

A photograph of a forest path covered in bluebells. The path is a narrow, dirt trail that winds through a dense forest. The ground is covered with a thick carpet of small, purple-blue flowers (bluebells) and green foliage. The trees are tall and their branches are covered in vibrant green leaves, creating a canopy overhead. Sunlight filters through the leaves, casting dappled light on the path. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Christ Church Hilderstone
PARISH MAGAZINE

A celebration of village life

Spring Edition 2022

WHAT'S ON:

MARCH:

Tuesday 8 th	W.I. 'Little Acorns'	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 19 th	Churchyard Tidy-up	10am – 12 noon	Christ Church
Sunday 20 th	March Equinox – start of Spring		
Saturday 26 th	Monthly Art & Craft Market	9.30am – 1.30pm	Village Hall
	Pop-up Pub & Indian Street Food	5pm – 10pm	Village Hall
Sunday 27 th	Mothering Sunday Special family service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church

APRIL:

Sunday 10 th	Palm Sunday	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Tuesday 12 th	W.I. 'VAD Nurses in WWI'	7.30pm	Village Hall
Wednesday 13 th	Village Hall Holiday Club	9am – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 16 th	Churchyard Tidy-up	10am - 12 noon	Christ Church
Sunday 17 th	Easter Sunday Special family service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Saturday 30 th	Monthly Art & Craft Market	9.30am – 1.30pm	Village Hall
	Charity Event: A Child of Mine	2pm – 4pm	Village Hall
	Pop-Up Pub	5pm – 10pm	Village Hall
	With Fish & Chip van		

MAY:

Tues 10 th	W.I. AGM & Talk by Jean Jones	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 st	Churchyard Tidy-up	10am – 12 noon	Christ Church
Saturday 28 th	Monthly Art & Craft Market	9.30am – 1.30pm	Village Hall
	Charity Event: TBC	2pm – 4pm	Village Hall
	Pop-up Pub	5pm – 10pm	Village Hall
	With Wood-fired Pizzas		

Editor's Letter



From the moment we start planning for each issue of the Parish Magazine, to the dreaded deadline date, we are always somewhat anxious that we will not have sufficient material to fill the issue. Of course, with this issue, as with all the previous magazines, we need not have worried; indeed, we have sadly had to omit some articles due to lack of space!

It may seem like Christmas was a long time ago, but we just had to report back on the magnificent Panto, the spectacular Christmas Tree Festival and, of course, Santa's special trip to the Youth Club (along with his beloved reindeer). As always, our village put on a fabulous programme of events throughout the festive period, for all ages to enjoy – and looking at the write-ups, enjoy it they did. It was regrettable that Covid prevented Christ Church holding its popular Crib Service, but I have no doubt that 2022 will more than make up for it.

This coming year, in contrast to the previous two years under Covid, promises to be much busier, not least with Her Majesty's Jubilee celebrations in early June. The village will, of course, do her proud, with plans for an evening event at the Village Hall on Saturday 4th June, followed by a Celebratory Community Service at Christ Church and the National Lunch event at the Village Hall on Sunday 5th. So much to look forward to.

Finally, I could not close this letter without saying a sincere 'thank-you' to so many friends in the village, and its wider community, for all your kind thoughts, prayers and well-wishes following our accident in December. Much is written, I know, about the strength of community spirit in Hilderstone, but having seen just how restorative and supportive it can be, I am truly grateful to live in this lovely rural village we all call home.

Enjoy your Easter – all the beauty of Spring (and all those Easter Eggs!).

SAVE THE DATES:

An event is only successful if you take part, so please join in and show your support of these two very special events in 2022:



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Celebration Weekend

Saturday/Sunday 4 & 5th June

Events to include:

- BBQ & Bar at the Village Hall – Saturday 4th June
 - Celebration Service at Christ Church – Sunday 5th June
 - The Big Jubilee Lunch at the Village Hall – Sunday 5th June
-

Christ Church - Scarecrow Weekend

Saturday/Sunday 2nd & 3rd July

Back by popular demand, our friendly Scarecrows are making a comeback following Covid! We look forward to seeing all your wonderful creations popping up all around the village and keeping this family event alive in Hilderstone. Don't forget, there will be prizes for the best on show!

Help us to make this a wonderful village event by entering your scarecrows in the competition. Details to follow in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.



Hilderstone Parish Council

Hilderstone Parish Council would like to remind residents to cut back their hedges that encroach on public paths. This ensures pedestrians can use the paths safely and keeps the village looking well cared for.

We have secured a new contractor, Trent Grounds Maintenance, along with the continued support from W H Holmes and Sue James, to carry out the necessary works around the village. We would like to thank Bill Holmes and Sue James for their hard work for the village.

The areas that Hilderstone Parish Council are responsible for are as follows:

- Eastholme/Whitesytc h island
- Severn Trent Corner
- Grass verge at the railings
- Roebuck Hill
- Small area in Dingle Lane
- Village Green
- Roebuck Flowerbeds
- Various flower boxes around the village

Anything not on the above list is the responsibility of Stafford County Council and you can report any maintenance on their website <https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk/web/reportfault>

Organic Milk on our Doorstep

When a satisfied customer describes your milk as ‘a glass of heaven’ then you know you are on to a winner. And what makes it even better, is this milk is right on our doorstep! The Milk Shed, which opened in February, is located on the Organic Cotwalton Farm and is open from 8am – 7.30pm, seven days a week. Offering fresh pasteurised organic milk from its Pedigree herd through a vending machine in its Milk Shed, along with fresh eggs, it is proving a big hit with the locals. You can either take your own bottle or purchase a reusable glass bottle. All payments are by card only but you not only get wonderfully fresh produce, but are supporting a small family farm too.

Contact: Tel. 07986 436682 or Facebook Page - ‘CotwaltonOrganicDairy’.

Hilderstone Branch Meetings

Dates for your Diaries:

- Tues 8th March 'Little Acorns' Mike Taylor (oak furniture making)
- Tues. 12th April 'VAD Nurses in WW1' Marian Armstrong
- Tues. 10th May AGM & Talk by Jean Jones on her WI experience in Canada.
- Tues. 14th June 'Corn Dolleys' plus a celebration of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

We meet on 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm, Village Hall. *For more information, please contact Pat Saul (President) - Tel: 01785 812580.*



(LEFT): Here are two inspirational young ladies of Hilderstone, Isabella Evans (6) and Emily Evans (4), litter picking in the lanes. What a wonderful job they are doing. Isabella and Emily are also regular contributors to the magazine with their lovely pictures.

Your Village Hall

Now that we're moving out of the pandemic's most onerous restrictions, village life can start to expand again. At the Village Hall, we continue to do all we can to support and improve the experience of those in our community.

Now in its second successful year, our ever-popular '**Pop-Up Pub**' continues on the last Saturday of every month from 17:00 onwards. We've put on an assortment of events aimed at all ages, including a variety of outside take-away caterers for themed food nights (from Greek to German) which have proven popular with local families. We continue this theme over the coming months – why travel to India, Italy or your nearest seaside resort when it is here on your doorstep (or at least the food is)?!

- March 26 - Indian Street Food
- April 30 - Fish and Chip Van
- May 28 - Wood Fired Pizza

The last Saturday of each month also sees the monthly **Arts and Crafts Market**. We continue to attract new stalls and after the April market, there'll be an Afternoon Tea hosted by local Stafford-based charity 'A Child of Mine', which supports bereaved parents and families as well as those who have lost a baby during pregnancy. We want to continue to offer, without payment, the hall to local charities in the time between markets and Pop-Up Pubs to help them raise funds. If you know of a local charity that might want to use the hall at that time, please let us know.

We also continue to improve the hall and March will see the parquet floor being restored and an audio-visual system being installed to improve our in-house facilities. This will help us to stage Film Nights again as well as developing other events. This new audio-visual system will be another added attraction for hirers too.

On the subject of events, two 'traditional' village events should be back this year - Scarecrow Weekend and the Village Dinner. We're considering moving June's pub to the first weekend in July to coincide with Scarecrow

Weekend and we're already talking to Joan Carr about how to bring the Village Dinner back to the Village Hall.

Other upcoming events include the Queen's Jubilee on the first weekend in June. There'll be a barbecue and bar at the hall on the Saturday night and we'll be joining in with the National Lunch on the Sunday. The Big Village Party will be back on Saturday 30 July and we've already re-booked The Travelling Taverna for the afternoon/evening. Later in the year, in September, we'll be holding a 'Roaring Twenties' evening.

So, as you see, life at your Village Hall, is busy, with events throughout the year which, we hope, will bring a real benefit (and much enjoyment) to you all. We hope to see you at some of these events. To join our mailing list, send an email to timhandley@btinternet.com.

VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

November:

Ball: 59 £100
24 £ 50
10 £ 25
64 £ 10
62 £ 10

December:

Ball: 82 £100
75 £ 75
4 £ 50
15 £ 40
83 £ 30
23 £ 25
36 £ 20
35 £ 20
46 £ 10
42 £ 10

January 2022:

Ball: 87 £100
40 £ 50
25 £ 25
82 £ 10
30 £ 10

Lottery winners are published each month on the Village Hall Website and on the noticeboard in the hall also. Interested in joining the Village Hall Lottery? Email: hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com or visit the website for an application form (www.hilderstonevillagehall.com).



Spring Word Search

B	I	B	I	R	D	S	A	Y	T	C	C	F	O	Q
E	A	P	O	W	E	E	P	E	U	A	H	S	T	Q
B	R	Z	G	E	F	A	O	L	L	L	E	I	E	B
H	B	D	B	N	E	S	T	L	I	O	U	S	C	U
E	L	E	C	R	A	T	I	O	P	N	O	A	O	G
D	U	R	S	U	P	E	R	W	S	R	G	X	R	B
G	E	A	M	S	J	R	U	U	M	E	K	E	W	U
E	B	G	S	N	B	V	T	I	N	Q	E	U	I	T
H	E	D	E	O	G	A	R	D	E	N	T	A	O	T
O	L	E	G	W	E	P	A	L	A	M	B	L	U	E
G	L	O	G	D	U	F	I	E	P	E	A	R	Z	R
S	S	A	S	R	F	B	R	S	R	E	W	O	L	F
Y	B	C	R	O	C	U	S	A	I	L	I	A	C	L
E	M	R	D	P	O	T	R	U	L	B	U	N	N	Y
L	A	I	T	S	B	X	P	C	H	I	C	K	S	E
Y	L	C	A	T	K	I	N	S	T	R	E	A	V	Z

Lambs
Snowdrops
Catkins
Butterfly
Bluebells
Yellow
Green
Blue
Primrose
Daffodil

Tulips
Eggs
Nest
Spring
Birds
Crocus
Butterfly
Bees
Chicks
Flowers

Bunny
April
Easter
Hedgehogs
Garden



Hilderstone Village Hall Youth Club



The children have been busy since the last magazine. They had their Christmas special when Santa and the reindeer visited. They also took part in the Christmas Tree Competition at the church and were so pleased when they won! So thank you to

the villagers who voted for their tree, which they had fun decorating with their baubles.

We have lots of plans for the spring: first of all, we want to get our bug hotel sorted again, now that the tree works at the Village Hall have been completed; we also have plans to begin planting around the hall to start off our gardening project; and finally, as a Youth Club, we love to be part of the community, so we will be helping with the church when we can.

If your child is interested in joining our youth club please contact Debbie on 07989130014 for information.

*ABOVE: Father Christmas and his reindeer dropped by the Youth Club to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.
RIGHT: the Youth Club Christmas Tree won 1st Prize at the Christmas Tree Festival at Christ Church.*



Hilderstone Village Hall Holiday Club

Following the success of the holiday clubs last year, we decided to run a holiday club in February Half Term, which had an 'under the sea' theme. The children had great fun creating lots of crafts and playing with their friends. They loved making the sensory jars.

We will be running a holiday club on both Wednesdays of the Easter Holiday and also the Wednesday of the May Half Term.

Dates are: 13th April 20th April 1st June

More information will follow nearer the time on our Facebook pages.

If you wish to book your child on or you would like more information, please contact Debbie on 07989130014 or debs0987@live.co.uk.

Spring watch for Children: Did you know:

- After the March equinox, countries above the equator line (like the UK) are tilted towards the sun. As a result, these countries get more hours of daylight and warmer temperatures. The March equinox takes place on Sunday 20th March 2022.
- Over half the world's population of bluebells live in the UK, and in spring, they're out in full force!
- Only 1 in 50 frogspawn will live to adulthood – that's why there are so many of them in your pond!



Hot Cross Buns

Nothing says Easter like Hot Cross Buns, dripping in butter! What better way to celebrate Easter than with a little home baking?

Ingredients

500g strong bread flour, plus
a little extra for dusting
7g sachet of dried yeast
2 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt

60g mixed peel
75g caster sugar
250ml milk
170g sultanas
zest of two small oranges

For the cross piping

75g plain flour
1 tbsp caster sugar

For the glaze

2 tbsp caster sugar



Method

- Sift the bread flour, caster sugar and salt together in a bowl then mix in the yeast. In a jug, mix the milk with 65ml warm water (to make 315ml total). Gradually add the liquid and mix to achieve a pliable dough. Lightly flour a work surface then tip out the dough and knead for 5-6 mins until smooth and elastic.
- Carefully mix the peel, orange zest, sultanas and ground cinnamon into the dough and make sure they are evenly distributed. Then leave to rise in the bowl for an hour.
- Lightly grease a large baking sheet and then pull off 85g pieces of the dough and make them into balls. Place the balls onto the baking sheet, evenly spaced apart and allow to prove for another hour.
- Preheat the oven to gas 8, 230°C, fan 210°C.
- Make the flour piping by combining the plain flour, tablespoon of caster sugar and 80ml of water and blend until the mixture is smooth.

Transfer to a piping bag and with a small plain nozzle and pipe a cross over the top of the buns when they are ready for the oven.

- Bake the buns for 15 mins at 230°C then turn the oven down to gas 6, 200°C, fan 180°C, cover with foil and bake for a further 10 mins.
- While the buns are cooking, heat 2 tbsp of water and sugar for the glaze until all the sugar is dissolved. Brush over the buns when they are just out of the oven.
- Allow to cool for 10-15 mins and serve warm. The buns can also be sliced in half, toasted and served with butter.

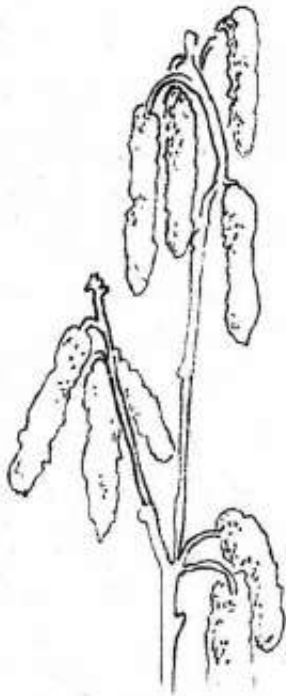
Spring Sudoku: "flower bud".

Fill in the grid with the letters F, L, O, W, E, R, B, U & D, making sure no letter is repeated in every row, every column and within each mini grid.

d		e	f	w			b
	b	u	e	d		w	f
o				b	u		d
l	e		o		w		
f	o	r	d	e		u	l
u	w		l		f		
b				o	r		e
	r	o	b	l		f	w
w		l	u	f			r

A Springtime Walk

'If Winter comes can Spring be far behind'...

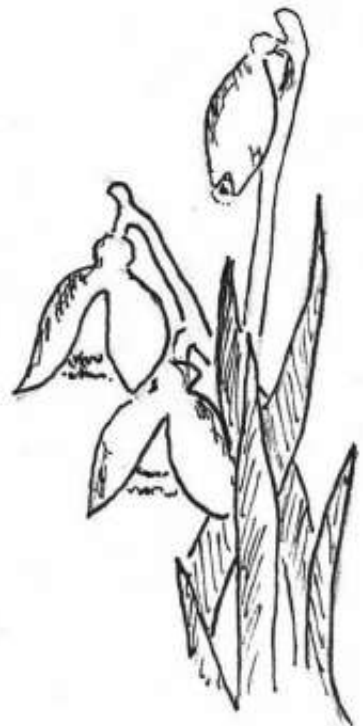


So wrote the poet Shelley in the late 18th Century. These past few days have been very chill in Hilderstone, and, as I write, black cumulus clouds carry a warning of storms, or even snow, to come. I am cheered however by the sight of snowdrops speckling, with their own special snow, the bare corners of our gardens and the bank opposite Christ Church.

Strolling at a leisurely pace along Whitestych Lane, I was delighted to see catkins drifting from their twigs (as a child I called them Lambs

Tails). Hedgerows are beginning to bud and soon our walks will be green-hedged, and lambs will bleat from the fields.

It gives us all such pleasure to see the primroses in our gardens and the colourful polyanthus, I spotted purple crocus this morning, there are miniature daffodils budding in sheltered corners. I am left with a feeling of confidence that





Spring, despite the glum weather warnings, is offering her promising symbols of a new Season waiting for us.

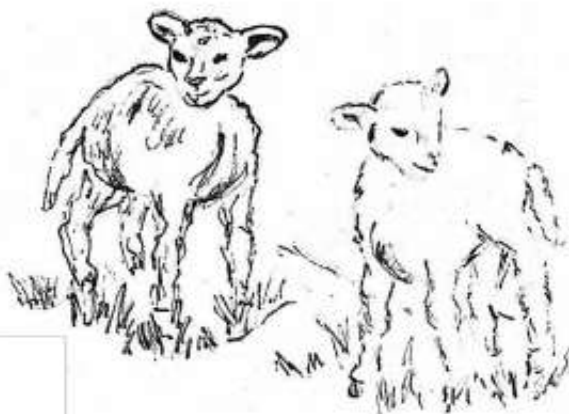
A friend and I were walking through woodland recently and paused to look through the trees at a view of hills and a misted horizon; we were aware of a soft noise ...like a shuffling in a pile of leaves and twigs half hidden near a clump of bushes. We witnessed a special scene... a gentle inquisitive nose was pushing the brown leaves

aside as a Hedgehog emerged from his Winter Hide a way.

Oh yes Shelley was right! Spring can't be far behind.

I wish you all happy and observant walks this coming Eastertide.

Marian Baldwin



PREVIOUS PAGE:

TOP RIGHT: Spring Catkins

BOTTOM LEFT: Snowdrops.

THIS PAGE:

TOP LEFT: an inquisitive Hedgehog.

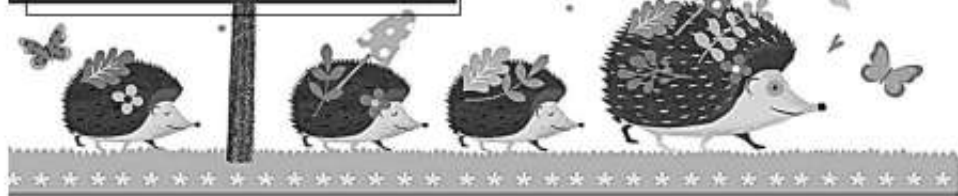
BOTTOM RIGHT: Spring Lambs.

Wildlife in Spring

The best way to attract more wildlife into your garden is to create habitats where wildlife can feed, sleep and hibernate eg digging a pond, growing plants for bees, pollinators and insects and making a log pile or a Bug Hotel to give them shelter – just “Bee Creative”!!



Hedgehogs: leave out water & meat based dog/cat food for hedgehogs that have come out of hibernation as they will be hungry. Leave food out from dusk & cover or discard any that's left over in the morning.



Grow purple flowers for bees as they can see the colour purple more clearly than any other colour. Here are some of the best plants for bees:



Lavender, Alliums, Buddleia, Catmint, Bluebells, Crab Apple, Crocus, Flowering Cherry, Forget-Me-Not, Hawthorn, Primrose, Pulmonaria, Rhododendron, Rosemary, Campanula, Foxglove, Ivy, Verbena Bonariensis, Heather, Eryngium, Penstemon, Aster, Cornflower, Scabious, Sedum and Dahlia (single-flowering).

Don't forget to keep feeding the birds, leaving a variety of protein and fat rich foods for them every day.

Wash out/sterilise bird baths and trays. Clean empty nest boxes.

Hedgehog

The leaves were crumpled
And brown, scattered deeply
Over twigs and tree roots

We would have passed by,
But paused to listen to
Shuffling sounds close by.

The leaves were moving
As patiently we watched
Then observed, a hedgehog...

Snouting from his Winter
Hide-away security.
Little eyes peered from sleep.

We watched a spiked ball
Emerge from the brown leaves,
Nosing scents of another Spring.

Panto comes to Hilderstone!



When we first began the project, knowing that it was a step away from the normal concert, I was excited, but also interested to see how the idea of a Village Panto would be received.

I was very pleased with the arrival of some new faces who wanted to take part, as well as the usual crew, and as the project began to take shape the rehearsals became very enjoyable and I knew all would be ok.

The whole production was done in-house, with costumes, sound cues and lighting cues being worked on and sorted by cast members. Then of course with opening night nearly upon us, we had the news that two of our wonderful cast would be unable to perform, leaving the rest of the company having to mix and match parts to make sure it all happened. At one stage, I think we all stood around thinking it wasn't possible to recast and re-rehearse in ten days. But of course it did happen, and the support from the village and the wider community was so welcome. 'The show must go on' attitude from the company was quite astounding.

The Panto should hopefully be repeated this year if there are enough people willing to take part and make it happen. I'm fully supportive of more Arts and Theatre events in our community. It gives people an opportunity to

meet new friends, and in an enjoyable environment be part of fund-raising for our community and linked projects.

I will insist on our two cast members who were unable to take part, being present in Panto '22!

Thank you to everyone involved, and to those who supported the event.

Andy Reiss.

As one of the Panto members who had to pull out at the 11th Hour, much to my great disappointment, I had very mixed feelings about attending the Panto as a member of the audience but along I went and had the most fabulous time! Perhaps there is the child in us all, who just can't resist the opportunity to shout the immortal words (at the top of their lungs) 'Open Sesame' or 'He's behind you'. Yes, nothing compares to Panto!

As Andy says, there was a major change in casting within days of the show being performed yet, undeterred, the team put on a magnificent show: it was a massive hit, with both parents (and I suspect grandparents) and children alike. Panto at its very best, with plenty of unscripted laughter thrown in for good measure.

Panto brings out the best in us all, but some surprises also: who would have thought we had such convincing villains in the village, not to mention would-be Panto dames and comic law-enforcers? But, give them a wig, moustache, make-up and props, and you'll be amazed what you end up with. Long live Panto I say!



OPPOSITE: the cast of Aladdin about to go on stage. ABOVE: the original cast.

Hilderstone Village Hall Burns Night

The skirl of the bagpipes could be heard echoing around Hilderstone on the 22nd January, as the village hall hosted its inaugural Burns Supper. For those unfamiliar with the tradition, Burns Night is the opportunity to celebrate the birth, life and works of Robert Burns; Scotland's most famous poet. It's generally a good excuse to meet up and socialise on a cold winter's evening.

The format of the evening is a stereotypically Scottish affair; with bagpipes, a hearty three course meal, singing (Auld Lang Syne – it's not just for New Year!), ceilidh dancing and the odd recital of the bard's work, with plenty of whisky to wash it all



ABOVE: Martin pipes in the revellers outside the hall.

down. Donning tartan was optional but much appreciated.

The organising of the evening and especially ensuring that the haggis, neaps and tatties were piping hot, was a tremendous team effort. We are very grateful for the support of the Village Hall Committee in ensuring that this 'experimental' first attempt was so successful, and even more fortunate to have had so many of the

committee members' family, friends and loved ones also 'willingly' helping-out. A special thank-you to Julia-Claire Handley for stepping in at the last minute to do the Immortal Memory speech, and to John Gray for his excellent rendition of the Selkirk Grace.

If the disco at the end of the evening was anything to go by, then everyone clearly had a good time and who would have thought that the Bay City Rollers would still be such a floor filler 50 years on!

Martin & Sam Shaw

Christchurch Christmas tree festival

A truly amazing sight greeted visitors to Christ church's first Christmas Tree Festival held on December the 18/19 last year. A total of 17 real Christmas trees, adorned with lights, had all been wonderfully and creatively dressed.

Many had homemade decorations made from folded paper, knitted ornaments or even festive characters made using old keys as the basic structure. Other trees were themed: Emma Bridgewater's with its specially produced miniature mugs and jugs and hand-blown baubles; the Village Hall's, which used Chinese-inspired decorations, advertising the village panto "Aladdin"; whilst Hammond's garage used spark plugs and vehicle baubles; and of course, those trees dripping with tinsel, baubles, beads, bells, Santas, and all things that glitter.

All those who visited were encouraged to participate in a public vote for the best dressed tree in the festival, resulting in first position being awarded to the Hilderstone village Youth Groups tree, run by Debbie and Sam, whose tree had individually created decorations showing the children's artistic abilities.

Unfortunately, due to covid restrictions, it was deemed best not to serve mulled wine and mince pies, but children (and some adults) who visited were able to participate in decorating their own Christmas charactered bauble at the craft table.

Members of Christ Church PCC would like to send an enormous message of thanks to all those who sponsored the trees (which are now planted in the churchyard) and to those who made very generous donations, all of which are for the Access For All Fund. We would like to thank Margaret and Robin from Mount Nurseries, who supplied the trees and donated the church's Christmas tree and all those who came and saw the trees in their full glory, both during the event and their enhancement of the church services in December.

Simon Shaw.

A note for your diary: - This year's Christmas tree festival will be on 10th/ 11th December 2022



Church Matters: Services at Christ Church

Easter is an important celebration for Christians and several special family services take place during the Spring period. We welcome families to all our services, but we extend a special invitation to Easter, Mothering Sunday and Father's Day to all ages, but especially young families in our community.

6 th March	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Linda Lucking
13 th March	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Brian Whittaker
20 th March	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Alan Betts
27 th March	MOTHERING SUNDAY – Family Service	
	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd John Hall
3 rd April	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd David Howard
10 th April	PALM SUNDAY	
	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Linda Lucking
17 th April	EASTER DAY – Family Service	
	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Gerald Gardiner
24 th April	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd John Sterling
1st May	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Gerald Gardiner
8 th May	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd David Howard
15 th May	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd John Sterling
22 nd May	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Graham Fowell
26th May	Thursday - ASCENSION Christ Church	Details to follow
29 th May	11.15am Christ Church United Service at Hilderstone	Rev'd David Howard
5 th June	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Graham Fowell
12 th June	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd John Sterling
19 th June	FATHER'S DAY – Family Service	
	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Graham Fowell
26 th June	11.15am Christ Church	Rev'd Graham Fowell

Church Matters: A Letter from the Rural Dean

Do you know what a “Lenten lily” is? It’s actually a daffodil – and, as I write, in our garden, just like yours, ours are springing up fast. It’s a lovely time of year, as the worst bits of winter are over (hopefully) and we look forwards, not just to longer days, but some warmer ones as well.

So Spring is associated with Lent. That’s what Lent is really all about – a season of new beginnings. I used to dislike Lent as a child, because I always thought it was negative, associated with giving things up. But that’s because I misunderstood the connotations. Just like the need to prune a rose, the point about giving things up is to make room for healthy new growth

All of us can feel weighed down, especially after two years of Covid depredations. We can have bad memories, feelings of guilt, regrets and the like. But the truth is that we have a Lord who wishes us to feel set free of all of that. In St Mark’s gospel we read ‘Jesus said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”’ I am always reminded of the Collect for purity we pray in Church: purity that starts our Communion services “...cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit.” It’s not about our needing to scrub our souls clean; rather it’s about allowing God to inbreathe good things to replace the negative ones.

So “Happy New start for Lent”. It’s about new beginnings and new opportunities. May it bring you light, hope and healthy new growth.

A PRAYER FOR LENT

Holy God, our lives are laid open before you:
rescue us from the chaos of sin
and through the death of your Son
bring us healing and make us whole
in Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen.

Church Matters: What is a House for Duty?

House for Duty – juggling a part-time post with full-time demands.

In our previous magazine issue, we have discussed what it means for Christ Church to be in Interregnum; a church without a priest. The church, to all intents and purposes, continues to maintain much of the everyday running of the church, and undertakes Sunday services, alongside weddings, baptisms and funerals, with the support of visiting clergy. This is only a temporary situation however; it is the wish of every parish to have a priest and our Benefice (which is St Nicholas in Fulford and Christ Church Hilderstone) is no exception.

Our new Incumbent will not be a full-time priest; as with the Rev'd Marion Reynolds, the situation on offer in our Benefice is a 'House for Duty' and this move from full-time Incumbent to 'House for Duty' is not unusual. Indeed, in recent years the Church of England has seen a marked increase in the number of posts for House for Duty. So how does the reality of this post differ from our expectations of a priest?

Whilst it may differ slightly from one Diocese to another, a House for Duty chiefly requires the priest to officiate at Sunday services, plus 2 full days a week (approximately 20 hours a week). This means one full day at Hilderstone, and a second day at Fulford, in addition to our usual Sunday services. What exactly the priest would do during that full working day, depends on what is asked of them by their parishioners – for example, attendance at PCC meetings, regular meetings with the Churchwardens, officiating at services in the local retirement home, or forging links with the local Church school. This does, of course, give them little time to attend village events or visit the sick or other traditional roles a priest would be expected to fulfil.

It is little wonder then that for some this is seen as a Church, strapped for cash, getting a cheaper alternative to conventional, stipendiary ministry;

rather than getting paid, they are given a house in lieu of salary. For others, however, it offers many benefits, especially to small rural communities, who do not require a full-time cleric and the cost associated with such a post. It can also be an attractive proposition to a priest who does not wish to continue with full-time employment but welcomes the flexibility and freedom from much of the bureaucracy a traditional role of Vicar brings with it!

This is the crux of the matter: there is much confusion within parishes throughout the land as to what *exactly* they are getting with a House for Duty. Just like the Bobby on the Beat, the Vicar is expected to be all things to all people, visible and 'on call' 24 hours a day. Expectations, therefore, have to be managed, even before the parish starts the long process of advertising for a new Incumbent.



ABOVE: Our modern family-sized Vicarage is located in Fulford.

"I wonder whether those parishes that are advertising are counting on the idea that, once in place, their priest will actually work pretty much full time. Perhaps the people of those parishes are not really aware of what they are getting, and not getting", wrote *the Rev'd Ron Wood, house-for-duty Assistant Priest in the Camelot Parishes, in the diocese of Bath & Wells in 2013.*

The problem is that a benefice can be set in its ways and to be thrown into the unknown is both unsettling and all-too-often unwelcome. We are creatures of habit after all and regular diary commitments can mean co-ordinating with parishioners, funeral directors, wedding groups etc can be a challenge when you only have a set number of days in which you are meant to be working (say Monday & Tuesday). Trying to co-ordinate meetings, including wedding couples, Funeral Directors etc within these working days can be difficult, if not impossible. Furthermore, if a funeral has taken up a day, or more, with visits to the bereaved and planning, does

the House for Duty Incumbent receive time off in lieu? All too often not if their parishioners have any say. They expect the priest to do whatever else they do and be where they normally are. As far as their parishioners are concerned, funerals are 'as well as', not 'instead of' the regular duties of the post.

The regular duties include working with groups such as the PCCs. As with Interregnum, Churchwardens find themselves dealing with the admin. side of the parishes, but for the PCC to discuss the real, spiritual side of things, such as patterns of worship etc, the Incumbent needs to attend PCC meetings.

Then there is the whole matter of what parishes regard as 'work': writing sermons, preparing special services - is that work? For some, unless a Vicar is 'seen' (ie visits to the sick, schools, village events etc) then it is assumed that he or she is not 'working'.

Rev'd Ron Wood continues: "The urge to be the priest whom people expect is strong, and I wonder whether parishes are counting on this, when they decide to go down the house-for-duty road. It might just be hard for a part-time priest to do a full-time job. If a diocese or archdeaconry decides that it wants a house-for-duty priest part-time, that parish needs to be thoroughly educated to a realistic expectation."

The Churchwardens and the PCCs understand the limitations such a post offers, but the wider community needs to appreciate that, whatever their past vicars have delivered, a two-day working week cannot be the same.

Our Parish Profile:

Our Benefice PCCs have reviewed what we require from the Incumbent, and have prepared our Parish Profile, which records our commitment to the priest and what we, in return require from them. An advert will be placed in the Church Times for this vacancy which we hope will result in applications for the post. We will then hold interviews from which, it is hoped, we will find a successful candidate. All this takes time: we could be fortunate and find we have viable applications by early Summer, but as there are currently so many vacancies throughout the country, many parishes are facing months (and sometimes years) without their post being filled.

We have put together a strong Profile, we are a willing and capable community, and we live in a beautiful part of the world, so there is much to entice candidates to this post. Until this post is filled, we will continue with our work – maintaining the church and churchyard, offering regular Sunday services and weddings, funerals and baptisms. It will be ‘business as usual’. For those who wish to discuss services or raise any questions about our church (or Benefice), our Churchwarden, Audrey Stringer, should be your first point of contact. We are also blessed with our Rural Dean, Ian Cardinal, who is based in Stone and who has been extremely supportive in our journey through Interregnum. We thank Ian for this encouragement, and we thank you for your support and understanding. We remain resolute in our determination to find someone who will bring as much to our small rural community as we know it will bring to them.

The Rev'd Ron Wood is quoted from an article which appeared in The Church Times, 20th December 2013.



LEFT: The Front and Back cover of our Benefice Parish Profile. This has now been approved and sent to Lichfield Diocese to start the process of advertising for the post of Incumbent.

If you would like to see a copy of our Parish Profile, please contact either Audrey Stringer (Churchwarden) or Eleanor Bane (Secretary – Christ Church PCC). The Profile can also be found on the Parish Council website.

Church yard Tidy Up



With Spring fast approaching and with all the lovely snowdrops, crocus and daffodils beginning to come into bloom it's time to make a start on thinking about the church yard and the tidying up after winter.

The churchyard is looking well-kept in spite of all the gales we are experiencing, which have brought small branches and leaves down. I'm very pleased to say that there has been a very good tidy up of the trees and bushes on the approach to the church car park - a job which was too big for our very enthusiastic team of volunteers - and we have also had the south end of the churchyard strimmed in readiness for the sowing of the wildflower meadow.



It would be nice if we could enter the Lichfield Diocese Churchyard Competition this year, as in previous years we have been very successful.

It is so important to keep our church yard grounds neat and tidy, especially for those visiting family graves and those special occasions during the year.



It is surprising how many people visiting Hilderstone stop and walk around the churchyard. I met a man one afternoon who was looking for special fungi and wildflowers and said how interesting it was as an old churchyard. He

explained that, as the grass has not been disturbed since it was a field, in 1829, it produces some interesting and unusual species.

We will be starting our regular monthly Saturday work parties on Saturday 19th March, 10am to 12 noon - With tea/coffee at 11am. We would be very pleased to welcome anyone who would like to join us.. Please bring your own gloves, and tools i.e. lawn rake, shears etc although there are some spares available. The jobs are numerous but not too arduous and there will be a lot of leaves to tidy up and the pathways to clear up too.

For more information, please contact Christine Clark 01889 505676.

Diary Dates: 16th April, 21st May, 18th June, 16th July, 20th, 20th August, 17th September and finally 15th October. Please come along and join us.

A Poem for Spring – for all you gardeners

"The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his Heaven—
All's right with the world!"

(Robert Browning, The Year's at the Spring)

Local Footpaths

Many of us in Hilderstone have enjoyed our beautiful country footpaths, especially over the Lockdown period and appreciate just how valuable they are. If, however, you are not familiar with these public footpaths, and want to know where they are, there is a section of the Staffordshire County Council website: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/rightsofway/footpaths-bridleways.aspx.

As the Parish Council Footpaths Officer, I would strongly recommend you go out and enjoy our local footpaths and our village scenery, but if you should come across any problems (ie damaged stile, blocked footpath etc), please take photos if you can and email them to myself and I will inform the Rights Of Way Department at the County Council to investigate the problem and find a way to rectify it so that we can all continue to enjoy this beautiful countryside.

Also, if you come across litter on your walks, can you either pick it up or report it to either myself or Street Scene at Stafford Borough Council. However, if you come across any fly tipping, please report direct to Street Scene at Stafford Borough Council on Telephone: 01785 619000.

My email is philip.davies73@btinternet.com



LEFT:

Thank you to Charlie Hughes for this lovely image of our local country lanes, as the first signs of Spring start to appear in the hedgerows.

Hilderstone Heritage: Part 36



This photograph (ABOVE) was taken in 1960 after the road was widened. Stone Rural District Council also took the opportunity to add a pavement from Briar Cottage to the Hollies. I did have a photograph of the nearby telephone exchange being built in 1969 but, alas, this is now lost.

The next postcards (BELOW), dating from 1905 and 1914 respectively, show a similar view of the church and school, with the drover's pool in the foreground.



Recently, eBay provided the opportunity to purchase some historical documents relating to Hilderstone. These represent correspondence concerning the sale of The Wooliscroft Farm:

"23rd October 1913 Hilderstone, Stone, Staffs

To Mr Walker

I understand that Lord Harrowby has offered to take the farm off our hands from the date of Sale and therefore the eating is not to be sold, this is what I understand from Mr Heywood. But you are not probably aware that 11 acres of this land has now been laid down by my son to permanent pasture and ought to be claimed for before giving up possession. There is also a small piece of building built by my son for which we ought to claim, then again they refuse to take to the Hay Barn the valuation of which is £28 and the tenant cannot afford to take to it. These matters should be settled at once before any arrangements can be made. I was sorry not to be able to see you on Sunday.

YF Geo(rge) Meddings

**Footherley [Hall], Lichfield, 24th October 1913,
Stone Aston Estate, The Wooliscroft Farm.**

To Msrs Heywood & Son, Newcastle, Staffs

I see the sale of the stock and produce at above is advertised to take place on the 30th inst. The produce to go off under the late Mr Meddings agreements he could not sell off except under certain conditions. I must therefore ask you to withdraw this permit. I shall also have to ask you to guarantee the payment of two half years rent now due, amounting to the sum of £144.10.6 in all. I shall be glad to hear from you on these points.

YF T S Parker Jervis

Newcastle, 24th October 1913 to Msrs Walters & Welch, Stone.

We send you a letter received from Mr Parker Jervis today we have replied. We have forwarded your letter to Msrs Walters & Welch who are acting for the executors and they will no doubt reply to it tomorrow.

YF Heywood & Son

[Note: The Parker Jervis family resided at Meaford Hall]

The below postcard dates from c1920/21. The farm on the left is Mill Farm, adjacent to which is Mill Cottage and then, what is now known as Stone's Throw. This was the Post Office until 1964 (see the protruding sign), and was the home of Mrs and Mr Meddings - the former being the postmistress, the latter being the son of the aforementioned George Meddings.



Extracts from Martin Phillips 'Hilderstone Heritage' series.

MOUNT NURSERIES

Growers of Quality
Plants

**Hilderstone Road,
Spot Acre,
Near Stone,
Staffordshire.**

**Phone:
01889 505627**

**This space is
available.**

**You could
advertise here.**



'TALKING OF CLEAN SWEEPS, WE'D BETTER CALL IAN...'

**Woodburners • Multi-fuel stoves
Open Fires • AGA/Rayburn**

☎ 01630 647457
PROFESSIONAL, LOCAL CHIMNEY SWEEP



JOHN'S WINDOW CLEANING

John Pilling

78 St Vincent Road

Walton

Stone

ST15 0DU

Tel: 07794699907



Andy & Son

Family Butchers



Major Credit Cards Accepted

7 Hilderstone Road
Meir Heath
Stoke-On-Trent
ST3 7PB
Opposite Windmill
01782 392521



Our business has been here for over 19 years supplying top quality meat and many other delicious products. We are a family business and we pride ourselves on great customer service and locally sourced produce. Price wise we can beat the supermarkets on many occasions but for the friendly service and expertise we win every time!

All cooked meats are cooked on our premises
our burgers + sausages are shop made.
We have a large selection of marinades available.

Taking Christmas Orders from the beginning of November

Highfields Farm B&B

Sandon Road
Hilderstone
ST15 8SF

Tel: 01889 505000

www.highfields-bb.co.uk

A warm welcome to all visitors.
All our rooms have modern en-suites,
wonderful views and comfy beds.

Full English breakfast with
home grown eggs.

Reviews on Book.com

We are open all year round.

Fairway Service Station

All makes of car serviced and repaired

MOT tests and retests

ESSO DEALER

Full Esso Shop and Newsagent

Quality Assured to BS EN ISO 9002

Lichfield Road, Stone, Staffs.

Tel: 01785 812548

Fax: 811598



Hall Lane, Hilderstone, Staffs, ST15 8SQ

Telephone: 01889 505656 Mobile: 07774151890

Email: info@hilderstonegarage.co.uk

www.hilderstonegarage.co.uk



Here at Hilderstone Garage we offer quality vehicle servicing, all types of repairs, in depth diagnostics and all class of MOT testing.

We also offer a car collection & delivery service for ultimate convenience, courtesy cars available on booking.

Our new state of the art ATL MOT testing facility is now open and are proud to announce that we are now testing all Class of vehicles from Motorcycle to Light Commercial and including mini bus.

MOT testing starting from £25 please call for prices and to arrange an appointment.

TRENT ROOFING AND BUILDING

- Building work and scaffolding
 - Roofing repairs
 - Groundworks

CONTACT:- 01538 722960

Mobile:- 07709 251239

R D CRESSWELL & CO LTD

Longton based Family Firm established since 1898

Delivery to the local area

Contact us for:

Calor Gas for your BBQ Portable heaters for home and leisure

General ironmongery items. Garden tools and pest control products

Or If you are running your own business: SMC Pneumatic products

Copper, Iron and PVC pipeline and fittings Pneumatic Control systems and automation

Industrial LPG heaters for sale or hire

For all enquiries call us on 01782 313488,

email us at rdc.cresswell@btconnect.com or visit our website at

www.rdcresswell.co.uk

Price and Stubbs

(A Boulton & Sons Ltd)
Est 1946

COMPLETE FUNERAL SERVICE
MILL STREET, STONE
Tel: 01785 812556

- DAY OR NIGHT
- PRIVATE CHAPELS OF REST
- FLORAL TRIBUTES
- MEMORIALS
- CATERING
- PRE-PAYMENT SCHEMES



Wanted:
Watches working or not Pay by cash
01782 317521.



Office Furniture Place
www.officefurnitureplace.co.uk

Stoke-on-Trent
01782 799 700
Chester
01244 533 527

- Educational Furniture
- Second Hand Furniture
- Desks & Workstations
- Executive Furniture
- Chairs
- Reception Furniture
- Screens
- Storage Solutions
- Space Saving Solutions
- Conference Tables/Chairs
- Breakout & Recreation
- CAD Office Design
- Safes

SPECIAL OFFER only £249 + VAT

Crescent desk with
panel end or double
cantilever leg with 600mm
desk high pedestal



Your local, family owned independent
heating oil supplier,
(based in Market Drayton).

Competitive Heating oil prices

Rix Oil Alert(Automatic tank Monitoring).

Order locally online, or over the phone

Milwich & District syndicate, Contact:

Mike Baggaley 01889 270161 m_baggaley@btinternet.com

Hilderstone Hall Care Home
Where we offer personal care
tailored to Each resident
by our caring attentive staff



Come and join us at the Hall and
meet the Manager
Every Thursday at 2.30pm
for Cream Tea

Everyone is welcome.



Hands & Co Chartered Accountants

Need a helping hand?

For all your bookkeeping, personal taxation and business
needs.

Telephone: 01889 505002

Web Site: www.handsandco.co.uk

'CURTAINS UP'



Custom made blinds and curtains.
Full measurement and making service.
Curtain alterations also undertaken.
Friendly and local at competitive prices
including collection and delivery.

Claire Hardwick

01538 702201

Mob: 07979 942050

Email: claire@curtainsup.co.uk

**This space is
available.**

**You could
advertise here.**

Eccleshall signage centre

Want a new sign for your shop, business or vehicle?

- shop signage
- vans
- lorries
- buses
- cars
- tractors
- banners
- A-FRAMES



Give **CREATIVE BEE** A CALL:
01785 850193/851183

or Email: sales@creative-copy.co.uk

Your local printers since 1979 • Providing all your printing requirements





JOHN REEVES

WASTE MANAGEMENT

"THE NUMBER 1 NAME IN THE NUMBER 2 BUSINESS"

SEPTIC TANKS & SOAKAWAYS

Emptying & Maintenance of Septic Tanks, Cesspools,
Sewage Treatment Plants & Pumps
All types of drainage systems catered for.

DRAINS UNBLOCKED

Drain Jetting & CCTV Surveys, Drain Tracing

Fully Licensed Waste Carriers Est. 1968

FREEPHONE: 0800 358 7455

Roger Simkin

Painter & Decorator

Member of the Dulux Select

Decorators

All decorating backed with written
guarantee by Dulux

Mobil 07971 950921

Home 01785 213277



Green Theme Landscapes Ltd.

Professional Garden Design and Construction

Patios – Drives – Water Features –

Shed & Greenhouse Bases – Turfing – Planting

Fencing & Timberwork – Weed Spraying

Mini Digger Excavation Work – Walling – Lighting

Why Us?

FREE QUOTATIONS

ESTABLISHED 1992

QUALITY WORKMANSHIP ASSURED

Contract: STEVE MATTHEWS

01889 505738 or 0781 308 5634



**COOPER
PLUMBING
& PROPERTY
SERVICES**

YOUR LOCAL FRIENDLY PLUMBER
FULLY QUALIFIED - FULLY INSURED
GAS SAFE REGISTERED
10 YEARS EXPERIENCE
NO JOB TO SMALL
24/7 CALL OUTS
FREE QUOTATIONS
CALL TODAY:

 safe

TEL: 07972196367
01889505085

EMAIL: COOPER-PPS@OUTLOOK.COM

Flying from East Midlands Airport?

Safe and secure indoor
parking with courtesy transfer
to and from the airport.

For more details and rates
(mentioning this advertisement)

**Telephone:
07748 625729**

ADW

Roofing & Building

All types of roof/ building Work

Large / Small property repairs

(No more felt)

Quality Workmanship

Friendly Service

Tel: 01889599046 07876336371

USEFUL NUMBERS

Christ Church, Hilderstone:

Vicar There is currently no Incumbent at Christ Church.
Churchwarden Audrey Stringer Tel: 01889 505638

Parish Council:

Parish Clerk

7.30pm on 4th Wed. of each month in the Village Hall

Nikola Evans

Email: clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk

www.hilderstone.org.uk

Hilderstone W. I.: *7.30pm on 2nd Tuesday of the month, Hilderstone Village Hall.*

President Miss Pat Saul Tel: 01785 812580

Hilderstone Village Hall:

Bookings Debbie Britton Tel: 07810 332559

Neighbourhood watch:

Stone Ash Connor Tel: 01785 234129

Hilderstone Sue Stubbs Tel: 01889 505203

Staffs. County Councillor:

Ian Parry Tel: 07831 510381

Email: ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk

Stafford Borough Councillor:

Andrew Harp Tel: 01889 505400



(FRONT COVER) Thank-you to Charlie Hughes for his beautiful photograph of Bluebells in the woods.

Happy Easter

from all the team on the Parish Magazine.



We hope you have a lovely Easter holiday, enjoy all the wonderful things Spring offers and that you manage to put your wellies on and get into the garden!

We would like to thank Marian Baldwin for her wonderful illustrations, which are a real delight, and also Sue James, who continues to provide some lovely seasonal graphics, which you will find scattered throughout the magazine.

Parish Magazine Donations.

If you could help towards the cost of printing this magazine, we would be very grateful. Please contact Phil Davies in the first instance.

Advertising in the Parish Magazine. Our Parish Magazine offers advertisers a valuable opportunity to reach new and existing local customers and support their community. Thank you to all those who continue to advertise in this magazine. If you are interested in placing an advert, please contact Audrey Stringer (Tel: 01889 505638). Annual Advertising rates are as follows:

1/8 page	-	£21.00	1/2 page	-	£78.75
1/4 page	-	£36.75	Full page	-	£99.75

