

February - March 2025

# Village Life

ST MARTINS



This Magazine is Sponsored by Ridgway Rentals Ltd

Cover by Lisa Fox

## Clubs and Groups

### **Bell Ringing**

Parish Church Tower            Wednesday 7:00 - 8:30pm            Sun Service 9:00 - 9:30am  
Contact: Tower Captain Dai Cartwright    01691 778215

### **St Martins Craft and Chatter**

Chapter House    Wednesdays 2:00 - 4:00pm  
Contact: Debbie Shaw    01691 777130

### **St Martins Women's Institute**

Lounge of St Martins Miners' Welfare Institute. First Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm  
President: Ann Sadler    Mobile: 07790 022281    Secretary: Lynn Morgan    778174

### **Age UK**

Cedar Close every Tuesday 10:00am - 2:00pm  
Contact: Dee Barnhart 01691 777842 or Marilyn Berry 07769 915201

### **Ifton Meadows Management Committee:**

Workdays on 2nd Sunday of the month 1:30pm at the Meadows  
Chair: Ann Williams    01978 710327

### **St Martins Youth Club**

St Martins Centre    Fridays in term time    7:00 - 8:00pm  
Contact: Sue or Nick Heard    01691 774097

### **Youth Groups**

1st St Martins Rainbows (4-7years)    Tuesdays 5:00 - 6:00pm    Ellesmere Road Chapel  
1st St Martins Brownies                    Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:00pm    Ellesmere Road Chapel  
1st St Martins Guides                      Tuesdays 7:00 - 8:30pm    Ellesmere Road Chapel

Contact: Rainbows - Mrs Heather Lloyd 01691778598    mobile 07506280482

Brownies - Pam 079320231734    email [archerpam@gmail.com](mailto:archerpam@gmail.com)

Judith Phillips 01691 690435

### **2nd St Martins Scout Group**

Beavers (6 - 8)    Monday	Not currently running	Meet in the Scout Hut
Cubs (8 -10.5)    Thursday	6:00 - 7:15pm	Meet in the Scout Hut
Scouts (10.5 -14)Thursday	7:30 - 9:00pm	Meet in the Scout Hut

Contact: Dave Cripps    2ndstmartinsscouts@gmail.com

### **St Martins Village Life - [stmartinsvillagelife@gmail.com](mailto:stmartinsvillagelife@gmail.com)**

### **St Martins Village Hall/Centre:            Email: [stmartinscentre@mail.com](mailto:stmartinscentre@mail.com)**

Coffee & Chat Drop-in                      Tues            10:00am—12:30pm    All welcome

Computers available for public use by appointment in the library

### **Community Speedwatch:**

Anyone interested in joining the monitoring please contact George Smith Tel: 01691 770886  
or email [george.smith@stmartinsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:george.smith@stmartinsparishcouncil.gov.uk)



# Parish Council

## FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of every one of our Parish Councillors, we wish you all a Very Happy New Year. I don't know if it was just me, but 2024 seemed to flash past in the blink of an eye.

Our work within the Parish Council has been generally successful, only delayed by constant lack of responses from Shropshire Council. We are not alone as, working alongside other local Town and Parish Councils, they too have exactly the same complaint. It really has been most frustrating as there is so much more that your Parish Council wished to achieve.

Anyway, there were some clear positives across the year:-

1) We now control all of the cutting of grass verges over our village and are making progress in consolidating the works as part of a longer-term plan.

2) We have appointed a village Councillor to form a group who now control and manage the footpaths across our village. They have been actively installing new metal 'kissing gates' which have replaced the old wooden stiles.

3) We have been the driving force concerning safety measures outside of the school. We have fully funded the kerbside planters and look forward to seeing the school continue the scheme by organising the planting of shrubs and flowers into them as a welcoming feature to the school approaches. So, no more vehicles parking on the grass and causing obstructions.

4) We have been assertive in getting parking restrictions along the roads by the school involving Yellow Lineage on roadsides and dedicated Bus Stop areas identified, and have been assured by Shropshire Highways that "the works will be completed by mid February". Let's hope that Shropshire deliver on their promise, especially as the only way to achieve the project was for us to fully fund the works.

5) We have made an application to Shropshire for a new Pedestrian-controlled crossing by Stans. Shropshire have a suitable funding pot and just before Christmas we received a response advising that our project and grant application "fits nicely into the criteria" so let us hope that, with this positive response, we can bring the scheme to fruition.

So, onwards and upwards into 2025 and, with the local government elections (for Shropshire Council wards) being held in May, it could be an exciting time.

George Smith MBE

Chairman:

St Martins Parish Council

### Current Parish Councillors

Neil Arthan	01691 777751
Andrew Cast	01691 773389
Nigel Court	07882325052
Mark Hayball	01691 770207
Peter Holmes	01691 772287
Alan Langley	01691 772368
Duncan Laing	07702 991845
Nina Mistry	01691 657324
Natalie Rowley	07870 507509
Sophie Hughes-Saunier	01691 778806
Sue Schofield	01691 777710
George Smith	01691 770286
Helen Williams	01691 777561

# **Report from St Martins Parish Council Clerk**

The last meeting of St Martins Parish Council was held in St Martins Village Hall on the Thursday 9th January 2025. Unfortunately, during the Christmas and New Year period very little gets processed due to Councils and businesses being closed.

With a representative of West Mercia Police from Oswestry Station present at the meeting, the subject of speeding through the village was again raised. They advised that speeding would continue to be a focus on the team going into the New Year with hopefully more activity carried out around this priority. Two Speed Surveys took place during December, happily with no offences recorded on the dates completed. Other traffic offences continue to be monitored and action taken where appropriate to combat these issues. During December (and looked at previously) the team have looked at issues around the misuse of the mini roundabout at the Overton Road, Ellesmere Road and Green Lane junctions. 6 vehicles were stopped on one day within the space of 30-40 minutes as drivers had failed to adhere to the roundabout sign/markings. On these occasions, verbal warnings were given and all blew negative on breath test. Further patrolling, education and/or enforcement will be taking place at this location as some of the manoeuvres fell below the standard expected of road users.

In regards to drugs, intelligence and information continues to be collected for any drug issues identified in St Martins and is constantly evolving and being reviewed/assessed. High visibility patrols continue to take place in locations identified as being subject to drug abuse or activities and this will continue to happen, with offenders dealt with appropriately.

The Parish Council have agreed to install an additional defibrillator in the village. This will be positioned on the outside wall of Lens Fish & Chip Shop.

The Parish Council have also agreed to replace the public notice board inside the bus shelter on Ellesmere Road, this is following vandalism to the locks.

Finally, the Parish Council precept has again be set with a zero percentage increase from last year.

Just a reminder that the Shropshire Council and Town & Parish Council election will be held on the 1st May 2025.

Edward Davies

St Martins Parish Clerk

# Shropshire Council

**Councillor Steve Davenport**

County Councillor for St Martins, Dudleston, Dudleston Heath

Mobile 07944097876 Email [steve.davenport@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.davenport@shropshire.gov.uk)

Happy new year. They certainly go faster.

There has been a lot of concern over speeding in the village. The police have listened, and on occasions they are now visible in the village.

Also, we are getting closer to having parking restrictions at the school. Apparently a letter has gone out about where to park. One of the options given however is Morlas Meadows, which is a private road, owned by the residents, so please be aware of this.

There's been a lot of concern all over North Shropshire regarding telegraph poles going up everywhere. It's the battle of the fibre company connections and rather than them coming up with a deal to use the same poles, they are double-poling. Hopefully recent meetings have brought them together; we don't want our streets looking like the 1960s.

Things might be moving very slowly, but discussions are still on going for a lights crossing at Stans.

I'm not allowed to be political here, but just to make you aware, George Smith and myself will be standing as Independents at the elections in May. We want to put people before politics and be as effective as possible, and one of the reasons for my decision was the charge for green waste and the booking in system at the recycling centres. I was totally against this and we will be backing others to get this overturned.

The Parish Council have spaces and they need you! Help make decisions, part of the village. Someone said to me last week Councillors don't work and I told them they're wrong; Our Parish Council does work and they're caring people.

Also if anyone fancies helping out at the village hall, please call in for a chat; find out what we do and if you can help.

While I'm talking about volunteers, this magazine does a great job and are always in need of help, the committee is shrinking and need people who can make the difference.

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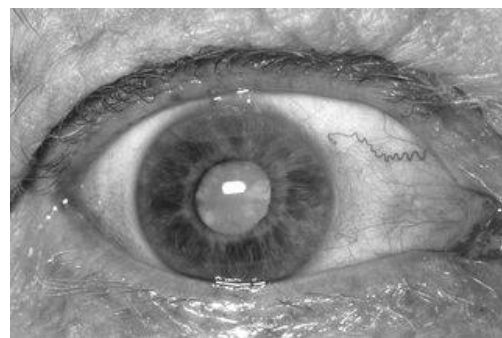
## Age-related cataracts

**Cataracts are when the lens, a small transparent disc inside your eye, develops cloudy patches.**

Over time these patches usually become bigger causing blurry, misty vision and eventually blindness.

When we're young, our lenses are usually like clear glass, allowing us to see through them. As we get older, they start to become frosted, like bathroom glass, and begin to limit our vision.

Cataracts usually appear in both eyes. They may not necessarily develop at the same time or be the same in each eye.





# St Martins Parish Church

**To book a Christening or Wedding and for any other enquiry please contact:**

Revd Stuart Jermy

saintmartinjohns@icloud.com

Telephone: 778 468 or Mobile: 07766 255436

Regular Weekly Events			Regular Monthly Events		
Monday	10.00am	Little Saints Baby & Toddler Group (Term time)			
Tuesday	9.30am	Morning Prayers	1st Tuesday of the month	9.30am	Monthly Communion
Wednesday	10.30am	Coffee Morning	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month	2.00pm	Women's Fellowship
Wednesday	2.00pm	Craft & Chatter			
Wednesday	7.00pm	Bell Handling - new ringers welcome			
Friday	10.00am	Walking Group - meets in the car park	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month	3.30pm	Sunday Social
Sunday	9.30am	Service of the Word or Service with Communion – streamed on zoom	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month	6.30pm	<i>Praise Night at St Johns, Weston Rhyn</i>

## Upcoming Events:

Please keep an eye on our on-line church calendar to see details of our Fish and Chip Supper & Quiz night and other events and courses.



Our Chapter House (Church Hall) is available for hire.

We are a friendly village church which enjoys worshipping in different styles to suit all ages.

**Check out our website: [www.stmartinsparish.org.uk](http://www.stmartinsparish.org.uk)**

# COMMUNITY BASIC LIFE SUPPORT AND DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

**Perry`s of Gobowen** has recently installed a Public Access Defibrillator at their base in St Martins.

Welsh Community First Responder Effie Cadwallader spent a morning running awareness sessions for all the staff at Perry`s so that they could confidently recognise a cardiac arrest and use a defibrillator in an emergency.

All those who attended found the sessions informative, while the opportunity to practise the procedures involved using training defibrillators was felt to be of great benefit.

Perry`s is a long term supporter of the CFR scheme and Effie was delighted to be able to offer her free awareness course to such lively and engaged “students.”





# **Sunday Social Club**

## ***Are you at a loss to know what to do on a Sunday Afternoon?***

This may be because you live alone and your family do not live close or are involved in other activities on a Sunday Afternoon. Or you may just want to chat to other folks.

You are invited to join us at

### **St. Martins Church Chapter House on the first Sunday of each month**

Where we meet for a chat with like-minded people and also share afternoon tea. There is a small subscription of £1.00.

We look forward to seeing you.

If mobility is a problem it may be possible to provide transport if you live not too far from the Church

For further information please contact Mrs Valerie Thompson on:  
01691 658756

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## **St. Martins Volunteer Car Scheme**

If you need to get anywhere local and you are unable to access local transport please ring to make a booking.

### **Here to help 07931760879**

Line open 9:00am – 5:00pm 7 days a week

<<<<<>>>>>

Please ring for more information if you would like to be a volunteer driver.

<<<<<>>>>>

No distance too small.

If you want to go to a Doctor's surgery, a hospital appointment, chiropodist, dentist, visit someone in a care home...ring and see how we can help.

<<<<<>>>>>

Are you able to drive and want to help in your community?

We have become a victim of our own success and WE NEED MORE DRIVERS

PLEASE give us a ring and volunteer today. Thank you.



# **St Martins Methodist Church**

(Ellesmere Road)

Minister for St Martins

Rev Julia Skitt - phone: 07810 360778

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9<sup>th</sup>. 12.30**

**BRING & SHARE COMMUNITY LUNCH**

led by Deacon Carys Woodley

Contact Nick Heard on 774097



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**JUNE 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>**

Join us to commemorate over a century of worship & celebrations.

**SATURDAY JUNE 28<sup>th</sup>**

Coffee Morning & Evening Concert,

Orthopaedic Male Voice Choir & St Martins School Choir

**SUNDAY JUNE 29<sup>th</sup>**

Celebratory service 11.00 & Afternoon Tea

Details of services, coffee mornings and other events are on our notice board and in 'Village Life', Facebook:StMartinsMethodistChurch, & St Martins Chatter

# St Martins Family and Local History Society

7:00 PM

Last Monday of each month

Next meet up is 28th January 2025

St Martins village hall

Please come and join us

£2.00

Visit the facebook page

If you have any photos, articles or stories to share, please get in touch



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(Please leave a message)

Email: [stmartinscentre@mail.com](mailto:stmartinscentre@mail.com)

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**Monetary donations always  
gratefully recieved for improvements**

# ST MARTINS VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Happy New Year!

I do hope that 2025 is going to be a good year for us all.

The village Hall is run by a group of volunteers and Trustees for the benefit of the St Martins community. It's YOUR village hall, for YOUR use .

Whether it's for a party, a meeting, an exercise class, library, coffee and chat, youth club, or one of the many groups that meet regularly, with use of a kitchen included.

Many of you might believe the village hall is owned by someone, it is, it is owned by St Martins village community.

We have recently lost two of our trustees due to retirement and would welcome some younger help. Bring in new brains, new ideas, a different viewpoint; if you are able to help, please get in touch to find out more.

We like to get all involved in family evenings, so we have a Valentines Quiz night on 15th February, this is a family fun quiz, and there will be raffle prizes suitable for the younger members as well as the adults.

A lovely evening out with the family as a team, bring your own refreshments, and have a great laugh.

We are currently fundraising for roof repairs, and creating additional car parking spaces.

Please visit our library, and take out a few books. We do not charge for them, and there is a huge choice of books.

Contacts include, Steve Davenport, 07944 097 876

Helen Williams 07599 309 889

Sue Heard 07713 636 354

Heather Lloyd 07506 280 482

Or phone the village hall 01691 770204

Or email [stmartinsvillagehall@mail.com](mailto:stmartinsvillagehall@mail.com)

# QUIZ CORNER ...

## Answers on page 34

1. How many years did prohibition last in the USA?
2. Who is England Cricket's new bowling coach?
3. Mycology is the study of what?
4. May is the name for spring blossom of which tree/bush?
5. What is the name of Boris Johnson's memoir?
6. What is the capital city of the Czech Republic?
7. Louise Redknapp rose to fame in which 1990s girl group?
8. Which is the largest state in Germany?
9. The Yangtze is the longest river in which continent?
10. To which of his six wives was Henry VII married to for the Shortest time?



## NEW YEAR, NEW HOBBY....



Are you thinking of taking up a new hobby? Why not consider Bell Ringing? We have a small, friendly band of ringers and are looking to increase our numbers. We meet at St Martins Parish Church each Wednesday evening from 7.00pm-8.30pm for practice and we also ring between 9am-9.30am every Sunday before the service; as well as all manner of church occasions, from Weddings to special services for Christmas and other holidays. There is no expectation to attend church services afterwards but you'd be very welcome to do so. Some ringers attend and some don't.

Bell ringing is suitable for all ages and abilities. The Tower Captain, Dai Cartwright, can be contacted on:

Telephone 01691 778215

Mobile: 07964 161397

Email: [dai.t59@icloud.com](mailto:dai.t59@icloud.com)

He will be able to answer any questions or provide further information. Why not come along for a trial to see how much fun it is. We look forward to seeing you!

# 2nd St Martins Scout Group



The scouts ended last term on a high with a trip to the Oswestry Climbing wall, while the cubs had a constructive last few weeks making bird feeders, snow globes and multi-coloured reindeer.



Now they are back to a busy term, with lots to be getting on with. Cubs will be working on personal challenges, and a number of badges including local knowledge and money skills, and will be writing to pen pals in a different cub pack. By the time this is published, the scouts will have done all their cooking planning and preparation for a cooking competition at the start of February. They will also be building up skills for their Challenge day in march, including fire lighting, camp cooking and pioneering.

Why don't you think about joining us and finding out for yourself how much fun it can be? We meet at the scout hut from 6-7:15 (cubs) and 7:30 – 9 (scouts) on Thursdays. Just turn up, or for more info please contact Dave Cripps on [2ndstmartinsscouts@gmail.com](mailto:2ndstmartinsscouts@gmail.com)

## **CAN YOU HELP?**

With a couple of leaders having to step down following changes of job etc, we are urgently looking for more adult support. Full training provided, and lots of support from the current leaders. Please get in touch if you think you can help: [2ndstmartinsscouts@gmail.com](mailto:2ndstmartinsscouts@gmail.com)

## **GOT ANY EMPTY/UNWANTED INKJET PRINTER CARTRIDGES?**

***Thank you to people who have been dropping off used ink cartridges, we are very grateful as it helps raise vital funds for the group. Just drop them off in the box located near the foodbank collection point in Stans Supermarket in St Martins. (sorry, we cannot take laser or toner cartridges).***

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STORE OPENING TIMES: MONDAY- SATURDAY 6:30AM-9PM

SUNDAY 8AM-8PM

# E-scooters – are you breaking the law?



Can I ride my e-scooter to school or work?

No, it's illegal...

E-scooters are classed as motor vehicles and are required to be taxed and insured. It's not possible to get insurance for privately owned e-scooters, which means it's illegal to use them.

Can I ride my e-scooter on the pavement?

No, it's illegal...

You cannot use e-scooters on public footpaths, cycle lanes or roads.

What happens if I'm caught using my e-scooter in public spaces?

The scooter may be seized and as a result, destroyed.

If stopped by an officer, you may be asked to complete a breath and drugs test. You also risk a £300 fine and six penalty points on your licence for no insurance.

For any crime prevention advice please feel free to get in contact with your local police team and please report anything suspicious to the police on 101.

**Oswestry Rural North  
Safer Neighbourhoods Team**

**PCSO Dave Hughes – 07870 219190**

**PCSO Pete Roberts – 07870 219019**

**PC Michael Hogg — 07870156668**

Please contact us on the above numbers if you have any issues you wish to discuss.

Email: [oswestryrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:oswestryrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

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<b>Infected insect bites</b> (1+ years)	<b>Uncomplicated urinary tract infections</b> (women 16 - 64 years)
<b>Shingles</b> (18+ years)	

**Book an appointment today.**

Tel: 01691 778873 Email: [pharmacy.FVG38@nhs.net](mailto:pharmacy.FVG38@nhs.net)

# 5 Ways to Help Wild Animals Survive the Winter Time

## **Make a wood pile for wildlife**

- When Pruning the trees in your garden, don't throw away the cut-offs, instead use them to make a wood pile for wildlife. This will help out our 'sleepier' species, such as newts, certain beetles and plenty of other insects, who are looking for a place to get cosy and shut down for the winter.

## **Plant a tree**

- Even though many of the trees around us are turning orange and gold, and will eventually have no leaves at all, this is still a great time to plant a tree. Flowering fruit trees can create whole ecosystems. One apple tree can provide homes for earwigs, spiders, moths, beetles, birds and much more. Fruit trees also develop decaying wood and fungi earlier than other trees, which means they're also a 'priority habitat' for rare species. Not only that, but did you know fruit trees can help with drought tolerance?

## **Plant spring flowering bulbs**

- As well as planting trees, why not plant some spring flowering bulbs? Pick ones that are good for pollinators like bluebells and get your garden buzzing in early spring! Make sure that you choose native species and only buy the bulbs from a reputable garden centre or shop – never take bulbs from the wild. We rely on pollinators for every third mouthful we eat, so help them out by filling your garden with their favourite snack.

## **Introduce a water feature**

- Autumn and winter are great times to introduce a water feature to your garden. Amphibians like newts, frogs and toads use water as shelter and breeding grounds when spring arrives. Butterflies get valuable minerals and salts from slightly muddy water, and birds use water to bathe and remove parasites. It is important to keep the water topped up during the chilly winter months as sources of water can become frozen and more difficult to find. To make it as appropriate as possible, ensure your water source is shallow with gradual and rough-textured edges. This will mean that anything that climbs in can get out again.

## **Maintain your bird boxes**

- Last but definitely not least, we can't forget about our feathered friends who are amazing to watch all year round. Help out the birds visiting your garden by installing and maintaining bird boxes for them to roost in over winter.



# FRIENDS OF IFTON MEADOWS



As you read this it is February 2025 and still Winter! And I hope unlike me you have managed to keep your New Year's Resolution... mine was to get up every day at 6am in the morning...unfortunately this was an instant failure as on New Year's morning I did not manage to get up until 7.30am..oh well! However, the year is still young and I can make amends in other ways, such as volunteering on the Ifton Meadows

Nature Reserve or even just visiting it and enjoying its bio-diversity. Public open space is continuing to be a rare and precious resource, so use it or lose it!

Spring is just around the corner, the Spring Equinox will occur on Thursday 20 March at 9.01 am, after that time the sun will be above the horizon for more time than it is below the horizon. So in February what can we expect to see? One of my favourite plants that flowers from the end of January through to April is the Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*, used to be called *Ranunculus ficaria* and is a member of the buttercup family). This is a low growing bright yellow starry petalled flower. It grows in damp areas, alongside streams, in woodlands, along woodland edges and along footpaths. It is a bright splash of colour, like little drops of sunshine lying on the ground and found along most of the paths around the reserve. It is a valuable early flowering plant as it is a nectar source for beetles, flies, bumblebees and others. I believe that the "verna" bit in its name relates to Vernal, which is "spring", the Vernal Equinox. Apparently, the leaves are high in vitamin C and have in days of old been used to prevent scurvy, some texts even say that the root nodes resembled haemorrhoids and that it was therefore used to treat piles and it had a local name of Pilewort (ref: The Woodland Trust). So, if you are a sufferer, then perhaps you could try sitting on a plant, and if you do, please drop us a line and let us know if it was beneficial (LOL). But by all accounts this is a beautiful little flower, a herald of the warmer days to come, apparently the poet Wordsworth not only wrote about Daffodils, he also wrote three poems about the Celandine (he seems to have liked yellow flowers). And remember to visit Pryce's Dingle to view the snowdrops (and more Lesser Celandines).



Back to volunteering, unfortunately our December volunteer day was cancelled as it coincided with the December storm. However, January was more successful with an outing to remove more of the birch off the Skylark mound, by the way the Skylarks are now returning and gearing up to gain territory and nest. Let's hope we have a drier and warmer spring and summer this year to give them a chance. Remember not to walk on the skylark mound during the breeding season allowing these ground breeding birds to breed successfully. People and dogs can cause damage without meaning too.

We will be meeting up again at the reserve main entrance at 1.30pm on the second Sundays of both February and March...if your new year's resolution was to do more for the environment or if you just fancy a working social event in the outdoors you are most welcome to join us.



So when you visit the reserve over the coming two months we hope that you are able to spot and enjoy the skylarks, Lesser Celandine, Snowdrops and of course all its other awakening flora and fauna and hopefully some warm and blue sky days.

# What's on in February 2024!

Tues 4th	<b>WI</b> Crafts with Debbie	St Martins Institute Lounge	7:30pm
Wed 5th	<b>Hearing Loss Support Hubs</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month	Oswestry Library	Booking required 01743 342168
Wed 12th	<b>Weston Rhyn &amp; District Gardening Club</b>	Weston Rhyn Institute	7:15pm
Thurs 13th	<b>St Martins Parish Council</b>	St Martins Village Hall	7:00pm
Wed 20th	<b>3 Parishes Wildlife Group</b> Wildflower Meadows at Chirk Castle	St Martins Village Hall	7:30pm
Mon 24th	<b>St Martins Family and Local History Group</b>	St Martins Village Hall	7:00pm

# What's on in March 2025!

Tues 4th	<b>WI</b> Sweet Pea Talk	Ifton Miners Institute Lounge	7:30pm
Wed 5th	<b>Hearing Loss Support Hubs</b> Usually 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday month	Oswestry Library	Booking required 01743 342168
Wed 12th	<b>Weston Rhyn &amp; District Gardening Club</b>	The Institute Weston Rhyn	7:15pm
Thurs 13th	<b>St Martins Parish Council</b>	St Martins Village Hall	7:00pm
Thurs 20th	<b>3 Parishes Wild Life Group</b> Shropshire Badger Group	St John's Church Weston Rhyn	7:30pm
Mon 24th	<b>St Martins Family and Local History Group</b>	St Martins Village Hall	7:00pm

Please let us know the time and date of your events in April or May for the next edition of Village Life (free on the 'What's On' pages) by no later than Wednesday 19th March 2025.

If you send us an article for the next edition, please bear in mind that it will be delivered at the end of March so any events you report on will have happened before then. If you want to mention any upcoming events or activities please make sure they are in April or May (or later).

We have come back to some very cold weather that is impacting everyone, thank you to our site staff who have worked to keep the school running in these conditions. Hopefully it warms up next week!

Attendance at school remains a priority and thank you to all our parents who support us with this. The best outcomes for students really do depend on attendance at school. It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough, common cold or sore throat, we would always contact you if your child becomes unwell and needs to go home. You can see your child's attendance on the ARBOR APP.

Holidays in term time will almost always be unauthorised - but I would like to let parents know that our October half term in 2025 is for TWO weeks which may be an option for taking a family holiday. Full term dates are on the [website](#)

Year 10 and 11 return to school with GCSE exams on the horizon. Our preparations continue with a Year 10 & Year 11 GCSE forum on Tuesday at 6pm . This online information session will be explaining plans for the coming months and support on offer from school. An email has been sent to all parents with a link to attend.

Over Christmas, 2 of our pupils earned a Blue Peter badge!

Lacey Herbert (Year 6) and Mya Herbert Kelly (Year 2) took part in a Blue Peter horse vaulting showcase where they showcased their talents with horse vaulting. They met presenters and earned their Blue Peter badge.



Well done to **Kitt Edwards, Year 2**, who used his incredible imagination to create a fantastic monster! Year 2 have been exploring monsters in their art class, inspired by the books

*The Troll* by Julia Donaldson and *Troll Swap* by Leigh Hodgkinson. As part of their project, the students also created amazing clay monsters, bringing their ideas to life through art.





Well done to our year 11 students that competed in the U16 N Shropshire badminton tournament. They all played so well!

Congratulations to Thomas Adams School (boys) and Moreton School (girls) for winning and go through to represent N Shropshire at the county games.



Our St Martins Unlimited enterprise club, with the help and support of OsNosh, prepared drinks and nibbles for staff and VIPs who attended our Christmas Extravaganza! Thankyou to Paul Newman from Be A Better Fish for his ongoing support!

The year 11 Geography field work trip took place just before the Christmas break with a visit to **Dolwyddelan, Snowdonia** —here are some photos of students really “immersing “themselves into river investigations about diversity, the main physical processes and types of management that affect *ivers*.

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6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
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Subtract the numbers and put the answer in the box.

$9-1=$

$8-1=$

$3-1=$

$2-1=$

$7-1=$

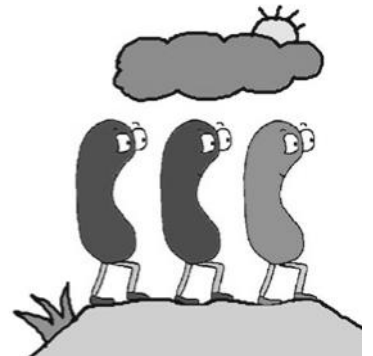
$6-1=$

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$1-1=$



Here's a picture for you to colour.



# WINTER WORD SEARCH



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## SoBS OSWESTRY



A hand is shown holding a leaflet for SoBS Oswestry. The leaflet features the SoBS logo (a stylized 'S' with hands) and the text: "Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide", "Support after Suicide", "Help and support is available", "Your nearest support group is SoBS Oswestry", "Call us on 07930 633 388 or email oswestry@uksobs.org", "The group meets on a monthly basis", "www.uksobs.org", and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. At the bottom, it says "search SOBSCharity".



**Support for adults  
Impacted by Suicide**



## Coq au Vin Hot Pot

Serves 6 (generously)

- Olive oil and butter, for sautéing and roasting
  - 500g mixed mushrooms, brushed and halved (button and portobellini)
  - $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon Herbs de Provence
  - 200g bacon, cut into thin strips
  - 5 medium shallots, peeled and quartered
  - 3 cloves garlic, finely diced
  - 2 heaped tablespoons cake wheat flour
  - 700g chicken thighs, skinless and deboned, cut into 2cm strips
  - 250ml (1 cup) Chardonnay
  - 15ml (1 tablespoon) tomato puree
  - $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups chicken stock
  - 8 sprigs thyme
  - 3 bay leaves
  - 3 medium carrots, peeled and roughly chopped
  - 5-6 large potatoes, washed (skin-on), thinly sliced
  - salt and freshly ground black pepper
1. Start by heating a knob of butter in a wide based pan. Add the mushrooms and brown over a high heat. They needn't be cooked through, just golden. Season lightly with Herbs de Provence, salt and black pepper. Remove from the pan and set aside.
  2. To the same pan, add a drizzle of olive oil. Sauté the bacon until the fat renders and the edges turn golden and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and add to the mushrooms.
  3. Heat another tablespoon of oil to the pan. Add the shallots and sauté over a medium heat until caramelized and soft, about 20 minutes. Stir through the garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes. Add the shallots to the mushrooms and bacon.
  4. Place the flour in a shallow dish and season with salt and black pepper. Dredge the chicken pieces in the flour. Heat a little more oil in the pan and brown in batches until golden on both sides. Deglaze with La Motte Chardonnay, scraping up all the sticky bits on the base of the pan, then reduce the liquor by half.
  5. Add the tomato paste, stock, thyme and bay leaves. Return the mushrooms, bacon and shallots to the pan. Add the carrots, cover with the lid on and simmer over a medium heat for about 35 - 40 minutes.
  6. Preheat the oven to 200 C.
  7. Blot the potatoes with paper towel to remove excess moisture. Place in a large bowl and drizzle with olive oil to coat, a tablespoon or two will suffice. Season lightly with salt and black pepper. Arrange the potatoes on top of the Coq au Vin. Brush with melted butter and bake until the potatoes are fork tender and golden, about 40 -45 minutes.
  8. Scatter with thyme sprigs just before serving.

## Bus services through St Martin's

If you live or work in the village, chances are you will have seen a bus passing by every now and again. In the modern world we live in many of us enjoy the benefit of using our own car to get about. For some however, the bus is a lifeline to the outside world.

In the UK, bus services are generally operated on a 'commercial' basis where the bus company choose the route and times and plan to run enough buses to provide a service where they make a profit from the number of passengers carried. Where deemed necessary the County Council can step in and 'subsidise' a service by providing public money to the bus operating company to run a service. As you can imagine, funds for doing this dwindle every year. The buses that run through the village here are a mix of commercial and subsidised. These are:

Arriva Wales service 2 from Oswestry to Wrexham via Park Hall, Gobowen, St. Martins, Gledrid, Chirk, Cefn Mawr, Acrefair, Plas Madoc, Ruabon, Johnstown, Ponciau and Wrexham (7 days per week)

Arriva Midlands service 53 from Oswestry to Ellesmere via Park Hall, Gobowen, St. Martins and Dudleston Heath (2 schoolday journeys and all the Saturday service run by Lakeside Coaches). (Doesn't run on Sundays)

Traws-Cymru service T12 from Newtown (Powys) to Wrexham via Montgomery, Welshpool, Guilsfield, Arddleen, Four Crosses, Pant, Morda, Oswestry, Gobowen, St. Martins, Gledrid, Chirk and Wrexham Maelor Hospital (branded as Traws-Cymru and operated by Tanat Valley Coaches). (Doesn't run on Sundays)

All these routes serve Moors Bank and the stops at St. Martins School. The 53 serves these stops too, then runs along Overton Road, past Stans and along Ellesmere Road. Some of the physical bus stops have vanished over time but they are still officially in use and plans are in hand to reinstate the missing signs in the coming weeks. These are at The Keys, The Old Post Office at the junction of Ifton View, and near Marsland Close.

Some facts you may not know:

-All of these services offer the ability to pay by cash or contactless cards.

-OAP / Disabled 'concessionary' passes are valid on these routes (all day at weekends and after 0930 weekdays). If you live in Shropshire your 'English' pass can be used to travel over the border into Wales (and back!) but not for local journeys within Wales. So, you can go for the day to Welshpool on the T12 for example, just not from Welshpool to Newtown. Every time you use your pass the bus company receives a payment helping to make that service pay

-The number 2 is the only bus that runs on Sundays in the whole of the county of Shropshire

-Full timetables are online or can be obtained from the bus companies. A summary of buses to and from the stop at St. Martins School (known as Beech Trees – does anyone know why?

Copies available by emailing me at [Stmartinsvillagelife@gmail.com](mailto:Stmartinsvillagelife@gmail.com)

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# The Talkative Tortoise

Long ago, there lived a tortoise and two swans in a pond. They were very good friends. The tortoise was very talkative. He used to talk to swans for a very long time. All of them were happy.

Once there was a drought and it lasted for a long time. The water in the pond dried up. There was no water to drink even and it was now impossible to live there. So, the swans decided to fly away to some other place.

The tortoise requested the swans to take him along too. But, since he couldn't fly, they sat down to think and found a way. The swans suggested an idea according to which the tortoise would have to hold a piece of the stick by its mouth and the swans will hold the ends of that stick.

They warned the tortoise to not talk during their journey. The tortoise promised, and the three friends set out to fly. On their way, they crossed several villages. Many villagers saw the tortoise and made fun of the tortoise.

This enraged the tortoise and he couldn't control himself. He opened his mouth to speak. As soon as he did so, he fell down and died. The swans were shocked to see their friend die. The tortoise lost his life because of his foolishness.

**Moral:** We should listen to our friend's advice.



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## QUIZ CORNER ...

1. 14 years - it ended 15/12/33
2. Andrew (Freddie) Flintoff
3. Fungi
4. Hawthorn
5. Unleashed
6. Prague
7. Eternal
8. Bavaria
9. Asia
10. Anne of Cleaves

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comes  
new strength  
and new  
thoughts.* ”

Eleanor Roosevelt

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# Project Gigabit STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

North Shropshire: January 2025



## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT EVENT

Throughout 2025, Freedom Fibre will host resident engagement events to inform residents about [Project Gigabit](#) and our full-fibre broadband, answering any questions residents may have. Residents will also be able to chat to ISP representatives about internet services on offer.

Freedom Fibre will be hosting our next event at Hadnall Village Hall on Thursday 23rd January 12-4pm for local residents. Please feel free to share online our [Facebook post](#) about the event. Residents can keep up to date with Freedom Fibre by following our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/freedomfibreuk](http://www.facebook.com/freedomfibreuk).

## PROGRESS UPDATE

We are starting to release our new full-fibre broadband network to customers in parts of Tilstock, Prees Heath, Grindley Brook, Hadnall, Upper Battlefield, Shawbury and Bomere Heath. The next areas for release will include Walton, High Ercall, Roden and Uffington.

The areas we are building ready to offer service to in 2025 include West Felton, Baschurch, Prescott, Ruyton XI Towns, Brownhill, Knockin, Osbaston, Nesscliffe, Kinton, Walcot, Cockshutt, Crosemere, Burlton, Clive, Stanton upon Hine Heath, Astley and Montford Bridge.



## FREEDOM FIBRE SOCIAL VALUE

As part of Freedom Fibre's long-term commitment to connecting communities throughout North Shropshire, Freedom Fibre has a number of social value initiatives. In 2025, Freedom Fibre will provide sponsorship to local business networking groups; deliver CV writing 'skills sharing' sessions for residents; deliver careers advice sessions in local colleges and secondary schools; promote volunteering in the community with Oswestry-based charity Qube; as well as reopening the Freedom Fund, providing grants to non-profit community groups.

# Morda FC 9 St. Martins FC 0



There is a long history of reporting clashes between these two local football clubs but few with such a convincing victory that this match provided. A reality that wasn't witnessed in the opening minutes with St. Martins, providing a positive early start to what became a nightmare for them.

That nightmare began in the 9<sup>th</sup> minute when Tom Gale fired home Morda's opening goal. Tom's goal provided an inspiration to his colleagues, particularly Carl Bailly who scored goal number two in the 14<sup>th</sup> minute, followed by a confident three more goals scored in the closing moments of the first half to secure a five goal half-time lead.

In defiance, St. Martins started the second with determination but were caught on the counter-attack by Morda's Zac Lea firing home his club's 6<sup>th</sup> goal, resulting in a rewarding confidence that created goal number 7 scored by Ben Thomson.

Clearly the match had now become a nightmare for the Saints, a fact epitomised by conceding a penalty that was duly fired home by Tom Clark providing Morda's 8th goal.

Providing the final blow to St. Martins, Logan Richards calmly fired home his club's 9<sup>th</sup> goal.



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Approver: Quilter Financial Services Ltd and Quilter Mortgage Planning Ltd, July 2024.

## Happy New Year from St Martins WI.

December saw us enjoying our Annual Christmas Meal and Quiz at The Keys. We enjoyed excellent festive fare, a Secret Santa, a fiendishly fun quiz, and a festive raffle. Presentation of prizes for our monthly Competition and Exhibition winners was made by our President, Ann Sadler. The Competition was won by Karen Thompson and the Exhibition winner was Sue Bedson.

The photographs show the winners being presented with their prizes.

Our first meeting of 2025 was held on Tuesday **7 January** when Ann welcomed members and visitors to the meeting, especially in view of the inclement weather, and wished them a happy New Year. Following various items of business Susan Ord, our speaker for the evening, gave a fascinating, interactive talk about analysing handwriting. Susan is a Graphologist & Forensic Document Examiner. The evening concluded with social time and refreshments.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 4 February** when our Speaker will be our own Debbie Shaw on Crafts.

On **4th March** Phillipa Cooper will present a Sweet Pea Talk and will have seeds for sale.

Meetings start at 7.30 p.m. at the Miners Institute, new members and visitors are all welcome.





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Spire Yale Wrexham	01978 268035
Oswestry Minor Injuries unit	01691 663617

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### Schools:

St Martins School:	01691 776500	Website:	<a href="http://www.stmartins3-16.org">www.stmartins3-16.org</a>
Lakelands Ellesmere	01691 622543	Website:	<a href="http://www.lakelands-school.co.uk">www.lakelands-school.co.uk</a>
Marches Oswestry	01691 664400	Website:	<a href="http://www.marchesschool.co.uk">www.marchesschool.co.uk</a>
North Shropshire College	01691 688000	Website:	<a href="http://www.nsc.ac.uk">www.nsc.ac.uk</a>

<b>St Martins Parish Church:</b>	Rev. Stuart Jermy	01691 778468
<b>Methodist Chapel Ellesmere Road &amp; The Moors</b>	Rev Julia Skitt	07810 360778

**Parish Council:** Edward Davies 01743 366420 Email: [clerk@stmartinsparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stmartinsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Shropshire County Council:** 0345 678 9000

**Shropshire County Councillor:** Steve Davenport 07944 097876

**Police:** Emergency: 999 Non-Emergency: 101

PCSO Dave Hughes: 07870 219190

PCSO Pete Roberts 07870 219019

**Citizens Advice Bureau** Oswestry: 0844 4991100

<b>Vets:</b> Blakemere Veterinary Centre	01691 881991
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Border Veterinary Centre	01691 670395
Brownlow Veterinary Centre	01691 622152 / 622137
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### **Defibrillators can be found at the following locations: RING 999 FIRST**

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