The MORCHARD MESSENGER

The Independent Village Newsletter

www.morchardbishop-pc.gov.uk/latest-morchard-messenger

No.378 DECEMBER 2026 SPONSORED THIS MONTH BY A. E. PARTRIDGE & SONS



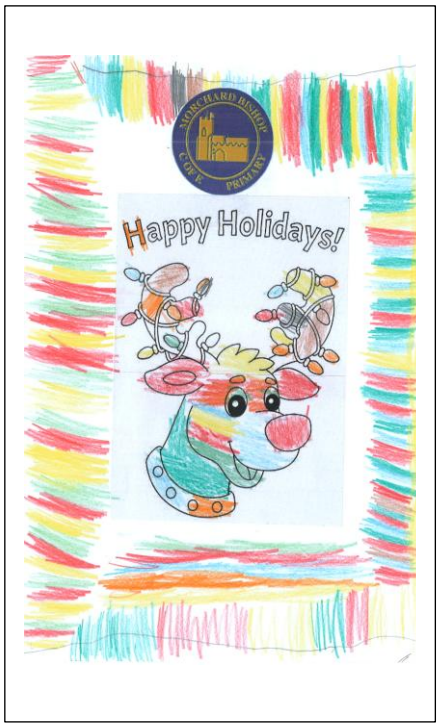
With many thanks to Grace from Oak class, winner of the front page competition

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers from The Morchard Messenger! And an enormous thank you to all our sponsors and advertisers for your support in the past year! A special thanks to all our contributors and helpers – without you there would be no Messenger.

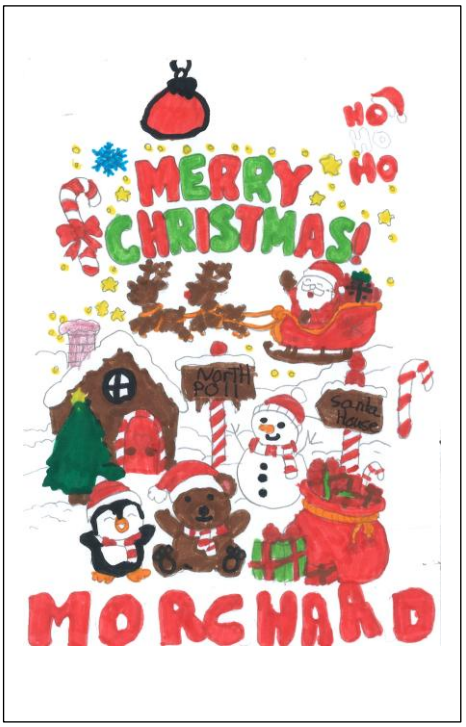
We've had a fantastic response to our competition for this month's front page from the pupils of Morchard Bishop Primary School. It was very hard to decide on the winners, so THANK YOU everyone for your lovely work!

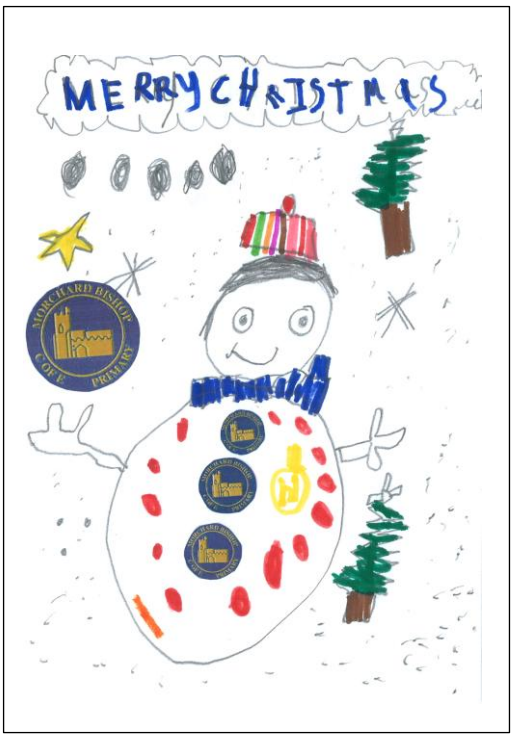
These are the runners-up, top left clockwise:

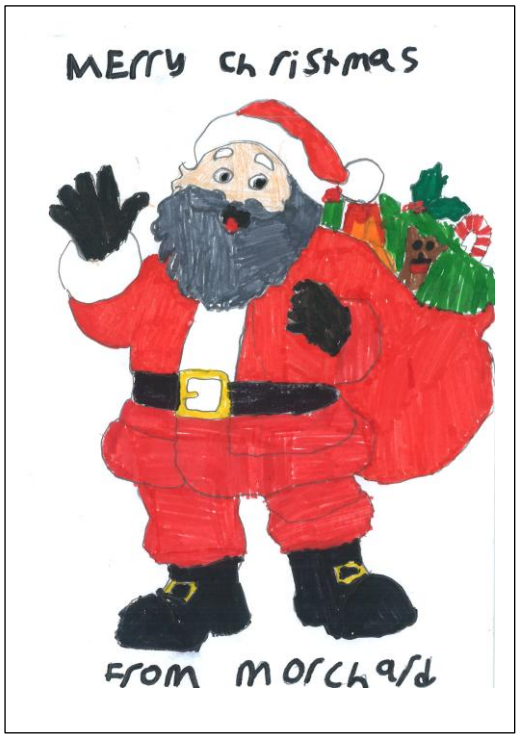
Lyra from Birch Class
Clay from Chestnut Class
Freddie from Oak Class
George from Oak Class
Oliver from Willow Class











DECEMBER 2026 DIARY

If you'd like details of your event or meeting to appear in the JANUARY 2027 Diary, please let Sue Eaglen know by December 12 at sue_eaglen@fastmail.co.uk or message Sue on 07854 745791. You may also like to use the section below to publicise a future event.

St. Mary's - all welcome at our services

Sunday 6th. 6pm. Christmas Tree Festival celebration service –
Warm mulled juice /wine and mince pies

Sunday 13th. 10.30am Holy Communion
Thursday 17th. 6pm Carol service
Sunday 20th. 10.30am Family service - refreshments afterwards
Thursday 24th. 9.30pm Christmas Eucharist –
Warm mulled wine/juice and mince pies afterwards

Friday 25th. 10.30am Christmas Day worship
Sunday 27th. 10.30am Morning worship

Emmanuel all welcome at our services.

Morning services start at 11, coffee from10.30.
Visit www.emmanuel-morchard-bishop.org for detailed information about services, Sunday School for primary age children, youth clubs and other events.
The Prime Club meets on the 2nd Friday at 19.00.
Edge Club meets on the 3rd Friday at 19.30.
Coffee morning Tuesdays 10.00 – 11.30.
For December Emmanuel events please see pages 6, 8 & 11.

BOOK SWAP - Wed December 2, 15.00 – 16.30 with mulled wine & mince pies

Christmas Tree Festival – Dec 3, 4, 5, 6.

For MB Sports & Social Club events and opening, please see page 5, 9, 10 & 14.

Pickleball: Debbie Ticehurst will be in touch with players when dates & times are available.

Tues	1 & 8, 15, 22	10.00 – 11.30	Coffee Morning	Emmanuel
	1 & 8	16.00 – 16.45	Intermed. Ballet	Memorial Hall
		16.45 – 17.30	Intermed. Modern ballet	
	1 & 8, 15	19.30	Bridge	MBSSC
Wed	2 & 9, 16 (23?)	10.30 – 11.15	Chair Pilates	Memorial Hall
	2	15.00 – 16.30	Book Swap	
	2	17.30 – 19.00	Brownies	

Thurs	3 3 & 10 3 & 10, 17 subject to availability	10.30 – 15.00 16.00 – 16.30 16.30 – 17.00 18.35 – 19.30	Can't sew won't sew Junior Ballet Junior Modern Mat Pilates	Emmanuel Memorial Hall
Fri	4 & 11, 18	13.30 – 14.30	Visiting Post Office	London Inn
Sat	5	10.00 – 11.30	Coffee Morning WI	Kate & Debbie
Mon	7 & 14, 21 7	09.00 – 10.00 14.00 – 16.00 19.00	Mixed ability Pilates Table Tennis Parish Council Meeting	Memorial Hall Emmanuel Memorial Hall
Wed	9	14.00	WI Meeting	Memorial Hall
Fri	11	11.30 19.00	Carers' Club Prime Club	London Inn Emmanuel
Sat	12	9.30 – 11.30	Produce Market & Coffee Morning Debbie & Frances	Memorial Hall Hilary & Debbie
Sun	13	17.45	Nativity in the Bus Shelter – refreshments afterwards at the London Inn	Bus shelter on The Green & London Inn
Tues	14	19.00	P3 Meeting	Memorial Hall
Wed	16	12.00	Over 60s Lunch	London Inn
Fri	18	19.30	Edge Club	Emmanuel
Sat	19	10.00 – 11.30 During the evening	Flower & Produce, Coffee morning MBFC Grand Draw	Memorial Hall Jo E & Carol MBSSC

Copy for Publication in THE MORCHARD MESSENGER

The deadline for articles, adverts and notices for the next issue is:

12th December 2026

The Editors retain the right to reject, edit, alter or correct articles which are sent in for publication.

The opinions expressed in articles and letters are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors. We do not publish anonymous letters, although names can be withheld on request.

Copy should be sent ***by email*** to morchardmessenger@gmail.com

Hard copy may also be delivered to Colin Crewdson at the address below.

Postal Service.
This newsletter can be posted to you monthly at a cost of £12 per annum. Please contact :

Colin Crewdson
Wayside Cottage
Frost
Morchard Bishop EX17 6SF
Phone: 07926 625120

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ADVERTS

Open the door to new business by advertising in the Morchard Messenger

Adverts up to ⅛ page are £5 a month

Adverts up to ⅙ page are £7 a month

Adverts up to ¼ page are £10 a month

(Larger sizes negotiable)

Please email your copy or draft to the editor (address above)

Morchard Bishop Sports & Social Club

Bar open to all members
Annual membership £2 per adult, due 1st August

DECEMBER OPENING TIMES

Mondays - closed
Tuesdays - all dates Bridge and Pool
Wednesdays - closed
Thursdays - 3rd, 10th Men's darts
Fridays - 18th Village darts Xmas draw
Saturdays - 19th normal opening hours plus Grand Football Draw
Sundays - Closed

PLEASE NOTE: THE CLUB WILL BE CLOSED FROM 20th December until 2nd January.

We would like to wish all our members a merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We thank you for your continued support.

IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE ABLE TO VOLUNTEER AT THE SOCIAL CLUB, HELPING BEHIND THE BAR FOR A FEW HOURS, WE NEED YOU !!!!!

PLEASE CONTACT
mbssc.secretary@gmail.com

This is a rough guide which may be subject to change please contact morchardsportsandsocialclub@gmail.com

Church Street Stores

Opening Hours:

Sunday & Monday: 8.30am-12noon
Tuesday- Friday: 8.30am-5pm
Saturday: 8.30a- 2pm

01363 877826

www.facebook.com/churchstreetstores

Matthew & Clare

For Christmas opening hours see our article on page 12

Bus Service 369 (Dartline)

Note changes –
369 no longer serves the RD&E hospital.
13.55 from MB goes via **Black Dog and Kennerleigh** to Crediton & Exeter
09.37 arrives in MB via Black Dog.

Outward

Morchard Bishop (Greenaway):
07.12, 09.40, 11.50, 13.55, 16.12
Saturday variation 07.25

Crediton High St: 07.46, *(07.54),*10.14, 12.21, 14.29, 16.44

Crediton Train station /Redlands:
07.51, *(08.00),* 10.19, 12.26, 14.34, 16.49

Exeter City Centre (Sidwell St):
08.19, *(08.25),* 10.42, 12.47, 14.55, 17.19

Return

City Centre (Sidwell St Stop 40):
08.35, 10.50, 12.55, 15.05, 17.30

Crediton Train station/Redlands:
08.59, 11.13, 13.18, 15.30, 17.57, *(17.55)*

Morchard Bishop (Greenaway):
09.37, 11.48, 13.53, 16.10, 18.34
Saturdays 18.28

Witheridge: 18.59 *(not Saturdays)*

Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

Available for birthday and celebration parties, family meetings/get togethers/wakes/wedding receptions.

Bookings - Contact **Debbie Ticehurst**j
dticehurst@icloud.com
07875359563

General - Contact **Anton Heal**
antonheal@yahoo.co.uk
07970 227753

Produce / Table Top booking –
contact **Robert Moore**
07455 896589
robert@lydcottnursery.co.uk

Thank You

So many kindly expressed their good wishes, verbally, by e-mail, or by sending lovely cards [some humorous!] and by contributing to DAAT, in celebration of my recent [not insignificant] birthday.

I felt overwhelmed, and sincerely thank you all.

Annie Robinson XX



St Mary's Quiz – Thank you!

A big thank you to everyone who came along to our fund raising quiz on 30th October in the Hall; we raised over £310 for our Restoration appeal!

The evening was a lot of fun, with Cllr Rhys Roberts kindly setting the questions and being our Quizmaster, the halfway snack break had a round of "cheese or service station" questions which proved harder than we thought (Malvern is a cheese not a service station!) and we all had a lot of fun.

We hope to run another quiz in the New Year sometime so keep your brains and pencils sharpened…

Wendy Vere

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone who sent cards, offered prayer and supported my family through this difficult time: we are most grateful and appreciate your kindness. I wish you all the joys of Christmas and every blessing for 2027.

Lindsey Starrs

MORCHARD BISHOP SPOTTED AND WHAT'S ON

We have a new community Facebook group for the whole village.
No waiting for approval before posts are published, but a large group of Admins from various organisations in the village just to keep an eye on it.
Please use it to promote local events, information, questions, services (both religious and business) Items for sale, lost or found.
Please post responsibly and positively.
Please don't overdo it on the self promotion of business (monthly would be fine). If you have multiple sales please try to put them on one post.



Our Parish Council would like to offer this as a tribute to our dearest friend and highly respected colleague, Simon, who sadly passed away last month.



Simon M R Baker

9th March 1979 – 21st October 2026

Simon was born in Coldridge, Devon and educated at West Buckland School. He went on to study at Swansea University before completing his Masters Degree at Cambridge University.

Simon had uncompromising determination and was fond of the expression 'the higher the mountain – the better the view' which he applied to his life.

Simon taught at Finborough School in Suffolk and at Sibford School in Oxfordshire. He also acted as a Camp Leader at Camp America in Ohio. He organised trips for his pupils to Snowdonia, the Lake District, the Norfolk Broads and was a Duke of Edinburgh Awards Assessor. With his sharp wit and wry sense of humour he was popular among his students and proud of the title they gave him 'Legend Baker'. Simon left his teaching career when his father asked him to come back to Devon to assist him in running the family business Hawkridge Dairy Produce where Simon became Managing Director on the retirement of his father.

Simon had a love of fine wine, cars and driving (only two out of three at the same time), he loved travel and exploration, good food and fine dining. Those of us lucky enough to have attended one of his dinner parties will remember being royally fed and entertained. Simon loved the outdoors, horseracing, the countryside and nature but family and friends were the most important to him.

Simon commented that the happiest time of his life had been here in Morchard Bishop where he settled some four years ago and soon joined the Parish Council. He will be forever remembered at this favourite spot by the bar in the pub on a Friday evening!

In May 2025, Simon was elected as the Chairman of the Parish Council and he chaired the Council with his usual attention to detail and fairness but also with swift decision making. Simon cared about people in his community; he followed through concerns from Parishioners about their properties flooding, hence the commitment to making sure that all the drains in the village ran free and water could escape the village quickly. He also acted on concerns about speeding motorists and organised the Vehicle Activated Speed sign. Simon was instrumental in organising the Bonfire and Laser Show in 2024 and MorFest in May this year.

This village will be a poorer place without Simon but he would want us to continue the work he started. In the words of some of his students may we just say – Legend Baker - we will miss you!

At his funeral, Rev Anthony Geering read extracts of a poem that we felt could have been written for Simon. – It expresses our sentiments so much better than we can and so we finish by quoting that poem:

Success *by Bessie Anderson Stanley*

He has achieved success
who has lived well,
laughed often, and loved much;

who has gained the respect of intelligent men and
the love of children;

who has filled his niche and accomplished his task;

who has left the world better than he found it
whether by an improved poppy,
a perfect poem or a rescued soul;

who has never lacked appreciation of Earth's beauty
or failed to express it;

who has always looked for the best in others and
given them the best he had;

whose life was an inspiration;
whose memory a benediction.

Bessie Anderson Stanley (1879 - 1952), a resident of Kansas, wrote this for a magazine contest that asked, "What constitutes success?" Her entry won first place. Bessie's words are often erroneously attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson and Robert Louis Stevenson, and often paraphrased, but this is the abridged original version.

Morchard's Weather

Well, we've had our first morning where temperatures were just below zero. I measured an air frost of minus 0.8C on 8th November at 5am. The first frost seems to have a significant effect in the garden, with plants and shrubs almost immediately dropping leaves and preparing for winter dormancy. Some of our trees are now completely bare of leaves. Strong winds have exacerbated this and on 24th October, I measured a very strong wind gust from storm Boelo, the second of the season. Luckily, no damage. As part of this same storm system, we also had quite a lot of rain, with over an inch falling on the same day. All of my water butts and the well are now full and we've gone from having too little water to being unable to store what we get locally. South West Water does offer a range of water saving devices, including water butts, which are very useful if you have the space.
The birds too noticed the weather change and we have started feeding again for the winter, starting with mealworms, peanuts and suet blocks. There has been an influx of blue tits and great tits, with the odd coal tit in amongst them. Now and then, a flock of long-tailed tits will suddenly appear, very busily devouring what they can, before disappearing again as quickly as they arrived.
Winter is definitely not far away.

Stephen Leese



Morchard Bishop WI

Heart Attacks and Cardiac Arrests

Steve Mayne from South West Ambulance Trust gave us an excellent presentation on Defibrillator use (which since one of the village defibrillators is next door to the WI noticeboard seemed very appropriate). He started by telling us the difference between Heart Attack (which is a plumbing problem with the heart pump, the patient is often conscious, breathing, chest pains and sweaty) and a Cardiac Arrest (which is an electrical problem, the patient is unconscious, not breathing and has suddenly collapsed). A cardiac arrest is an emergency and there is a very small amount of time when the patient's life can be saved, which he illustrated with statistics from SWAT.
He then talked us through the acronym DRSABC (look it up!) of which the last bit "C" for maintaining circulation via CPR he demonstrated with a dummy. It was surprising to many just how hard you have to press to compress the chest enough to aid the circulation; the defibrillator use was explained thoroughly and everyone was reassured that in the event of having to use one you are talked through the whole procedure via the call handler and the machine.
This year the WI has had a national campaign on *Bystanders can be Lifesavers* and Steve's presentation was very timely and very good. He answered all our questions and was thanked for the talk, we then had our tea and biscuits and the raffle and sung Happy Birthday to Annie – the real Annie, not the defibrillator dummy! Please remember anyone is welcome to our meetings, we just ask for a small donation – if you like the look of the WI or our talks/events on the noticeboard then do join!

Wendy Vere

An ideal Christmas stocking filler

Quiz sheet
in aid of Ukraine & Moldova

£2 (+2nd class postage if posted)

1st prize £10, 2nd prize £5 & a consolation prize for anyone who enters whether the quiz is completed or not.

All money raised, apart from the prize money, goes directly to help the people of Ukraine and Moldova.

If you would like a copy the sheet is available at Church Street Stores, Morchard Bishop Social Club, from Helena Sykes, via post or email csykes162@btinternet.com.
Contact Helena Sykes 01363 877434.
Closing date 31st January 2027

MORCHARD BISHOP FOOTBALL CLUB

Devon & Exeter Football League
Division 2



DECEMBER FIXTURES

*****As at the print deadline for the Morchard Messenger we have received no fixtures for December**

RESULTS OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

Saturday 31st October Feniton 0 Morchard Bishop 4
(Tom Angell 2 Ben Betts 2)

Saturday 7TH November Royal Oak 4 Morchard Bishop 2
(Ben Betts 1 Adam Leat 1)

****Saturday 14th November Morchard Bishop 9 Dunkeswell 3**
(Adam Galliford 1 Jack Parkhouse 2 Ben Betts 2
Samuel Rice 2 Adam Leat 1 Antek Wozny 1)
****cup match**

*****For all updates on club fixtures please visit the Devon & Exeter Football League Website.**
www.defleague.co.uk
or Facebook Morchard Bishop Football Club or the Football Club Noticeboard.

Please support your local team

THANK YOU…Morchard Bishop Football Club would like to thank everyone who has supported our club in 2026, to everyone who has attended our fundraising events, every business that has jumped on board with our pitch side boards, to every business or individuals who have sponsored a player, not forgetting our loyal supporters who are there every week come rain or shine. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. See you all in 2027 **M.B.F.C.**

Morchard Bishop Table Tennis Group

Fancy a game of Table Tennis? New players of any ability welcome.

We play in the Emmanuel Hall on Mondays between 2pm and 4 pm, tea and biscuits provided.

Please contact Karena for further info:

07926 171275

Mid Devon Council

Residents' Survey open

A new residents' survey is now open, and we are encouraging you all to take part, to share your views and priorities for your council.
The survey is open for six weeks and the results will feed into the Council's budget setting process, as well as future plans for prioritising services. This year's survey continues on from last year's, with questions that include topics such as climate change and dealing with economic pressures, as well as listening to how communities feel about current service provision and where the Council can improve.

The survey is anonymous and a summary of the results will be published on the Council website.

As a result of previous feedback, the Council has taken a number of steps to address residents' priorities and concerns including:

- Provide more affordable homes - added 75 new homes to our own housing stock in 2025/26
- Support the local economy and businesses - provided capital grants to small businesses to support energy saving and supported local shops with store front improvements
- Improve leisure provision - introduced SEND sessions at our swimming pools and added two new Pool Pods allowing easier access for people with reduced mobility
- Improve infrastructure – supporting the delivery of the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road
- Tackle climate change - collected 40 tonnes more food waste and saved the equivalent of 102 tonnes of CO2 through the use of solar panels on our facilities

The survey can be **completed online** and should take no more than ten minutes. If you need help completing the survey, or require a paper copy, please contact customer services on 01884 255 255.

The deadline for responses is Wednesday, 16 December 2026

News from your Parish Council

The Parish Council wishes you all a Happy, Joyous and Peaceful Christmas.

The Parish Council met in the Memorial Hall on Monday 2 November 2026.
The Parish Council spent £90.35 from the main account, nothing from the Reserve or Footpaths Accounts.
There were no planning applications for the Parish Council to consider.

The Parish Council were saddened to learn of the Death of their Chairman, Simon Baker, please see the Tribute elsewhere in this magazine.

We received a presentation from the Resilience Officer at Mid Devon District Council about Community Emergency Hubs (CEH). A CEH is in the first instance an information point and warm space. The Parish Council nominated The London Inn as the Community Emergency Hub and will progress the CEH alongside its Emergency Plan.

The Parish Council approved two grants of £125 each, one to Mid Devon Mobility and one to the Churches Housing Action Team – both in recognition of the services they offer and the support they give to members of the local community.
We received a report about local Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure – this was being aimed at charging vehicles for local residents as they were only offering slow charge systems and not the fast charge that visitors and tourists may want. It was felt that those who had electric vehicles had the facility at home for them to charge and that there may not be a need for such slow charge systems – if any of you have a view on this please do let the Clerk know.

Parish Council meeting dates were confirmed for 2027. The Parish Council confirmed that the Parish Initiatives it would work towards were: Another Apple Day in October 2027, a printed guide to the Footpaths around Morchard Bishop, Fibre Broadband to the door of all properties in the Parish, continue to monitor and press Devon Highways to repair our roads, Support for Carers, the Welcome Pack, a Village Tidy-up twice a year, Drain Monitoring, a Community Orchard, the Village Archive, the Community Emergency Hub and Emergency Plan, a First Aid Course, Village Gateways and a Bonfire and Laser Show in Autumn 2027.



Our next meeting is on Monday 7 December at 7.00pm in the upper room of the Memorial Hall where the Parish Council will give first consideration to next year's budget and the precept that we will need to apply for – all are welcome.

If you want to read the full minutes of Parish Council meetings, they are available on the Parish Council noticeboard on the London Inn Skittle Alley. They can also be read on the Parish Council Website: https://www.morchardbishop-pc.gov.uk/. We hope that the website is a useful tool for everyone in the village, please do let us have your comments and contributions including future dates of your organisations' activities in order that other groups can avoid double booking.

If you have any views or issues regarding life in Morchard Bishop, please do let me know.

David Parker
Parish Clerk

Contact Details for the Parish Council:

David Parker: 07794 362591
email: clerk@morchardbishop-pc.gov.uk



A Big Thank You
Ukraine and Moldova
Coffee Morning & Collection



We really appreciate your ongoing kindness in supporting this fantastic charity cr2ee (Christian response to Eastern Europe). Articulated lorries have travelled to Moldova / Ukraine each month packed to the roof with much needed equipment and clothes. These items are distributed to contacts previously sourced by Hugh Scudder (the founder of the charity). Hugh frequently visits these areas and also offers financial help to the disabled, elderly, families and others when there is no other means of support.

On a personal note a big thank you to everyone who supported the coffee morning and the collection of clothes, toiletries etc. for Ukraine and Moldova. Again the response was absolutely amazing. Thank you also to Matt and Clare who supported the collection with a box outside the shop.

We raised the grand sum of £700 (amazingly the same amount as last year!) at the coffee morning. There are so many people to thank especially: helpers on the day ; those who donated and made items for the stalls, those who gave monetary donations and all who came along and spent their money! It really was a brilliant village effort and a lovely atmosphere on the day. Thank you all once again, and can we reassure you that the money will go directly to help the people of Ukraine and Moldova, and not a penny goes to administration.

Don't forget to look out for our next fundraising effort!

Carol & Chris Hutchings & Colin & Helena Sykes





Christmas @ Church Street Stores 2026

The festive season is in full swing, and we're here to help make it local, fresh & tasty.

Christmas Hampers

- Ready-made hampers filled with local goodies start from just £20
- Or handpick your favourites and we'll wrap them up for you

We love a bit of reuse — bring in your own basket or choose from our selection.

Christmas Homemade Tarts & Pies

*** **Our homemade tarts are available to order** for the Christmas period. If you want to try beforehand, we bake them fresh every Saturday morning.

Choose from:

Goat's Cheese, Pesto & Caramelised Red Onion
Chestnut, Leek, Sundried Tomato & Mature Cheddar
Roasted Squash, Red Onion & Stilton
Local Ham, Cheddar & Tomato

Also available: **Homity Pies-**
Cheesy Potato with herbs, garlic & Cream in our sesame pastry cases.

*Gluten-free option available.
£3.95 each or any 6 for £22.50

Collect your tarts and pies on Wednesday 23rd Dec (from 11am).
They'll keep well for 5 days (easy to reheat or freeze).

Our Pasties & Sausage Rolls can be ordered any time, choose from:

Steak Pasty- £3.95
Christmas Turkey Pasty- £3.95
Chicken, Bacon & Leek Pasty - £3.85
Cheese & Onion Pasty - £3.75
Sausage Roll - £3.25
Vegan Sausage Roll – £2.25
and
Home made coleslaw £1.85

Over the Christmas period our opening times will be as follows:
We will close at 1pm on Christmas Eve (Wed) and reopen on Wednesday 6th January 2027.

Thank you for your incredible support this year. Wishing you a warm, joyful Christmas from all of us at Church Street Stores —

Matthew, Clare, & Hilary

CHOOSE AND CUT CHRISTMAS TREES

CHULMLEIGH HILL CHRISTMAS TREE FARM

OPEN FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS



Fri 27th, Sat 28th & Sun 29th Nov
Fri 4th, Sat 5th & Sun 6th Dec
Fri 11th, Sat 12th & Sun 13th Dec
Fri 18th, Sat 19th & Sun 20th Dec

9.30am – 3.30pm

Find us on the B3096 between Chawleigh & Chulmleigh - EX18 7ES
what3words: ///cuthack.amaze.rags

Traditional Norway Spruce • Low Needle Drop Nordmann Fir
Freshly Made Wreaths • Stands

www.johncockramchristmastrees.co.uk

Tel: 07724 079733 Email: johncockram@hotmail.co.uk

Member of The British Christmas Tree Growers Association

John Cockram Christmas Trees

Find us on Facebook

Morchard Bishop Memorial Hall

Wednesday 2nd December
3 – 4.30



We have a large and varied selection of new books, jigsaws and lots of children's books.

WITH MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE!!!

Or just join us for a chat!!!

Church Street Stores Puzzles Continue!

Wow! Thanks for getting involved with last month's wordsearch, it was SO popular we thought we'd do something this month.

ANAGRAMS! And yes, we sell all these items in the shop! The winner this month will receive 4 x Homity Pies OR 4 x Christmas Turkey Pasties to Collect Christmas Eve. Drop form in by 15th December, winner drawn on Sat 19th December.

1 TEAPSTHIG ……

2 NOWSRIEB ……

3 GEOSTRUECT ……

4 ASSGASEU ……

5 CREMBUUC ……

6 SNARPSWEEP ……

7 WOLLCUIERAF ……

8 STUCISIB ……

9 RCOPOCES ……

10 OBKUAMCH ……

11 WOLLEACS ……

12 HOURTGY ……

13 STOAEACK ……

14 MRADAREE ……

15 SIRLLAOTT ……

16 SMOPHAO ……

17 MUSSSATA ……

18 TERMAISS ……

19 ERIMMAT ……

20 AXEWIEBT ……

Name:

Phone:

Sustainable Morchard has now set up a collection for used coffee pods.

Please put your used coffee pods in the blue buckets provided in the metal shed in the **London Inn** car park. If you separate the plastic ones from the aluminium type then one of us will take them to Punchbowl to be recycled.

Thank you

Did you know the UK uses 1.2 billion pods a year, *(NielsenIQ sales data reported by The Grocer).*

369 BUS TIMES

Another way to keep tabs on the bus…

We run Live Bus Times, a free UK bus timetable site with no login or app:
https://livebustimes.co.uk

Our pages are updated every week from the operators' published timetable data, and the addresses stay the same when an operator redesigns its website, so links to them don't go dead.

369 (Dartline), Exeter to Witheridge via Crediton and Morchard Bishop:
https://livebustimes.co.uk/routes/369-exeter-sidwell-st-morchard-bishop-gr

All 8 bus stops in Morchard Bishop, with the next buses at each one:
https://livebustimes.co.uk/bus-times/morchard-bishop

creditonarts centre

EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

Full details of events can be found online at www.creditonartscentre.org

3 December	Jazz on the Green: Music & Food
4 December	Theatre: A Christmas Carol
11 December	Film: Ziggy Stardust
18 December	Big Christmas Quiz
19 December	Music: Solstice Live Lounge

MB Playing Field Association – 100 Club for 2027

100 Club membership for 2027 is now open to EXISTING members for renewal….any remaining numbers will be open to NEW members from December 12th.

We've really enjoyed running our 100 Club this year; at the time of writing 10 lucky winners have each won £100. The roll-call of 2026 winners is: Debbie Ticehurst; Michaela Rodd; Steve Watson; Daniel Baker; Lindsey Starrs; Mandy Tapp; Matt Grant; Jo Savage; and Pauline & John Chater. Our October winner asked to remain anonymous, and requested we donate the winnings to our friend Tony Scoins GoFundMe appeal to help him in his cancer recovery, which we were only too pleased to do. Our last 2026 draw will take place on 16th December at the Over-60's lunch at The London Inn. It could be YOU …….

We will be running the 100 Club again next year: all existing members should have received an email inviting them to roll over their number to next year. We really appreciate the support this gives us. The 100 Club raises £1,200 annual profit, all of which is a massive help towards running costs to keep your playing field and all its facilities open. We hope you enjoy a bit of fun in following the draws and the winners, look up our facebook page (search for Morchard Bishop Playing Fields Association) and follow us to see regular updates.

If you are not currently a 100 Club member but you are interested in joining, please get in touch on mbplayingfield@gmail.com We will operate a waiting list for new members, the 100 Club has been fully subscribed this year, but it is worth letting us know if you would like to join if numbers become available. We ask for £2/month for the whole year, total £24 which you can either pay in a lump sum or as a monthly standing order. For every £2 we receive, £1 goes into the prize pot and we keep £1 to contribute to the charity running costs. We will hold a draw once per month in 2027, with £100 cash on offer (if we are fully subscribed) to the winning number every month.
Thank you!







Winners!
Above: Mandy Tapp with Dawn Parkhouse; Jo Savage with Wendy Vere
Above right: John & Pauline Chater with Bob Robinson

Over 60's Lunch & Get Together

The next Over 60's Luncheon at the London Inn will be on Wednesday 16th December at 12.30pm.

The menu will be Roast Turkey with all the Trimmings
Christmas Pudding with Clotted Cream or
Profiteroles with Hot Chocolate Sauce
Tea /Coffee

The cost is £12.00 inclusive.

Regular and new members will be warmly welcomed in the London Inn.

WIN A HAMPER FOR THE BEST CHRISTMAS JUMPER!!

If you would like to join in please fill in the slip below and return it to me by Tuesday 15th December or email me at mandytapp@talk21.com or phone me on 01363 877459 or just pop in to me at Harries.

Regular members please let me know if you are unable to attend, thank you.

Name- ----------

Tel No: ----------

Mandy Tapp



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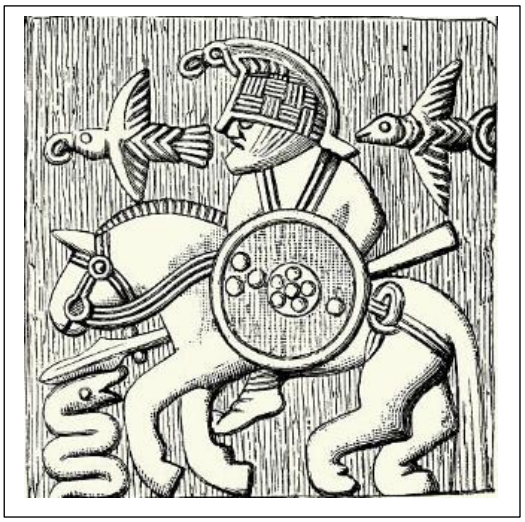


Hard Core Curioso

Curious about what you are getting for Christmas? Curiosity is an interesting word, it appears to have been dragged in to English almost directly from Latin in the Middle Ages. You would have thought that being inquisitive was a more intrinsic concept but that word, inquisitive, is also a 14th century appropriation from Ancient Rome via France. Clearly the early English were not investigative, we didn't even get nosy until the sixteen hundreds and had to make do with prying (*prien*: to peer) in to things, but even that we could only do from the late twelve hundreds. Apparently Saxons got in to boats, braved the dangerous North Sea and came to their new land without the slightest twinge of inquiry.

It is a puzzle (nope, 1600s), since curiosity is a major feature of mythology from as early as Gilgamesh, who is driven by a 'restless spirit' and a desire to push at the boundaries of life, but let's focus on a mythical figure a bit more closely connected to the season.

Looking to the North we find a world view where the shaper of the cosmos is on a lifetime quest for knowledge, and since they are immortal that's a pretty big quest. Odin appears to be driven by his beef with the giants, claiming the knowledge he seeks is so the Aesir, the gods of Asgard, can defeat the Jotun, the giants, in the final battle of Ragnarok when all of creation will be destroyed. But I'm not sure I buy that excuse, the episodes of the myth cycle in which he specifically goes in search of wisdom rarely turn up anything of precise strategic or tactical value for the impending scuffle. Nevertheless, he can't stop himself, regardless of the cost, (and sometimes the jeopardy level is pant wettingly high), he just has to find out... what can be found out. He is recognised as a god of knowledge and wisdom, but I think the effort he goes to in order to get that knowledge, makes him a god of curiosity.



In several of the tales from the Eddas, the source material for the Norse Myths, Odin gets in to riddle matches or question games with giants which feature life threatening bets, just to find out what the giant in question knows. He also risks journeys to the underworld to hear prophecies from the dead and goes on an undercover mission deep in to enemy territory to obtain a magical mead that bestows oratory skill. Oh, and he has two ravens called Thought and Memory who fly around the world to keep him informed.

When a peace treaty with the Vanir, The Shining Ones From Beyond,* goes south and the head of the wise god Mimir, is sent back to Asgard, Odin uses magic charms and herbs to not only preserve the head but keep it alive and talking. The head of Mimir, now simultaneously dead and alive so able to see much that others cannot, is placed by a spring that rises at a root of the World Tree, Yggdrasil. Odin then visits the 'Well of Mimir' on a regular basis to learn from the magical head. On one visit he hears that the waters of the well will give him even greater wisdom but he has to pay for a drink with one of his eyes**. He pays the price. This gives him a jolt of smarts, a cool new look, a nickname or two, and reduced depth perception (though the last one is generally not mentioned). On another occasion he hangs himself from Yggdrasil, upside down, stabbed through the side with his own spear, for nine days and nights without food or water, until he is able to grasp the mystery of the runes.

Thinking about it, Old One Eye's need to know is bit out there, practically its own genre, like Hard Curiosity; Curiosity eXtreme! 360 degree inquisitiveness! Compared to figures like Newton and The Buddha, who calmly sat under trees risking little more than falling fruit, or maybe an insect bite, you have to admit the All Father is a pretty hard core curioso, which is the word for one who is curious, well, since the 17th century anyway.

* Beyond *what* is never specified.
** What Mimir wants the eye for is never specified.

...here's to living happily ever after, until the next adventure.

The Travelling Talesman
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Garden Tips for December



- Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place
- Check that greenhouse heaters are working
- Insulate outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing
- Prune open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls)
- Prune acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding
- Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops
- Deciduous trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted
- Take hardwood cuttings
- Keep mice away from stored produce
- Reduce watering of houseplant

Jo Coffey

Poem of the Month

A Christmas in Palestine

Her hair, gleaming with damp,
true as hanging water,
shone with amber lights, uneven ends.

I dried it.
I combed it.
I cut it straight (borrowed scissors).

Snow on the way to Bethlehem. Checkpoints,
hooded men in the dark:
we prepared stamped passes for soldiers,

faces for tv cameras.
We cracked our heads
on the stone lintel, built low

to enforce genuflection
(or to prevent horse riders galloping into church),
our carols blew through Byzantine columns

silvering icons, guttering candles.
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Countryfile

Little Robin Redbreast, Sat upon a rail;
Niddle noble went his head, Widdle waggle went his tail...

16C English Nursery Rhyme

The European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) has moved house. Once considered the smallest native member of the thrush family along with Song and Mistle Thrushes and the Blackbird, further understanding of the bird has seen it grouped into the family of 'Old World Flycatchers and Chats'.
The other native member of this group is the Spotted Flycatcher.

The Robin has a beak like other flycatchers, the narrow straight beak of a bird who includes catching insects whilst landed as a key part of their diet (as every keen gardener will have seen). Birds who eat mostly seeds tend to have stubbier conical grain-cracking beaks, birds who trawl open-mouthed for insects in the air have wide short beaks.

There are two things we associate our robins with, especially at this time of year: the bright orange-red breast feathers which signal the virility of the adult males particularly at their late winter breeding time; and their sweet trilling song. Both of these characteristics make them the stand-out bird of winter. The red breast means as soon as it snows heavily they glow out of the landscape, the spot of colour in the monochrome greys and whites.

Robins are also the only garden bird to carry on singing right through the winter. In part to do with their early breeding time, and partly because they are so very territorial. Two male robins in the same area will choose higher and higher perches to show off their colours and sing louder and louder until either, one is clearly the winner, and the other leaves, or, when one robin has had enough it will physically attack the intruder and they may fight.

Courtship can take up to fifteen weeks, there is no big show, just an assessment of the territory he holds, his vigour and health and brilliance of plumage and melody of song. A robin couple are monogamous during the breeding season and once paired off. The female chooses and builds the nest, with him supporting her with courtship feeding (30-50 times a day). This feeding allows her to lay between four and six eggs which are small and creamy white with reddish brown markings. Their total mass can almost match hers by the time she has completed her brood. Incubation lasts just under two weeks, as does the hatchling stage of the chicks. At about three days old they start to sprout feathers on their tiny bald bodies, at day five through eight their eyes gradually open. By day ten the chicks are fully feathered and the female can start to find food too rather than entirely relying on the male to feed her and the chicks. Juveniles leave the nest about two weeks after hatching to learn to forage for themselves. Juveniles are distinctly unlike their parents with their brown speckling and their place in the thrush family is more obvious at this stage. Two days after leaving the nest they start to learn to fly. Like many birds they have an initial vulnerable fledgeling stage where they are earthbound. Typically this fast turnaround allows robins to have two clutches a year but they can have up to four in a favourable year.

Robin's Song

by *Rodney Bennett* (1890-1948)
Robins sang in England,
Frost or rain or snow,
All the long December days
Endless years ago.

Robins sang in England
Before the Legions came,
Before our English fields were tilled
Or England was a name.

Robins sang in England
When forests dark and wild
Stretched across from sea to sea
And Jesus was a child.

Listen! in the frosty dawn
From his leafless bough
The same brave song he ever sang
A robin's singing now.

At the end of the breeding season all adults undergo a full moult where they appear to disappear from the garden as they hide away with their feathers half missing and their weatherproofing with it. In late summer the juveniles will experience a partial moult where their speckled patterns of youth will be replaced with the rosy flush of adult plumage.

The willingness to fight to the death to one side though, with their cheerful colour, beautiful song, and memories of their warm companionship in sunny summer days in the garden, it's no wonder the sight of a Robin cheers us up and is featured on so many Christmas decorations and cards.

Jo Coffey

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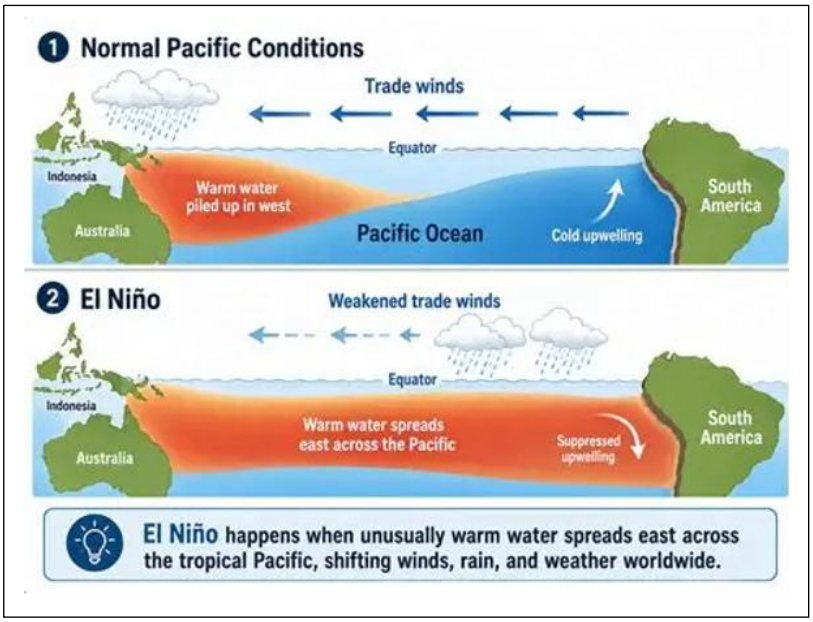
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El Nino

The climate phenomenon El Niño has been a prevalent news item over recent months. Climate scientists are already predicting that it will be the most severe ever recorded. However, this rather complex event is poorly understood. I shall try and unravel some of its complexity, but anticipate that I may add to your confusion.

Many explanations of El Niño assume a certain knowledge of meteorological processes. I shall try and avoid this trap by giving some basic reminders.

The atmosphere is fluid like water in the oceans. Wind is the evidence that it moves from one place to another. Wind blows from high pressure areas to low pressure areas. High pressure occurs where cold air is descending, and low pressure occurs where warm air is rising. So, differences in air temperature cause differences in air pressure. This is rather simplistic as there are other important causes, but this explanation is relevant to El Niño. The greater the temperature difference the greater the pressure difference, and the greater the air pressure differences the stronger the wind.



El Niño and La Niña are two annual cycles that each occur once in every 2-7 years. It is not possible to predict in which years each event may occur. The years when neither occurs are considered to be neutral years.

El Niño is the warm phase and La Niña the cool phase.

The Earth's global circulation (of air/wind) identifies and explains the large-scale air pressure systems around the world and their associated winds. One set of these winds are the Trade winds that blow from east to west in the Pacific.

The Earth's ocean currents, like the atmosphere, are constantly moving due to temperature differences and associated pressure changes.

During a neutral year in the southern Pacific, the Trade Winds blow from east to west across the ocean from South America to Australia. These winds blow warm water towards the coast of eastern Australia. During La Niña these Trade Winds are strengthened (caused by increased temperatures resulting in a greater pressure gradient). This intensification of the normal pattern brings increased rainfall to eastern Australia.

During El Niño a cool tongue of air from the Antarctic weakens the Trade winds and the warm water in the western Pacific swashes back towards S. America. This brings heavy rain to the western S. America.

The impacts of El Niño are not confined to S. America and Australia. The atmospheric conditions in the southern Pacific are linked to atmospheric conditions around the world. So changes in one place will have ramifications elsewhere. Furthermore, the changes in atmospheric circulation described above are not limited to the southern Pacific. For example, La Nina's stronger Trade winds reduce Atlantic wind shear which results in more intense hurricanes.

The concerns of meteorologists are that this year's El Niño is starting sooner and is more intense than previous episodes. Although, being cautious by nature, scientists are reluctant, without further evidence, to attribute these changes to climate change.

Next month's article will examine some of the global implications of El Niño.

Paul Ticehurst

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December's Recipes

1. SPICED ARANCELLO



5 large oranges
1 cinnamon stick
2-3 cardamom pods
1 vanilla pod
1 litre bottle of vodka
600g caster sugar
Extra oranges, cinnamon stick, cardamom, and vanilla pod to put in the bottle.

Step 1.

Pare the zest from the oranges using a peeler, making sure that none of the bitter white pith is left on the peel. Put the zest, spices and vanilla pod in one large or several smaller clean jars, then tip in the vodka. Seal and leave for a week, shaking the jar each day.

Step 2
After one week, you're ready for the next stage. Boil a kettle of water. Put the sugar in a heatproof bowl, then pour over 500ml boiling water, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Add to the vodka mix, then leave for another week, shaking the jar regularly. Strain into decorative bottles, discarding the peel and spices, and store in a cool place until Christmas. Before giving, drop some fresh spices and peel into each bottle to decorate. Will keep bottled for 6 months.

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  Stir the chocolate and cream together until you have a smooth
  mixture. Add any flavourings eg orange zest.
  Cool and chill for at least 4 hrs.

- **Step 2**
  To shape the truffles, lightly coat your hands in flavourless oil (such as sunflower)
  and roll the truffles between your palms. Roll the truffles in cocoa powder and
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Devon & Cornwall Police

Dog Attack Alert: Livestock worrying remains a concern

As we move into the winter months, Devon & Cornwall Police is continuing to receive reports of dogs attacking and worrying livestock across our rural communities.

We are reminding dog owners that livestock may be present even when they cannot be seen from footpaths, tracks or public rights of way.

Sheep, cattle and other animals can be hidden by hedges, woodland, undulating ground or poor visibility during darker winter days. For this reason, dog owners are urged to keep their dogs under close control and on a lead at all times when in farming areas or likely to be around livestock.

Please remember- our moorland has livestock present ALL YEAR ROUND, and your dog must be under close control at all times, so please keep it on a lead across moorland at all times of year.

We are also asking farmers and livestock keepers to **report every incident of livestock worrying or dog attacks to police**, regardless of whether they are insured or intend to make an insurance claim. Every report helps us build a clearer picture of the problem, identify repeat offenders, target prevention activity and develop long-term solutions to reduce incidents across our rural communities.

If you witness or experience livestock worrying, please report it to Devon & Cornwall Police via 101, online in a non-emergency, or by calling 999 if a crime is in progress.

Responsible dog ownership protects livestock, supports farmers, and helps keep our countryside safe for everyone.

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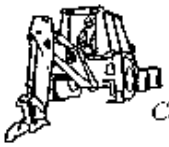
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Helen Greensmith BSc(Hons), MCSP, AACP, HCPC Reg

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- **Rehab** after injury and operations eg Fractures, Knee replacement, ACL repair, Rotator cuff repair, Hip Replacement……
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Contact details : **mobile** – 07597 160558
: **home** – 01363 877803.
: **email** – jomcdphysio@gmail.com
: **web site** - jomcdougallphysio.com



School News

The wonders of reading

Morchard Bishop School is excited to be entering the festive season – yes, we start extra early in school! We are practising already for our carol concerts and Nativity plays. And of course we are looking forward to supporting the village at The Village Bazaar and the bus stop lights switch on.

As you will be aware, as a school we are always seeking to enhance and improve the learning opportunities for our children. This year we are completely refreshing our approach to reading in order to create a school that values reading for pleasure.





Reading opens children's worlds to a world of imagination, information, creativity and it helps them progress academically.

We have been working with Sparx and have trialled Black Belt Reader - it has motivated and encouraged children to read, read, read. Last week we were delighted to welcome Greg, from Sparx, into school who'd helped us in our weekly celebration worship to award new reading belts to children.

Greg is now producing a film about our success ready to show other schools. This is testament to the dedication of staff and our super enthusiastic children!

Hannah Bancroft
Headteacher



