

The Village Connection

Leigh on Mendip + Downhead + Stoke St Michael +

Issue 325

February 2026



February

- 6 Coffee & Chat with PCSO Mortimer Stoke Church 10 - Noon
- 9 Leigh WI Memorial Hall LoM 7.30pm
- 10 Stoke Cinema Memorial Hall 7.00pm *See p 10*
- 13 Coffee & Chat Stoke Church 10 - Noon
- 13 Leigh Lunch, Memorial Hall LoM *See p 11*
- 20 Coffee & Chat Stoke Church 10 - Noon
- 21 FOLC Bingo Leigh Memorial Hall 7pm *See p 7*
- 26 FOLC Coffee Morning Leigh Tower Room 10.30am - Noon
- 27 Coffee & Chat Stoke Church 10 - Noon

March

- 14 FOLC Race Night
- 14 Annual Wilf Quiz Memorial Hall SsM

April

- 4 FOLC Easter Quiz
- 13 Leigh Rec AGM

The Village Connection

The Annual Subscription will remain at £5 thanks to our advertisers.

From the Reverend Keith Johnson

Nunney Rectory

Shrove Tuesday falls on 17th February this year. Christians have marked the last day before Lent for centuries, seeing it as an opportunity for one final feast, before entering the solemn season of Lent. The festivities are often accompanied by a time of penitence in church, the ringing of Church bells, and the burning of last year's palm crosses, in preparation for the next day – Ash Wednesday, when we hold our first Holy Communion service of Lent, accompanied by ashing.

With the welcoming of a new dawn, comes the first day of Lent, which has been observed by Christians for centuries - a time for confession and inner self-examination.

In Matthew chapter four, we read:

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights.

Lent has its origins in this time of personal reflection which Jesus spent in the desert, during which time he ate no food, spending extended periods in prayer and reflection, after which he is tempted three times by the devil.

I wonder, do you have any specific plans how you might mark Lent this year? In writing these words, I am conscious that I don't yet myself! Perhaps I will make a deliberate effort to find some quiet places to commune with our heavenly father, being sure to turn off my mobile for a while, open my bible, and listen to the wonderful sounds of nature which we enjoy in our beautiful countryside.

Keith

From the Registers

Funerals

Clint Grant	Nunney	12 th December
Julia Fowler	Nunney	19 th December

A Winters Walk in Stoke St Michael

The 'Christmas Walk', which started at the church and was organised by the Stoke Walkers, took us on a gentle, winters ramble through the lanes, suitable for pushchairs and attended by all ages. The weather was dry but chilly and all walkers were grateful to end up back at the Church where mince pies, warm mulled wine and treats for the little ones were waiting. The walk and refreshments were followed by joyous Carol singing led by a local trumpeter, where favourite carols were sung with gusto.

A huge thank you, on behalf of the PCC, to the Stoke Walking group for organising the event and to those who volunteered with the refreshments. The kind donations given were split between the church and the school PTA. Thank you to everyone who supported the event.



Follow the 'Stoke St Michael Walkers' on facebook if you are interested in joining future walks.

New Church Service Pattern

Beginning the 1st February the service pattern has been rearranged so that Keith our Vicar will have more time to stay after services to talk to those attending and not have to rush to his next service. At Stoke the 9.30 service on the second Sunday will now be held on the fourth Sunday for Leigh the pattern has not changed. Nunney, Witham and Cloford have also swapped Sundays. See the full changes in the centrefold. This is for a trial period of six months and will be adopted if successful enabling Keith to spend more time with his congregations.

STOKE CHURCH **Coffee** and **Chat** **Fridays 10-12**



follow us on

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Sidesmen & Flowers



Leigh on Mendip

	Sideman	Flowers
1 February	Alastair & Jane Weston	Margaret Loten
8 February	No service at St Giles	-
15 February	No service at St Giles	No flowers from 18/2
22 February	No service at St Giles	LENT – No flowers
1 March	Mary Witts & Kate Drinkwater	LENT – No flowers

Church/Brass Cleaning

February - Margret Loten & Joan Pattison
 March - Mary Witts & Lally Lee

Stoke St Michael

	Sideman	Flowers
1 February	Penny Anderson	Karen Pearce
8 February	No service	-
15 February	Wendy Foulds	No flowers from 18/2
22 February	Janet Gilham	LENT – No flowers
1 March	Penny Anderson	LENT – No flowers

Church Cleaning

February – Jane Evans
 March - Cicely Middle

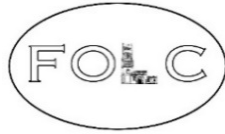
Flower Arranging

Do you enjoy arranging flowers? Would you like to join the Flower Rota for Stoke St Michael Church?

What is involved - donate and arrange flowers for the two Altar vases about once every three months.

Interested? Please contact Janet Gilham for more information on 01749 840671 or email thevillageconnection@hotmail.com.





FRIENDS OF LEIGH CHURCH
Registered charity number (England and Wales): 1174913

FEBRUARY UPDATE

Thank you to all who took part in our successful autumn of fund raising, and for a generous donation, which will enable us to support the grant application to the Lottery Heritage Fund for the next phase of repairs to our beautiful Grade 1 listed church.

Our next cash **Bingo** will be held on Saturday 21 February in the Memorial Hall – bar open 7pm, eyes down 7.30pm. Entry £5 including table snacks, with a book of 10 games for £6. Later in the month on the Fourth Thursday 26 February we host a **Coffee Morning**, with home-made cake, from 10.30am to noon in the Tower Room café in the church.

Advance notice of a **Race Night** planned for Saturday 14 March and a repeat of last year's successful but challenging **Easter Quiz** on Saturday 4 April, with questions again set by Gus Unger-Hamilton.

The Tower Room café remains open every day as a peaceful place to rest, work or socialise. With free wi-fi, electronic access to the church records and children's toys together with self-serve refreshments it is well worth a visit.

Many thanks to all those who already support us; if you would like more information or to join us, please email: folcleigh@gmail.com

The FOLC Team

Sunday Stokers_s

In January, Stokers explored the parable of the Wise man and the Foolish man using Lego:



“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” Matthew 7:24-27.

The children were given the task of making a Lego house that could withstand a storm. The houses were then subjected to a Hurricane, an Earthquake, Quicksand and even a Tsunami! Do pop in to Church to see our Lego houses and photos of what they endured.

We talked about how, if we work hard, try our best and follow Jesus’ teaching, we are like the wise man, building our lives on a sure foundation.

If you are interested in knowing more about Stokers, please email us on sundaystokers@gmail.com, find us on [facebook.com/StokeStMichaelChurch](https://www.facebook.com/StokeStMichaelChurch), or on www.achurchnearyou/church/10959/

Charlotte and Lizzy



Annual Parochial Church Meetings - advance notice

All of our Parochial Church Councils have agreed to hold these important meetings on Sundays with a 11a.m service this will be brought forward to 10am followed by the meetings and ending with a a bring and share lunch. Watch this space for dates.

Mendip Live Wires

At our January meeting we were delighted to welcome some new visitors for the evening, as it is always lovely to see new faces.



During the evening we all enjoyed the chance to have a go at several different crafts, discovering new skills and learning what each craft had to offer.

Badge Making – At W.I. we find it useful having name badges as it does help you get to know peoples' names.

Chicken Scratch Embroidery – Is a vintage technique of stitching decorative patterns, like lace, directly onto gingham fabric using simple stitches (running, cross, double cross) that follow the fabric's check grid, creating a texture, lacy look.

Crochet - making a granny square using two different stitches and it is often the design that crochet is known for.

Decoupage – this involved attaching pretty dried flowers and leaves to the inside of glass jars and to finish the design off attaching a ribbon with a bow around the top of the vase

Origami - the Japanese art of paper folding – some very pretty flowers were made.

Pergamano – this is a specific brand and style of parchment craft, an intricate art form using translucent parchment paper to create detailed, lace-like designs through embossing, perforating, cutting, and colouring with special tools, resulting in beautiful cards, bookmarks, and decorations with a frosted, delicate look.

Scandi Baskets – these were made using felt of two different colours to make a distinct interwoven pattern.

Everyone greatly enjoyed the crafts, and it was lovely to see so many people having a go at different activities. It was a perfect chance to discover new crafts and perhaps spark a new interest.

Teas, coffees, and a delicious selection of treats were available, giving everyone the chance to relax and chat together.

We are a thriving WI group with members from Leigh on Mendip and other surrounding villages, with wide-ranging ages and interests – meeting on the 2nd Monday of each month in the Memorial Hall. More room, of course, for new members. If you think this could be for you just turn up at 7.15pm or contact Caroline on 07974 025608. Our new e-mail address is mendiplivewires@gmail.com

There is more information on Leigh on Mendip Village Website. (<https://leigh-on-mendip.org.uk/>) via either the Groups button or Events page, where you will find a link to our Facebook

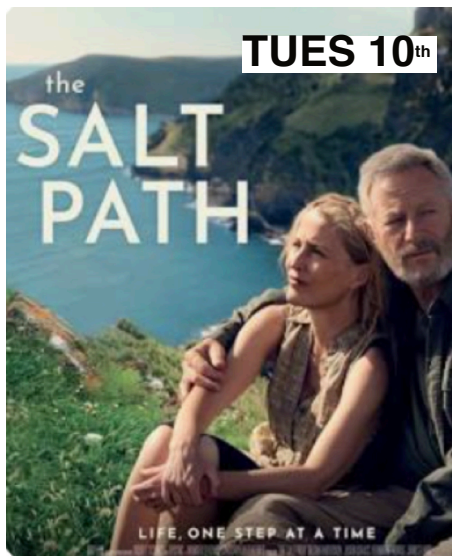


Stoke St. Michael War Memorial Hall



**CINEMA NIGHTS: 2nd Tues of each month,
7pm**

£5 - pay on the night: Bar available



FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Sat 14th March: Annual Wilf Quiz –

Check out posters for details, booking essential.

COMMUNITY BOOK SWAP

Did you know, We have over 400 books and 25 puzzles in the summer house at the rear of the hall.

These are regularly updated.

Please feel free to borrow, no charge.

LEIGH RECREATION FIELD

Bonus Club – The winners in December were Trish & Colin Gronow and Sue Vaughan with number 40. In January, Ken & Tina Johnson and Jan Schlecter won with no 4. They should have their £20 by now.

Wreath Making Thank you to everyone who helped make the wreath making such a fun event, especially the Barnes family. The rec made £403, which is great.

Don't forget, our 2026 AGM will be on Monday evening, 13 April. Come along if you want to have a say.

The meetings have started for the **Car Show and Village Day!** Lots of items from last year's have already been booked again, and a fun dog show is in the planning. Put 5 July in your diary.

David Pattison 812570

THE LEIGH LUNCH **at Leigh on Mendip Memorial Hall**

Friday 13 February 2026
and the second Friday of every month
Arrive from 11.30am, lunch served 12.30pm

£6 for a 2-course hot lunch, including hot drinks
Bar available

Dietary needs catered for - just let us know when you book

Everyone is welcome - all ages!

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Please book by **Tuesday 10 February** at the latest
If you would like help with transport please let us know when you book

Friends of Leigh Church, Registered Charity No. 1174913

INFORMATION PAGE

Vicar: The Reverend Keith Johnson

The Rectory, High Street, Nunney, BA11 4LZ Tel: 01373 792344

Parish Administrator : Claire Edwards

Phone: 07404 824355 email: postleburysecretary@gmail.com

Parish Office, The Rectory, High Street, Nunney, BA11 4LZ

Office hours - Thursday 11am- 5pm

Leigh on Mendip and Downhead Parochial Church Council

Contact email: sec.lomd.pcc@gmail.com

Churchwardens	Steve Britten	The Old Granary, Green Farm
	01749 880118	Downhead BA4 4LQ
	Paula Freeland	Honeysuckle Cottage
	07722 359093	Leigh on Mendip BA3 5QQ
Treasurer	Margaret Loten	6 The Old Sawmills
	01373 812922	Leigh on Mendip BA3 5RQ
Secretary	Mary Witts	11 Bellfield
	01373 812367	Leigh on Mendip BA3 5QH

Stoke St Michael Parochial Church Council

Contact email : stokestmichaelchurchwardens@gmail.com

See also : <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10959>

<https://www.facebook.com/StokeStMichaelChurch>

Churchwarden	Jane Evans	Withybrook
	01749 840660	Stoke St Michael BA3 5JQ
Treasurer		Penny Anderson
	07970 908671	Grove View, East End
	email	Stoke St Michael BA3 5JD
		ssmchurchtreasurer@gmail.com
Secretary	Janet Gilham	Hillside, Withybrook
	01749 840671	Stoke St Michael BA3 5JQ

Safeguarding Officer for Leigh on Mendip, Downhead & Stoke St Michael

Post vacant please contact Parish Administrator

Generations growing in faith together

By Fiona Gibson, who will become the Bishop of Taunton on 8 February 2026

Our extended family recently got together for a celebration. We were nine adults from 24-68, one toddler, and one dog, and it was glorious! The joy was simply in being together, whatever our age.

I sometimes wonder what would happen in the life of our churches if we could adopt the same outlook there? Each generation glad that the other is there. Each generation contributing something to the whole. Each generation looking to the interests of the others, making sure there was something that spoke to the others even if not to them.

The writer of the Chronicles records something you could miss if you weren't looking for it. In 2 Chronicles 20, when Judah was facing attack from Ammon and Moab, King Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast and summoned the people. This is what it says in verse 13:

“All Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.”

At a time of great peril, when the king was seeking the LORD, all generations came together to pray.

We often think of intergenerational meaning us older ones passing on wisdom to the younger ones, and that's certainly part of it. But a truly intergenerational family, which the church is, means all generations welcoming one another, valuing one another, learning from one another, and praying with and for one another. It's not a one-way thing.

Our younger generations are ambassadors from the future, with wisdom to give us about their culture, and how to share the timeless truths of the gospel with their peers. They are leaders and learners, just as we all are.

What might it look like across our diocese if we committed to making room for other generations? What might it look like if, like the people of God in ancient times, we came together in our year of especial focus on prayer - adults, young people, and little ones - and sought the power and wisdom of God together? I have a feeling we'd be surprised!

Church Services in the Benefices of Stoke St Michael, Leigh on Mendip and the United Parish of Postlebury

Sunday 1st February - 4th Sunday of Epiphany

09.30	Wanstrow	Holy Communion	
11.00	Leigh on Mendip	Holy Communion	
18.00	Stoke St Michael	Evensong	<i>(Jane Evans)</i>

5th February (Thursday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
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Sunday 8th February - 2nd Sunday before Lent

09.30	Nunney	Holy Communion
11.00	Witham	Family Communion

12th February (Thursday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
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Sunday 15th February - Sunday next before Lent

09.30	Marston	Holy Communion
11.00	Stoke St Michael	Holy Communion with Stokers
16.00	Nunney	Soul Food <i>(Henry & Caroline Pomeroy)</i>
18.00	Downhead	Evensong

18th February - Ash Wednesday

19.00	Leigh on Mendip	Holy Communion with Ashing
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19th February (Thursday)

10.00	Nunney	Holy Communion BCP
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February 2026



Sunday 22nd February - 1st Sunday of Lent

9.30 Stoke St Michael Holy Communion

11.00 Cloford Holy Communion

25th February (Thursday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

Sunday 1st March - 2nd Sunday of Lent

09.30 Wanstrow Holy Communion

11.00 Leigh on Mendip Holy Communion

18.00 Stoke St Michael Evensong *(Jane Evans)*

5th March (Thursday)

10.00 Nunney Holy Communion BCP

All services taken by Reverend Keith Johnson unless stated otherwise

*Note new service pattern for Stoke St Michael
The 9.30 Service of Holy Communion now on the Fourth
Sunday of the month*

Also changes to the pattern for Nunney and Witham

East Mendip Gardening Club

February feels like a turning point in the garden. It's still cold outside, but there are signs of spring's imminent arrival everywhere you look. Bulbs are slowly emerging from the ground, and the days are getting longer at last.

This month's garden jobs are mostly about getting things ready for the spring. But there are also some early sowing and growing tasks to do.

Prepare your seed beds. As long as the ground isn't frozen, you can cultivate beds and start to warm up the soil, with fleece, polythene or cloches, in preparation for sowing in the coming months.

Organise this year's seeds by sowing date. Get hold of a box with dividers, and file your seed packets by the month they need to be sown in. You'll be so glad of this effort in the weeks to come.

Check your tools are sound and your garden machinery is working. Give your tools and equipment the once over and apply a little TLC to anything that needs it. While you're at it, tidy your shed ahead of the imminent planting & sowing season - you'll thank yourself for a clean & tidy space later!

Blitz perennial weeds in your beds and kitchen garden. Dig them up, roots and all, to get a head start on the blighters before the weather warms up.

Cut back shrubs, such as cornus and salix cultivars (grown for their colourful winter stems), down to their bases.

Prune summer-flowering clematis towards the end of the month, before active growth begins.

Prune winter-flowering jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) after flowering, to encourage new growth for next year's blooms. Cut back the previous year's growth to 5cm from the old wood.

Lift and divide snowdrops still 'in the green', if you want to move them or create more plants.

Start chitting early potatoes — stand them on end in a module tray or egg box and place them in a bright, cool, frost-free place.

Build raised beds now, before the growing season gets underway. Raised beds allow you to make an early start in the garden; the soil warms up faster and raised beds drain quickly too, so they're a great way to deal with clay soils.

Force rhubarb plants for an early crop.

Cover outdoor strawberries with cloches to encourage an earlier crop.

Plant begonia tubers (hollow side up) in pots of moist compost and cover with a little more compost. Keep them in a bright, frost-free position.

Pot on rooted cuttings of tender perennial plants taken last summer.

Plant lily bulbs and allium bulbs. Although best done in autumn, you can get away with planting lilies and alliums until spring.

Start sowing cucumber and tomato seeds for the greenhouse, in warm conditions.

Sow sweet peppers for growing on in a heated greenhouse. Always provide plenty of warmth.

Direct sow hardy broad beans, such as 'Aquadulce Claudia', if the soil isn't frozen.

Plant raspberry canes and blackberries provided the soil isn't frozen or waterlogged.

Plant currant plants, such as redcurrants, whitecurrants, blackcurrants and gooseberries if soil conditions are right.

Plan your vegetable plot for this year to ensure good crop rotation and prevent pests and diseases building up in the soil.

Order seeds and plug plants online now. Having a garden plan drawn up will help you decide the quantities you need.

Keep feeding the birds. The weather is still cold this month so hang fat balls and keep bird feeders topped up.

Taken from <https://www.thompson-morgan.com/in-the-garden-this-month>

On Tuesday 24th February the East Mendip Gardening Club will meet in the Ashwick and Oakhill Village Hall at 7.40p.m when Steven and Lindsay will give a talk entitled 'Blending wildflowers and planting'. If you would like to now more about incorporating wild flowers into your garden then join us to find out how. Further details from our Chair Mark Manley, markamanley81@googlemail.com or see <https://www.ashwickparish.org/clubs-and-societies/east-mendip-gardening-club>

Leigh on Mendip Allotment Association

The Leigh on Mendip allotments are in the field to the west side of the Recreation Playing Field. If you live in the parish of Leigh on Mendip and want to register, or simply discuss having an allotment, please contact :- Tim Spurgeon, 18, Park Hayes, tel 07813 505830 or e mail timsurgeon@btinternet.com



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Leigh on Mendip Parent, Toddler and Baby Group

New members are always welcome at
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Tuesdays 9am - 11am (term time only)
£1.50 for first child and 50p each for siblings
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If you need any more information contact

Vicky Williams on 07866 894303

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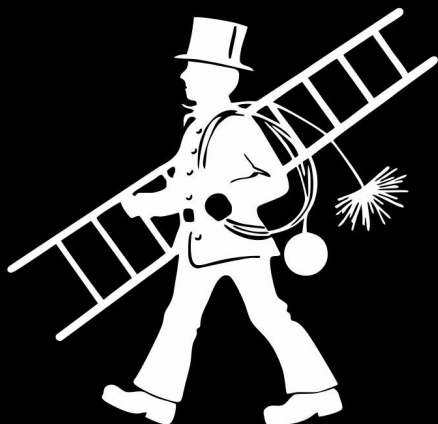
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Stoke St. Michael Baby and Toddler Group



Come and join our friendly group!

Wednesdays, during term time from 9.30am to 11.30am.
at the Memorial Hall

£1.50 per family. Your first visit free!

We provide a large range of toys for babies and toddlers, as well as fun weekly activities. Children can enjoy a healthy snack whilst parents can relax with a cup of tea, all included!

Just turn up or contact Gemma on 07837 121099 or via Facebook



Stoke St Michael Toddler Group

Bluebells Early Years Unit at Stoke St Michael Primary School

Moonshill Road, Stoke St Michael, BA3 5LG

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Open Term Time Only: Monday-Friday 9am-3pm

Places available for Reception and Pre-School children.

We offer 15 and 30 hours funded places for eligible families.

To arrange a visit please email stoke-st-michael@educ.somerset.gov.uk or call the office on 01749 840470. For more information go to www.croscombstokefederation.co.uk or visit



@StokeStMichaelSchool.



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Chair
Vicki Taylor
Tel. 01373 813942

Clerk
Joe McGhee
Tel. 07518 710688

Email parish.clerk@leigh-on-mendip.org.uk

Meetings are held on the **3rd** Monday of every month in the Memorial Hall unless otherwise advised – see Parish Noticeboards for details of Agenda, Minutes etc. or visit

www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk



All parishioners welcome to attend

LEIGH on MENDIP MEMORIAL HALL

(Registered Charity No. 304574)



Monday to Friday (until 6.00 p.m.)	£5.00 per hour
Monday to Friday (6.00pm onwards)	£7.00 per hour
Saturday and Sunday	£7.00 per hour
Business Users - At all times	£10.00 per hour

Hire of the hall includes the use of tables and chairs, crockery, cutlery, glasses and use of the kitchen. The hall has WiFi and a comprehensive audio system for playing music or using microphones. It also has a hearing loop.

Some items may also be hired for outside use. A list is available.

Booking clerk Ann Orpwood 01373 812459
r.a.orpwood@btinternet.com

Articles for the next issue to be submitted by the 20th of each month

E-mail - thevillageconnection@hotmail.com

Post - Janet Gilham, Hillside, Withybrook, Stoke St Michael, BA3 5JQ

Your Village contacts are:-

Leigh	Jan Pattison	Yew Tree Cottage, Tadhil	01373 812460
Stoke	Janet Gilham	Hillside, Withybrook	01749 840671
Downhead	Steve Britten	The Old Granary, Downhead	01749 880118

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Payment for adverts to:-

Janet Gilham, Hillside, Withybrook, Stoke St Michael, Radstock BA3 5JQ

Cheques made payable to Stoke and Leigh Magazine

Note from the Editor

When emailing articles or adverts please use black text and grayscale for all logos and pictures A5 portrait format with 1cm margins 1.5cm bottom margin. Or A4 landscape same margins two columns with central gutter of 2cm.

Leigh on Mendip Village Website:- www.leigh-on-mendip.org.uk

Police Community Support Officers

Louise Perry for Leigh on Mendip and Will Mortimer for Stoke St Michael

Tel: 101 for non-emergencies 999 for emergencies only

Or report on line at: <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report>

CCS Village Agent Nic Edwards Tel 01823331222