

# LOPEN *Life*

February - March 2026



*Diary  
&  
Events*

*Church  
Street  
Origins*

ISSUE 21

# SECURE SELF STORAGE LOPEN



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



beehive  
self storage

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



Call now for more details

**01460  
243100**

or visit our website:  
[www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk](http://www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk)



# H.R.HODGE

TV & AUDIO SPECIALIST

South Petherton Somerset TA13 5BW



**Domestic Appliances**

**\*\*\*Now Available!\*\*\***



**Panasonic** SONOS

MITCHELL & BROWN

*Roberts*

**LOEWE.**

*morphy richards*

 **euronics**

**01460 240 645** [www.hrhodge.co.uk](http://www.hrhodge.co.uk)

## Edit this...

One of the challenges in putting a publication like this together is that as it's bimonthly, what should one put on the cover that spans two months? I always think of February and March as still winter, and whilst maybe not quite as fervently snowy as the cover depicts, it is often cold enough, so I ask for some latitude in the selected imagery! At least its shows a winter that makes one feel better than a wet grey February day! And if anyone has some local pictures they wish to see in print, please share!

To take away some of the chill and damp check out the activities going on at the ARK at Egwood, along with a broad range of diary happenings and we take a look at the origins of some of the areas of Lopen, starting with Church Street.

Keep warm, dry and healthy.

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



# AUTOHOUSE CARS

Looking to sell your car?

Talk to a real local market professional

- 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

Look out for the next meeting via the Whats App groups and the Lopen Life Diary - usually the last Monday of the month, everyone welcome.

## 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 reporting** [www.avonsomerset.police.UK/report](http://www.avonsomerset.police.UK/report)



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 10th  
Nov 2021

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



# All Saints Church

---

## SERVICE DATES:

### February Services:

Sunday 1st - Evensong Candlemas with Ad Hoc Choir - 6.00pm  
Sunday 15th - Communion - 10.30am

### March Services:

Sunday 1st - Communion - 9.00am  
Sunday 15th - All Age Mothering Sunday Service - 10.30am

Rev Bob and Julia Hicks 01460 76406  
bobhicks66@gmail.com  
julahicks1@gmail.com

Please check the Church Porch  
notice board for latest  
information

---

## YOUR STORY

### *Matters*

*Preserve Your Memories  
in a Beautiful Book*

Life Stories  
Ghostwriting  
Editing  
Design and Print

*No writing experience needed*

*Mandy Bloom Memoirs*

LOCAL WRITING & EDITORIAL SERVICES



# *What you may have missed...*

## **Brilliant Result for Lopen Craft Fayre**

Lopen had another amazing success at our Craft Fayre on the 29th of November. A wonderful selection of crafts were on display. Many of them made by Lopen residents or Lopen produce used in the preserves.

After some excellent advertising by Trevor Power we had a steady stream of people from several of our parishes who enjoyed purchasing Christmas gifts in great surroundings without the bother of an over heated over full department store or shopping mall!



Wonderful refreshments were available including an array of cakes, cream teas and delicious mulled wine.



*What you may have missed...*



Many thanks to Mary and Steve for organising the raffle again.

All the prizes have now been claimed and enjoyed.

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed crafts to sell, cakes, bought raffle books and gave their time on the day to help on a stall.

An incredible £2360 has been raised so far.

**Christine Hill**

## **WINTER CLOTHING PLEA**

Many thanks to all who donated clothing for RAFT (Refugee Aid From Taunton) recently. 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**

# February 2026 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
1st & 3rd Tuesdays	ARK Community Lunches Merriott Village Hall from 12.00	£6.00 for 2 courses Contact 01460 391974
2nd & 4th Tuesdays	ARK Soup & Social Merriott Village Hall 10.30am - 1.30pm	Free of charge
2nd & 4th Thursdays	Health Walks Meet 10.30 at ARK	Stretch those legs...
Tuesday 10th	Just Women Crewkerne In Bloom Presented by Mary Cooper	7.30pm Sunday School Room
Saturday 14th	Check out the ARK Ceilidh Event!	see poster...
Wednesday 18th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Monday 23rd	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
Friday 27th	   L'Open Arms Pop Up Pub CURRY NIGHT Some provided and BYO too!!	7.30pm Sunday school Room
Saturday 28th	SNOW DROP Planting In the Church Yard Please bring your own tools and any spare plants! 	2.00 pm

# March 2026 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Monday's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
1st & 3rd Tuesdays	ARK Community Lunches Merriott Village Hall from 12.00	£6.00 for 2 courses Contact 01460 391974
2nd & 4th Tuesdays	ARK Soup & Social Merriott Village Hall 10.30am - 1.30pm	Free of charge
2nd & 4th Thursdays	Health Walks Meet 10.30 am at ARK	Stretch those legs...
Tuesday 10th	Just Women Victorian Bath Presented by Terry Mitchell & AGM	7.30 pm in the SSR Contact Pauline Rook 240644
Wednesday 18th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, cake and a chat, all for a good cause @ £1
Friday 27th	L'Open Arms Pop Up Pub Jenny & Nikki's popular <b>BINGO NIGHT</b>	7.30pm Sunday School Room
Monday 30th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00 pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome



**SAVE THE DATES....**

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May - ARK Garden Fair

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September - Lopen OCTOBERFEST

Join Us for a  
**Ceilidh Evening**

*with Murphy's Lore at Merriott Village Hall*



**Music • Dance • Bar • Fun**

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February    £12.50**

**Doors Open 6.30pm Band from 7pm**

Booking via the QR code, ARK at Egwood  
website or call the office on 01460 391974





# ARK at Egwood

Changing lives within our community

We have a feeling that 2026 is going to be a good year!

We have lots of things coming up that you may wish to get involved with, not least our regular activities:

## **Monday's :**

Tai Chi with Jona 9.30am-10.30am: £5: Every week unless extreme weather conditions.

## **Tuesday's :**

Community Lunches in Merriott Village Hall: £6 for two courses: Doors open at 12pm for lunch at 12.30pm . Every Fortnight 3rd Feb, 17th Feb etc - Booking Essential, so please call the office on 01460 391974

Soup and Social in Merriott Village Hall. Come up for a bit of winter warmth, a chat and hot soup. 10.30am -1.30pm. Every Fortnight 10th Feb, 24th Feb etc - Just turn up - Free of charge

## **Thursday's:**

Health Walk from ARK every 2nd and 4th Thursday. Blow out those winter cobwebs! 10.30am start from the ARK field kitchen - a circular walk of approximately 1 hour, with refreshments upon return - dogs welcome.

## **Events:**

We are hosting a Ceilidh on Saturday 14th February in Merriott Village Hall; Music and dancing, with the band 'Murphy's Lore'. Doors open 6.30pm with dancing from 7pm. £12.50 per ticket, booking via [www.arkategwood.com](http://www.arkategwood.com) or please call the office.

## **Workshops:**

We also have a number of paid workshops coming up, where funds generated will enable us to support people at ARK. These range from flower arranging, wreath making, willow and cookery courses, so please keep an eye out on Facebook or visit our website for more information and to book.

## **Garden Fair - save the date**

We shall also be holding a Garden Fair on the morning of Saturday 16th May; if you are a keen gardener and are looking to split perennials or are growing seeds, then please think about doing a few extra for us to be able to sell on the day - we would be very grateful!

## **Volunteering:**

If you are thinking about volunteering for a local organisation, or belong to a group where you fundraise for local charitable causes, please consider ARK; we are friendly bunch who want to support as many people to improve their confidence and health and wellbeing.

Contact: Amanda Bell    [amanda@arkategwood.com](mailto:amanda@arkategwood.com)    01460 391974

# St. Margarets Hospice Care Charity

## **FEBRUARY 27th : Firewalk**

Fearless fundraisers will have the chance to test their limits at St Margaret's Hospice's Firewalk in Yeovil this February. Participants will walk barefoot over hot embers, raising funds for hospice services and proving that even the boldest of challenges can be overcome with courage and community spirit. Before facing the flames, each participant receives expert training from professional instructors who guide them through the mental preparation needed to conquer fear and embrace the moment. With friends, family and supporters cheering them on, it's an unforgettable evening of adrenaline and achievement.

Those seeking the ultimate test can combine this event with the New Year's Day Dip to earn the exclusive Fire & Ice Champion Medal, awarded to those who brave both the cold and the heat for hospice care.

**Location:** St Margaret's Hospice, Yeovil, BA20 2HU

**Time:** 6pm

**More information:** <https://www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/firewalk/>



## **MARCH 1st : Taunton Half Marathon**

This year, the Taunton Half Marathon is celebrating its 40th anniversary! As the headline charity partner, St Margaret's Hospice is offering charity places to eager runners to the now sold out event! Join the hospice team, enjoy the scenic Somerset route, and help raise vital funds for local hospice care.

**Location:** Taunton

**More information:** <https://www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/taunton-half-marathon/>

## **MARCH 29th : Yeovil Half Marathon**

The Yeovil Half Marathon is welcoming runners of all abilities with its half marathon, 10K, and kids' Mini Mile! This year, runners can fundraise for St Margaret's Hospice, and support their mission of providing specialist, compassionate care to people facing life-limiting illness.

**Location:** Yeovil

**More information:** <https://www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/yeovil-half-marathon/>

# Always look on the bright side...



## Rainfall report 13th January 2026 - Jeremy Rook

I recorded 122mm in November 2025 and 151 mm in December

My Long Term Average (LTA) for those 2 months together is 208mm so you can see that rainfall was about 31% above average - it certainly felt that way!

There were only 6 days in November when I did not record any rain, and in December it rained practically every day until the 22nd, but then thankfully kept dry over the Christmas period.

We have had 46mm in January to date so groundwater levels are now well topped up!

For the calendar year 2025 we had a total of 836mm against the LTA of 900mm. This works out at 93% of our yearly LTA. This shows how averages can be deceptive - since it hides the severe Spring and Summer drought, behind wet Winter months.

Keep in contact: [floodgroup.lopen@gmail.com](mailto:floodgroup.lopen@gmail.com)



## 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.

# Lopen History Casebook

## CHAPTER 14 - VILLAGE ORIGINS

### CHURCH STREET

The Roman road from Merriot to the Fosse Way at Snapant had two roads off it. One was Higher Street, now Church Street, and the other was Frog Street.

Higher Street was seen to be the more important, as it contained the Church and probably the Manor House.

The road turns off Holloway at what is known as Cross Tree. This is because the remains of the old village cross are found at the base of the oak tree, and was wider at the top to accommodate the village Fair which was held here from 1201 to 1882. When it moved to the main road at Lopen Head (formerly White Cross).

The village stocks were sited here, and maybe where Lord Poulett put Cardinal Wolsey (then a vicar near Yeovil) in them for being drunk and disorderly!

Cross Tree House may have been originally built in the C18th, but was much altered in the C19th. It had a large orchard and land which was farmed and was lived in by the vicar John Templeman from 1783 to 1835, and then his son.

Next to Cross Tree House is the Crown Inn. This was built in 1840, and closed in 1950. It boasted a large garden, a skittle alley and a room where dances were held. In a cottage opposite, there was a bicycle repairer.

Next door to the the Crown is now Oswalds. This, like the other houses here has a long garden as part of the original field plan. Oswalds had two cottages along side it, which were probably worker's cottages for Lopen Farm. These were demolished in the last century, but the front wall with gate in is still there.

The Cottage along side them is Bailiff's, which did not house a bailiff, but the groom for the horses at Lopen. House.



## Lopen History Casebook continued



Lopen Farm House opposite, belonged to one of the largest farms in the village, it was built in the C19th but is attached to a much older barn.

Ina's House round the corner was built by the Denman family and they lived there for many years. One of the Denmans also owned the Flax works. Ina was an important Saxon King, but as far as we know never visited Lopen.

Opposite the house is Pound Cottage. This is the site of the village pound where stray animals could be kept. It may have been in this area that the Manor House was built, as there is written evidence of a large complex of a house and outbuildings. No other evidence has been found of it apart from some earthworks.

Lopen House was built in the C19th for Mr Templeman (the Vicars brother) who also owned the Flax factory before the Denmans. It is said that he built the tower so that he could spy on the workers at the mill!

The church was probably founded around 1209, but very little of the original remains. Much work was done in the C19th, including virtual rebuilding of the West end. What is now the Sunday School Room was converted from two cottages belonging to Church farm in the 1880's, and was given in trust by Lord Poulett to the Church and Village. The Bier house opposite the Sunday School Room was built to hold the village bier, which carried the coffins into the church.

So, you can still see much of the origins of Lopen if you know where to look.

**JOAN FARRIS**



 **hewins**  
OAK

PROUDLY  
SUPPLYING



The Nest  
an Ashmore brand