

LOPEN*Life*

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025

Local
Events &
Diary

Floods,
Flowers &
Crafting

ISSUE 19

Edit this...

The feature of this issue is definitely Lopen and water - be it flooding and what we can do about it when it happens, the rainfall and our very dry summer and what that means, and finally why we have names like Water Street, Water Lane and Frog Street, not to mention several 'Mill' references, all pointing to some wet origins.

So, wet content aside, I am also pleased to announce we have a new Parish Clerk, our annual Craft Fayre coming up and all that indicates it is time to put the shorts away, get the chimney swept, the apples in and the boiler serviced!

See you again just before Christmas for the December/January issue.

Chris

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

 [/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/](https://www.facebook.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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CONTACT - Chris - 07714 631007
- 01460 419012

Lopen Parish Council

Aside from our two new Councillors introduced last issue, we now also have a new Parish Clerk on board - Kim Larsson, so it would be great if villagers came to the next meeting and introduced themselves, so that Kim can get a sense of our village community to be able to support us in the best ways possible.

The Parish Council meetings are open to the village to attend and hear what is being reviewed and for us to hear your views.

We have been actively working with the Flood Group team, as you will see on a report page in this issue, and hopefully will be better prepared for whatever the weather/climate wants to throw at us.

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 - Kim Larsson - 07871 935101

OTHER CONTACTS:

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

MP - 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

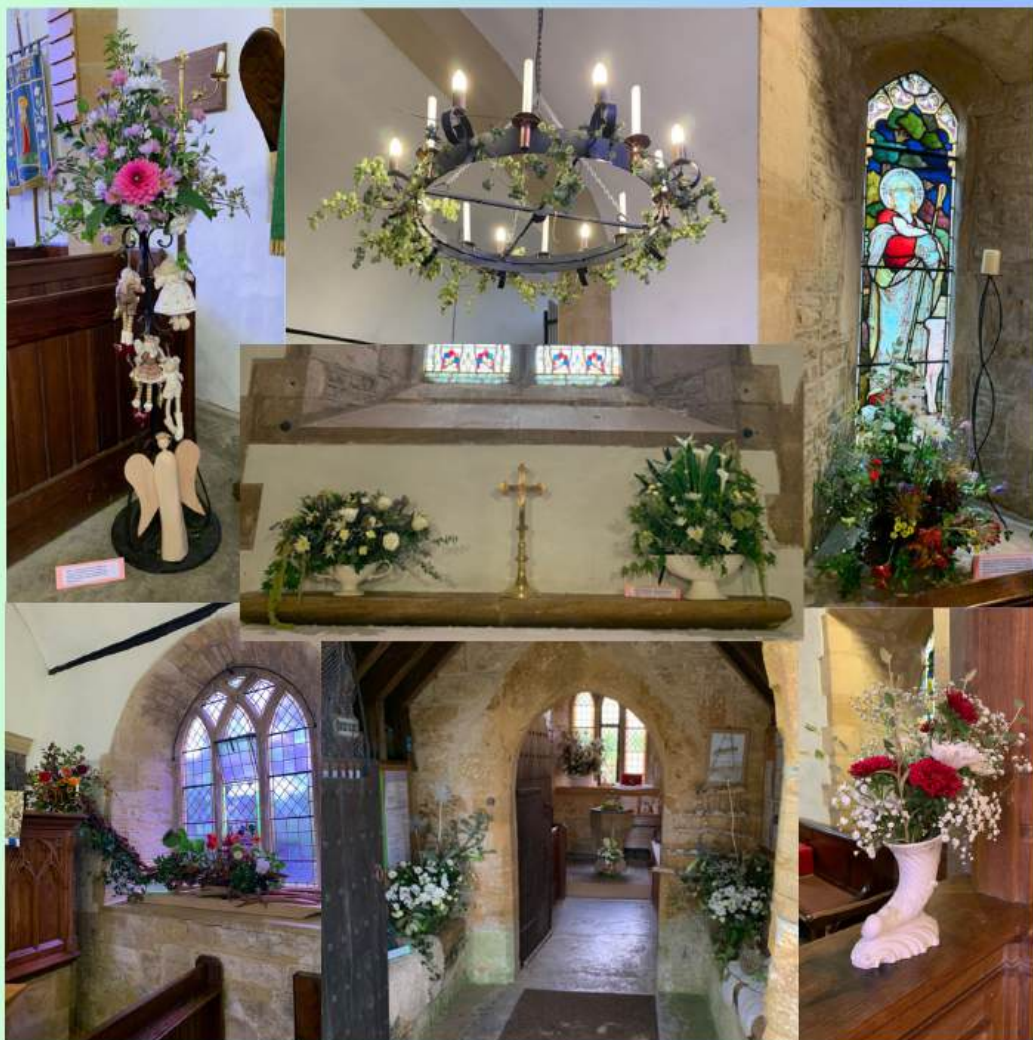
Neighbourhood Watch - Carron Richards - 07706647112
Caroline Gibson - 07767621804

Police CSO - Mike Bell - Dial 101 and ask for PCSO 7954 -
mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK

What you may have missed...

Lopen Festival of Flowers -

A huge thank you to everyone who participated in the 'angelic' Lopen Flower Festival, which raised £348 for the Church. To the amazing arrangement creators, some of which are shown here, the enthusiastic tea team, the cake makers, the stewards and of course everyone who donated-to and attended the event, both over the weekend itself, and in getting us across the starting line in the first place. THANK YOU!
The next one is in two years time - start prepping in the spring!



What you may have missed...

Annual Church Work Party - what always sounds like a contradiction in terms - Work and Party - proved to confuse or entice some 20 volunteers, armed with clippers through to tractors for our annual church greenery clean up, and a great job by one and all, a big thank you.

(We will be looking for another set of chain-gang volunteers in 2026, glad you all missed that in the small print, as you are all signed up!)



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All Saints Church

SERVICE DATES:

October Services:

Sunday 5th - Communion - 9.00am

Sunday 19th - Merriott Harvest Festival at ARK at Egwood - 11.30am

Sunday 26th - Lopen Harvest Festival & 16 Bells Choir - 11.00am

November Services:

Sunday 2nd - Communion - 9.00am

Sunday 9th - Remembrance Service - 9.00am

Sunday 16th - 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

Calling all Crafters

After last years incredible success, we are organising another craft fayre in Lopen on Saturday 29th November (from 1-4 pm), and we need your help please.

If you would like to make something to sell to raise funds for the church or to help at the event itself, please contact: Christine (07814 364990).

Last year we had a wonderful array of beautiful crafts, including candles, wood turning, pottery, cards, flowers, wreaths, knitted items, preservatives and even damson gin.

All seasonal crafts welcomed.

Thank you.

October 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 8th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Tuesday 14th	Just Women The Priests House, Muchelney David McLean	7.30pm Sunday School Room
Wednesday 22nd	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Monday 27th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All welcome
Friday 31st	TBC L'Open Arms Pop Up Pub	Look out for WhatsApp details



WINTER CLOTHING PLEA

Many thanks to all who donated summer clothing for RAFT (Refugee Aid From Taunton) recently. As October arrives I am now appealing to those who can pass on unwanted clean washable winter clothing for men, women, children and babies, all sizes, and any suitable winter footwear for all.

We always need blankets, sleeping bags, tents, large suitcases with wheels, new toiletries, baby and hygiene products. All such donations are gratefully received because every little helps enormously.

With grateful thanks,

Geraldine Downey, Merriott tel. 01460 271358

November 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...
Tuesday 11th	 REMEMBRANCE DAY Lest we forget	11.00am 11 th Day 11 th Month
Tuesday 11th	Just Women Peoples of Africa Tribes of Tanzania by Les Morton	7.30 pm Sunday School Room
Wednesday 12th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Monday 24th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00 pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
Wednesday 26th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, cake and a chat, all for a good cause @ £1
Friday 28th	TBC L'Open Arms POP-UP-PUB 7.30 pm Sunday School Room	Contact Mary Chapman 07942 689164
Saturday 29th 1.00-4.00pm Church & SSR	 Christmas Craft Fayre with 3.30pm Raffle Draw	 For contributions, tel: Christine 07814 364990

Lopen Brook Catchment Flood Group

Involving Kingstone, Allowenshay, Dinnington, Hinton St George, the Seavingtons & Lopen

With autumn fast approaching after an unusually dry summer and the rain returning, sharp showers revive flooding memories for the beginning of the year.

There is no doubt that climate change is changing rainfall patterns, with the increased intensity of storms being a particular concern for causing flooding not just near major watercourses, but anywhere water runs off the land. Flooding and its consequences affect us all in Lopen.



We can't do anything about the weather, but there are things we can all do to mitigate its consequences. That is what the purpose of the Lopen Brook Catchment Flood Group is. The aim is to bring together interested parties; householders, Parish Councils, landowners, farmers and local industry. Then, with the assistance and guidance of outside agencies such as Somerset Council (SC), The Farming & Wildlife advisory group (FWAG), Wessex Water (WXW) and the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) to assess our main risk areas, causes of the risk and how the risks can be reduced. As some of you will be aware, there has already been a preliminary meeting with FWAG and the SRA in attendance, which was very positive, but there is still time to get involved and more help is needed and welcomed so please do get in touch (see below).

Primary tasks for the Flood Group to undertake before a second meeting both within Lopen and further afield are:

- Critically, form a Core Group across the Catchment : This is a community-driven venture so we need a small number of people who are willing to commit to put in some time undertaking both the information gathering in their parishes and also meeting with the wider catchment reps to undertake any admin, research etc., and to prepare for further meetings. So if you'd like to be involved please contact as below

- Investigation starting points for marking on maps with photographic evidence where possible :
 - What are the key flooding issues identified within each community e.g. highways flooding, buildings/internal flooding, gardens/land/yards ?
 - Which areas of each village are worst affected by flooding?
 - Is it surface water, fluvial (river) or combined flooding?
 - Are there any issues that have had attempts at addressing them and what was the result? Can successful ones be replicated elsewhere with similar circumstances, or if they were unsuccessful, why, and what might be an alternative solution?
 - Extend connections with local farmers and landowners in the relevant areas and request their knowledge, input and ideas on the issues



Contacts:

Lisa Wilson: FloodGroup.Lopen@gmail.com (07587 211150)

Nick Jones: nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com (07909 490294)

More information and links are available on the Lopen village website floodpage (work in progress): <https://www.lopenvillage.org/general-clean>

All Saints Church, Church Street, Lopen

Christmas Craft Fayre

Handmade Products,
Gifts & Food!

1 - 4pm Saturday
29th November

Wood Turning, Dried
Flowers, Candles,
Preserves, Cards and
Wonderful Seasonal Gifts!

Mulled Wine & Refreshments

All money raised for the upkeep of All Saints Church, Lopen



Always look on the bright side...



Rainfall report 31st August 2025 - **Jeremy Rook**

Hurrah, the 6 months of drought seems to have broken with 32 mm of rain in the last week!

The period 1st March to 31st August this year has been the lowest 6 month period since I have been recording with 135 mm of rain – the second lowest was the same period in 1990 when I recorded 151 mm. In the same 6 months last year I recorded 391 mm so quite a difference.

There has been a lot of maize grown in this area this year. In UK conditions maize is regarded by farmers as something of a drought insurance – provided it has enough moisture to germinate. Early sown crops have looked good but some of the later sowings are poor due to the lack of rain since sowing. Early sown crops are often grown under what looks like plastic sheeting, but is in fact sheeting made of bio-degradable potato starch, which disappears as the Spring goes on.

In this country the whole of the maize plant is chopped up and made into maize silage, which is a first rate high energy feed for cows. In warmer countries like the USA or Southern France, only the cobs are stored and the maize grains are ground up to make maize meal, which can be fed to poultry as well as pigs and humans.

Maize flour is famously made into polenta in Italy - to me it tastes as I imagine wallpaper paste tastes. (*Ed - hence the invention of sauces and pesto!*)

The Americans call maize “corn” which is short for “Indian Corn” because the first settlers from Europe found the natives growing it. Cornflour is of course the refined and sieved maize meal.

A lot of the maize around Lopen will not be used to fill cows stomachs this Winter but will be used to satisfy the appetite of the digester at Frogmary Green.

Lopen History Casebook

CHAPTER 12 - WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE.

Why Water Street, Water Lane and Frog Street?

There was once an abundance of water in Lopen, but much of it is now gone - bar the occasional flood as mentioned earlier. Our main source of water is Lopen Brook. It was much larger at one time and operated two mills.

Lopen Mill was first used as a flour mill in the 13th century, and continued as such until it was mechanised and used as a flax mill in the 19th century.

Hinton Mill, which was on the corner of Hinton Road and Merriott Road, was used for some years as a flour mill for Hinton St. George, and likewise in the 19th century, briefly was a flax mill.

The brook must have been quite large and powerful to run two mills, and there were at least two smaller streams running into it. There were several smaller streams in the village, mostly coming from springs, many of which are still around.

It was likely that the Romans built their villa close to what became Hinton Mill because of the easy access to fresh running water.

One of the springs came from Seavington way, and joined the spring at Manor Farm to create a brook which went over Kitchen Lane, where local children caught minnows. Manor Farm had its own well and four watercress beds, which many people still remember. The spring stream was at some point blocked and diverted to go straight to the brook. There was also a stream on the other side of Water Street, which went behind the houses and there is still a culvert in Applehay which took the water away to join the brook.

With all that water around it, it's no wonder it got given its present name!

Frog Street is likely to have been called that as there was a large pond before the bend, which was always full of frogs!

There were several springs in Lopen creating streams, and the one which never seems to run dry, is the one in Rydon Lane. That also flows through gardens and into the brook. It can still get very wet down there! In the past the spring fed streams were used by farmers to keep their milk churn cool.

Before water was “on tap”, people relied on wells, which many folk had in their gardens. If they did not have access to one, they would use the village well. This was situated in Holloway in the bank on the right hand side, but is difficult to see. It had a wooden door on the front. There was not so much traffic then!

All this water was lost several years ago, when a farmer at Sockety dug a bore hole, and the water table dropped by several feet.

Joan Farris with thanks to Colin Cable and Ben Norton



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