

Village Volunteering

Three Parishes
Big Local
Weston Rhyn • St Martins • Gobowen



As the days get shorter and colder, it's easy to go into 'hibernation mode' and curl up in front of the TV or fire, but why not try something new and become a volunteer?!

There are lots of people in the local area who depend on the valuable support that volunteers offer them. For example, elderly people who rely on volunteers to deliver them a hot meal, or to give them a lift to a social group, which for some might be the only contact they have with the outside world in a week. These roles, along with many others, exist right here in the local community and we are looking for volunteers to help this winter.

Whether you are retired and looking for something to keep you busy, or a younger person hoping to gain some experience and develop skills, contact Qube to find out how you could make a real difference in your local community, or come to one of our monthly drop-in sessions for an informal chat.

We are also looking to hear from groups in the area who need volunteers. We can advertise opportunities for you and support you with all aspects of managing volunteers. Come along to the drop-in or give us a call.



**Every 1st Tuesday 10am-12pm – St Martins Centre
Next session : 6th Feb 2018**

Or contact **Caroline Wix at Qube 01691 656882 / voluteering@big-local.org**

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St Martins School



The end of last term saw a very busy Christmas themed week with primary shows and, of course, the Christmas Extravaganza - all were well attended and enjoyed by all! Our Christmas Fayre was a huge success raising over £950 - thank you to all the staff that made this such a fabulous event for our students and for the very kind donations from parents, staff and local companies. Some of this money will be used to buy a school pond. This will replace an older one that was removed during the rebuild a few years ago and will be a real asset to science lessons through out the school. If you would like to join our 'St Martins School Supporters Club' please contact Miss Devismes, teacher of year 5.



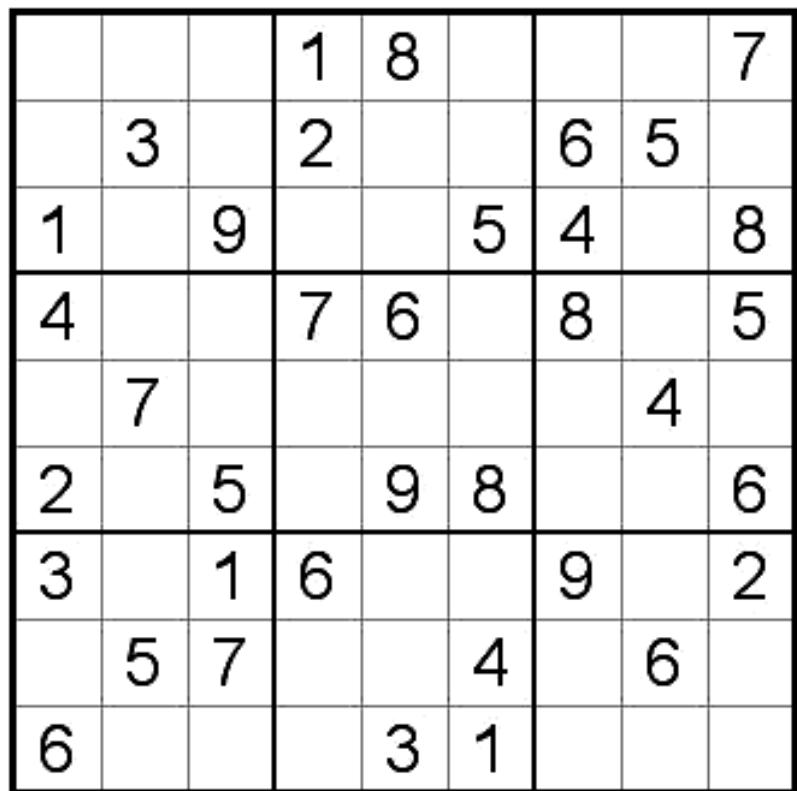
Students have settled back into school life well this term. This year's exam season has already started - Year 10 and 11 students sat their first external exam for the year. Year 11 attended a study skills session with Enlighten Education (year 10 attended last term). This session is a powerful workshop designed to develop academic excellence, improve cognitive skills and build self-esteem. Through experiments, demonstrations and interactive exercises everyone engages equally, irrespective of academic ability. All the students will be astounded at their ability to learn and remember. Over the next few weeks, the after school revision timetable will be finalised ready for the next set of mock exams which start before half term. Lower down the school students in year 6 are on their SATs build up, working on practice questions and developing technique.

Our hub library has had a large number of new books this year - as you know we use a system called accelerated reader program. Students select books on their reading level, read independently, and take an independent comprehension test on the computer. Students then move up reading levels as their comprehension ability improves. This is one initiative we have in school to help our students develop their love of reading and therefore improve their literacy and comprehension which has positive knock on effects across the whole curriculum.

Reception class applications for September 2018 need to be in by the 15 January - if you need any assistance please see Ms Faulks in our nursery.

As usual this term I will have my Open Door session on a Tuesday from 2.20 - 3.20pm for members of the community to pop in .

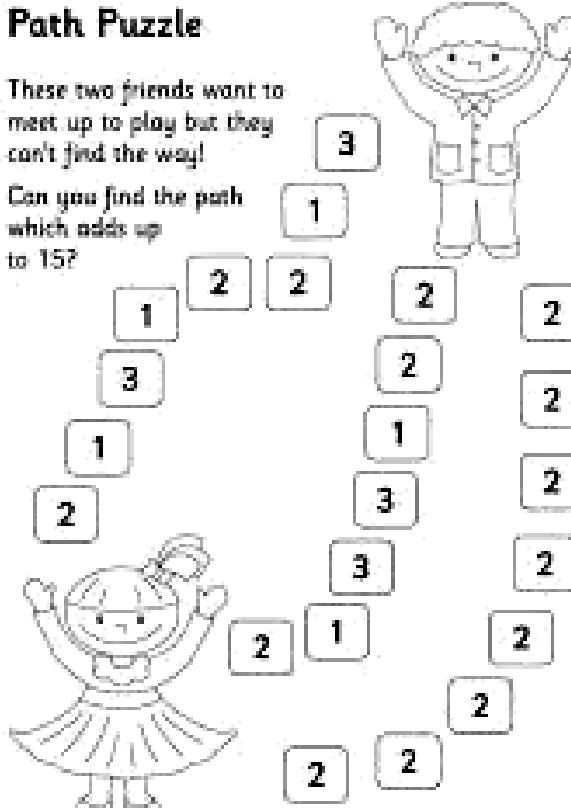
SUDOKU



Path Puzzle

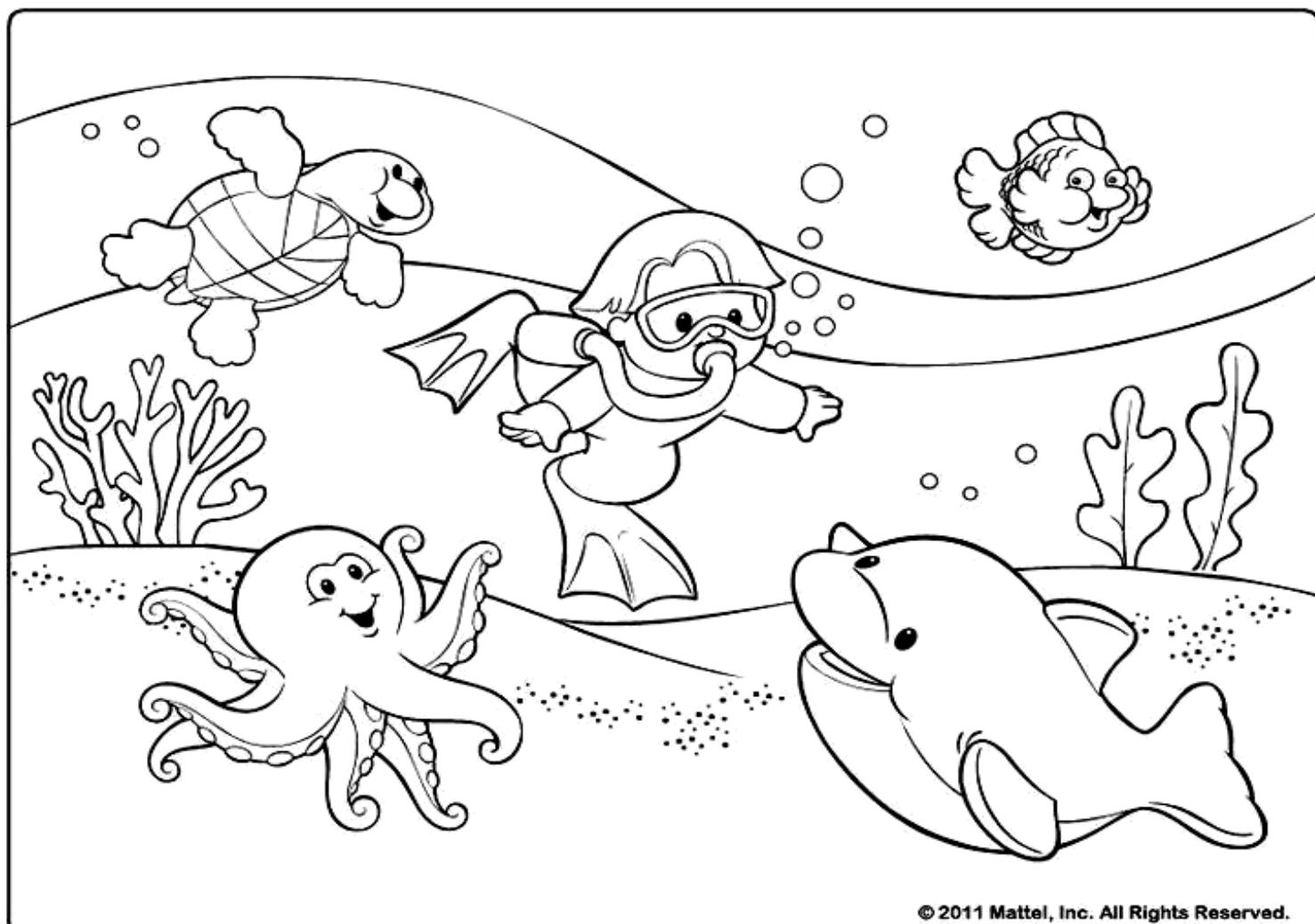
These two friends want to meet up to play but they can't find the way!

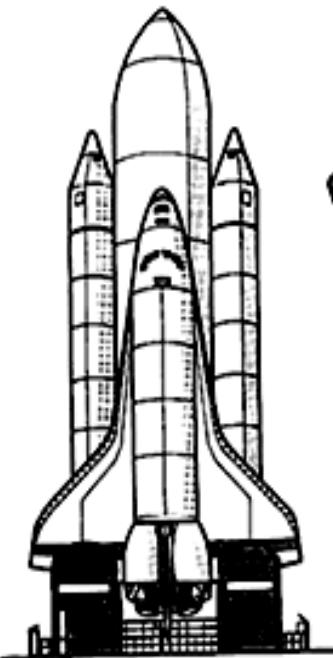
Can you find the path
which adds up
to 15?



www.scholarone.com - www.scholarone.com

Here's a great picture for you to colour





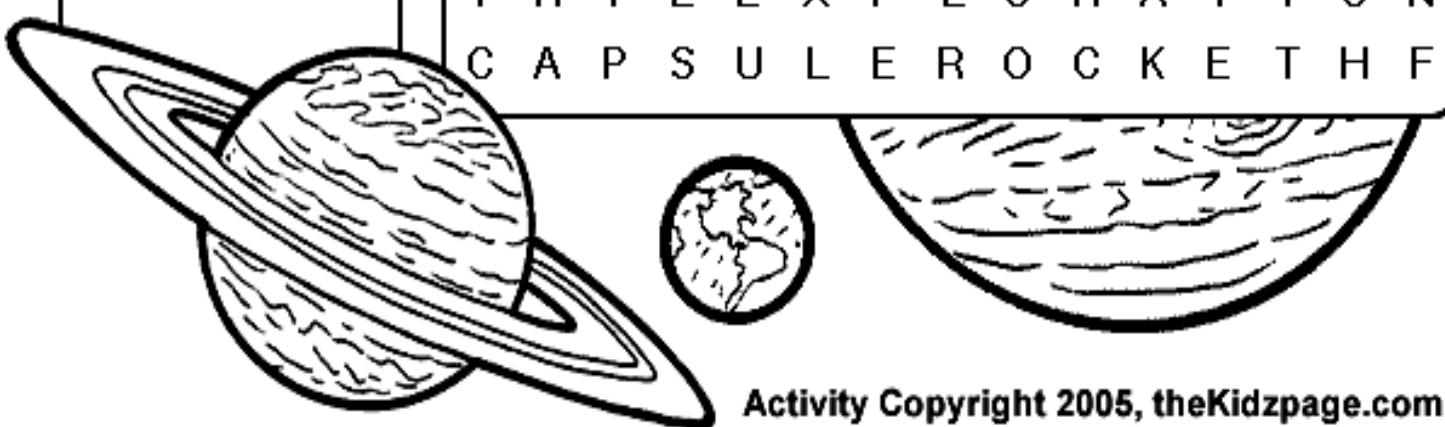
OuterSpace Word Search

Search the puzzle for the words shown in the word list.
Circle each word that you find until you find all of the
words listed.

Word List

booster	earth
countdown	mars
launch	saturn
orbit	jupiter
atmosphere	pluto
capsule	mercury
lander	neptune
satellite	uranus
shuttle	sun
astronauts	moon
rocket	venus
exploration	comet
gravity	meteor
lunar	star

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





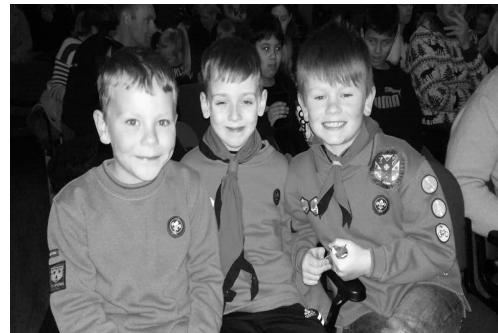
Scout and about



2nd St Martins Scouts is looking forward to another exciting year.

From village rambles to scout hut sleepovers and family fundraising to mini pioneering, the action continued through to the Christmas festivities ending with parties and a panto!

Oh yes we did!



Thanks to volunteer Vicki Evans, who organised a special group rate for scout family and friends, over 50 of us took over the front four rows at the Theatre Stiwt in Rhosllanerchrugog for some thigh-slapping, rib-tickling, laugh-a-minute fun. Two of our group (after much hand-waving and cheering) had the opportunity to go on stage in a competition that saw them walk away with a special prize each.

Vital funds

A staggering **£1,367.70** was raised at the annual bag pack and we're very grateful to everyone at Stans Superstore for supporting this special opportunity to raise vital funds for the group. This figure includes the 'Guess the corks' competition which raised a grand total of £150. The total number of corks in the bottle was 737, guessed correctly by Craig Clutton winning the hamper. Well done Craig pictured below left!



Charming

There's never a dull moment with the group and one November night some special visitors meant the hut might have been mistaken for Hogwarts! The group had an opportunity to get close to owls and snakes. They learned about their habitats and sources of food and were able to gently touch feathers and bravely stroke scales, with one or two myths being dispelled along the way. An evening they won't forget.



Beavers meet on Mondays at 5pm to 6pm; Cubs meet Mondays at 6:15pm to 7:30pm; and Scouts meet Wednesdays 7pm to 8:30pm. Contact Barry Evans on **07921 838120** if you would like to know more.

Wishing you all the best for the year ahead.

2nd St Martins Scouts

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Contented Cows

When I was young, a long time ago, you could buy 'milk from contented cows', condensed and sweetened, sold in tins on which the label bore a photograph of the tin itself and on that photograph there was a photograph of the tin, and so on, a source of fascination for my young mind. A little while ago I, along with Ken Hinton and George Porter, were taken by Terry Ellis to see robot milking machines at Fullwood's in Ellesmere. Terry worked for the company for more than twenty years, ultimately in a management role.



So, what is the connection with contented cows? The basic principle that underpins the concept of milking by robot is that the process should be animal-led. Life on a dairy farm for centuries has operated to the twice-daily rhythm of milking, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The cows do not know that it is Christmas. To that extent they are dictated to by the farmer. If any factor, be it weather, the farmer's indisposition or need for a break, nothing could be allowed that prevented milking the herd morning and evening. To the non-farmer this feels like a tyrannical regime. Generations of farmers no doubt saw it as what goes with the territory, a price to be paid for involvement with animals and their husbandry.

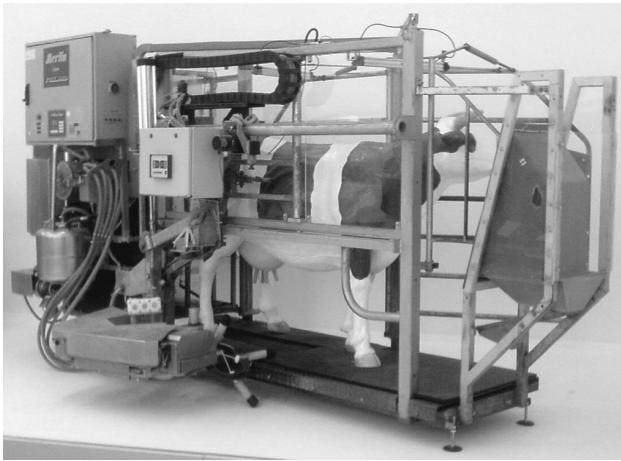
To the lay person, such as me, the opportunity to be released from this relentless obligation must have been irresistible. The farmer, on the other hand, must have needed more convincing. Milking robots have been around for a good number of years now and from what I have seen in their design, manufacture and operation they have reached a considerable level of sophistication. Before I give a broad account of that, though, let me return to the basic principle cited above. The first difference from the old way is that the cow is milked when it asks to be and that has evolved into three or four times a day. It is interesting that, as with human beings, where the bond between mother and child, the mutual affection and physical closeness that is the ideal, stimulates the release of the hormone oxytocin in both, promotes the bond further and the production of milk, so with cows. Adrenalin, the fight-flight hormone, something that some humans enjoy, is the sign of stress and the cause of more stress. To have the cow in a stress-reduced environment, notwithstanding the absence of the calf whose birth occasions the initial production of milk, means that oxytocin can play its part in making for a contented cow. Regular, sympathetic milking continues to stimulate oxytocin. And that cow will be more productive, more likely to remain healthy and therefore cheaper to maintain.

So, as ever, it all comes down to money? Clearly for a farmer to make the considerable investment that the robot milking machine requires it has to be a good economic proposition, something more than the opportunity not to have to get out of bed at an unearthly hour day in day out. I don't know from my brief encounter anything of the detail of the economic advantages. The evidence I did see was a production line that is producing ten or so of these machines every week, for export, and for the home market. So there is a demand.

Continued opposite.....

What then does the machine offer? I guess its first advantage is a tailor-made set of four 'hands', one for each quarter of the udder that milk and are capable of stopping the milking operation appropriately individually as required. The cow's chip, on a collar it wears, gives it access to the stall. Then an 'arm' begins its work. A further asset is its hygiene. Before the milking begins the teat is cleaned with a disinfected brush. Then the flow and output of milk are monitored and recorded by the machine's software, visible in real time on a touch screen. Other factors can also be monitored, such as any

indications that the animal has issues of health, the information related to each individual cow. This is the sharp end of the machine's sophistication. To a degree the cow is enticed to enter the stall to be milked by the food that is dispensed by the machine, food, of course, dispensed according to the specific need of the particular animal. It all sounds a bit soul-less, but when I saw it later in situ on a farm specialising in the production of organic milk and heard the farmer's wife speaking with what felt like genuine concern and understanding of the herd, it did not feel soul-less.



To produce such a machine is, in the first instance, an achievement of design and logistics. Our visit to Fullwood's took us through the assembly of their second generation Merlin milking robot, the manufacture of many of its parts and, as part of all this, some very informative and interesting dialogue with people involved. We saw the design room, pipe-bending machines, welding, sheet metal 'folding', pipe-piercing, some work done by skilled hand, other by bewildering machines. Andrew Davies took us round, patiently and thoroughly. His background, having been brought up on a farm, his involvement with the company from the age of sixteen, subsequent education and training and experience elsewhere had clearly equipped him well for a deep understanding of the company's products and philosophy. This philosophy is described in the company publicity material as 'expertise in all things related to stress-free and animal friendly harvesting of milk'. My impression was that there was a determined effort to provide as stress-free a production and manufacturing environment as possible for the work force. Machines made the noise but there felt to be a kind of relaxed but purposeful commitment to production in the people we met. John Morris, the head of the injection-moulding department gave us a superbly well-informed and enthusiastic account of the processes and the benefits to the company of his years of detailed knowledge and experience.

Astoundingly Fullwood's has been in business for more than 250 years and at one time, recently in terms of that amount of time, employed six hundred people. Now there are a hundred or so, testament to the use of the technology that is now its unique selling products, and applied to the actual production process.

The icing on the cake of our visit was to be taken to the farm to see Merlin doing his magic. John Baines, Fullwood's Technical Director, took us and it is to him and Andrew Davies that we owe our thanks for such a fascinating day. They are clearly proud of what the company does and it was a privilege both to have an insight into something that the likes of me would be very unlikely to have and to be given time to have it. Lastly, and vitally, the offer of such attention speaks volumes for the affection and respect that they have for Terry Ellis. It was his idea to take us along and the company's response was marvellous. Thank you!

Don Borland



Ifton Meadows

Management Committee

**Hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year
2018 has much to offer at the Meadows.**

After extensive landscaping, "Ifton Meadows" was opened as a amenity site in 1978, ten years after coal production ceased. In 2005, Oswestry Borough Council working with Ifton Meadows Management Committee had the site designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

I do not know the names of the forward thinking Oswestry Councillors who decided to purchase the site from the Coal Board and then went on to find the money to landscape the 'slag heap' and turn the eyesore into a green space. Whoever you were THANK YOU.

This year is the 40th year as a public open space/nature reserve and we wish to hold an event to celebrate this.

To mark the anniversary we have decided that in the Summer we will hold an event on the site.

Whether you are a group or an individual, if you would like to be involved and have any suggestions, or want to be involved in any way come along to our next meeting on **Tuesday 13th February, 7.30 p.m. at St. Martins Centre and put them forward.**

The Meadows proved very popular when we had the snow in December and many young (and not so young) found their way to us and enjoyed sledging down the back slope.

But we must never forget that this site is primarily a nature reserve and this should be taken into consideration when you use it.

If you are one of the many people who use and appreciate the Meadows why not help us to keep the pathways, drains, etc. clear by helping at our workdays on the second Sunday of each month starting at 1.30 p.m.

We usually meet at the main/Colliery entrance unless the weather is bad. Further details from Ann 01978.710327, Facebook : Friends of Ifton Meadows or speak to Neil at the Meadows.

Answers to Jans Quiz (from page 11)

1. Tottenham Hotspurs FC
2. Cambridge University CC
3. Blackburn Rovers FC
4. Hampshire CC
5. Shrewsbury Town FC
6. Leeds United FC
7. Durham CC
8. Oxford University CC
9. West Bromich Albion FC
10. Middlesex CC

Mr Eric Stokes of 7 Greenfields died peacefully in Chirk Hospital on Thursday 28th of December

Mrs Cherry Healey of Cottage Lane died on 25th December at home. Cherry was a very great help in bringing this magazine into the light and will be sadly missed.

Our deep commiserations to their family and friends and to all those who have lost loved ones, please email us with information for a mention here.



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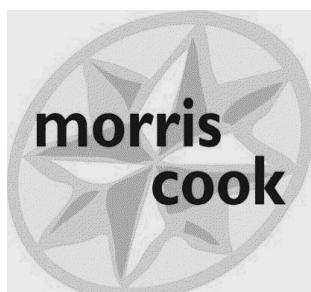
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January Report

We had the first St Martins W.I. meeting of the year on 2nd January and our president Shirley Willis wished us all a Happy New Year.

After our usual peruse through our newsletter, we welcomed Charlotte Cadwallader, who is from St Martins, to our meeting. She is doing her Masters dissertation on Healthy Aging at the Health and Social Care faculty of Chester University and she is interviewing older people in the rural community to get input about what it means to them. Those interested stayed behind after our W.I. meeting was over. We hope we have been of some help to her.

Our scheduled speaker for the evening was Dave Andrews and he and his wife support various charities putting on events and, in his case, using his book writing skills to raise funds. He talked about a previous book called The Oswestry Round about a 33 mile walk he devised, but mainly talked about his latest book called Gobowen to Everest which was based on the diary he kept on a trek to Everest Base camp he did when much younger. He was part of the support group of the largest international attempt on Everest at that time and included many famous climbers also the actor Brian Blessed. The proceeds from this book will be going to support Cancer Research UK and The Lingen Davies Unit at Shrewsbury Hospital for which he has memories of his own treatment there and the desire to "put something back" as he puts it. He is a very entertaining and inspirational speaker. The book is a very good read too!

At our meeting the winner of our Competition Cup and our Exhibition Cup was presented with the trophies by our Competition secretary Barbara Aston and the winner of both was none other than our President Shirley Willis, so well done to her. Next month's meeting will be on 6th February and will be Terry Rosamund talking about Man Sheds. Visitors and new members are welcome.



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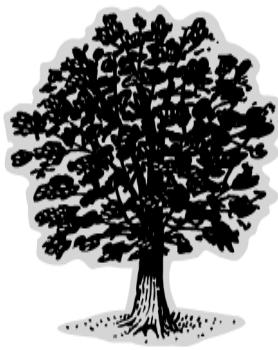
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SIXTH FORM TASTER MORNING

The Marches Sixth Form in Oswestry, Shropshire, will be opening its doors on Saturday 3rd February to prospective students offering them the opportunity to experience life as a Sixth Form student. Since the Sixth Form opened at The Marches School in 2013 it has gone from strength to strength and now accommodates just over 150 students in a modern, purpose-built Sixth Form centre. Students applying to the Sixth Form from September 2018 can choose from the 24 A Levels and 6 BTEC level 3 courses on offer.

In the morning, parents will be welcomed by the Associate Headteacher and will receive a talk from the Head of Sixth Form about the curriculum on offer, academic and pastoral care approaches and post 16 reform whilst students take part in taster lessons by subject specialist teachers.

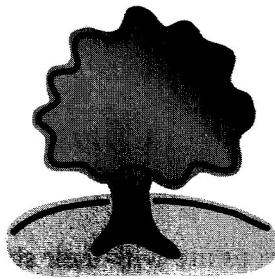
Mrs Boyes, Head of Sixth Form at The Marches School, commented, “We are delighted to be able to offer the opportunity for prospective students to see what it is like to study at The Marches Sixth Form. Our extensive course offer in 2018 has enabled us to increase opportunities for a wider range of students. Young people who apply to the Marches Sixth Form will be able to blend a pathway that suits them and their individual career aspirations. All applicants to the Sixth Form have a personal one-to-one interview and are given expert careers advice to ensure they choose the right courses for them.”

Mrs Boyes continued, “Excellent transport links, including private minibuses operated by the school, mean that students travel from surrounding areas including Wrexham, Chirk, Ellesmere and Powys to attend the Sixth Form. We are very proud to have recruited exceedingly bright students from such a wide range of secondary schools in England and Wales. Our offering of BTEC courses means that the Sixth Form is also accessible to an even wider range of students from Oswestry and beyond. I am excited to be able to share this information with prospective students and their families at our forthcoming Taster Morning.”

The Marches Sixth Form offers a large range of A Level subjects along with BTEC level 3 courses which are equivalent to one A Level and include – Applied Science, Business Studies, Engineering, Information Technology, Performing Arts and Sport. The Marches Sixth Form will allow students the unique opportunity to mix both A Level and BTEC courses.

The Taster Morning will begin with registration at 9.30am, tasters and talks to start at 10.00am. The two taster sessions will be forty minutes long and we anticipate the event finishing at around 12pm. To register, students must visit this [link](#). For more information, please contact Mrs Boyes, Head of Sixth Form on 01691 664400 or email boyes.c@marchesschool.net.

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Thur	11:45 - 1:30	5pm - 9:30
Fri	11:45 - 1:30	5pm - 9:30
Sat	11:30 - 2pm	Closed

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FREE Training for businesses



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Please contact us if you would like to attend either of the following training courses:

Business start-up training

Date: Wednesday 7th March 2018

Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm

Venue: St Martins Centre

This course is for you if:

- You have a new business idea
- You have recently started a new business
- You want to move from being employed to being self-employed
- You are running a business and are considering a step change or a change in direction

Changes to Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Date: Wednesday 31 January

Time: 9.30 (1/2 day)

Venue: St Martins Centre Find out about the changes to the Data Protection Law and what your business or organisation needs to do to comply.

To book a place or register your interest please contact Bridget on 01691 656882.

My Money Matters

The 'My Money Matters' programme of support and workshops for the next few months is now available.

This includes workshops:

- Consumer Rights workshops
- Internet banking
- Utilities health check
- Benefits health check
- Universal Credit
- Transport solution in St Martins, Weston Rhyn and Gobowen
- As well as continued drop in sessions

Details will be published in the Messenger or you can contact us if you would like a copy of the full programme.

Want to keep up with 3 Parishes Big Local news? Contact Bridget or Paula at Three Parishes Big Local on 01691 656882 or at info@big-local.org

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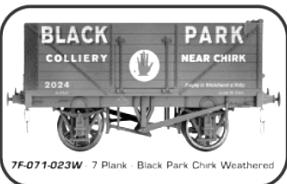
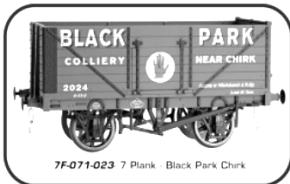


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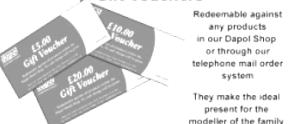
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