunately, our new private contractor for village maintenance works cleared the majority of the village road signs in his first visit in November, so this enabled the Police to set up the mobile check. The overall reduction in speeding since we started in April is close to 4% which equates to approximately 40 vehicles per day.

The speeding at the Hinton Junction is far higher than that recorded by the post box, and although the problem remains a major concern we are seeing a reduction. The downloaded information on the 12th November recorded the **LOWEST** percentage speeding in all zones above 40 MPH since we started in April: 41 - 50mph down 9.28% / 51 - 60mph down 2.78% / 61 - 70mph down 0.27% and 71 - 80mph down 0.3% and for the first time since we started in April - **NO SPEEDS ABOVE 78 MPH**. Small progressive steps to a safer village!

## SECURE SELF STORAGE LOPEN

- Secure, purpose built Self Storage
- 250 units from 20-260 sq ft
- For all your business & household storage needs

Call now for more details  
**01460 243100**  
or visit our website:  
[www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk](http://www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk)

Lopen Business Park,  
Mill Lane, Lopen, South  
Petherton, TA13 5JS

bee hive self storage

## Lopen History Casebook Chapter 8 - THE PARISH CHEST

The Parish was a circuit of ground which is 'committed to the charge of one person or vicar, or to other ministers having cure of souls therein.'

Civilly, it was a place for which a separate Poor Law rate could be made, and for which a separate overseer can be appointed.

The officers of the parish were the Churchwardens, the Overseers of the Poor, Waywardens, (surveyors of the highways) and Constables. There may also be Haywards, Dog Whippers, and Field Wardens.

Every Church and Chantry probably had its own Chest (Ark or Hutch) before Tudor law made it mandatory. At Exeter in 1287, it was ordained that each Church should have a Chest for books and vestments.

In 1538, there was a mandate from Thomas Cromwell, which instructed every parish to purchase a "safe coffer", the parson to have one key, a church warden the other. Neither could gain access without the other being present.

Each Minister was to enter into a book every marriage, christening and burial at which he had officiated, the entries to be made after the service on Sunday with a church warden as witness. The book was to be kept in the chest.

The Poor Law of 1552 said that parishioners in every parish should provide a strong chest with a hole in the top, with 3 keys to hold alms for the poor. Occasionally, one chest served both purposes.



trading  
post

FARM SHOP · SOMERSET



Trading Post Farm Shop  
Lopenhead | Somerset | TA13 5JH

01460 241666  
hello@tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk  
www.tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk



Westcountry Cheese Deli  
Large Organic Selection  
Exclusive Gin Collection  
Weekly Veg Box Scheme  
Local Beers & Ciders  
Fresh Eggs  
Daily Fresh Bread  
100+ Local Suppliers  
Ample Car Parking  
Refill Room  
Garden Centre



"A Mini  
Borough  
Market"  
- Sunday Times  
May 20 2021



Winners of the Muddy Stiletto Award  
for The Best Farm Shop/Deli in  
Somerset & Dorset 2021

In the late 1500's the marriage, baptismal and burial records were probably written on sheets of parchment, and kept in the Chest. Both Churchwardens had to witness the entries, which were read out each Sunday. Also, they had to transcribe a whole year's entries and send them to diocesan registry within a month after Easter.

1667-8. The Burial in Wool Acts declared that '*no corpse of any person (except those who shall die of the plague), shall be buried in any shirt, sheet, shift or shroud or anything whatever made or mingled with "flax, hemp, silk, hair, gold or silver, or any stuff or thing other than what is made from sheep's wool only*' An affidavit was made at each burial that the law had been complied with. The law was intended to help the wool trade, and a fine of £5.00 was imposed if wool was not used. The Acts were repealed some 150 years later in 1814.

#### Churchwarden's Accounts.

Two Churchwardens were elected by the vestry, and they both had to be literate and numerate. They were responsible for all money coming in and going out of the parish. Accounts had to be kept and written in a book. In the C17th and C18th, payments were largely for the relief of the poor. They were also responsible for collecting 'pew rents' - Church pews were sold freehold, and the rest rented out. Your pew position in the church reflected your place in society! There were also payments to local tradesmen, and often to children for catching vermin, (especially sparrows) all of which were usually stored in the chest. The 'Chest' became the fund of the Parish, to use as it saw fit. One of these areas was also to be 'overseers of the poor'. Land owners and Churchwardens would put paupers to work and maintain them. Money collected by tax on inhabitants and land owners was then used for this oversight together with erecting Poor houses as well as houses "of correction".

Appointments and local issues were dealt with by Vestries. These were the fore runners of local councils. Local matters were discussed and Parish Officers appointed along with all aspects of a developing 'management' of the communities. Much of this was established by 'Briefs'. These were royal mandates for collections for a deserving person or cause. The Brief was read out from the pulpit, and at the end of the service someone took the collection saying "please to remember the Brief." They were issued for church repairs, flood, fire and grave losses, and the whole lot entered into the church accounts with details kept in the 'Chest'.

Briefs from Hinton St. George include "for the parish store for Frimlington in Devon, for printing a bible, and for 'the fire in Langullo in Wales.'

Sadly most of Lopen's records were destroyed during the war.

**Joan Farris**

# Always look on the bright side...

Rainfall and weather report 17th November 2024



September and October were 2 more wetter than average months, with September exceptionally so, but so far this month (17th November) we have had only 2.8 mm of rain and are waiting for the blast of cold air promised for Tuesday 19th November. A depression is forecast across the middle of the country which will pull down colder air from the North.

We last had a dry November in 2021 and in 2004.

Although the air is colder, Northerly winds tend to drop their rain/sleet/snow over Northern regions of the country, so that once we in the South West get into the North winds we get fewer showers than benighted regions further North. Our historic heavy snow comes when milder, wetter air over us comes into contact with much colder air brought down from Arctic areas.

From my records starting in Lopen in 1997, October has been the wettest month on average - this compares with historic figures showing December and January to have been the wettest months. This change is likely to be due to the warming of the atmosphere in the Autumn which enables the atmosphere to carry more water vapour (which comes out as rain as the temperature falls with the approach of Winter).

The long-lying flooding down the Fosse Way towards the Dinnington Docks is almost certainly caused by a blocked culvert under the road. Our financially hard-pressed Council will have increasing problems of this sort - perhaps the time has come for each parish to employ a part-time "old boy" with a shovel like they used to in days gone by - their job was to keep the culverts and gouts clear and thus to help preserve the road surface.

**Jeremy Rook**

**Ed Note** - As predicted, as we go to print the temperature has plummeted and we are in for some snow - wrap up!

## Welcome to Lopen -

This information you might find helpful as you find your way around Lopen and the surrounding area:

- Village website is [www.lopenvillage.org](http://www.lopenvillage.org)
- [www.facebook.com/loopennewsandevents/](https://www.facebook.com/loopennewsandevents/)
- Village WhatsApp Group - contact Trevor Power on 07878 185537 or Chris Marsh on 07951 239110 to join.
- Lopen Life - is the bi-monthly village magazine, with an events diary, local trades and local matters of interest. It is delivered to every household in the village and can also be found on-line on the village website and copies are also available from the Church porch. Villagers are encouraged to submit articles.
- Lopen Village Fund - being a small village without much infrastructure we are looking to eventually find our own public space; in the near term as a communal space and in the long term with a village hall of some description. To do this a village fund has been set up to support local fund raising activities and events and (together with the advertising) Lopen Life. All proceeds going back into the fund.
- The Link Magazine is the monthly publication of the four Churches that makes up the Benefice, these are Merriott, Hinton Saint George, Dinnington and Lopen. Church services and a range of other information relating to activities in our surrounding villages is included. Copies are available from the Church porch.
- Events -Typically there is a plant sale in May, a Pre-Christmas Mistletoe Market in November, and every other year a Village Picnic at the end of August with food, children's games, cream teas and, weather permitting, country dancing. These events raise funds for Village and Church projects. The notice board at the turning into Church Street by the big oak tree has event posters and parish council news displayed on it.
  
- Health Services - There are pharmacies in South Petherton, Merriott, Crewkerne and Ilminster. 24 Hour hospital Accident and Emergency Departments are in Yeovil District Hospital ( 01935 475122 and Taunton, Musgrove Park Hospital (01823 333 444).
- Doctors - South Petherton Medical Centre 01460 240 707, Bernard Way South Petherton TA13 5EG, is now next to the new Community Hospital to the east of South Petherton. Crewkerne Health Centre 01460 74797 is next to Crewkerne Hospital in Middle Path.
- Dentists - Crewkerne at Orchard Lane 01460 73 250, Black Swan 0844 8480 001, Ilminster (01460 52 480) and Martock (01935 823 040)
- Post Offices - the closest are at Merriott at the fuel filling station and Hinton St George in the Community Shop . The Lopen post box is positioned by the lay-by on the Main Road through the Village

- **Bus services** - buses run through the village the time tables are displayed on the pole by the lay-by in the centre of the village.
- **Berry's coaches** (01823 331356) run a booked seats service to London Hammersmith coach station 2 times a day from the fuel station by the South Petherton roundabout.
- **Recycling** - collections are made on Mondays and the wheelie bin once every 3 weeks. The closest recycling centre is in Crewkerne which is open on Saturday, Sunday and Monday only. Chard recycling is open from Thursday to Tuesday (closed Wednesdays). The times are listed on the Somerset Waste Partnership website.
- **Parish Church** - The times of the services in our Anglican church of All Saints' are on the notice board both by the Sunday School Room and in the Church Porch. All denominations are welcomed to the services and events. Other Churches are well represented in Merriott, Hinton St George, South Petherton and Crewkerne.
- **Parish Council** - meets monthly in the Sunday School Room, typically on the 3rd or 4th Monday of the month. Details are on the village notice board. Council minutes are also posted, and anyone in the Village can submit agenda items at least 1 week before the meeting via the Parish Clerk on [lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com)
- **Groups** - Just Women is a friendly group that meets on the second Tuesday evening in the month at 7.30pm in the Sunday School Room (at present the meetings are online using Zoom), for further details contact Pauline Rook on 240 644. And Lopen Lads - Out and About and a Chat - contact Trevor Power 07878 185537
- **Coffee Stop** - on the second and fourth Wednesdays there is an informal Coffee Stop 10.30-12 in the Sunday School Room. For £1 not only do you get a drink and refill but cake as well! All ages drop in and all proceeds go to an agreed charity.
- **Local shops** - The Trading Post at Lopen Head has local and many organic foods, it is open 9-6 Monday-Saturday and Sunday morning and Pips Railway Carriage restaurant next door to the farm shop is open on weekdays. There is a community shop in Hinton, small supermarkets in Merriott and South Petherton and a mini supermarket in the fuel station at South Petherton and Merriott. Ilminster has larger supermarkets and various artisan shops.
- **Visiting traders** - Darren, the fresh fish man on Thursdays, will call at your house contact Sally-Ann, 2 Church Street to find out more details.
- **Milk** - a door step delivery with a good selection of other groceries Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. 01935 475 512 or online [www.milkandmore.co.uk](http://www.milkandmore.co.uk)
- **Vets** - there are practices in Crewkerne 01460 72 443, and South Petherton 01460 241 262. The Hinton St George practice has recently transferred to Stoke Sub Hamdon 01935 310 930.

Any updates or additions please contact the Editor.

SEASONS GREETINGS



FROM

