

Stoneleigh & Ashow

News



February 2026



“The Heart of Stoneleigh Defibrillator”

In the phone box on The Green

Coordinator

David Ellwood 07785 284482

Text if no reply.

There is also a defibrillator outside the Village Hall

Trained Volunteers

John Churchley 07885 496795

Laura Elliot 07738 222969

David Ellwood 07785 284482

Richard Hancox 07596 276829

Ian Huston 07974 237331

Sharron McEldowney 07760 101775

Claire Neale 07557 675842

Martin Smith 07958 955629

Mary Taylor 07890 535506

Remember: always ring 999 first

“You Don’t Look Like a Vicar” – Revd Petrică Bistran

Lent may be arriving early this year, but for now we are still in the season of Epiphany — which, in church terms, is Christmas extended... like the leftovers you keep reheating because they’re just too good to let go. Epiphany, of course, is all about revealing — about God being made known in surprising ways.

Which brings me to one of the greatest compliments I’ve ever received in my ministry.

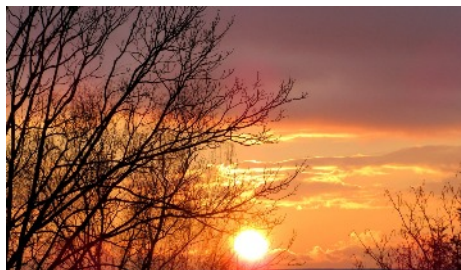
I was at a carol concert in the village hall, dressed in my finest festive attire: a Christmas jumper over my clerical shirt, a cap on my head, and wellies on my feet — the full “country chic” look. A parishioner looked at me, slightly puzzled, and said, “You don’t look like a vicar.”

I was delighted! Truly. Beaming. Because the truth is, I have no idea what a vicar is *supposed* to look like — but I do know I wasn’t trying to be *Reverend Santa*.

Epiphany reminds us not to be fooled by appearances. The wise men didn’t find God in a palace, but in a baby. Jesus didn’t arrive dressed for power, but wrapped in humility. God has a habit of showing up where we least expect Him — in jumpers, wellies, village halls, and ordinary conversations.

So perhaps Epiphany is an invitation for us too: to stop worrying about how “holy” we look, and focus instead on how honestly we live. To remember that God reveals Himself not through costumes or clichés, but through love, authenticity, and grace.

In other words, God coming to us in Jesus — choosing to be like one of us — is a bit like God putting on a Christmas jumper, just so we wouldn’t miss Him.



Stoneleigh History Society

You may receive this magazine in time for our January meeting on Tuesday 27th January 2026, when we have a double bill: First, Adrian Clarke will give us the answer to “Who put the Lanch into the Lanchester Polytechnic?”, telling us about the life of Dr Fred Lanchester. Then we shall view a film made by the late Will Blagburn, documenting the Campaign to Stop Expansion of the Airport in the first decade of the 21st century. Perhaps you were involved in this campaign yourself? All visitors would be very welcome, particularly if you have memories to share. Nora Blagburn will be adding to the film with memories of her own.

If you miss this, come along to the following meeting on Tuesday 24th February, when we have even more to discover! The evening consists of three presentations by our members. First, Peter James has researched *"The Man who saved Kenilworth Castle"*, the story of John Siddeley. Next, Margaret Moorhouse will tell us about *"Coventry Whitefriars, from religious foundation to workhouse"* and Sue Crofts will conclude with *"The brass band conductor and his defiant daughter"*, a tale of working-class life in West Yorkshire at the beginning of the 20th century.

Something for everyone!

Please do come along to the Village Hall for a 7.30pm start (£3 to include refreshments) or why not make 2026 the year you join the Society?

www.stoneleighhistorysociety.org.uk

Sheila Woolf



Kenilworth Castle



Coventry Whitefriars

Film Night

March's film will be:
Six Minutes to Midnight

Background to the story:

Six Minutes to Midnight is set in Bexhill on Sea where Eddie Izzard's family is from and where he spent a lot of time as a child. His connection to the town and his success led the Bexhill Museum to ask him to become a patron. On Eddie's first visit to the museum the curator there, Julian Porter, showed Eddie the school badge from the real Augusta-Victoria College for girls, sparking the whole idea for the film. A cross in the right-hand corner and a union jack in the left-hand corner got Eddie thinking. Through conversations with local historians and the museum he discovered the school was a finishing school for daughters and God-daughters of important Germans.

Stars: Eddie Izzard, Judi Dench, Jim Broadbent



Friday March 13th 2026 in
Stoneleigh Village Hall
Meet 6.45pm for a
7pm showing

Please can you bring a cup and plate.
Coffee, tea and pastries will be served in the
interval.

Entry price £4.00, to cover refreshments
and room hire.

To reserve a place and a pastry call Jane on 01926 858315 by

Wednesday March 11th

DON'T FORGET DOWNTON ABBEY - THE GRAND

FINALE ON FRIDAY JANUARY 30TH.

Stoneleigh Community Orchard



Pete Freeman

It would be misconceived to think that orchard-related work grinds to a halt during the winter months. There is of course a plethora of seasonal tasks to complete, most notably pruning and tree maintenance. Mid-November also saw the Orchard board's close of year meeting which allowed directors to reflect on what went right in 2025 and what needs to be refined and improved going forward. I would like to thank fellow director and treasurer Richard Hancox for all his hard work in finalising our year end accounts. Decisions to come out of this meeting included a date for the 2026 "Spring Festival" of Saturday 16th May at 14:00. There was also a debate to consider giving structure to processes surrounding the distribution of Orchard funds within the Stoneleigh Community. It was agreed to design a form to facilitate this which we are currently working on and developing. Another notable topic for discussion was to give a timescale for Stoneleigh Brandy to become available for sale. We are working towards making Brandy available this coming Autumn so "keep an eye out for this".

As this article is being written, I am awaiting the imminent visit of personnel from the WDC food inspection team. This is a statutory and periodic inspection for all food and drink suppliers to undergo, prior to selling products and covers hygiene aspects of our cider production facility, a factor of the highest importance and priority to the Orchard.

Regular readers of the S&A News may recall that the Orchard has taken more than a passing interest in the local environmental issues. Given the incidence of regular flooding in the local area in recent years a dialogue had been opened with HS2 and the EA. It seems that our observations haven't fallen on deaf ears. HS2 appear to have excavated land upstream

of their river rail crossing, at the confluence of the river Sowe & Avon this may act as a flood reservoir to mitigate upstream flooding at Stoneleigh, a feature that I'm sure they would argue they'd always had planned

The EA (Environment Agency) responded magnificently to a fallen tree blocking the river adjacent to the Orchard last winter, so we'll see if responses are consistent to current and similar problems manifesting in the vicinity of the Motslow Bridge.

Orchard Friends' subscriptions and yearly renewals for 2026 will cost £10 and can be made to Pete Freeman as Chairman or to Richard Hancox as Treasurer.

Cheques should be made payable to Stoneleigh Village Community Orchard, however why not become a long term friend and set up a direct debit.

Pete Freeman (Chairman), 5 Church Lane, Stoneleigh

Petefreeman773@gmail.com

Richard Hancox (Treasurer) Hancox,

Richard.Hancox@nationalhighways.co.uk



Stoneleigh WI

The beginning of December was quite busy. At our monthly meeting Sheila Woolf was our speaker. She spoke about Mary Dormer Harris, a noted historian in the area and born in Stoneleigh.

We then had our annual Christmas lunch at Stoneleigh Golf Club which was as excellent as always.

In January our meeting was a social one when games were played.

A coffee morning has been arranged at King's Hill Nursery and a lunch is planned in February.

Our next meeting is the first Monday in February when the speaker is Peter Walters who will talk about the history of Coventry. We start at 2pm and everyone is welcome.

Liz Sykes

The Leigh Educational Foundation

Did you know you can apply for a grant? The Foundation exists to help young people under the age of 25 with funding to support education or training. You are eligible if your family lives in Stoneleigh, Ashow, Burton Green or Leek Wootton.

Examples of the type of assistance which can be given include:

- Individual help for school trips, both home and abroad
- Assistance with school uniform/equipment of all kinds
- Help with an individual's School/College/University expenses
- Support for youth groups, teams, Scouts, Guides, Cubs, Brownies and the like

If you would like more information, please contact the Clerk to the Foundation, James Johnson. He can assist you in submitting an application via our website, or can send you a paper copy of the application form. You can find out more by visiting:

<https://leigheducationalfoundation.org.uk>

or contacting James directly on 07831 816638

or johnson.jfgm@gmail.com .



Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir.

On behalf of the SMVC I would like to wish everyone a belated Happy New Year. As we enter a new year the choir has again started rehearsing in the village hall. Kevin Stannard, our MD, is taking a short sabbatical and we are grateful to Alison Boyd for stepping in and helping us during Kevin's absence.

Forthcoming Events:

February 16th - singing at the Little Ray of Sunshine Cafe in the Kenilworth Centre.

March 21st - We are holding a concert in Stoneleigh Village Hall in aid of Fighting Prostate Cancer.(see the advert elsewhere in the magazine for further details)

If anyone likes singing and is interested in joining the choir, please come along to one of our rehearsals on a Wednesday evening in Stoneleigh Village Hall at 7.30pm or contact Philip Jones on 07910240453,01926 853511 or kathryngjones@hotmail.co.uk for further details.

Philip Jones

Royal British Legion Appeal 2025

When the last issue of the magazine went to print in mid November the final amount was unavailable. I am delighted to announce that £3264.42 was raised. A magnificent total. Thank you to everyone who helped raise this wonderful amount.



Kate and Philip Jones

Ashow Church News

Ashow PCC would like to thank everyone who helped to make our Christmas services so memorable.

At the end of November we celebrated the beginning of Advent with a candlelit Advent Carol Service organized by Fraser Watts, assisted by Susan Spencer on the organ, followed by tea, coffee and mince pies in the church. Fraser also organised our Christmas Carol Service which took place on Sunday 21st December.

The church was beautifully decorated for the occasion. A big thank you to everyone who helped, particularly to Anne Gregory and Jean Shrimpton who assembled the large floral decorations. The Christmas tree was again donated by the Stoneleigh Estate so thank you to Stephen Harvey for arranging this. The service was followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the village club. We are grateful to Tony Gregory for heating up the mulled wine and the members of the congregation who provided the mince pies.

Sadly Susan Spencer had a nasty fall before Christmas and so was unable to conduct the Leek Wootton Bellringers. However, Jonathan Kingston stepped into the breech and they played beautifully, doing Susan proud. Everyone at Ashow Church wishes Susan a speedy recovery as she is greatly missed.

Both carol services and the service on Christmas Day were very well attended and joyous occasions.

I would like to finish by wishing everyone a belated but very happy 2026.



Kate Jones

Mobile Library Service



The mobile library will visit the following locations in 2026:

- Wren Day Nursery, Stoneleigh Park: 1:40–2:10pm
[Mobile Libraries : Locations - Show - 355](#)
- Stoneleigh Village Hall: 2:20–2:45pm
[Mobile Libraries : Locations - Show - 344](#)

Visits will occur on the following dates:

- 9th February • 9th March • 10th April • 8th May • 1st June
- 29th June • 27th July • 24th August • 21st September
- 19th October • 16th November • 14th December

The library provides lift access and offers a diverse selection of books, including large print editions, audiobooks, and children's literature. For further information, please contact the library via email at mobilelibraryservice@warwickshire.gov.uk or telephone at 01926 851031.

Any recommendations for a book that we could feature in next month's magazine would be greatly appreciated. Email via sanewsletter30@gmail.com
This month's pick is Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell—read the bestseller before seeing its award-winning film adaptation, nominated for 6 Golden Globes.



Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir Wishing You All Well For 2026

If you had stopped me in Kenilworth on Wednesday 10th December 2025 and asked had I seen three kings wandering about looking for a new born babe, I would have told you, “Yes indeed,” for, dear friends they were making their way to St Francis of Assisi Church to take part in the SMVC Christmas Concert. As usual the Choir were helping kick off the Christmas Season with their annual celebration. A packed Church enjoyed a selection of Festive Songs and Carols in which the audience were invited to join, and did most heartily. Father Ryan kindly agreed to give the warm welcoming address and we were delighted to have in the audience our Life President Mr Alan Biddle.

The opening of the concert was quite splendid as the Choir sang a special arrangement of “In The Bleak Mid-Winter”, written for an exam by a GCSE student of our incomparable Music Director, Kevin Stannard. A moving piece especially in the hushed lighting of the Church. The Choir then started “Marching to the Beat of a Different Drum”, well actually a tambourine struck robustly, yet rhythmically, by the said MD, as the “boys” processed down the three aisles to the front of the Church (The Performance Area) to “The Carol of the Drum” [aka The Little Drummer Boy] pa rum pum pum puming happily as they went. The evening began with our ever- present and long-suffering conductor, Judy Hadfield keeping all in order.

Congregational carols and songs sung by a choir were interspersed with excellent readings of Christmas-related tales, one touching, one funny about a young school child moaning about the part given in the School Nativity play by the teacher, one Mr Stannard!! The reader was the multi-talented Kate McCutcheon, a Choir favourite guest. There was also an amazing soloist Debbie Koster who sang most beautifully “Star of Bethlehem” and later “When a Child is Born” backed by SMVC K-Pop Singers! Your reporter had thought this was an ABBA song “When a Child is Born” but no it was the Johnny Mathis hit! (Apologies to sensible readers!). Following the star those three kings I mentioned earlier, brought their gifts for the new born.

After the Choir had been “Walking in the Air” they were brought down to earth by some amazing facts from guest Mr Neil Morris of Kenilworth

Heartsafe, SMVC's chosen charity for the evening.

This amazing charity has already placed 35 easily-accessible defibrillator machines around the Kenilworth Area and given appropriate training to several hundred volunteers to save lives in the event of a sudden heart attack incident on our streets and public places. The evening raised around £1000 towards their cause, thanks to the generosity of our supporting audience.

Now someone had to follow that – so we chose the audience! They enthusiastically sang their way through the “Twelve Days of Christmas” although it must be said the performance was well frankly.... a bit up and down! They know what I mean! The performance was rounded off by renditions of “The Christmas Song”, “Silent Night” and “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”.

Father Ryan gave a final Blessing and thanks were given by the Choir Chairman, Phil Jones. All then retired for delicious mince pies supplied by The Bakers Dozen of Leyes Lane, Kenilworth and lashings of mulled wine.

The Choir are indebted to Father Ryan for use of the Church and Lorraine Taylor Hoff and colleagues for arranging use of the Church Hall for the refreshments and of course our dear friends, the audience, who supported us so enthusiastically and generously.

December proved to be a busy month for the lads in green. On Wednesday 17th December they joined forces with Stoneleigh Ladies Choir at Stoneleigh Village Club for a few traditional songs and carols then on to Kenilworth Castle on 20th to support Kenilworth Lions Carols at the Castle. Those that were still left standing joined the congregation at St Mary's Church Stoneleigh for the Christmas Carol Service.

Thanks to all of you who have yet again so generously supported the Choir during 2025 and we hope to see you again in 2026. Our good wishes go to everyone as we venture into a new year.



Rod Owen

STONELEIGH LADIES CHOIR



Although most of us are now firmly focused on Spring, we are pleased to report a very successful Christmas season.

Our charity concert in aid of Warwickshire Vision and Coventry Vision Hub was completely sold out. In fact, we had a waiting list for returned tickets at one point. Representatives from each of the charities attended the concert together with a guide dog who occasionally let his presence be known with a bark of approval! I'm delighted to report that the Choir has been able to donate £500 to each of the charities.

If you weren't in the Christmas spirit before, you certainly would have been after the community carol singing in the village Club. This was a new joint venture with the Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir and those who attended really entered into the spirit. The original idea was to sing outside but it was rather windy and there was a threat of rain, so a last-minute decision was made to stay inside the Club which was beautifully decorated and nice and warm! Everyone agreed it was a great evening and should certainly be repeated next Christmas.

The Carol Concert in Church rounded off the season with a beautiful service again with the male voice choir and the members of the congregation.

The choir has started a new season of music with a number of events scheduled throughout the year which we will report on nearer the dates.

Information and contact details may be found on our website www.stoneleIGHLadieschoir.org or by telephoning 07817 899091.

Pat Wightman



HS2 Update February 2026

I hope that all readers are well. This year is going to be challenging for us locally. There will undoubtedly be many temporary road closures as parts of the road network are realigned, resurfaced and so on in accordance with the project schedule.

Residents should be aware of a road closure at the bottom of Crewe Lane on Monday 2nd February (one day only).

There will also be works at the Stoneleigh crossroads, with two one day closures Saturdays 7th and 21st February.

The road closure in the B4113 (from Stoneleigh Bridge up to the Showground) will continue to 1st February, with another 5 week closure from 23rd March. (All these dates may be subject to change).

Warwickshire County Council have been running a consultation to reduce the speed limit and to close a section of Crewe Lane. Timescale unknown if it is implemented.

Finally we are warned that there will be a 14 month closure of Dalehouse Lane some time in the spring of this year.

Knock-on impacts on bus services etc are no doubt to follow.

Sorry not to have better news for you!

Martin Smith for the
Stoneleigh Action Group



Stoneleigh Village Club



COFFEE MORNING
Thursday
February 12th and
26th.
10:00am - 11:30am

*Come along, enjoy a hot drink
and catch up with friends.
Everyone is welcome!*

£1 donation



This edition of Stoneleigh and Ashow News was compiled by Jane Taylor, who would like to thank all contributors.

The online colour version can be viewed at the

Stoneleigh Village Facebook page.

The March 2026 edition will be compiled by

Sarah Ballinger

sanewsletter30@gmail.com

Copy deadline: 16th February 2026

Placing an advertisement in Stoneleigh & Ashow News
Our page format size is A5. Rates **per annum (10 editions)** are:

Full page (13 x 19cm)	£100
Half page (13 x 9.5cm)	£50
Quarter page (portrait or landscape) (6.5 x 9.5cm or 13 x 5cm)	£25

Rates for advertising in a single edition are:

Full page (1 edition + £10 each extra edition)	£20
Half page (1 edition + £5 each extra edition)	£10
Quarter page (1 edition + £5 each extra edition)	£10

How to create your advertisement

To place an advertisement, or for general enquiries, please email the Treasurer,
Bill Crofts at sanewsletter30@gmail.com

Please state:

- The size of the ad you would like.
- The artwork if you have it ready.
- The editions in which you would like your advertisement to be published.

Once received, you will be invoiced based on your request. Please note that, in order to have each edition printed, we need to complete the above by the 16th of the month prior to your first requested edition, e.g. 16th April for the May edition. We are happy to provide help with any advertisement request.

Stoneleigh Village Club

Est. 1856

*www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub
stoneleigh.villageclub@gmail.com*



The club has been busy over Christmas with lots going on. The children all enjoyed a visit from Santa who kindly fitted us in even though he had a busy week.

Christmas Eve was a worry when our lovely barmaid Jo had a fall and was unable to cover the bar. Once again Liz Wrist, Nigel and Susan stepped in at the last minute. Thanks again guys, what would we do without you?

Finally, the grown-ups (at least those who did not have the flu lurgy that was going around) had a great time seeing the New Year in with the All-Fab Beatles. A very Happy New Year to all our members and neighbours. Let's hope it will be another great year for us all.

Generally the club has been busy and Fletch and Jo have worked hard together on several evenings where there have been events or parties. Thanks to you both – the footfall is up, and the club is thriving. We plan to have the finance meeting we discussed in February – keep your eyes open for an e-mail with the date and details. The Club has had some additional unavoidable expenses over the past year or so, but we are through that now and profits should begin to rise again in 2026 which will enable us to begin to rebuild the savings and address other issues around the building.

As always, keep an eye on the information board outside the club for further event details and last minute changes.

Dates for your diary – January / February 2026

- January 31st - Quiz night (Book your team in at the bar)
- February 14th - Valentine's Bingo (With love from SVC)
- February 20th - Chippy night (Place your order at the bar)
- February 21st - A members' party but all welcome to attend.

SVC will also be open and supporting the SIX NATIONS RUGBY on 7th, 14th and 21st February.

Look out for posters promoting upcoming events.

Look forward to seeing you soon at the club!

Your SVC Committee

Teams4u Shoebox Appeal

We are very proud to report that we have dispatched 2133 shoe boxes from Stretton during August & November 2025!

The support received has been most welcome and we would like to thank all those from Stoneleigh and Ashow who contributed.

Our boxes started their 1,400-mile journey from Stretton in November, venturing off to vulnerable children and families in Bihor County, Western Romania and Ukraine. It meant every needy child received a box last Christmas.

Date for your diary: Saturday April 25th - Coffee morning, to raise funds for the shoebox transportation, in Stoneleigh Church.

There are always tasks to do, so if you are interested in helping the appeal in 2026, please do get in touch.

Contact: Pam – 07526 337437 / Joanna - 07906 398752

In Aid of Prostate Cancer UK



**Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir,
together with our special guest, Jane Lee,
present a glorious evening of songs and light
entertainment.**

**Saturday 21st March 2026
7pm till 9.30pm**

**Stoneleigh Village Hall
Birmingham Road
Stoneleigh
CV8 3DD**

Tickets £20

**To include refreshments,
please advise if you have dietary requirements and
bring your own drinks and glasses.**

A raffle will be held.

**Tickets are available from the chairman, Philip Jones, on
07910240453**

Or email kathryngjones@hotmail.co.uk

Please book early to avoid disappointment.





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

How to Play Codewords

Codewords are crosswords with no clues! Instead, every letter of the alphabet has been replaced by a number, the same number representing the same letter throughout the puzzle.

All you have to do is decide which letter is represented by which number! To start you off three letters have been revealed, you should have enough information to start guessing words and discovering other letters.

Answers on page 23



**Dr Tait
Dr John
Dr Imray**

**jill@warwickshireprivategp.co.uk
www.warwickshireprivategp.co.uk**

-
- **Same day appointments available**
 - **Longer, unrushed consultations**
 - **Continuity of care**
 - **Onsite tests**
 - **Private referrals, medicals & prescriptions**
 - **We see children from birth**
-

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Codeword Answers



The United Benefice of
The Assumption of our Lady, Ashow
and
St Mary the Virgin, Stoneleigh



SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY 2026

Sunday 1 st	11.00 am United Holy Communion at Stoneleigh
Sunday 8 th	9.30 am Holy Communion Service at Ashow 11.00 am Morning Praise Service at Stoneleigh
Sunday 15 th	9.30 am Celtic Service at Ashow 11.00 am Celtic Holy Communion at Stoneleigh
Wednesday 18 th	7.00 pm United Holy Communion Ash Wednesday Service at Stoneleigh
Sunday 22 nd	9.30 am Village Service at Ashow 11.00 am Holy Communion at Stoneleigh

From the Registers

Wedding

Saturday 20th December 2025 – Christina Ingrid Rosenburg to Perrin
Michael Frederick Baker – at Stoneleigh Church

Priest in Charge: Reverend Petrica Bistran 07572193260
email: revpbistran@gmail.com

Churchwardens:

Ashow: Kate Jones 01926 853511 and Anne Gregory 01926 713066

Deputy Warden: Peter Shrimpton 02475 096477

Stoneleigh: Gordon Gatward 07776 211276 and

Ashley Toogood 07771 888618

Deputy Wardens: Richard Ashley 07708 097187, John Woodward
02476 418272 and Paddy Bryniarska 07947472297

Or please contact the Parish Administrator,

Jackie Cubitt, 02476 415506 email: stoneleighchurch@hotmail.com

*Office Hours Wednesday 9.00 am to 12.00, Thursdays 9.00 am to
1.00 pm*

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12964 for Stoneleigh
www.achurchnearyou.com/church/12954 for Ashow