



# PEN PAPER



Photo: Geoff Parcell

The newsletter of St. Michael's Church and the Parish of Pen Selwood

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## From the Editor

What a wonderful time of year it is to be in Pen Selwood - the greening of the trees, the wild flowers creating a spectacle on the banks and the young lambs frolicking in the fields.

We have started celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday with a beacon and continue in June with a Village Party on the Community Field. Before we know it the Fete and Show will be upon us.

Behind the scenes efforts are being made to simplify and coordinate the running of our activities and resources.

Read all about it in this edition of the Pen Paper.

Geoff Parcell 841216

## Rector's Reflections



### *On a Journey?*

Each year at our Annual Parochial Church Meeting we review the progress of the church in various practical ways, such as fabric and finance, and year by year the measuring of progress can be seen as a sort of journey. But, I ask myself, what about trying to assess things in other terms, such as 'the journey of love and service'? Here is a question for our personal lives as well as for the activity of the church or the wider community.

At April's Annual Meeting we said a lot of thank-yous, particularly to the several people who shared the many church duties between them. But on the question of finance we became aware of how much the church is supported by an even wider range of people in the local community. It was made very clear at the meeting that without the financial gifts of many, St Michael's would not be able to maintain the building or to keep up payments to the diocese (for clergy and back-up administration). Therefore on behalf of the church community I do thank all who support the church financially in this way. Such support is an encouragement to both church and wider community. It is good to know that for many who make a gift to the church, the church has some meaning, significance or positive memory for them.

Clearly the church means different things to different people. To some who don't worship in church, the meaning of church may lie in the beauty and history of the building or church yard. Others are drawn towards the pattern of worship and devotion by the body of the worshipping community. Such feelings and attachments are often deep within us and go back a long way. But if our minds are open to seeing our lives as being on a journey, then we may discover that our feelings about significant things - worship, faith and personal peace - can change, and grow within us, especially if we see ourselves on a day-in, day-out journey of change. In fact, one mark of a worshipping congregation growing in love and wisdom is when we learn to see

ourselves, and others, as fellow travellers who are searching and inquiring about growing in faith and awareness of God.

Journey is on my mind as I am writing this while away on sabbatical study leave. Alongside my physical journey, the awareness of my ongoing spiritual journey grows within me. I realise that this expectation of a heart moving and warming towards things of eternity can also be an expectation I hold when I'm back home. Yes, home can be the place where the journey continues.

With every good wish, Nigel

### **Voices from the Sky**

Waist high in lush long grass  
Pale stalks-legs tickling and tingling  
He stood transfixed under the tangle of brambles  
Eyes straining to take in the wonder of  
Sun, branch and sky  
The voices of blackbird and thrush.  
What was this glad infusion from above, below, all round?  
The joy of sound smell and touch  
Quivering head to toe?  
How could he climb, crawl, reach to embrace  
Air, song, and cloud?  
Peeping between astonished fingers  
He saw the gold messenger  
A bird with speckled breast perched on the fence.  
It cocked its head as if it knew  
And flew away.

by Jeffrey Lee *from his collection "Easter Sunrise"*.

## Recent Events

**Fun Run (aka The Tough 10k)** This popular event was held on 10th April with 98 finishers from a range of clubs including Taunton, Gillingham, Yeovil, Frome, Wells and Poole. There were a number of runners from the village too. The winner was Phill Burden in a time of 35mins 2 secs.



Photo: Charles Whitton



Photo: Charles Whitton

The children's 5k and 2k races proved popular too, Holly Nixon winning the 5k and Oiner Prince (8 yrs) winning the 2k in 10:05.

Thanks to Gillingham Trotters for organising the races and to the volunteer marshals and refreshment providers. The bacon rolls are becoming a major attraction along with the wonderful countryside!

### Sports & Social Coffee Morning

It was bright and sunny for the Coffee Morning held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May at Selbrook Cottage, Underhill with people able to sit outside and enjoy the warmth and the view. Thank you to Tamsin and Charlie for hosting this fundraising event and to all the helpers. Donations of plants, cakes and raffle prizes were much appreciated. We made a profit of £327 to go towards our celebrations for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

Sandra Jenkins

## Café - 3rd Birthday celebration

On 8th April the café was packed to celebrate three years of operation. Free cakes were on offer. You are welcome to drop in on alternate Fridays, when you put the black bins out, between 10:30 and 12 noon.



Coffee, cake and conversation at the café



**The Church Jumble Sale** on 16 April raised £443.70. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and support.

## Beacon

On 21 April Rosalind and Charles Buckler lit a beacon on Beacon Field to form a chain across the UK to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday. About 70 residents joined in the fun taking along their own refreshments. Though the weather wasn't perfect several other beacons could be spotted across the SW. There was a bucket collection for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute (RABI) raising over £130. Photos were sent to RABI and to Buckingham Palace and replies received. See Pen Selwood website ([www.penselwood.ning.com](http://www.penselwood.ning.com)).



Photo: Nick Hall

## Ringing for Leonard Sweetman

On 21 April the church bells were rung in memory of Leonard Sweetman on the 100th anniversary of his death, followed by the planting of a Remembrance poppy in his memory at the war memorial. More about Leonard Sweetman can be found in the March issue of the Pen Paper.



Photo: Heather Doe

## Clubs and Society News

### Sports & Social Club

**Proposed changes:** Following numerous discussions and committee meetings, proposals to make changes to the Sports and Social Club are being considered. It is intended that the club will be wound up in its current form, and will be replaced with a new entity with the working title of Village Social Committee. This body will have representation from the existing committees of: Parish Council, Village Hall, Church, Community Field, Pen Pub, Café and Fete.

The Village Social Committee's remit will be twofold; to organise social and sports activity, and, to improve the facilities and general area of the village.

It will become responsible for managing the resources of our village such as the Village Hall, Community Field, Footpaths & Bridleways and the Defibrillator. It will oversee the organising of the Fete, Pen Pub, Café, Fun Run and social events such as the Village supper, coffee mornings, clubs and Charity fund-raising.

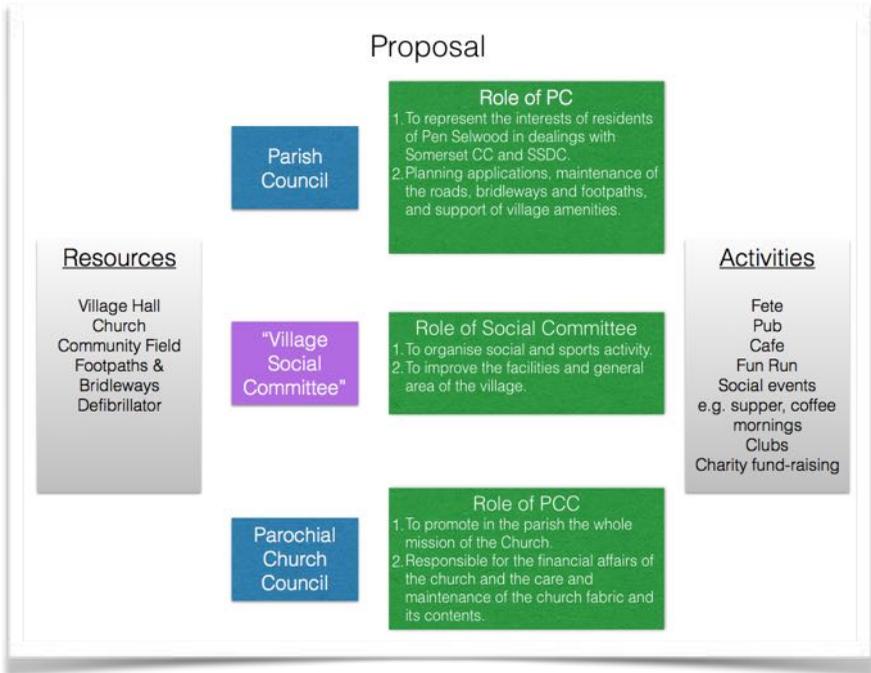
The benefits of making this change include improving coordination - "joined up thinking"- when planning and organising events in the village. It will also reduce internal accounting, which currently results in minuscule amounts of money being passed between existing committees and its resulting accounting overheads. It will provide a single overview of village resources, activities, priorities and funding needs.

By adopting this approach, there will be no changing of the legal structures or contraventions of covenants contained in the agreements under which the Village Hall is leased and the Community Field was purchased.

The Village Social Committee will function alongside The Parish Council and Parochial Parish Council as illustrated below.

In the coming weeks an inaugural meeting of the Village Social Committee will be called to elect its founding members and to establish its terms of reference and articles of association. I will keep the village

residents informed on developments and the date of the initial meeting. In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please contact me on 01747 840 697 or [tonyharrison@ahhe.co.uk](mailto:tonyharrison@ahhe.co.uk).



## Pen Selwood Allotment Association

We still have vacancies for a part or a whole plot at the site located in the centre of the village. Currently harvesting rhubarb, purple sprouting broccoli and asparagus, we are anticipating bumper crops of currants and broad beans in June! There is still time to plant young vegetable plants and enjoy a harvest yourself this year.

To find out more, please contact Jackie Collins (Chairman) on 840072.

## History Society

The History Society has had some lively meetings lately covering Pen Selwood in its Iron Age environment, a geophysical survey on Beacon Hill and the Battle of Pen Selwood 1016 when Edmund Ironside fought

against Cnut. The last meeting of the season will be on 2 June with a stroll to Cockroad Castle, the third of our Motte and Bailey Castles.

Geoff Parcell 841216

## Garden notes for Pen

Perhaps we should blame it all on the “mystical” jet stream, but what a shock. I was starting to think that spring, heralded by yellow brimstones (so we are told), had finally arrived after our “oh so mild winter”, but we did not know what surprises we were to experience – hot weather alternating with cold, plus frosts. If that is how we see it, how can our poor plants cope with it? As well as a surfeit of slugs, the signs are that we may lose some shrubs and perennials, all fooled into reacting too fast to clement but temporary weather conditions.

It pays this year to be patient in putting out plants and seed sowing; too early means failure - a time when weeds are useful in indicating good conditions for plant growth. And when May arrived so did the weed growth, suddenly, giving the lesson of patience as far as gardening is concerned.

One good thing is that many spring flowering shrubs have looked so lovely this year, and hopefully did not suffer too much from the night frosts. Don't forget to prune them when the flowers die, and remember the importance of bulb deadheading, and compost making.

In a more positive way, try to plan the vegetable and fruit patch in accordance with the weather, and have fun with it, perhaps trying a few new vegetables. Who knows, some obscure research team might decide that something is bound to make us live to 160 – if we want to that is!

Don't make the mistake of working too arduously in the garden when the sun shines to entice you out. Always make time to sit and enjoy it, and don't feel guilty about that, just pretend you are planning new concepts. These might even involve a lot of work!

PG

## Parish Council Chairman's year report

Looking back over the year's meetings, what stands out as the most important and difficult things the Parish Council have to deal with are planning applications. These take up a great deal of our work. Our role is an advisory one to the District planners. Sometimes we agree with them, sometimes not, sometimes the applications are easy, sometimes difficult and involve extra meetings. On occasions we have disagreed with a decision and asked for it to be reconsidered by the Area East planning committee. Sometimes we lose.

We started the year with a complex and difficult one involving a landslip and have ended it with an exciting one, that of the transformation of the old Wessex Water Pump House into a home and the old reservoir into a walled garden.

This year saw the resignation of our clerk, Kevin Stow, who left us to concentrate on a new business venture. We were very pleased to recruit Anne Kaile as our new clerk in January.

Our roads and verges are mostly in good shape - the usual problems surfaced over the year - mud on the roads, potholes to be filled and the really tricky one - when to cut the verges. Our salt bins were full but with the mild winter no salt was used on the roads this year.

We do try to get things right. We had thought to have the welcome booklet information solely on line, but following representations from villagers, quickly reinstated updated paper copies. These now, as before, will be delivered to all newly arrived residents.

For the first time in around eight years we voted to increase the precept as spending exceeded income last year. This will enable us to keep supporting village things such as the Pen Paper, the Churchyard, the website and footpath clearing and stile mending.

### PEN SELWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

#### *Chairman:*

Jenny Steadman 01747 841041

#### *Councillors:*

Tony Appleton 01747 840168

Jane Ashman 01747 841481

Adrian Carter 01747 841431

Peter Fitzgerald 01747 840895

Andrew Jenkins 01747 840773

Alex Juckes 01747 841437

#### *Parish Clerk:*

Anne Kaile 01747 854565

What else to say, well I guess we will just go on as before, doing the best we can for our lovely village and the people who live here.

I think the Parish Council is a great team and I would like to thank every one of them for all their hard work, help and support throughout this year.

Jenny Steadman

## Swallows

Those who look at the Village web site may have been a bit perplexed by the entry on April 8<sup>th</sup> logging the first sighting of a swallow at precisely 9.32AM. "Jeremy is losing the plot" would have been a reasonable reaction! However I just want to explain the pleasure and excitement I gain from the first sighting of our summer visitors.



When we moved into Woodlands 5 years ago the building was of course brand new. The following year we had our first swallows, who enjoy nesting under the eave on the front of the house. We are particularly lucky as we can observe them at eye level, re-building their nests and then rearing and training their young.

The first pair were early this year, they have flown all the way from South Africa, through Morocco, and come back to Pen to raise their families, before flying back in mid September. They raise 2-3 hatches of between 4-5 eggs, so the population builds up fairly quickly. The young take to the wing after 3 weeks and remain with us for the remainder of Summer. They live off insects, feeding on the wing, and at the beginning of September begin to congregate in the evening. Sometimes one can be seen anything up to a hundred flying around the house, dive bombing me as I mow the lawn!

Suddenly the next morning they are all gone. Back to South Africa, 200 miles a day, some die of exhaustion but the majority make their destination, safe in the knowledge that there will always be a welcome the following year in our lovely village of Pen Selwood.

Jeremy Cox

## Farming Diary

### **Some personal thoughts on the impending EU Referendum as it affects farming**

My thoughts are chiefly centred around the Common Agricultural Policy [CAP] which claws back more than half of the UK's payment into the EU.

The CAP provides money, mainly for farmers and foresters, to aid investment and continuity of supply in an industry which has to accept world commodity prices and is not able to charge on a cost of production plus profit basis. The CAP is also, to a lesser extent, directed towards food manufacturing, the environment and rural development. There are additional Structural Funds for investment in the least developed regions such as Cornwall, to reduce regional disparities, and for research and development.

The CAP has worked in turning a food shortage into a food surplus (which has the consequence of bringing down farm gate prices), and then it turned towards helping the environment and sustainability. It is overly complex as it attempts to equalise its effect over 28 very different countries.

If we leave the EU and the CAP there is no indication or promise that any British Government would continue to support agriculture to the same extent. DEFRA has stated that there is no Plan B and both the main parties have said they want to reduce payments to farmers.

The result, as I see it, would soon be fewer farmers farming much greater acreages in the manner of a big business, and the appearance and nature of the countryside would change forever. However the same historically could have been said of the Enclosures Acts taking in the Common Land and the Open Field System, or going further back to when the native woodland and scrub was cleared for early farming efforts.

Man has always overcome, or at least learned to live with nature; it's the politicians and bureaucrats that are much harder to live with!

Charles Buckler

## Noticeboard

### **Village Fete**

Don't forget the Village Fete on 6th August opening at 12 noon. The main attractions are a Vintage Car Display, Circus Skills and music by Mustang Sally. The fete will be opened by Lucy Nelson. In addition to the White Elephant (Dick and Rita Capron) there will be a second-hand clothes and accessories stall (Susan Appleton.) Both are now accepting donations. This is a great chance to join in making this our biggest Fete ever. There are lots of opportunities, contact Jeremy Cox to offer your support. Money raised is shared between the Parish Church, the Village Hall and the Community Field.

Jeremy Cox 840325

### **Flower & Produce Show**

This year's show, as always on the afternoon of the Pen Selwood Fete, will be on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August, in St Michael's Church. A copy of the schedule of classes and prizes is being distributed with this edition of the Pen Paper. The Show may not be a big fund raiser but it is a key attraction on the day and the vast majority of people at the fete pay it a visit and they love it. The church looks so beautiful with its colourful displays of flowers, produce, arts, crafts, photographs, children's exhibits and such. We should take pride in this as it all comes from Pen residents and their families.

It would, however, look even better with more exhibits so, to this end, if you are a regular entrant please continue to enter whatever you can and if not a regular then why not support our village and enter this year? If you are competitive then if you enter enough classes you might well win a trophy and if you are not then enter for the simple pleasure of it and to make our show bigger and better.

Ian Steadman

## Village Party

Let me start with an apology. One beady-eyed reader of the previous Pen Paper contacted me and asked, *“Which street is the Street Party being held on?”* To which my uneasy reply was, *“It is not being held on a street but on the Community Field.”* I was ahead of the enquirer but helpless to intervene before the retort came with the speed and agility of a combine harvester, *“Well then it can’t be a Street Party, can it?”*

Of course, my challenger is right and I apologise for misinforming everyone. The function on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June on the Community Field is a Pen Selwood Village ~~Street~~ Party in celebration of Her Majesty’s 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. There are joint themes of Red, White and Blue plus 1953, the year of Her Majesty’s coronation to inspire our outfits (optional) and our decorations. This will be a “Bring and Share” picnic, the idea being that you bring what you want to eat and drink (and some to share), your tables etc. We will provide a marquee, 1950’s music and games for the whole family. The running order for the day will be:

13:00 The Community Field will be open to partygoers

14:30 Church Service of thanksgiving for Her Majesty’s life of service

15:00 Games available for people to play and a selection of fun races and activities for children.

18:00 Hog roast available at a price ~ £5.00 per head

18:00 Pen Pub opens

It will be a marvellous day and we hope to see everyone come down and have loads of fun in the sun.

Tony Harrison

## Village Walks

We seem to have missed spring and arrived in summer and we have some interesting walks to look forward to.

**Thursday 23rd June 10:30am** After voting for the referendum join Mike Carson (841563) outside the church for a walk to Hunters Lodge for lunch. Dogs are welcome so if it is wet we will walk to The White Lion instead as dogs are allowed inside there.

**Thursday 14th July 10am** Jeremy Cox (840325) will lead us on a 7K walk over the most beautiful downland with accompanying talk on wild flowers by Libby Dineley. Sandwich lunch in the pub afterwards. Dogs welcome. Meet at Woodlands Berwick St John Grid ref ST951232, full details on parking nearer the date.

**Monday 15th August 2:30pm** Jennifer Bower (840335) will lead a dog friendly walk starting from Pear Ash Farm corner lasting one hour. There is room for a few cars to park in that area.

Jennifer Bower



**Pen Pub Night** - on the first Friday of every month (except August). Do come along and join other villagers by relaxing in our very own Village Hall. Families most welcome. Make the most of the longer days & summer warmth by watching the sunset from our fabulous vantage point whilst your children play in the playing field. Local real ale and cider, quality wine and soft drinks at local prices along with complimentary nibbles.

Pen Pub will once again be operating our hugely successful beer tent at the Village Fete to help wash down your burger whilst listening to the entertainment - we look forward to seeing you there!

Rob Backus

## **Spectra Musica's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

For those of you who do not know Spectra, it is a local chamber choir which rehearses in Wincanton and performs a wide range of music from Monteverdi to Gershwin. Elizabeth Carter sings with it and was on the committee for many years.

Spectra has now been running for 10 years and we shall be holding a celebratory concert on Saturday 2 July at Wincanton Roman Catholic church. A string quintet formed of players from the Bath Philharmonia will be playing with us as well as the wonderful pianist, Anita d'Attellis, who has accompanied us throughout. Her piano playing is worth coming along for in its own right. The programme has not yet been finalised, but it will include pieces by Purcell, Finzi, Edward German and

Scott Joplin. Please put the dates in your diaries now and look out for the posters.

If any singers have moved into the village recently, we are looking for new members, especially tenors and basses. It is an auditioned choir, so some previous experience and the ability to read music are desirable. If you are interested, please phone Elizabeth Carter on 841431, who can tell you more and put you in touch with the current chair to arrange an audition.

**Pen Selwood Dog Show** to be held at Pen Ridge Farm (the water-works field) by kind permission of Bryan Young on Sunday 14th August. In aid of Greyhound Rescue West of England. The Show opens at 10.30 a.m. Entries taken from 11.00 a.m Judging starts at midday. There will be four pedigree classes and eleven novelty classes. There will also be a 'Fly Ball' demonstration, car boot and stalls. See website for details.

We encourage other stalls to attend (i.e. a cake stall, teas, coffees etc.)

Susan Appleton

## **Return of the Pen Selwood Variety Show**

Who can forget more than thirty residents of Pen singing songs, reciting poetry, recounting tall tales, chasing bears up trees, firing people from canons or the Parish Council sending themselves up in a spoof meeting and other such fine entertainments?

So, six years on from "*The Amazing Pen Selwood Variety Show*" of April 2010, Charlie Meaden and Ian Steadman have recklessly decided to stage another in the Village Hall on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

This time we want to involve twice as many people! Everyone has a favourite bit of poetry or prose they can read out or sing a song or perhaps do a magic trick. Group together and do a sketch or an act. If you have an idea we will support you. If you don't we can give you ideas. All we need is your willingness to join in. If you are up for it – and why wouldn't you be? – just let Ian or Charlie know (841041 / 840988) and some time in the summer we will convene a meeting to share ideas and get things rolling.

## Church Services



Sun 5 June	9am Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun 12 June	9am Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 19 June	9am Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 26 June	6:30pm Evensong
Sun 3 July	9am Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun 10 July	9am Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 17 July	9am Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 24 July	6:30pm Evensong
Sun 31 July	9am Matins
Sun 7 Aug	9am Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun 14 Aug	10:30am United Service: Family worship at Wincanton Parish Church. No service at St Michael's
Sun 21 Aug	9am Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 28 Aug	6.30pm Evensong

### **St Michael's Pen Selwood**

Rector: The Revd. Nigel Feaver

Parish Office: Tel. 01963 824503

Church Warden: Jeremy Cox

Tel. 01747 840325

**Welcome to:**

Rosie, a new daughter for Louisa & Martin Reeves

Vivienne and Frank Clifton have moved into Queen's Grove

Paul Shinar and Richard Elborough at Pen House Farm

Chris and Janet Bush at Coombe Side

**Thanks to Don Hoare - Oil Buying Group**

Don has lived in Pen Selwood with his wife Beryl for over 42 years and he has been negotiating discounts on our fuel oil for 10 years. He took over from Peter Llewellyn who set up the group. He was well qualified for the role. Having run the Citroen dealership in Mere he is well used to dealing with petrol companies. He has proved to be a tough negotiator over the years and saves us about 4 pence a litre on our heating bills. He is now handing over the reins to Richard Gething.

He says he'll miss the contact with people and has really appreciated the co-operation of everyone in making his job straightforward.

Does he have any advice for us? He has had to deal with customers who thought their oil had been stolen until Don suggested checking the tank with a dip stick, rather than relying on the internal electronic gauge! He also advocates topping up regularly and keeping the tank full. If your tank needs replacing then go for a larger one if space permits.

What does he plan with the time saved? More golf and an ambition to finally master his iPad!

If you are interested in joining the Oil Buying group then contact Richard Gething on 841481.

The Pen paper is the community newsletter of the parish of Pen Selwood containing news about St Michaels Church, Parish Council matters and other community activities. Contributions for the next issue should be submitted by 15 August 2016 to Geoff Parcell at Manor Barn or email: ourpenselwood@gmail.com. Items can be handwritten, typed or sent by email. The next issue will be published in Sept 2016.

## Village Diary

Day	Event	see page
Every Mon	9am Nordic Walking [Helen Gilchrist 07745 413194]	
Every Mon	7:30pm Bell Ringing [Jennifer Bower 840335]	
Every Tues	7pm Yoga [Anne Openshaw 840129]	
Every Wed	10am Silton Art Group [Joyce Butler 835978]	
Every Thurs	2pm Pen Art Group [Helen Aylett 826468]	
Alternate Fri	10:30am Black Bin Café [Jenny Steadman 841041]	
Thurs 2 Jun	5pm History Society Cockroad Castle [Geoff 841216]	16
Fri 3 June	7:30 pm Pen Pub Night	15
Sun 12 June	Village Party on Community Field	14
Fri 17 June	10:15 Mobile Library at Old Orchard lay-by	
Thur 23 Jun	EU Referendum	
Thur 23 Jun	10:30 Village Walk [Mike Carson 841563]	14
Fri 1 July	7:30 pm Pen Pub Night	15
Sat 2 July	Spectra Musica Wincanton RC Church	15
Wed 13 July	7:30pm Parish Council meeting	
Thur 14 July	10am Village Walk [Jeremy Cox 840325]	15
Fri 15 July	10:15 Mobile Library at Old Orchard lay-by	
Sat 6 Aug	12 noon Village Fete	16
Sat 6 Aug	Flower & Produce Show	16
Fri 12 Aug	10:15 Mobile Library at Old Orchard lay-by	
Sun 14 Aug	Pen Selwood Dog Show	17
Mon 15 Aug	2:30pm Village Walk [Jennifer Bower 840335]	15