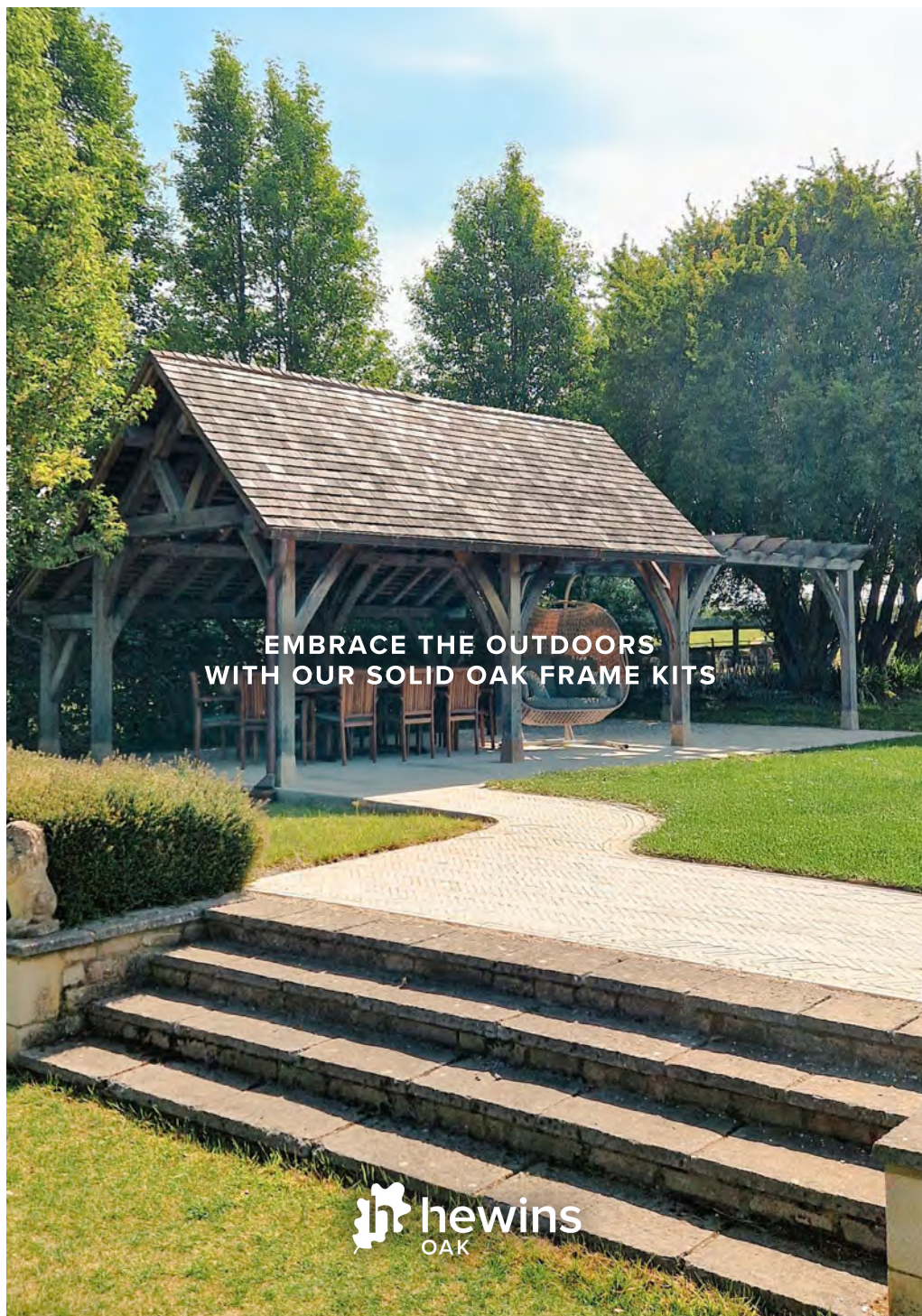




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Local
Events &
Diary

ISSUE 18

&
Welcome to
our New
Councillors

Edit this...

In this heat (this has to be such an English/British thing, its ALL about the weather!) we may all feel a little slower but that said, a lot still seems to be happening.

I am delighted to report we have two new Parish Councillors, the Sunday School Room refurb is complete (bar a few extras), and the village maintenance is starting to really show the benefits of the consistency of 'attacking' the growth. In this issue Joan Farris takes her historical lense to our religious habitats, and Jeremy Rook has hopefully been less active on the rainfall and weather front, but points out there are still records to break.

Meantime lets all make hay while the sun shines!

Chris

Chris Marsh - Editor - Email: chrismarshlpc@gmail.com

 /Lopen-Events-277018432630673/

Visit our village website: www.lopenvillage.org

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



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- 01460 419012**

NON CONFORMITY - There was a growing movement of non conformity in the 18th - 19th centuries. Many different Protestant churches or chapels were set up, it was no different in Lopen .

In the 18th century, there were two groups of non conformists. In the houses of Joshua Gummer and Peter Horsey, Presbyterians met, and Horsey's house was also licenced for Anabaptists. His house was also used by Methodists! He really was hedging his bets!

In 1759, licences were issued for both Baptists and Presbyterians.

There was a young man called John Rowe, who was born in Lopen in 1788 whose family were Baptists. He had a very basic education, but taught himself English and Latin. He went on to learn Greek in Bristol, where he met his wife. He then set off for Jamaica as the first Baptist missionary, where he taught many children to read and write, as well doing some missionary work. He sadly became ill and died in 1816, but an achievement at the time for someone born into poverty and self-taught.

The Congregationalists started in a private house in 1825, with meetings held in a small room until 1864, when a local man called Samuel Hebditch, (who was also a preacher) built the chapel.

Like the church, Congregations declined, until the chapel was sold off in 1952.



Luckily we still have All Saints and a Parochial Parish Council to take care of the church, which like so many villages, irrespective of religious beliefs and interest, remain cornerstones of a village life and structure.

JOAN FARRIS

Lopen History Casebook

Chapter 11 - LOPEN CHURCHES

Sadly, many of us no longer go to church, but until the 19th century, it was compulsory. You had to have a very good reason not to attend, otherwise you would be taken to court and fined!

Records for Lopen church, go back to 1209, when the de Meriet family granted the chapel of Lopen to the canons of Bruton. It then went to Bristol but in 1574, burial rights were given to the chapel, thereby severing links with the mother church and priests were then required to serve it.

Before the Reformation in the 16th Century, it was of course Roman Catholic, but then became Protestant, as was the law at the time.

In 1577, John Vawdye became the curate, but was found to be “unmeet “ for the job,”being a Jersey man, not having the English tongue, and unlearned”. There is no record of who appointed someone so unsuitable!

By 1854, services were held in the morning with 150 people attending. In the afternoon, there were 250, and the same in the evening. 60 to 80 children attended Sunday School in the morning and afternoon. This of course was at the height of the local flax industry, when many more people lived and worked in the village.

The present church was probably built in the 14th- 15th century, but very little of it remains. The building was much altered and added to in the 19th century, mainly to accommodate the growing population.

It is said that the pews were deliberately made to be uncomfortable so that you couldn't drop off during the sermon!

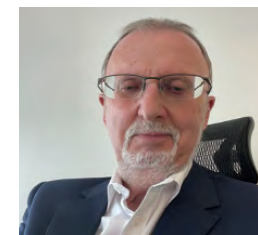
It was usual for the 'well to do' people to pay an annual fee for their own family pew.

It was a saying at the time that the 'Toffs went to church, and everyone else went to Chapel!' And then came the non-conformists...

Lopen Parish Council

Well we called and the Village answered - I am delighted to report we have not one but two new Parish Councillors:

Dan King - has been a Lopen resident for 6 years, during which time as a Chartered Architect and Master Planning Consultant, has spent much of his time in the Middle East on major infrastructure, residential and cultural projects, returning 'home' in early 2025.



Michael Armstrong - I moved to this lovely village in spring 2018 after working in finance, based in central London but originating from SE London. It's a wonderful thing to be surrounded by 'so much sky' compared to a city.



Welcome guys.

NEXT LPC MEETING::

Look out for the next meeting 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

Michael Armstrong - md.armstrong@btinternet.com - 01460 354023

Dan King - d.king1@hotmail.co.uk - 07504 250172

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

OTHER CONTACTS:

Council: Jo Roundell Greene - 07341 560016- jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk

Member of Parliament - Adam Dance - 07767 224213 - adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk

Just Women - Pauline Rook - 240644 - prook12@gmail.com

Lopen Lads - Trevor Power - 07878 185537 - trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com

Neighbourhood Watch - Carron Richards - 242640 - carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk

Caroline McKendrick - 359201 - carolinemckendrick@outlook.com

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

mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK

What you may have missed...

Sunday School Room - Grand Reopening - Steve Chapman

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the opening of the rejuvenated Sunday School Room on Saturday 31 May. The Rev Bob welcomed everyone and Colin Cable cut the ribbon declaring the building officially open. The Rev Julia unveiled the benefactor plaque which represents over £70,000 of donations and grants. Steve Chapman then thanked the many people involved in the project and Trevor Power presented a number of gifts.

Refreshments and cakes were then enjoyed by all in the tranquil setting of the churchyard. Pictures of the project's extensive renovation stages were on display and will remain so for the next few weeks. The building with its new thatch, robust floor, excellent kitchen facilities, stylish lighting and infra red heating will now serve Lopen for many, many years to come. With the proposed audio/visual system, generously funded by the Parish Council, it will be a superb facility to use and enjoy.

Sunday School Room Managing Group - The renovation of the room was overseen by a small project group of volunteers. Now with its enhanced facilities and modern and attractive interior it will appeal to a much greater number of users. All Saints PCC is now wishing to form a small enthusiastic team to manage and promote this valuable community asset. If you are interested in this exciting opportunity, please contact one of the following for more information: Jonathan Delbridge 07719 187508 or jonathandelbridge@gmail.com Steve Chapman 07710 235249 or jsteve.chapman249@gmail.com

Footnote from Steve Chapman. "Thank you so much to all of you who contributed to the very generous gift vouchers. Mary and I look forward to our visit to Holm".

Pictures of the event opposite



Always look on the bright side...



Weather report 4th July 2025 - Jeremy Rook

May and June continued the dry theme of the previous 4 months with approximately one third of the Long Term Average (LTA) rainfall for the 2 months.

It is interesting that the aquifer to the North East of the village is keeping the water flowing in Church Street/Rydon Lane and in the stream that forms the Eastern edge of the parish -albeit with reduced flows. This is a result of the wet Autumn and Winter – it is hard to remember now the very wet January and above-average February.

It will be interesting to see if the weather repeats the 1976 pattern when a very dry Spring and early Summer gave way to downpours in late August.

The driest calendar year I have recorded was 2011 with 610mm in total (one third of the LTA) but the driest 6 months so far was in 1990 with 151mm March to August inclusive (42% LTA).

There are a number of us in the parish with thatched roofs and the continued dry weather makes us concerned about the possibility of sparks from garden bonfires and barbecues, so keep your eyes open and flames down!

Thanks.



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What you may have missed...



All Saints Church

SERVICE DATES:

August Services:

Sunday 3rd - Communion - 9.00am
Sunday 17th - Communion - 10.30am

September Services:

Sunday 7th - Communion - 9.00am
Sunday 21st - Communion - 10.30am

Rev Bob and Julia Hicks 01460 76406
bobhicks66@gmail.com
juliahicks1@gmail.com

Please check the Church Porch
notice board for latest
information

Job Opportunity!

As some of you will be aware, Steve Chapman will be standing down as All Saints treasurer at the end of this year after 10 years in the role. Therefore, the Lopen Parochial Church Council (PCC) is now looking for a replacement.

You do not need to be an accountant or a financial expert, just competent at maintaining basic accounts. There is no requirement to be a PCC member (Steve is not), just there to advise the PCC allowing them to make financial decisions.

With the Sunday School Room renovation almost complete, Steve estimates that it involves about one day a month. Wider involvement is very much up to the individual, it can be a very satisfying and rewarding role.

If you are interested then please have a chat with Steve for more information (07710 235249).

Lopen PCC

The L'Open Arms

our Pop up Pub

Back in 2021 (yes, that long ago!) we set up a Pop up Pub to be held in the Sunday Schoolroom on the last Friday of each month. It was intended as an informal venue for Lopen people to gather with everyone bringing their own preferred drink and glass (so no washing up!), and nibbles.

Sometimes we had a particular theme – some excellent fun quizzes, a spectacular Glasto experience, brilliant bingo, a curry night, film show, board games, and rousing music nights, sometimes in tune! All are welcome and the evenings have provided in particular a great opportunity for new Lopen residents to get to know everyone.

Since the start of the Sunday Schoolroom Renovation Appeal, donations from the Pop up Pub evenings have raised over £900 which is truly amazing. Thank you all! I'm sure the village is grateful to those people who have dug their hands in their pockets to achieve this superb result and helped to provide an enhanced community facility that can be used for years to come.

The Friday 25 July evening saw Jenny and Nicki host a 'Prosecco and Strawberries' event, after which it is an open book and up to whoever is willing to open up the room and put out the tables. If you'd be happy to host an evening – you don't have to think up a specific theme – please let me know so I can book the room, add the date to the village diary and put up posters. Its not a challenge, but needs a 'host'!

Many thanks to everyone who have contributed so far, and please let me know. provisional dates are in the Lopen Life Diary.

Mary Chapman - 0794 268 9164
mechapman2016@gmail.com

LOPEN MUSIC WEEKEND 2025

A FRENCH HORN RECITAL



SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER

Benjamin Hartnell-Booth is a prize winning and talented horn player who studied at the Royal Academy of Music. He has performed as Guest Principal Horn with Orchestras across the country including the BBC Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. His programme will include Beethoven's Horn Sonata as well as works by Paul Dukas, Schumann and Poulenc. **Tickets - £14, Free for 16 and under Concert begins at 7:00pm**

ACCOMPANIED BY JONATHAN DELBRIDGE



THE MAGIC OF MOZART PIANO

SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

Join pianist Jonathan Delbridge to explore the wonderful world of Mozart's piano music, ranging from the much-loved Variations on Twinkle Twinkle Little Star to the famous and emotional Sonata in A minor which Mozart composed shortly after his Mother died.

Tickets - £8, Free for 16 and under Concert begins at 3:00pm

Tickets available from southsomesetmusiccentre.co.uk or contact@southsomesetmusiccentre.co.uk or 01460 594464

Venue - All Saints Church, Church Street, Lopen, TA13 5JX

Church & Sunday School Room Annual Working Party 10am - 1pm Saturday 16 August

Our annual working party is a great opportunity for us all to ensure our church, churchyard and Sunday School Room (SSR) are spick and span for another year. With the renovation of the SSR, the focus this year will be on the church and its surrounds.

A list of tasks will be displayed in the church porch the week before, choose whatever suits you. Please bring your own tools if you wish.

This is a great opportunity to meet new faces and discuss new ideas.

A ploughman's lunch will be provided

For further information,
please contact Steve Chapman on 01460 249549

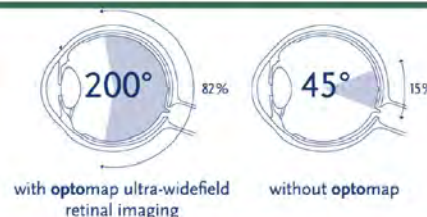


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August 2025 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
2nd & 4 th Thursdays	Health Walks Meet 10.30 at ARK	Stretch those legs...
Last Friday of the month	ARK Supper Club 3 Courses and Live Music	£27.50 per hed
Wednesday 13th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Monday 25th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00 pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
Wednesday 27th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 29th	TBC L'Open Arms POP-UP-PUB 7.30 pm Sunday School Room	Contact Mary Chapman 07942 689164
30 th & 31st Weekend	Glorious Gardens Weekend at ARK at Egwood	In aid of St. Margarets Hospice

A LITTLE FROM EVERYONE HELPS ENORMOUSLY

For the past couple of months I have been gratefully receiving donations of summer wear for refugees overseas which were regularly delivered to RAFT (Refugee Aid From Taunton) but the need never ends because wars and environmental disasters never end.

From September we ask for unwanted clean washable winter clothing and footwear for all, men, women, children and babies; and blankets, sleeping bags, tents, large suitcases with wheels, new toiletries and hygiene products. At present these donations go to Ukraine and to camps in southern Europe and the Middle East.

Your donations manifest the kindness of strangers and grateful thanks go to everyone. Please remember – a little from everyone helps enormously.

With grateful thanks, Geraldine Downey, Merriott tel. 01460 271358

September 2025 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
2nd & 4 th Thursdays	Health Walks Meet 10.30 am at ARK	Stretch those legs...
Saturday 6th	Dog Show ARK at Egwood Paws-itively fun for everyone	All welcome
Tuesday 9th	Just Women Skittles Evening and meal and the Dinnington Docks Open to partners and friends	Details from Pauline Rook 07845 968125
Wednesday 10th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
 Saturday 13 th & Sunday 14 th		
Wednesday 24th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 26th	TBC L'Open Arms POP-UP-PUB 7.30 pm Sunday School Room	Contact Mary Chapman 07942 689164
Monday 29th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00 pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome