

**This Newsletter also available for download in colour at  
<https://www.southamtoday.org.uk/newsletter>**

## **Fancy a walkabout....Saturday 1st March 2025 at 10am**

With spring just around the corner come along and join us on a gentle walkabout Noverton or Southam for about an hour.

Meet your neighbours and parish councillors and tell us what we can do to improve our place. Are there areas that need a clean up? Do we need more bins or benches? Are footpaths blocked or hedges overgrown? Do we need more organised walks? All suggestions very welcome.

Meet at the Parish Council Noticeboard by the playground on Desert Orchid Road in Noverton or by the war memorial in Southam. 10 am on Saturday 1st March 2025, at both venues.

***Happy New Year to one and all***



Even in the depths of winter new life can break through in  
the most unloved and neglected places

**Contributions for the April/May Newsletter by  
15th March 2025**



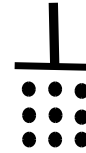
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**Contact**

ednajsmith@btinternet.com  
Telephone – 01242 520 137  
Letters – 37 Ratcliff Lawns

*We are always pleased to receive and publish your letters.  
When writing, please provide a name, address and telephone  
number. On request, the name and address of correspondents  
will be withheld.*

**Edna’s Epistle...**

A long overdue welcome for Paul and Millie Green in Southam Lane and their baby boy George who is one year old.

Southam residents extend a warm welcome to Victoria Minter who has recently moved into Old Road together with her mum Linda Henderson.

Victoria is mum to Toby, Charlotte, Harriet and Jessica and grandmother to Jessica’s baby. Also, two dogs for all dog lovers!

We hope you will all be very happy in our and your, village.

Edna Smith

Phone: 01242 520137

email: ednajsmith@btinternet.com

**Southam Gardening Club**

December was a busy month for the Gardening Club with 2 events: a Wreath Making Workshop and a Christmas Social and Quiz. Both were well attended and great fun.

Future meetings include:

*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February – Garden Visiting by Margie Hoffnung*

*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March – Bach Flowers by Pauline Wickens*

*Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April – an outing to Daglingworth House*

*Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May – Coffee Morning and Plant Sale*

Meetings are generally held on third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. All are welcome, no gardening experience necessary, you don’t even need to have a garden!

For more information contact gardens@southamtoday.org.uk or phone 07980 699036. If you wish to be added to the email distribution list, please email gardens@southamtoday.org.uk

**DROP IN**

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 25

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 25

Race Week No Drop In

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 25

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 25

All at 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm



**DROP-IN** to the Village Hall for a cup of tea and slice of cake and join the increasing numbers dropping in twice every month

# The Church of the Ascension, Southam



On Sunday evening the 8th December, forty brave residents and friends attended the beginning of Christmas festivities in the village. In spite of the appalling weather and a very cold Tithe Barn (although everyone dressed appropriately) the family service, led by Rev. Natalie Garrett was joyous, meaningful and happy. Hot cups of tea, biscuits and chocolates greeted the visitors and repeated at the end of the service. A voluntary collection was held in aid of the church floor. Thank you to all those who braved the elements.

## Services

2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2025	Holy Communion	Southam Church	9:30am
9 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Holy Communion	Southam Church	9:30am
16 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	No Service	---	---
23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2025	Breakfast Church	Southam Village Hall	9:30am
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2025	Holy Communion	Southam Church	9:30am
9 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Holy Communion	Southam Church	9:30am
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	No Service	---	---
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2025	Breakfast Church	Southam Village Hall	9:30am
30 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Mothering Sunday	Details to be announced	---

**Edna Smith – 01242 520 137**

On a crisp winter's evening just before Christmas, John Donovan and the Rev. Bill Blakey led a carol service at The Church of the Ascension in Southam. The service combined traditional readings, with angels, shepherds and kings making their way to Bethlehem, and cheerful and tuneful singing by the congregation. Many thanks to those who made it such a lovely evening, and to the villagers who generously supported the fund-raising appeal for repairs to the Church.

Church Wardens

## **SOUTHAM ART GROUP**

Southam Art Group's Annual Exhibition and Coffee morning will take place on Saturday 29th March 2025, from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Entrance is £2, to include a beverage and a biscuit. Proceeds in aid of the Village Hall.



# News from Cleeve Common Trust

## Save our Skylarks!

Cleeve Common is a Conservation Area and as a result our Skylark populations are okay, but they are declining both here and nationally and as a result skylarks are on the Red List, which means they are threatened with global extinction. Imagine no skylarks singing to us anymore!

### Ground nesting habits

On Cleeve Common we have several species of bird which nest on the ground. All ground nesting birds are under pressure due to habitat loss, predators and climate change.

Skylark nests are not robust, and skylark eggs



are well camouflaged and about the width of a 5p, so newborn chicks are tiny. The nest, eggs and chicks are therefore very easy to miss.

### What can you do to help?

We are delighted to welcome people onto the Common, to share the space with the wildlife here. We know the benefits time out in nature has for our health and wellbeing. However, during bird nesting season (Feb – Aug) we need to be extra careful not to disturb our vulnerable residents.

**Please stick the main tracks and areas of short grass, watch your step and keep dogs on a short lead, or under close control with you.** Calling them away from running in the rough grass areas (where they may well disturb adders too). Also keep your head up and look about. If you see an adult bird calling out in distress, back away as they may be trying to protect a nest or chicks.

## Cleeve Common Trust Events 2025

Our 2025 Events are varied so we hope there is something for everyone. Our listings can be found here [www.cleevecommon.org.uk/events-calendar](http://www.cleevecommon.org.uk/events-calendar) or follow us on Eventbrite, Facebook or Instagram. Below are the next few. Please remember to book ahead on Eventbrite, goto the CCT website, under 'Whats On' menu..

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 10:30am. **Family Fun Friday – Bird Boxes and Nature Stomp.** Make a bird box to take home.



Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm. **Nature Journalling** in Wardens' Wood with Amanda Steer. All abilities welcome for this gentle, mindful workshop.

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 6pm. **Foraging Walk** in Wardens' Wood with Rob Gould. An evening exploring & tasting the edible plants on our doorstep.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April from 1pm. **Family Fun Friday Easter Trail.** Our popular event is back with treats for everyone who completes the trail!



Did you know you can support us by playing the Cheltenham Lottery?

And be in the running for a £25k prize! More details here: [www.cheltenhamlottery.co.uk/support/cleeve-common-trust](http://www.cheltenhamlottery.co.uk/support/cleeve-common-trust)





## **VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS**

Southam Village Hall Reservation procedures:

To book the Village Hall go to the Hire the Hall page on the village website (<http://www.southamtoday.org.uk/hire-the-hall>) and follow the instructions. If you do not have internet access please text or call the bookings secretary on 07712 695 207.

### **2024/2025 HIRE CHARGES**

“Occasional Bookings” – for one off bookings - £25/hour  
(£20/hr for Southam residents) £100 deposit

“Regular Bookings” - £12/hour (£10/hr for Southam Residents)



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# SOUTHAM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE REPORT

WI contribution for February 2024 -

March 2025 Southam Newsletter

At our December meeting, we had a fascinating talk on "Spooky Magic" Magician and Storyteller by Nick Brunger. Nick was a trained hypnotherapist as well as being a magician and he demonstrated how some people can use tricks of the mind to control how you behave.

Pam Holland was the speaker at our January afternoon tea meeting talking about "Tales from a Travel Rep". This was an entertaining and amusing talk of her life as a travel rep leading groups of people on excursions and also being an airport representative. She supplied us with plenty of real-life tales including one of a holiday maker losing his false teeth after a few drinks and deciding that he needed to go home as he couldn't stay without his teeth. Fortunately, they were eventually found under the bed by Pam.

February is our Resolutions Meeting, when we will also have Chris Evans talking about "The Unexpected Journey" and March is our Birthday Meeting with entertainment.

Southam WI meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 19:30 in the village hall. We are a friendly group with a varied programme of events and we always welcome new members.

New members can come for three free meetings before deciding on whether to join. If you would like to find out more about what we do, please contact one of the Secretaries (details below)

**Pauline Cook-McAnoy Tel: 01242-520133**

**Isabel Henchy Tel: 01242-221440 – email:**

**issy@henchy.uk**

**Secretaries**

theWI  
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# Parish Council News

For December 24 - January 25 Newsletter



*Happy New Year to all residents of Southam.*

## Planning Matters

In December Tewkesbury Borough Council wrote:

“We are writing to inform you of a change in the appeal procedure for the planning appeals relating to Land known as **Parcel 3300, Kayte Lane, Cheltenham, GL52 3PD** (Appeal References: **APP/G1630/C/24/3350803 and APP/G1630/W/24/3336834**).

The Planning Inspectorate has decided to vary the appeal procedure from a Public Inquiry, which was scheduled to commence on 14 January 2025, to the Written Representations procedure. This decision has been made based on information provided by the appellant, as well as the Inspector's assessment of the complexity of the issues involved.

This means the appeal will now be dealt with by way of an exchange of written statements only. **The Public Inquiry due to commence on 14 January 2025 has been cancelled.**

The Inspectorate has outlined the following revised timescales:

- By 31 January 2025:
  - The Council and the appellant will agree a Statement of Common Ground.
  - The appellant may provide statements concerning their personal circumstances.
  - The appellant may add an addendum to their statement of case.
- The Local Planning Authority will then have 4 weeks to submit an addendum to its own statement of case.

A site visit with the Council and appellant will be arranged in early 2025.

Please be advised that the decision to change the procedure has been made by the Planning Inspectorate and the Council are bound by this decision. The Council were consulted as to their views on the procedure and commented that its preference would be to hold the Inquiry or at the very least hold it as a Hearing (much like the procedure of the previous appeal at Kayte Lane). It is important to note that the Council has incurred costs in respect to commissioning expert witnesses and a Barrister to support the Council's case, these services will remain in place to ensure that the strongest possible case is now presented through the written Representations procedure.

The Planning Inspectorate has not yet indicated that interested parties will have any further opportunity to provide representation on the appeal beyond that already provided to date, the Council will enquire as to whether this is possible and will communicate this accordingly”.

At the time of writing this article the Parish Council does not know whether it will have time to develop further written representation or even if that is allowed.

## Devolution

The Labour Government is in favour of unitary authorities and it is likely that our Borough Council as we know it will merge into a unitary authority. This will give more power to an elected Mayor. The process for this change was commenced in 1997 but has been given impetus by the current Government.

## Housing Needs

In this issue of the newsletter we are publishing the results of a housing survey carried out on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council. It appears to indicate that a rural exception site for “affordable” housing could be justified within Southam Parish. The results show a majority need for downsizing. It could be disputed that these do not necessarily require Housing Association remedies. Instead, it indicates a lack of suitable type private housing provision and that sale/purchase costs are prohibitive. The survey was carried out in Spring 2024 although some of us are struggling to remember seeing it.



## Traffic Data

Some interesting patterns come from our traffic data collected over the last 3 years. It shows that traffic volumes have increased considerably on Southam Lane and that drivers are still risking lives with high speeds:

### Southam Lane

Traffic Report From 20/06/2024 06:00:00 PM through 25/07/2024 05:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 35.5 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 71,269 counts

Max Speed = 75.0 MPH on 25/06/2024 23:30:00

Total Vehicles =83,846 counts

Traffic Report From 01/07/2023 06:00:00 AM through 29/07/2023 04:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 35.7 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 59,441 counts

Max Speed = 65.0 MPH on 03/07/2023 18:15:00

Total Vehicles =69,931 counts

Traffic Report From 01/07/2022 03:00:00 PM through 29/07/2022 07:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 36.3 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 55,137 counts

Max Speed = 65.0 MPH on 12/07/2022 16:00:00

Total Vehicles =64,867 counts

### New Road (factors such as roadworks may play their part)

Traffic Report From 01/07/2024 12:00:00 PM through 29/07/2024 12:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 34.4 MPH

5th Percentile Vehicles = 40,348 counts

Max Speed = 55.0 MPH on 02/07/2024 12:00:00

Total Vehicles =47,468 counts

Traffic Report From 01/07/2023 10:00:00 AM through 29/07/2023 05:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 35.9 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 45,659 counts

Max Speed = 65.0 MPH on 01/07/2023 19:45:00

Total Vehicles =53,717 counts

Traffic Report From 01/07/2022 06:00:00 PM through 29/07/2022 06:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 35.9 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 41,806 counts

Max Speed = 60.0 MPH on 20/07/2022 18:30:00

Total Vehicles =49,183 counts

The data is shared with the police and they do attend to monitor.

### Haymes Drive Layby on the B4632

The land here belongs to Gloucestershire County Council who are not much interested in managing it. Vehicles left or occupied overnight are legal provided they have appropriate tax and MOT. Resulting litter, fly-tipping etc. needs to be reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council online.

### Village Walkabout

The Council will be setting a date for a village walk to assess what improvements can be made around the parish. Any improvements or ideas for biodiversity projects can be fed into the Council's Action Plan. An invitation will be extended to residents to join the Council in this activity.





**Tickets now available for the best panto in Cheltenham, performed at Prestbury Hall.**

[www.thedramaticvillagers.co.uk](http://www.thedramaticvillagers.co.uk)

**Friday January 31st at 7:30pm**

**Saturday February 1st Matinee at 2:00 pm**

**Sunday February 2nd Afternoon at 4:00 pm**

**Friday February 7th at 7:30 pm**

**Saturday February 8th at 7:30pm**

**Adult tickets £12.50 Children over 2 £6.00**

**This is a typical panto from The Dramatic Villagers. So who is or are THE TRAITORS? Will you find out before the end of the show? Will Snow White be safe from The Wicked Stepmother?**

*In aid of*



A note from our Councillor Joseph Welsh who is leaving us this month:

Serving as a Parish Councillor over the last year and a half has been an incredibly rewarding experience. I have had the privilege of representing our parish at meetings with the police to make our concerns heard and understand what is being done in our area. I have also enjoyed the monthly public meetings and the chance to engage with our residents. I have gained valuable experience that I will take into my future career in the police force. I would like to thank the other councillors and the clerk for their dedication to the village and I have seen their truly positive attitude to helping our community.

GRCC, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, a charitable organisation has commissioned and published a report into the state of housing in Southam, Gloucestershire.

## **Executive Summary**

1.1 A Housing Needs Survey was undertaken by GRCC in February 2023 and running to June 2023, the report being finalised and issued in February 2024. The results are valid for five years from the date of issue.

1.2 Southam Parish has a population of 1,080 residents according to the 2021 Census<sup>1</sup>. Southam Parish is located on the outskirts of Cheltenham and contains a village hall and the Anglican Church of the Ascension. Five-star hotel Ellenborough Park is also located within the parish.

1.3 Survey questionnaires were sent to 455 dwellings on the Council Tax register. The response rate was 22.2%.

1.4 The data shows the highest proportion of respondents were from two-person households (49%). From reported ages of residents, the largest proportion of residents are in the age groups aged 55-70 and 70+ (both 29%). The highest proportion of respondents have lived in the village for 10 to 20 years (34%). 92% of respondents own their homes, either outright or with a mortgage, whilst 4% rent live in private rentals. None of the respondents live in properties rented from the local authority or a housing association. 49.5% live in 4-bedroom houses. 5.9% of respondents live in a 2-bedroom dwelling of any form, compared to 85.1% who live in houses with 3 or more bedrooms.

1.5 97% use a car to access services; 79% of respondents access services in Cheltenham, and 71% travel to Bishops Cleeve.

1.6 Of the completed and returned surveys:

- **4 households may require affordable rent homes**
- **5 households may be able to afford affordable home ownership**
- **6 households may require open market housing to buy**

In addition to the households who have self-identified as being in housing need through the Parish Survey, the Homeseeker Plus register also indicates that there is 1 household with a local connection to Southam Parish in need of affordable rented housing.

1.7 The data shows that, based on the average price (£551,667) of homes sold in Southam Parish in the two years to end June 2023, a person in receipt of the median Tewkesbury Borough full-time income of £32,594 **would be unable to purchase an average priced property in the parish without a considerable deposit of around £421,291.**

1.8 The highest number of comments received on affordable housing in the parish expressed concerns about infrastructure pressures, whilst the second highest number of comments were against development in general.

The full survey report can be found on the Southam Today website. Select the 'Parish Council News', from the 'Parish Council' drop down menu. Search the list of items to find the Housing survey item and the click on the highlighted '**results**'.



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# Southam Village Hall



## Village Hall Events

### Film Nights

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February (7pm for 7:30 start) Film: TBC

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March (7pm for 7:30 start) Film: TBC

### Pub Nights

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 7pm**

Come and catch up with your neighbours and friends.  
We have a dartboard, table football, table tennis and boule pitch and most importantly a licensed bar.

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March**

Come and join us for a celebratory drink to close off race week in Southam

### The Gold Cup Cafe

**11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> March**

Following several successful years, we will again be running the Gold Cup Café at the hall during race week. Please do come along to support the event, soak up the atmosphere and enjoy the goods on offer.

If you can help with running the café, baking cakes, supervising the car park or anything

### **Past Events**

There was a good turnout for the light switch on in early December. All enjoyed the mulled wine, mince pies, carol singing and festive lights.

### **AGM**

The village hall AGM will be held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 at 7:30pm. The AGM is open to all residents. Please do come along to hear about future plans for the hall, ask questions and make suggestions to the committee.

## **Advertise your business here!**

**Please contact Edna Smith for more details**

**[ednajsmith@btinternet.com](mailto:ednajsmith@btinternet.com)**

**Telephone – 01242 520 137**

# USEFUL NUMBERS

Tewkesbury Borough Council	01684 295 010
Glos CC Roads - Hazards & Repairs	01452 425 000
NHS Direct	111
Dental Help Line – info on dental access centers for pain relief	01452 318 858
Care Direct – benefits, appliances and care enquiries	0800 444 000
Vicar – Reverend Tim Garrett	01242 673612
Village Agent –	-----
Southam Footpaths Coordinator – Pam Sissons	footpaths@southamtoday.org.uk
Southam Webmaster – Gill Jennings	07905 836113
Neighbourhood Watch – John Donovan	01242 526 011
Southam Village Hall	chairsouthamvh@gmail.com
PCSO - Farah Devji-Large	101

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# WHAT'S ON in Southam Village Hall



**SOUTHAM WI**  
First Tuesday of each month  
7.30pm – 9.30pm  
Village Hall  
Visitors Welcome



**KEEP FIT**  
**Over 50's Classes**  
Every Wednesday --  
9.30am to 10.30am



**SOUTHAM ART GROUP**  
Every Thursday morning  
10.15am to 12.15pm  
Village Hall

**SOUTHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
MEETS AT 7.30pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> TUESDAY OF EACH  
MONTH – SOUTHAM VILLAGE HALL

## Zumba Dance and Fitness Class

Every Wednesday starts 7pm  
Email: [Michele.darnell@btinternet.com](mailto:Michele.darnell@btinternet.com) or  
Phone: 07885 082817 to book or for  
information

## SPORTINA

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## Classic Chinese Exercise Classes

Every Tuesday  
Qi Gong 12.00 - 1.00pm  
Contact Jeff 07970 303 694

## Martial Arts Classes for 7–16-year-olds

Every Tuesday and Thursday 6pm - 7pm

£25pm First two classes free!  
Email:  
[strikingandgrapplingacademy@gmail.com](mailto:strikingandgrapplingacademy@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.strikingandgrappling.com](http://www.strikingandgrappling.com)

## Additional Exercise Class from Tina

Friday 10.35-11.15 Chair Based Exercise

**£24 for 4 classes or £8 for one**  
Email: [sportinafitness@gmail.com](mailto:sportinafitness@gmail.com); Mobile:  
07376 051 863

## Southam Village Gardening Club

Third Thursday of the month  
7.30pm start. Friendly monthly  
meetings, with presentations on a  
wide range of gardening topics  
All are welcome, green fingers  
not required.



## BRIDGE CLUB

First and Third Monday of the month,  
7.00pm – 10.00pm

**U3A Table Tennis**  
**Every Friday** at Southam  
Village Hall 2.00pm to 4.00pm  
Bishops Cleeve U3A

**Drop In Bi-Monthly**  
Southam Village Hall  
Tea, sandwiches, cakes and chat  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays  
2.30pm to 4.30pm



ELLENBOROUGH PARK

**Set lunch menu**  
**£25 for 2 courses • £30 for 3 courses**  
**with a 250ml carafe of wine**

Dine with purpose and support Emily's Gift, helping children with cancer in Gloucestershire. An additional £1 charity donation from each person will go towards supporting a fantastic cause.

Book now: 01242 545454 or via [www.ellenboroughpark.com](http://www.ellenboroughpark.com)  
Available 12:30pm - 2:30pm, Monday - Friday  
2nd January until 28th February 2025  
Southam Lane, Cheltenham, GL52 3NJ

