

Meeting Point

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The community magazine for the villages of Olveston, Tockington, Old Down, Lower Hazel, Awkley, Ingst, Aust, Elberton and Littleton on Severn

From the Editor

Energy is a hot topic this month especially after the freezing weather we experienced at the turn of the year. There is an article in the magazine which includes some useful contacts and gives news of a talk on the subject.

This is a bumper issue for those who like to peruse weather statistics, since Marcus Bean has provided a report on the whole of 2008 compared with 2007 and the long term average. Yes, we all remember that wet summer! We also have the quarterly report for October to December 2008.

Dinah Spratt has done us proud with her vivid descriptions of the birds, animals and plants and their own life in Tasmania, part 2. She only finished writing it the day before the magazine was due at the printers – the wonders of email!!

The other feature of this month's magazine is the appeal for volunteers; for helping carers, fostering, and bell ringing. The need is bottomless and the number of offers never enough.

Our cover is by Elaine Thomas

Meeting Point Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol

**Meeting Point magazine and Meeting Point Directory is online
on the Community Website: www.olvestonandaust.com.**

Tales from Tasmania Part 2

Dinah Spratt

The first thing that hits you when you set foot on Tasmanian soil is the smell of eucalyptus from the gum trees. They are the most abundant of the native trees and there are great forests of them all over the state. There are more than 600 species, all bearing tough, leathery aromatic leaves and the most common are used for commercial timber. Old growth forests are regularly replaced by new plantations by the forestry department, much to the bemusement of the environmentalists who would prefer the old forests and their native animals to be left alone.

There is an enormous variety of native plants, all of which are designed by nature to retain moisture. The banksia plant comes in a wide range of colours and is a bushy shrub with large hair-brush shaped flowers, made up of colourful spikes. Bizarrely these plants have evolved to cope with bushfire, and their large woody cones only release their seeds if heated to 120 degrees centigrade! There are 700 species of orchid native to Australia, and Tasmania's varieties are small and delicate and can be found deep in the forests, often only germinating after a bushfire. Imagine walking through the charred remains of a once dense forest, only to find these delightful and colourful flowers, dotted amongst the newly replaced fern undergrowth!

I clearly remember our arrival in early December 2006 and, of course, preparations for the Christmas festivities were all around. It was strange to see the high streets lined with tinsel and Christmas lights, with familiar tunes of Santa on his sleigh ringing out from the shops, when the air was hot and the summer season was upon us. But the old traditions of Christmas trees, roast turkey and Christmas carols were no different to the UK. However there was an Australian slant to proceedings with a Christmas parade, where floats carrying community groups and decorated in summer regalia were paraded down the main street, amongst decorated school buses, police cars and fire trucks, and people in garish costumes waved at the crowds lining the street. It reminded me of summers spent at the London Notting Hill Carnival in my youth! The festivities continued with Christmas Carols in the park and a 'sausage sizzle' on the barbeque.

Christmas in Tasmania comes at the beginning of the long summer holidays, and it gave us the opportunity to check out the native wildlife, both in our own back yard and in the local wild life park. We were surprised to learn of the many different species of marsupial there are. We were previously aware of the koala (sadly now extinct in Tassie) and the kangaroo, but we were introduced to



pademelons, possums, wallabies, sugar gliders, bandicoots and bettongs, to name a few, all with their little pouches to carry their young. My favourite is the wombat, a four-legged furry animal with long sharp claws for digging burrows, and a stumpy tail, which gives it the resemblance to a badger crossed

with a small bear. Its pouch is conveniently designed to face the other way, so that the poor baby doesn't get a mouthful of dirt when its mum is busy digging! The most infamous marsupial has to be the carnivorous Tasmanian devil, renowned by the popular cartoon 'Tas of Tasmania', which I used to watch as a child (having no idea where Tasmania was, of course). It is a solitary creature with a fearsome reputation, and its snarl would terrify the escaped convicts and bush rangers of old. In fact it is only the size of a well fed Jack Russell terrier, but has the jaws of a hyena, which can crush a cow's skull. Sadly they are in decline due to an ugly facial tumour disease which, once contracted, makes it impossible for the sufferer to feed.

I cannot omit the platypus, which is abundant in the local area where we live, on the north west coast. It inhabits rivers and lakes and has an otter's body, duck's beak, four webbed feet and a beaver-like tail. Most peculiar, and even more so because it is a mammal who lays eggs, and then feeds its newly hatched young on its own milk!

As well as these sweet and delightful creatures, we are only too familiar with the not so nice insects and reptiles, namely the redback spider (of which we found four nursing their egg sacs on the underside of our garage door), and the tiger and copperhead snakes. All three have deadly venom and it's best to avoid walking in long grass or stick your hand in dark places (such as the underside of the garage door!). We have come face to face with large blue tongue lizards and

tarantula sized huntsman spiders. I have kept one of the latter in a plastic tub for a whole week in an attempt to get used to its ridiculous size, but I still jump out of my skin whenever I see one!

The birds here range from common sparrows and blackbirds to colourful parrots, wild black swans and noisy kookaburras, not to mention the enormous and beautiful white-tailed eagle; only the other day I stood a mere 10 feet away from a pair of them, which were biding their time on a couple of fence posts.

We happen to live in a seaside town called Shearwater, with its white sandy beaches and clear blue sea, so for us it was essential to educate ourselves in the field of water safety. So we joined the surf life-saving club in nearby Port Sorell. The club is one of many, which are situated all over the coast of Tasmania and mainland Australia, and are run by groups of volunteers, with the help of the parents. We meet twice a week in the summer months and the children learn vital rules for sea safety as well as team skills in life saving. They also get lots of exercise and practise beach races, long distance running, mastering paddling face down on the flat, narrow boat-shaped boards and sea swimming. Members can enter the various competitions (known as carnivals) which are hosted by each club and are run most weekends. But for those who take part for fun, there is a great family social atmosphere, with each session followed up with burgers and hotdogs, and occasional live music, outside the club house.

Sport and the great outdoors feature highly for the Tasmanians, primarily because the weather is usually dry and sunny (if a little windy at times, mainly

from the southwest 'roaring forties'). Cricket and Aussie rules footy are the most popular, with basketball and swimming in hot pursuit. But the main aim is for people to enjoy taking part and if they don't, then bike riding and bush walking are a must, and there are miles of cycle paths and bush walking tracks, so that roads can be avoided.

For entertainment, there are the usual restaurants, cinemas and theatres, and even the Tasmania Symphony Orchestra. Sadly the old English pub doesn't exist here, but we have replaced this with frequenting the many vineyards, or wineries as they're called. There is a lot of wine produced here, due to the fact that Tasmania is on the same latitude as Bordeaux in France, but with a temperate climate, and their situation is usually on the banks of a beautiful meandering river, or looking over rolling hills, with the sea in the distance. We had our latest work Christmas party in one of them, where we all tucked into a platter of delicious smoked salmon, Turkish breads, olives, humus and vine leaves, washed down with a glass of pinot noir!

The people of Tasmania, whether born here or moved here from the mainland, are extremely warm and friendly, and everyone's backgrounds are of no consequence. If you like someone, you become their friend. Simple as that. Social gatherings are usually done in each other's homes, and the children are always involved. Everyone also brings a plate of food to contribute to the meal, so that the host isn't expected to do all the work. Barbeques are definitely a summer staple and there's no nonsense of lighting the coals and waiting an eternity for the thing to get hot. These ones have a gas bottle attached. No worries, as they say!

The school year runs from February to December, and full time schooling starts for children in the year they turn six. Our three children, Emily, Jesse and Fabian attend a small primary school of only 75 pupils, most of whom come from farming backgrounds. The school prides itself on both its academic successes and its teaching of family values. Each month there is a Merit Assembly when certificates are awarded to children who have demonstrated values such as friendliness, co-operation, persistence, determination and respect for others. When I look back at the time of our arrival two years ago, I remember both the excitement and nervousness of being in a country so far away from the one I was born and brought up in, and my awareness of its different culture and history. But the transition into the Australian way of life has seemed quite seamless, and I feel this has been due to the way of the people who have truly made us feel so welcome.

A move to the other side of the world comes with challenges of its own, including leaving family and friends. For us, there has been some spectacular red tape, and bureaucratic hoops to jump through, in order to get residency and for me to register as an Australian physiotherapist, which is no mean feat. It has involved many hours of studying for exams, as well as working long hours on a temporary registration basis, to fulfil visa requirements. But one can achieve anything with grit and determination, and for us it has certainly been worth it!

Carol Singing in Aust

Paula Watkins

I would like to say a big 'Thank you' to all Aust residents, both those of you who took part in the singing and those who kindly donated money. We ventured out on a chilly and damp Friday evening, 19th December, to raise money for Action For Children.

Due to your generosity we raised a fantastic £264.35p, even managing to collect a donation from the crew of a passing police car who were enquiring about our activities!

Thank you all once again for supporting me in this very worthwhile cause.

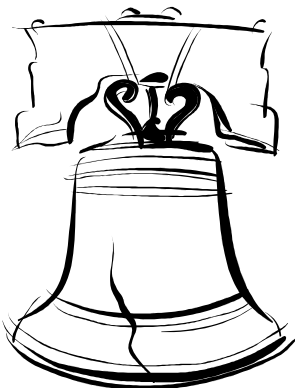
Craft Fair

Judy Jones



We are holding a Craft Fair in the Parish Hall, Olveston on Saturday 28th February. The majority of the stallholders will be from the Parish of St Mary's, Olveston and the Fair will be in aid of the Appeal for the church re-ordering. It will start at 10am and finish at 4pm and refreshments will be available throughout. Come and be dazzled by stained-glass hangings and jewellery, mesmerized by hand-woven goods and oriental crafts, amazed by wood-turned items and paintings and many more locally made goods.

News from St Mary's Bell Ringers



Paul Grainger-Allen has been Tower Captain for a number of years but has now sadly left the post to emigrate with his family to New Zealand. Good wishes from the bell ringers go with him. The new Tower Captain is Rosemary Ruddick and she is appealing for new ringers to come forward.

The need is urgent or the bells will not be heard nearly so frequently; for example no New Year peal was rung this year. So anyone willing to learn a new skill can telephone Rosemary on 613321 or June Robbins on 617491.

Volunteers Urgently Needed by the Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre

Recently the Centre has obtained increased funding for the '**Break for Carers**' sitting service. This valuable service enables unpaid family carers to take a much needed short break. Currently we are looking for reliable and trustworthy volunteers who can spare a couple of hours a week.

If you enjoy building relationships with new people and really making a difference, this rewarding experience could be for you. The Carers' Centre fully trains and supports all volunteers and all expenses are reimbursed. If you would like to know more, please contact volunteer support workers, Amy Flood or Liz Doling at the Vassall Centre in Fishponds on 0117 9589903.

Thornbury Choral Society

CHORAL WORKSHOP
on Saturday 21 February 2009 10.30-5pm
at Thornbury Baptist Church, Grovesend, Thornbury

Thornbury Choral Society cordially invite you to come and join them for an all day workshop to study **J.S.Bach's exciting Magnificat** using the Barenreiter edition and the beautiful **Spirituals from Michael Tippett's "A Child of our Time"**. We shall be conducted by Steven Kings, accompanied by Nigel Davies and joined by five young soloists from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Entry to the Workshop Performance at 4pm is free with a retiring collection.

Tea, coffee, juices, biscuits and cake at tea are included in the £12.50 cost of the ticket.

Scores: Available for hire for £2

Lunch: Available by pre-booking for £5.00

Application forms are available from:-

Jos Gregson, 18 Willoughby Close, Alveston, Bristol BS35 3RW

Telephone: 01454-411652

Email: jos@josgregson.plus.com

Notice

Gill Chidgey contacted Meeting Point to tell us that her mother, **Rose Cooper**, had died. Mrs Cooper formerly lived in Mill Lane, Tockington and moved to Cornwall in 2000 where she died peacefully on 30th December. She will be sadly missed by all her family.

Family Placement services

Tony Bray, recruitment and marketing officer at South Gloucestershire Council, says it is his wish to see every child included as part of a loving, caring environment and there are various ways that people can ensure this happens, through the family placement services offered by the Council. In this article Tony will explore the various options available and hopefully inspire people to come forward and consider a new career.

Foster Care

We always need foster carers, for all age groups but in particular for teenagers and we also need carers for sibling groups. As the ultimate welfare of the child is this authority's responsibility it is in our best interest that the foster carers we attract, assess, approve and, very importantly, retain are people we can trust, call upon and know will provide the best care for the children. In exchange for this we offer generous fees and allowances, structured training, interaction with existing foster carers and continuous, ongoing support.

If you feel you want to take that first step towards becoming a foster carer you can either contact me, Tony Bray, on **01454 866423** and I will answer any questions you might have, or you might prefer to read our comprehensive information pack which can be viewed online at www.southglos.gov.uk/fostering

Adoption

We are always on the look-out for adopters for children aged one and over and sibling groups. Adoption is a way of providing new families for children who cannot be brought up by their own parents. It is a legal process, which transfers all the responsibilities held by the child's birth parents to the new adoptive parents. The adopters become the child's legal parents through the granting of an Adoption Order by a court.

In addition to the attraction, assessment and approval of adoptive parents, we deal with step-parent and inter-country adoption. Also, if you are an adult who was adopted as a child and would like to find out more information about your adoption records or trace your birth family then South Gloucestershire Council's Family Placement Team can help you. We offer counselling to all adopted people living in South Gloucestershire or adopted through the Council in the past.

If, after reading this, you feel you want to find out more about becoming an adopter you can call **01454 866423** or read our online information pack at www.southglos.gov.uk/adoption

Family Link

This scheme is a way of providing regular short breaks for a child or young

person with a disability. Family Link caring offers the opportunity for a person to forge a long term relationship with a disabled child or young person and their family. Some of the disabilities the children have range from autism, physical impairments and learning difficulties. This sort of care usually suits people who can offer short breaks and who feel positive about disabled children and young people. Family Link always welcomes more carers and once approved carers are carefully matched with a child or young person through a gradual introduction process.

So what is involved? The level of commitment expected of a carer is at least one weekend a month on a regular basis; however people can give as much or as little time as they wish. Some Family Link carers are linked with one child, others provide short breaks to more than one child. Most of the children would stay overnight in the carer's home but if accommodation is not suitable to meet the child's needs there is still an option for day care.

You can call me on **01454 866423** or obtain further details online at www.southglos.gov.uk/familylink

Private Fostering

Anyone who is already looking after a child or children under the age of 16 (18 if disabled), or anyone planning to do so, for more than 28 days where that child is not a close relative, will be classed as 'private foster carers'.

This arrangement has to be agreed by the Department for Children and Young People at the council and an assessment will need to be carried out accordingly. If you are already doing this, or expect to take on this role in the future, please contact **01454 868008** for more details. Alternatively, you can find out more about this at www.southglos.gov.uk/privatefostering

Olveston & Tockington Parish Hall

AGM - 24th February 2009

Mark Bunyan

A short AGM will be held at the Parish Hall on Tuesday 24th February to elect the managing trustees for 2009/2010. A number of new faces have joined the committee over the past year and considerable effort is going into refurbishing the hall and trying new events. If you have ideas, want to get involved, or simply want to share a glass of wine and some cheese, then please come along at 8pm. For further information contact Geoff on 615806.

The Parish Players

present
Rodgers and Hammerstein's

Oklahoma!

from Wednesday 18 March to Saturday 21 March 2009

at the Parish Hall, Tockington, curtain up 7.30pm.

Ticket sales:

**commencing Tuesday 10 February, 6pm - 7pm at Olveston Methodist Hall
and anytime after that by phoning 01454 612850.**

Prices:

£8 adults, £5 children (no increase for 3rd year).

Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'
The Surrey with the Fringe on Top
Kansas City
I Can't Say No!
People Will Say We're in Love
Poor Jud is Dead
Oklahoma

Thornbury Library

'Take Note' music festival February 2009:

Free Events at Thornbury Library

Friday 13 February 10.30 am – 11.00am St Mary's School junior musicians.

Saturday 14 February 10.30am – 11.00am Castle School String Quartet.

11.05am – 11.30am Fascinating Rhythm.

Friday 20 February - Holiday workshop 11.00am – 11.45am

Tickets £1.50 library members, £2.00 non-members

Fancy trying some African drumming? Join Sandro Granda for this children's workshop. Please book in advance, ideally suited for children aged 8-12.

Pre-school Story Time: Monday afternoons 2.15-2.45pm and alternate Saturday afternoons at 2.15pm especially for Dads and their pre-school children.

Olveston Pre-school

Stop Press 30th January

After last year's sell-out success, Olveston Preschool is hosting another quiz and curry night on Friday 30th January. The venue will be Old Down Sports Club, which has a great bar. Doors open at 7.30pm for curry and the quiz will start at 8.00. Make up your own team of four or we can pair you up on the night. Tickets are £6 each and available from Natasha Harrod email address natashaharrod@hotmail.com or telephone 613642.

Have you heard of the latest craze, Swishing Parties? The concept is simple; that bag you were given for Christmas which doesn't match anything in your wardrobe, or the sales bargain which doesn't quite fit, or the coat you bought on a whim which isn't quite you –bring it along and swap it for something you will love to wear. Olveston Preschool is hosting a Swishing Party on **Friday 27th February at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall**. Tickets are £5 and include a glass of wine. Email or telephone as above.



St Peter's Hospice - Annual Quiz

St Peters Hospice Severnside Support Group would be delighted to welcome you to the Annual Quiz on Friday 6th March at the Armstrong Hall commencing at 7.15pm. The quiz team should be made up of four people, an excellent supper is served and a very good raffle takes place. The cost is £24.00 per table

of four.

For further information and to reserve your table please telephone Mary on 01454 412567.

Please come along and support St Peters, your local Hospice.

Friends of St. Mary's

The prize winners in November's draw, held at the Christmas Bazaar were:-

| <u>Amount</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Name</u> |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| £150 | 293 | Mrs. L.J. White, Olveston |
| £75 | 208 | Mrs. C.E. Black, Thornbury |
| £25 | 486 | Mrs. C.A. Phillipott, Tockington |
| £20 | 487 | Mrs. C.A. Phillipott, Tockington |
| £20 | 160 | Mrs. A.E. Williams, Tockington |
| £15 | 361 | Mr. & Mrs. T. Roper, Fern Hill |
| £10 | 496 | Mrs. J. Williams, Greenditch Street |



Police Report

The Safer Stronger Community Group Meeting was held on 13/01 however this report is written prior to this date so I'm unable to update you on any new priorities. Therefore the priorities remain as previously published.

December was a busy month with various things going on. I had a very good get-together with one of the Neighbourhood Watches from Olveston on a Saturday

morning in December and had a good discussion.

The Cricket Club in Oldbury is having sporadic vandalism which seems to occur overnight. I get to sound like a broken record but the crime trend appears to be thefts from outbuildings of tools and other similar items although most of these crimes have occurred off my beat towards Tytherington and Iron Acton.

13 crimes for December

1/12 Theft of lead from a roof of a house in Catherine Hill, Olveston.

4/12 Hardy Lane Tockington, a break-in to an industrial type unit. The offenders were using a stolen van (from The Portway area) which was found abandoned later in Manor Close. 5 young men from the Patchway area were arrested but there's insufficient evidence to link them to this crime; however other offences were found at the time and they are being dealt with for those.

5/12 A container was broken into at the industrial units in Fernhill.

5/12 Stables in Hardy Lane were entered and various equestrian items stolen.

7/12 A drive-off theft of fuel from Aust services.

9/12 A vehicle in Elberton had the window smashed and tools stolen; this was between 2pm and 3.30pm.

12/12 A burglary overnight at Rockhampton Cricket Club.

20/12 Another theft of lead from a roof of a house at The Green, Olveston.

21/12 Another drive-off type theft of fuel from Aust Services. The vehicle was using stolen number plates.

21/12 An Audi parked overnight at The Street, Olveston junction with Denys Court had the tyres punctured.

22/12 A handbag was taken from the seat of an unlocked car at some riding stables in Shepperdine.

24/12 Locks were cut to Harnhill landfill site but nothing appears to have been stolen.

28/12 At Ingst a quad-bike was stolen from a barn. This is about the fourth time that this particular premises has been targeted.

Roger Hopes, PC 3404, Neighbourhood Beat Manager, DC 125 Severn Vale .

Phone: 0117 945 5959, Mobile: 07919628625

Thornbury Police Station, Rock St, Thornbury S Glos. BS35 2BA

E-mail: roger.hopes@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

News from OPTA (Olveston Parish Twinning Association)

Jan Winter

Some updates on forthcoming events:

By the time you read this the murder mystery will be swinging into action – **Friday 6th February** at the Parish Hall, from 7.30 for an 8.00 start. Anyone wanting last minute tickets should contact Jan on 612641, but sales are going well already so we may be sold out. Tickets are £5 for members and £6 for non-members.

The Wine Challenge is our next event, on **Friday 3rd April** – and tickets are on sale from 1st February from Emma (on 619833). You may need to be quick as these always sell like hot cakes. This will be a relaxed evening identifying 10 wines (or not!) from their descriptions. How hard can that be? – you might be surprised! Tickets are £10 for members and £12 for non-members.

Also, a reminder that we are expecting a group of French visitors from **1- 4 May** this year. There will be an event in the Parish Hall on the Saturday evening, with supper and a band – we will welcome people who would like to join us for the evening and will give ticket details in a later Meeting Point.

Finally, those who came to the Family Fun Day in the field behind Denys Court last year will agree that it was just that – a lot of fun! The sun even shone. We are planning a repeat event this year – it's a long way off yet, but in the cold of February it is good to have a summer event to look forward to. Make a note of **Saturday 11th July** and there will be lots more information later.

We're looking forward to lots of fun this year and are always pleased to hear from anyone who'd like to know more or get involved. Please contact Jan on 612641 or Paul on 626835

Cricket Club News

150 Club Winners January:

£50 Steve Clark £15 Ian Bradly £ 5 Rob Birtle

Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winner 3rd January: Paul Middleton

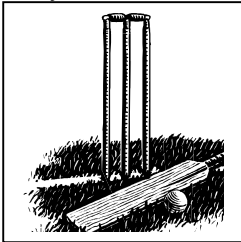
Diary Dates:

Friday 13th February Commencement of Colts Indoor Nets at Bradley Stoke Community School. Contact: Andrew Kitchen 07713 316378 for Information.

Friday 27th February General Knowledge Quiz at Olveston Sports & Social Club.

Friday 13th March Commencement of Senior Nets at Bradley Stoke Community School. Contact: Greg Welsher 07977 212339 or Reg Purchase 07778 701703

Membership Subscriptions for 2009 were due on 1st January - see website for details.



Old Down Cricket Club

Andy Rowen

A successful 2009 for the England cricket team in the Ashes series against the Aussies will hopefully once again increase the popularity of cricket, after the surge of interest that Ashes success of 2005 generated. We at Old Down CC certainly hope that the popularity of cricket increases, as we feel we offer excellent facilities for anyone interested in joining a cricket club or someone looking to take up the game.

Our ground, The Park, is owned by the Cricket Club and is located behind the Olveston Sports & Social Club (OSSC) and the Olveston United football pitch on the Alveston Road, opposite the turning to Foxholes Lane at Old Down. Although rather biased, we feel that our ground is one of the most picturesque in the Bristol area with character as well as stunning views of the Severn Estuary. We benefit from having a set of covers, permanent nets as well as a bowling machine, which enhance our practice facilities. In addition we are lucky enough to benefit from the bar facilities offered by OSSC and most of our social activities centre on the social club and its facilities.

We run two Saturday sides in the Bristol & District League and are always looking to add to our squad. The cricket is competitive but we retain the traditional village element which other clubs seem to have dispensed with. We also run a Sunday XI that plays friendly games where the emphasis is on enjoyment as much as being results-driven. This year our build-up to the season starts at indoor nets which we are holding at Bradley Stoke Community School, starting on Friday 13th March from 8pm-10pm and any new players will be very welcome. For further information please contact 1st XI Captain Greg Welsler 07977212339 or 2nd XI Captain Reg Rurchase 07778 701703.

As a club we also benefit from a Colts section which seems to get more successful each year. 2009 sees us running three sides at Under 13, Under 15 & Under 17 levels. However we also offer the facility for younger children to be coached throughout the summer. By the start of the summer our plan is to have 5 qualified coaches as part of the club, as we appreciate that investment in colts' cricket aids the future development of the whole club. Our Colts commence their indoor nets also at Bradley Stoke Community School on Friday 13th February 2009 6.30pm-8.30pm. Any new players will be very welcome but for more information please contact our Colts Officer, Andy Kitchen, on 07713 316378.

As with any local club run by volunteers we are always keen to secure sponsorship. Whilst we appreciate that times are extremely hard for many local businesses we would be very grateful to hear from anyone interested in sponsoring the club in any way.

For further details on any of the above, please contact Club Secretary Andy Rowen on 01454 418157 or at therowens@blueyonder.co.uk or alternatively please visit our website www.olddowncricketclub.co.uk.



THORNBURY

Take the Plunge for a Good Cause

Thornbury Rotary Club's annual fundraising Swimarathon – otherwise known as the Big Splash - will be held this year on Friday 6th, Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th March at the Leisure Centre. Anyone thinking of taking the plunge should book a place now.

Since its launch 23 years ago, the event has become enormously popular and more than £250,000 has been raised for many local and regional charities. Last year's Swimarathon was another great success, with more than 50 teams swimming and raising over £10,000 for local causes.

This year the two main beneficiaries, in addition to local charities, will be CLIC Sargent and Macmillan Cancer Support.

Thornbury Rotary Club President, Ray Carney said "The Big Splash is one of the most popular fund-raising events of the year involving many local people and schools. You can swim alone or as part of a team of up to six and you don't have to be a great swimmer or to be fast.

Graham Shrubsole, the organiser, says 'We are looking for more teams this year, particularly from firms in the area and bearing in mind the popularity of the event, it is advisable to register as soon as possible'.

For entry details please ring 01454 856706 or visit www.thornburyrotary.org.

1st Olveston Scout Group
Webb Ivory



A very big Thank-you to Audrey Knapp for raising an amazing £400 from the proceeds of Webb Ivory sales of cards, wrap and gifts during the run up to Christmas.

For the last 17 years she has donated to Olveston Scouts, clocking up a remarkable £12,000. Previous to that, she has raised £10,000 for charities that her children were linked with over the years.

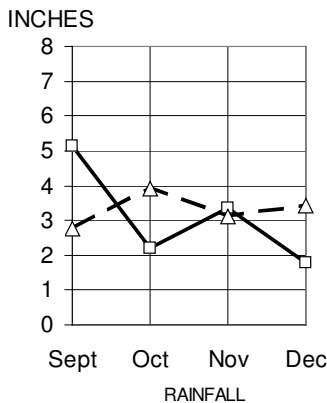
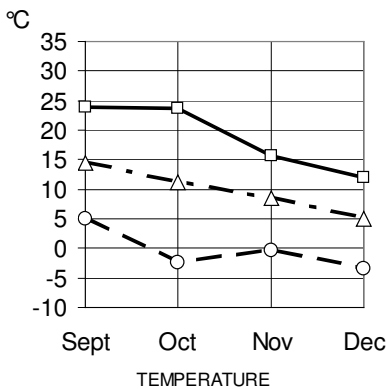
Thanks Mum!

Lynda Spratt ,Scout Leader 1st Olveston Scouts



Weather Record

October to December 2008 *Marcus Bean*



—□— Max. —○— Min. —△— Ave.

—□— Actual —△— Ave.

October

A mild and fairly damp beginning of the month gave way to ten days of warm sunny weather with blue skies and no rain. This was followed by a period of warm but changeable weather and, for the last five days of the month, a winter snap occurred with Arctic winds bringing cold days and frost at night. Rainfall for the month was approximately half the average, with temperature and pressure being slightly below normal for the time of year.

November

Wind for the first half of the month was predominantly from the West or South West bringing relatively mild temperatures and some rain. On three days commencing on the 9th we had heavy rain, approaching an inch every day. Mild weather continued until the 19th when the wind reverted to a Northerly direction bringing much cooler temperatures. Rainfall for the month was marginally above average, but pressure and temperature were slightly below norm.

December

The first fortnight was bright with the coldest December days since 1976 and overall the coldest month since 2001. Following this a spell of Atlantic weather continued for a week bringing cloud and rain with warmer night time temperatures. The final week of the month returned to very cold conditions with cloud and an Easterly wind with severe frosts at night. Average pressure for the month was marginally above normal but average temperature was about 1.5°C below normal and rainfall was about 1.75 inches below average.



Weather Report for Olveston 2008

Listed below are the highlights for the year and comparative statistics followed by a short commentary Marcus Bean

| ITEM | 2008 | | 2007 | | LONG TERM AVERAGE | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|------|
| | Highest day max temp (°C) | 30.2 | 25 th July | 29.6 | June | 31.9 |
| Lowest day max temp | 2.3 | 31 st Dec | - 2.3 | Dec | 1.9 | Jan |
| Highest night temperature | 16.8 | 30 th Aug | 16.0 | Aug | 17.4 | Aug |
| Lowest night temperature | - 3.7 | 17 th Feb | - 5.2 | Feb | - 5.2 | Dec |
| Max Pressure (millibars) | 1041 | 16 th Feb | 1040 | Feb | 1042 | Feb |
| Min Pressure | 956 | 10 th Mar | 973 | Dec | 972 | Oct |
| Max wind speed (mph) | 57 | 10 th Mar | 57 | Jan | 58 | Jan |
| Prevailing Direction | S West | 95 days | West | | West | |
| Max rain on one day (mm) | 47.58 | 4 th Sep | 38.06 | June | 38.72 | Oct |
| Wettest month | 153.82 | January | 133.89 | Jan | 136.94 | Oct |
| Driest month | 29.54 | February | 6.03 | April | 19.82 | Aug |
| Total for year (equal to ins.) | 971.04 (38.23) | | 939.29 (36.98) | | 857.44 (33.76) | |

The year began on a promising note with January being very mild albeit also very wet and with February being very sunny and dry. High winds and gales with torrential rainfall characterised March with April being cold and fairly wet. May was mixed with warm sunshine followed by a very heavy thunderstorm which

was followed by cool wet weather. The early part of June was warm and wet with the latter half being cool and very wet. Cloudy, cool and wet conditions continued in July, August, September, October and November. December has been very cold but fairly dry.

In the year we have had thirty five gales, two days with a light dusting of snow and six electrical storms. Wet, however, is the word that sums up the weather for the year, with the summer months being very wet. Rainfall for the year was nearly four and a half inches above average and only 141 days were dry.

How to Save Money and Stay Warm

Rising gas and electricity prices have become a major concern for everyone across the UK this year.

And with a cold winter expected, fuel bills are set to continue rising and likely bring more worries to residents across South Gloucestershire.

Now, though, the local Energy Saving Trust advice centre and South Gloucestershire Council are working together to help people and communities stay warm in their homes and to lower their bills.

The Energy Saving Trust advice centre offers free and independent energy efficiency advice to tenants and householders on how to reduce energy use in their homes.

There are a number of ways to keep warm this winter and lower fuel bills all year round, including loft and cavity wall insulation. Cavity wall insulation is now free for all homeowners or private tenants over the age of 65 or those in receipt of certain benefits, and in many cases loft insulation may be free, too.

People receiving certain Government benefits could also be eligible for certain discounted tariffs from gas and electricity providers. These can be up to 15 per cent lower than normal tariffs.

So what can you do?

To find out more about the number of ways you might be able to reduce your fuel bills, access local grant schemes and stay warmer, or receive any energy saving tips, contact your local Energy Saving Trust advice centre on 0800 512 012.

The **Energy Saving Trust advice centre** offers free and independent energy efficiency advice to tenants and householders on how to reduce energy use in their homes.

The Centre for Sustainable Energy is a leading charity delivering solutions to climate change and fuel poverty <http://www.cse.org.uk/>.

Thornbury Camera Club News and Tips

Peter Haworth

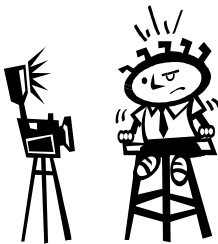
NEWS

The programme for February commences on Monday the 2nd with visiting speaker Adrian Herring showing prints and digital images of "The Czech Republic and Beyond".

On the 9th judging takes place for internal competition no4, the 16th February features a selection of images from Axminster camera club and the 24th speaker Roger Mallinson demonstrates how to make digital images AV sequence using Pictures to Exe.

TIPS

February can be cold and miserable, so if you're inside in the warm try shooting some indoor portrait photographs of friends and relations in formal or candid poses.



Indoor portraits are a perfect opportunity to experiment with lighting; you can use electronic flash or incandescent light to create professional looking portraits.

Work with two or three lights. The main light provides illumination for the scene, fill light placed near the camera controls shadows, and back lighting produces silhouette type photos.

A mini-studio at home allows you to adjust poses, backgrounds using different fabrics, and experiment by moving the lights; natural light through windows can create a soft flattering portrait.

If you're using flash, beware of Red Eye; try to angle the flash away from the eyes and bounce it off wall or ceiling. Also watch out for reflections from people wearing glasses and ask your model to raise or lower their chin so the light will bounce off the lenses at an angle rather than back at the camera.

Thornbury camera club welcomes new members of all abilities. Contact me Peter Haworth on 01454 612441 for more information.

Friends of St. Mary's

The prize winners in December's draw, held on the 29th at the Friends' Committee Meeting were:-

| <u>Amount</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Name</u> |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| £150 | 377 | Mrs. J.A. Jones, Olveston |
| £75 | 223 | Mr. R.C. Panes, Olveston |
| £25 | 324 | Mrs. M. James, Olveston |
| £20 | 310 | Mr. A. Vizard, Tockington |
| £20 | 271 | Mr. J.D. Donaldson, Olveston |
| £15 | 186 | Mr. G. Clark, Olveston |
| £10 | 293 | Mrs. L.J. White, Olveston |



News from Olveston School: Netball Magic

by Victoria, Class 6

On 24th November 2008, Miss Plews took Olveston CEVC Primary School netball team to compete in a tournament. We were playing at UWE (University of the West of England.) All of the teams played 3 matches. Each game lasted for seven minutes because we were running a bit late.

The first team we played was St. Peter's. We made a bright start with Kathryn scoring our first point which made us one nil up. St. Peter's started with the ball, we couldn't get the ball off them which made them get nearer to our hoop, but they didn't score. As they were trying to score, I caught the ball in mid air. I passed the ball to Ella and we kept passing the ball down the court. Which made us score another point by Abbie. The first match flew by very quickly with us winning our game 6 nil!

The next team we were playing was St. Helen's. Once we had started the game, the first few minutes went by quickly and I could tell this game was going to be hard. We started off with another score by Abbie which made us one nil up. Before we knew it, the other team had scored and it was one all. I quickly passed to Izzy with her passing to Jess and then onto Ella who took a shot but missed. Then Jess caught it, threw it up and luckily scored.



With the other team starting, they got to the hoop with us trying to stop them, but they kept trying and eventually scored making it 2 all. This match flew by again, with us just winning 3-2 to us.

We had a little break, then we were back on playing against Almondsbury. We got off to a brilliant start with Julia passing to Carli then onto Jess who scored. So with the other team starting, Carli caught the ball, passed to Julia then me. I shot and scored. Like the other games, it zoomed past with us winning 6 nil, feeling very puffed out and excited.

All of the teams sat down waiting to see who the winners would be. Almondsbury was fourth, St. Peter's was 3rd, St. Helen's was 2nd and we came first!! We won the tournament and we were so happy! Thank you Miss Plews for your coaching!

Congratulations to Olveston School on their achievement so well reported! Ed

Sustainable Thornbury

Keeping the Lights on!

Maggie Jeffery

On Wednesday 4th February at 7.30pm in the Stuart Room at the Chantry, Sustainable Thornbury is hosting a talk by Peter Marshall which will give an overview of power generation in the 21st Century and discuss possible strategies for the future. Do come along and join in what promises to be a lively debate! Admission free.

How to book tickets for Thornbury Arts Festival 2009 17th-26th April

In order to try and ensure that everyone has access to tickets at the same time, it has been agreed that the booking form for all events in the 2009 Festival will be available in the March edition of Thornbury Magazine alongside a full listing of events.

The booking form will be available to download from the Festival website from 1st March 2009. Anyone wanting tickets for the 2009 Festival should complete the form and either post it or drop it into the Town Hall in Thornbury High Street, where all envelopes will be dated and treated in strict order of arrival.

Events Guides will be available around the town in March. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to accept credit card bookings in 2009 because of the unacceptably high fee now being charged to small charities such as the Festival.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Performed by Thornbury Musical Theatre Group from Wednesday 18th February until Saturday 21st. There are performances nightly at 7.15pm with matinees on both Friday and Saturday at 2.15pm. Ring 415850 or go along to the box office at Wildings, Thornbury High Street from Monday 2nd February (mobile number 07707 673734)

Women's World Day of Prayer

'IN CHRIST THERE ARE MANY MEMBERS YET ONE BODY'

Rosemary Boere

On Friday 6th March over 3 million people worldwide will be praying and worshipping together during an annual day of prayer, using a service prepared by Christian Women in Papua New Guinea. Further details next month.

Yours Faithfully

*Father Richard Mway Zeng SDS
Christ the King Church, Thornbury*

Last November 2008 I left my home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo, to come and work in England for a few years. You might expect that in this article I ought to give you my first impressions on arriving here and describe some of the differences between Africa and England.

However, rather than focussing on the differences I would like to share something about the current economic situation. Indeed, within a period of just two months, I have found myself working in two parishes, in two totally different contexts. Unexpectedly, one crisis seems to unite them all; the Credit Crunch.

You might think it strange to hear that Africa is as badly hit by the current economic downturn as Great Britain. But I can say that the financial effects of the current economic crisis are in fact much worse in Africa than here. Indeed, almost all African countries get their income from the exportation of their raw minerals and this is particularly true of my home country.

When the factories in Britain and Germany reduce production, jobs in Africa and the other developing areas of the world are lost. Thus, the collapse of raw mineral prices due to the credit crunch directly affects the poor economies. Thousands of workers are put on the streets without any social security.

Moreover, the banking systems are not so good and most ordinary people do not have access to banks where they could get credit, so there is no cushion to help them get over a temporary downturn.

It is unfortunately true that even in the developed countries, the working people are the badly affected by the current downturn. The news we hear, day by day, is sometimes very sad. Here and there High Street businesses are closing; thousands of jobs are being cut. In one way or another we are all concerned; whether in Africa or Britain we face the same problems. We are all anxious about the future especially for our young people who may not be able to find jobs.

I have a conviction. Despite the current difficult situation, our hope is not dead. In fact, as Christians we are a people of hope. We hope that the future will be better, that new possibilities will appear. May hope be our drive so that we are able to give reassurance to those around us who are filled with despair as they see their economic situation worsen. Let us help them to see that there are other values that are also important such as family life, trust between people and faith in God.

From the Registers at St Mary's

Baptism on 7th December 2008 of Joseph John Philip, son of Steven Cox and Katherine Chick

Marriage on December 21st 2008 of Sara Preston and Andrew Wigmore

Church News

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, OLVESTON

| | | | |
|--------|------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Feb 1 | 8am | Holy Communion | Rev Philip Rowe |
| | 10am | Holy Communion | Rev Philip Rowe |
| | 10am | Breakfast Club | Breakfast Club Team |
| | 6pm | Candlemas Vespers with Choir | Mr Denis Jones |
| Feb 8 | 8am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Canon David Sansum |
| | 10am | Morning Worship with Choir | Mrs Janet McBride |
| | 10am | Breakfast Club | Breakfast Club Team |
| | 6pm | Evensong | Rev Philip Rowe |
| Feb 15 | 8am | Holy Communion | Rev Philip Rowe |
| | 10am | Holy Communion with Choir | Rev Philip Rowe- Victory Outreach |
| | 10am | Breakfast Club | Breakfast Club Team |
| | 6pm | Evensong | Hon. Curate David Bone |
| Feb 22 | 8am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Canon David Sansum |
| | 10am | 4 th Sunday | Rev Roly Bain |
| | 10am | Breakfast Club | Breakfast Club Team |
| | 6pm | Evensong (BCP) with Choir | Rev Philip Rowe |

Information on services correct at time of going to press.

Contact: The Rev Philip Rowe, 01454 613223; email:

office@stmaryssevernside.org

Please contact Philip about Baptisms, marriages, funerals or other matters at any time, but please try to avoid Thursdays except in an emergency.

Verger: Mrs. June Robbins, 01454 617491

www.stmarysolveston.org.uk/index.html

PRAYER GROUP: Mondays, 3.00pm in the Church (except third Monday)

WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION: At 9.00am led by the Rev. Roly Bain

CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

| | | | |
|--------|------|----------------|------------------------|
| Feb 1 | 8am | Holy Communion | Hon. Curate David Bone |
| Feb 8 | 10am | Holy Communion | Hon. Curate David Bone |
| Feb 15 | 8am | Holy Communion | Hon. Curate David Bone |
| Feb 22 | 10am | Morning Prayer | Hon. Curate David Bone |

Hon. Curate: Rev David Bone, 01454 614601

Church Wardens: Jo Jenkins, 01454 632838 and Janet Ford, 01454 633300

ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

| | | | |
|--------|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| Feb 1 | 9am | Holy Communion | Rev David Pole |
| Feb 15 | 9am | Matins | Mr Don Streatfield |

Contact: Rev. David Pole 01454 414810; www.sthelensalveston.org

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

| | | | |
|--------|-----|----------------|--------------------|
| Feb 8 | 9am | Matins | Mr Don Streatfield |
| Feb 22 | 9am | Holy Communion | Rev David Pole |

Contact: Rev. David Pole 01454 414810; www.sthelensalveston.org

OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

| | | | |
|--------|------|--------------|--|
| Feb 1 | 10am | Tock. Ch. | Morning Worship led by Rev Tim Harrison Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms |
| | 6pm | Olveston Ch. | Evening Worship led by Rev Peter Mortlock |
| Feb 8 | 10am | Olv. Ch. | All Age Worship led by Rev Iesinga Vunipola. The Breakfast Club will join us later. |
| | 6pm | Tock Ch. | Evening Worship led by Rev Iesinga Vunipola |
| Feb 15 | 10am | Tock. Ch. | Morning Worship led by David Head. Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms. |
| | 4pm | Daldry Gdns | Worship led by Rev Iesinga Vunipola |
| Feb 22 | 10am | Tock. Ch. | Morning Worship led by Mr Glyn Varney |
| | 6pm | Olveston Ch. | Evening Worship led by Rev Peter Mortlock |

LIGHT LUNCHES: Thursday 5th Feb at 12.15 in the Tockington Wesley Rooms. To book your lunch please ring 416056.

NORTHWICK LUNCHEON GROUP: This meets at 12.30pm on Wednesday 4th Feb. To book your lunch please ring 416528

PRAYER MEETINGS: Thursdays at 2.15pm in the Olveston Vestry.

COFFEE MORNINGS: Sats 10.30 - 12 noon in the Olveston Methodist Hall.

CONTACT: Rev Iesinga Vunipola, 01454 412269; Iesinga@hotmail.com

THE VINE, PILNING STREET, AWKLEY

We meet in a relaxed, informal manner for worship, prayer and conversational Bible studies and incorporating Communion, normally on Sundays at 10.30am and Mondays and Wednesdays at 7.30pm. As we also visit other churches and events, please check our Notice Board or contact us. If you would like us to pray for you, your requests can be posted through the letter box at The Vine or sent to us by post or email. Please add a name or initial to identify your request.

Mike and Barbara Matthews, tel. 07840 793772 or email:

thevine_awkley@hotmail.com

THE OASIS CHURCH, OLDOWN

| | | |
|--------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Feb 1 | 6.30pm | Paul Ashford |
| Feb 4 | 10-12.30 | Shirley Lawrenson -Operation Exodus |
| Feb8 | 6.30pm | Roger Greenslade |
| Feb 15 | 6.30pm | Rev Jim Dick |
| Feb 22 | 6.30pm | Ceri Morgan- Davies |

Prayer Time every Thurs 8pm.

For further information please contact **Olwen Wonnacott**, 412141 or **Paul**

Ashford, 07774 110814 or email: Paul@CalebGroup.net

AUST EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Worship and Prayer for Severnside Sat Feb 14th.8pm Phone 632564 for details 'Happy are the people whose God is the Lord'.

BRISTOL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP - Our Sunday morning meetings are held at The Grange School in Warmley at 11 am. Please contact the **Fellowship Office** in Almondsbury on 01454 613305 for more information or on the internet at www.bcfnet.com

RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury - each Sunday

8.30am Mass

11.00 Family Mass

6.30pm Mass

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury

Meeting for Worship Sundays 10.30-11.30: The Hanover Room, The Chantry, Castle St. Wheelchair accessible. Children welcome with prior notice.

Local contact: Elizabeth Sidwell, 412975

National: www.quaker.org.uk Bristol area: www.bristolquakers.org.uk

Diary Dates for February 2009

The information given below is believed to be correct as we go to press.

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|------------------------|
| 1 st Sun | | | |
| 2 nd Mon | | | |
| 3 rd Tue | Tockington Toddlers Friends Walking Group: Frampton Cotterell tel 613912 Royal British Legion - Women | 10.00-12.00 10am 7.30 | WR DGCL |
| 4 th Wed | Keep the Lights on - talk Olv. Par. Hist. Soc: Slavery in the Bristol Area- Madge Dresser | 7.30pm 7.30pm | Chy MH |
| 5 th Thu | Coffee Shop Olveston Baby & Toddler Group | 10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 | OS+ MH |
| 6 th Fri | Twining 'Murder Mystery' | 7.30pm | PH |
| 7 th Sat | Coffee Morning | 10.30-12.00 | MH |
| 8 th Sun | | | |
| 9 th Mon | | | |
| 10 th Tue | Tockington Toddlers Booking for Oklahoma Women's Institute: Thanks for the Memory Mr Merrett Smith Royal British Legion - Men | 10.00-12.00 6.00-7.00pm 7.30pm 7.30pm | WR MH PH DGCL |
| 11 th Wed | Severn Vale Flower Club: AGM Lunch Elizabeth Matheson' - -with the season' Royal British Legion - Men | 10.30 7.30pm | AH DGCL |
| 12 th Thu | Coffee Shop Olveston Baby & Toddler Group Thornbury & District Flower Club -Talk | 10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 7.30pm | OS+ MH TMH |
| 13 th Fri | Junior Musicians in the Library School Term ends | 10.30-11.00 | |
| 14 th Sat | Coffee Morning Music in Thornbury Library | 10.30-12.00 10.30-11.30 | MH |
| 15 th Sun | | | |
| 16 th Mon | | | |
| 17 th Tue | Tockington Toddlers | 10.00-12.00 | WR |
| 18 th Wed | Severnvale Smallholders Association: Puddleditch Farm Shop Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs until 21st | 7.30pm 7.15 | Chy AH |
| 19 th Thu | Coffee Shop | 10.00-12.00 | OS+ |

| | | | |
|----------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------|
| | Olveston Baby & Toddler Group | 2.30-4.30 | MH |
| 20 th Fri | | | |
| 21 st Sat | Coffee Morning | 10.30-12.00 | MH |
| 22 nd Sun | Marlwood School Car Boot Sale | 9.30-1pm | |
| 23 rd Mon | Severn Vale Flower Club: Practice | 1.30pm | AH |
| 24 th Tue | Tockington Toddlers Fibromyalgia Support Group: AGM & Mindfulness | 10.00-12.00 7pm-9pm | WR AMH |
| 25 th Wed | | | |
| 26 th Thu | Coffee Shop Olveston Baby & Toddler Group Thornbury & District Flower Club: AGM | 10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 7.30pm | OS+ MH TMH |
| 27 th Fri | Swishing Party - Olveston Pre-School Cricket Club Quiz | 7.30pm | PH AP |
| 28 th Sat | Coffee Morning Craft Fair | 10.30-12.00 10.00-4pm | MH PH |

Looking ahead to March

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|------|
| 6 th Fri | Women's World Day of Prayer | | St M |
| 6 th Fri | St Peter's Hospice Quiz | 7.15pm | AH |
| 6 th - 8 th | Take the Plunge see p 27 | | |
| 14 th Mar | Music in the Church at Aust | 8pm | AC |

KEY: **AC** Aust Church; **ACR** – Almondsbury Church Rooms; **AH** – Armstrong Hall; **AMC** – Alveston Methodist Church; **AMH**- Alveston Methodist Hall; **AP** – Alexandra Pavilion; **AVH** – Aust Village Hall; **CCCP** – Castle Court Car Park; **CH** – Cossham Hall; **Chy** – Chantry; **DGCL** – Daldry Gardens Community Lounge; **EVH** – Elberton Village Hall; **MH** – Olveston Methodist Hall; **OS** – Olveston School; **OST** – Olveston Stores; **OV** – Olveston Vicarage; **PH** – Olveston Parish Hall; **StM** – St Mary's Church, Olv.; **StMA** Almondsbury Church; **TBCh** - Thornbury Baptist Church; **TMH** – Thorn. Methodist Hall; **URC** - Thornbury United Reform Church; **WR** – Wesley Rooms.

Contact details for any clubs or organisations in the Meeting Point area can be found in the Meeting Point Directory on the community website: www.olvostonandaust.com. If you would like to update your organisation's details, please email: meetingpointsecretary@olvostonandaust.com

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