

---

# LOPEN *Life*

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2024



Local  
Events &  
Diary

The delightful  
Lopen Sunday  
School Room -  
a past and a  
future

A Wilder  
Greener  
Lopen

ISSUE 13

---

# Edit this...

Well that didn't feel like a real summer, however as usual we have been a busy village, with plenty more to come as the days close in.

In this issue you will find lots more detail on making Lopen a wilder greener place, and in addition to a very positive update on the Sunday School Room repair fund, we jump back into the Lopen History Casebook and look at Educating Lopen, and how the school room came about.

The Parish Council are still looking for new members - there must be someone out there! And if not that - what about being our Pub 'Landlord' at some point in 2025? Contact Mary Chapman for details on that one. We are a village of 110+ residences, so there must be some takers - we need you!


## On a seasonal front - Calling All Crafters

We are organising another Christmas Craft Fayre on Saturday, 30th November. After the stunning success of last year when we raised £1500, we would very much welcome donations to sell in aid of the church in Lopen. Last year contributions included scented candles, preserves, flowers, bird boxes and other wood items, local pottery and much more. We hope to repeat the success of last year and would welcome any craft items to sell. If you are able to help on the day or assist with advertising the event please contact Christine on 07814364990.

Next issue deadline for diary dates, articles and stories is November 10th 2024.

I would very much appreciate anyones input on subjects, stories and photographs related to the village. It only needs to be a paragraph or two, or more. This platform is your (our villagers) voice, please feel free to input to it. Also we are keen to keep Lopen Life going, and welcome any new local businesses and sole traders to contact me in regards to advertising. Thank you.

**Chris Marsh - Editor - Email:** [chrismarshlpc@gmail.com](mailto:chrismarshlpc@gmail.com)

 [/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/](https://www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/)



Visit our village website: [www.lopenvillage.org](http://www.lopenvillage.org)

**Join The Village WhatsApp Group for all the latest updates and news - Contact the Editor**

## OTHER CONTACTS:

**Council:** Jo Roundell Greene - 07341 560016- [jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk)

**Member of Parliament - Adam Dance - 07767 224213 - [adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk)**

**Just Women - Pauline Rook - 240644 - [prook12@gmail.com](mailto:prook12@gmail.com)**

**Lopen Lads - Trevor Power - 07878 185537 - [trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com](mailto:trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com)**

**Neighbourhood Watch - Carron Richards - 242640 - [carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk)**

**Caroline McKendrick - 359201 - [carolinemckendrick@outlook.com](mailto:carolinemckendrick@outlook.com)**

**Police CSO - Mike Bell - Dial 101 and ask for PCSO 7954 - [mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK](mailto:mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK)**

# What's Up?

## Sunday School Room Project Update - a future secured

Good news, the Local Authority has granted consent for the floor replacement. A schedule of works will now be submitted to local builders. The replacement is likely to take 2-3 months during which time the facility, apart from the toilets, will be closed. The church will be available as an alternative. The closure date, once agreed, will be publicised as far in advance as possible.

Serious issues with ground water had led to the decay of the underfloor timbers over many years. They will be replaced with a concrete beam and block structure. In addition, two new underfloor vents will be created to improve ventilation. The concrete floor will be finished with timber, so visually will look very similar to the current. This approach will ensure a permanent solution to the ground water problem.

Regarding the re-thatch. The new season's reed has been harvested and I am awaiting a date from the thatcher.

Members of the project group are working on the kitchen layout and equipment. A consultation document is on the board in the SSR, so come along to Coffee Stop and have your say!

The latest grant application which was to the Platinum Jubilee Fund has been successful and we have been awarded £4,000. This now takes us to nearly £65,000 (of which £47,500 is from grants). Although the original target was £60,000, with inflation, possible additional kitchen facilities, replacement windows, heating and lighting, we will need every penny. So, please continue to support this important community project.

Steve Chapman.

---

## Can you help??

Marie and Mike Wilson were in Lopen recently from Australia, trying to trace Marie's family, surnames Wetherill and Gillard. They believe these families came from Lopen and Hinton St George (and possibly Merriott?) before leaving for Australia in the 1800s, the Wetherills emigrating there with their five children. If anyone does have any information about them, please contact Mary Chapman (01460 249 549 [mechapman2016@gmail.com](mailto:mechapman2016@gmail.com)) to pass on to Marie.

Thank you.

# ROBERT FRITH OPTOMETRISTS

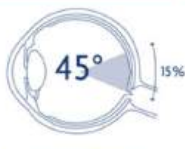
Experienced optometrists delivering outstanding eye care  
in a relaxed and friendly environment.

A wide range of products and services including tailor-made  
spectacle frames and lenses, emergency eye care and the  
latest in 3D eye scanning technology.

Introducing the New **optomap**  
ultra-wide field retinal imaging  
technology, giving us a comprehensive  
view of your eye health



with **optomap** ultra-widefield  
retinal imaging



without **optomap**

28 Princes Street, Yeovil

01935 474333

We are happy to collect any unwanted glasses for us to use in our eye testing work in Kenya.

# AUTOHOUSE



## CARS

Looking to sell your car?

Talk to a real local market professional

- Not a registration machine
- Free valuation & collection
- No admin fees or hassle
- I pay what I say - instantly
- Family business since 2007

**CONTACT** - Chris - 07714 631007

- 01460 240506

## **Lopen Parish Council - your village needs you...**

Back in the April/May issue we communicated the opportunity of our Parish being able to rent on a 25 year lease, the field and orchard of just over 2 acres on Kitchen Lane opposite Manor Farm. Things have progressed and you will hopefully have seen and responded to the village survey to get feedback on taking on the responsibility of this space. At the time of going to print some 30+ households had responded out of approx 110 that make up the village. Most seemed very positive about it, and we are now therefore in the final stages of either moving this forward or stepping back. We will keep you informed as we go. It is probably useful to join the Village WhatsApp group for the latest updates. (Contact Trevor Power on 07878 185537 or Chris Marsh on 07951 239110 to get invited.)

And yes, we still need you, so are still looking for that elusive new Council member or members! Please contact the Parish Clerk - Lisa for details.

The Parish Council are keeping a close eye on the development activities of the West Down Orchard Camping Park which although not in our Parish, borders it directly and influences footpath and security aspects of the village.

Finally please contact the Clerk if anyone has a storage space for the Parish Bier, as it needs a new home urgently! Thank you.

### **NEXT LPC MEETINGS:**

**Monday 28th October, and 25th November at 7.00 PM  
in the Sunday School Room. Everyone welcome.**

### **PARISH COUNCILLORS:**

**Chairman – Nick Jones** - [nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com](mailto:nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com) - 01460 241643

**Stephen Crane** – [scrane1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:scrane1@hotmail.co.uk) – 01460 241412

**Jenny Feeney** – [jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com](mailto:jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com) – 01460 419569

**Chris Marsh** – [chrismarshlpc@gmail.com](mailto:chrismarshlpc@gmail.com) – 07951 239110

**Caroline McKendrick** – [caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com](mailto:caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com) – 01460 359201

**Vacancy** -

**Parish Clerk** – [lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com) - Lisa Wilson - 07587 211150

# **Christmas Craft Fayre**

**Saturday 30th November 1-4pm**



**All money raised for  
All Saints Church, Lopen**

**WOOD TURNING, CANDLES**

**JAMS, MARMALADES, CHUTNEYS & PRESERVES**

**FLOWERS, CARDS**

**CAKES & BISCUITS**

**TEA, COFFEE & MULLED WINE**

**All Saints Church  
and the  
Sunday School Room, Church Street, Lopen**



# All Saints Church

---

## SERVICE DATES:

**Every Wednesday at 08.30**  
Morning Prayers lasting about 30 minutes for the people of Lopen.

## October Services:

Sunday 6th - 9.00 am Holy Communion  
Sunday 20th - 10.30 am Harvest Festival with 16 Bells Choir

## November Services:

Sunday 3rd - 4.30 pm All Saints Evensong with Lopen Festival Choir  
Sunday 10th - 9.00 am Remembrance  
Sunday 17th 10.30am Parish Communion

**Rev Bob and Julia Hicks**  
**01460 76406**

**bobhicks66@gmail.com**  
**juliahicks1@gmail.com**

**Jonathan Delbridge**  
**01460 240025**

**info@jonathandelbridge.com**

Please check the Church Porch notice board for latest information

---

## The Great Churchyard Clean Up



Villagers of Lopen were out in force on Saturday 17th August sharing their skills and time tending to important annual maintenance tasks around the Church and Churchyard.

22 volunteers joined together to deep clean the church, cut back the hedges, treat the furniture, clear the gutters, polish the brass and much more. Fabric Committee member Steve Chapman said 'Over 80% of the task were achieved and the team did a brilliant job'.

As a finale to the day, various members of the group organised a bountiful Ploughman's lunch complete with local cider and apple juice which was enjoyed by all. On behalf of the PCC, Christine Hill thanked everyone for their hard work and contributions to the day and praised people for their efforts in ensuring the church is so well cared for.

# October 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
MONDAY's	Tai Chi @ ARK at Egwood 9.30-10.30 am	£5 Just turn up!
THURSDAY's	Yoga @ ARK at Egwood 9.00-10.00 am	£5 Just turn up!
Tuesday 8th	JUST WOMEN at 7.30 in Sunday School Room The Magic Man - David Beckley from the Inner Magic Circle	One of only 5 'close-up' performers for King Charles
Wednesday 9th	Coffee Stop 10.30-12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Saturday 19th	LOPEN LADS	Details on Whats App group & Trevor 07878 185537
Saturday 19th	HARVEST SUPPER 6.30 pm in SSR 2 Course hot supper for £5 ph	Book in advance Carolyn 240717
Wednesday 23rd	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 25th	POP UP PUB L'Open Arms BINGO NIGHT	Contact Jenny or Nikki
Monday 28th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All welcome
Thursday 31st	 <i>Halloween</i> TRICK OR TREATERS...	...welcome at Hazelwood House Church Street 4.30-7.30pm



# November 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Tuesday 5th	Bonfire Night	Keep the animals safe!
Sunday 10th	REMEMBRANCE SERVICE 9.00 am All Saints Lopen	
Monday 11th	ACT of REMEMBRANCE 11.00 am Lopen War Memorial	Lest we forget
Tuesday 12th	JUST WOMEN 7.30 Sunday School Room Golden Age of Glass	Dr Francis Burroughes
Wednesday 13th	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Saturday 16th	LOPEN LADS	Details on Whats App group & Trevor 07878 185537
Monday 25th	Lopen Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
Wednesday 27th	Coffee Stop 10.30 - 12.00 Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1
Friday 29th	L'Open Arms Pop Up Pub Sing-a-long Night	All welcome Contact Jonathan
Saturday 30th	Christmas Craft Fayre 1.00-4.00 pm Lopen Church and Sunday School	All welcome

# S.I.D. Update ...



Since the reintroduction of the Speed Indicator on the 14th April this year we have recorded lots of data, although the issue of speeding is an ongoing problem for Lopen as it is with many small villages. This data has actually been useful to gauge trends and influence additional measures.

Due to the information being sent to relevant authorities, and a direct request, a police speed camera was deployed in the village on July 16th. The Parish Council is working to have the camera back in the village again as soon as possible.

In July the Speed Indicator returned to the same location as in April, recording vehicles travelling in the same direction, the first time we have had the opportunity to compare two sets of data with identical parameters. The result was an overall reduction in speeding of 3.66%:

31 – 40mph Down 1.46% ; 41 – 50mph Down 1.86%; 51 – 60mph Down 0.3%

Speeding figures from the latest available data (21st – 30th August) show a total 66% speeding in the following zones:

31 – 40mph 55.9%; 41 – 50mph 9.3%; 51 – 60mph 0.7%; 61 – 80mph 0.1%

Although the majority of offences are in the 31 – 40mph zone we acknowledge any level of speeding is a concern - we will continue to monitor statistics, liaise regularly with the Police & Unitary Council, and continue full use of the device.

## SECURE SELF STORAGE LOPEN



- Secure, purpose built Self Storage
- 250 units from 20-260 sq ft
- For all your business & household storage needs



Lopen Business Park,  
Mill Lane, Lopen, South  
Petherton, TA13 5JS

beehive  
self storage



Call now for more details

**01460  
243100**

or visit our website:  
[www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk](http://www.beehiveselfstorage.co.uk)



# Harvest SUPPER



---

JOIN US FOR A TWO COURSE  
HOT HARVEST SUPPER

BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS!

£5 PER PERSON  
CHILDREN UNDER 10 FREE

Contact Carolyn - 240717



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM

---

PROCEEDS TO PILSDON  
COMMUNITY

SATURDAY  
19 OCTOBER

# The Wilder Greener Lopen Initiative



With monthly wildlife saunters (which may become more long-form if the energy & will is there) to locate and identify village plants, insects, birds etc.; share ideas, sightings and photos (recently included a Lime Hawkmoth caterpillar) via our WhatsApp group, and plans for citizen-science involvement in local groups, the Wilder, Greener group is up and running. Actually, as yet, there is no commonly-decided name for the Lopen nature and conservation group - suggestions are invited - but we did informally launch a Lopen nature afternoon at Nick & Kate's home in Rydon's Lane on August the 18th. Fortunately the weather was gorgeous, and a good number of lovely residents actually turned up, which meant Kate and I didn't have to struggle to find freezer or stomach room for the home-made Goosnargh biscuits, chocolate, lemon drizzle and blueberry & banana cake. Thank you to all those who came along and enjoyed tea, cake and a great couple of hours in the sun.

With nature guides to riffle through, apps or a bit of low-scale cheating (some plants had ID labels still on them:) our game visitors wandered the grounds where Lopen brook passes through at a lively ripple, the pond is full with blue water hyacinth (or pickerel weed; *Pontederia Cordata*) and specimens took us around the world from China (Banana - probably *Musa Basjoo* as it's growing outdoors unfettered all year round) to the Andes (*Nasturtium*; *Tropaeolum*) to the Mediterranean (*Acanthus* and *Aeonium Schwarzkopf*). Brains were also exercised with a plant and garden quiz covering themes of nature in folklore, health & medicine, invasive species, companion planting and the most beneficial plants for pollinators and other insects. Trickiest maybe was the bird species who are known as Harfang, Madge & Billywix (various owl words, either origin or dialect-based - Billywix possibly originated in East Anglia as the name for a tawny owl. Personal gardening experiences on the best bee-attractors found sedum, verbena and rocket as some of the most useful. A completed quiz sheet left fallow on the table however, gave up one wry answer to "how best to attract ladybirds to the garden".... "Facebook".



## Some other Good Stuff :

Pauline Rook had 2 families of swallows reared in their barn this year, the first lot was 8 fledglings and the second about 6. And a host of Swallows and Martins gathering up on the wires where Frog St. meets Kitchen Lane, we have to hope the development of the old farm buildings won't deplete their nesting space in Lopen.

Merlin, the app - described as a bird "coach", with 5000 + in the specialist bird team feeding in research, it can guide you to ID birds via sound, photos, or general description through a multi-layered approach, more sophisticated than some other apps. A favourite in our group and one that I often find walkers are using locally.

(Its a US App so you may receive recommendations or articles in your feed concerning North American birds but the data on the app is worldwide and use of the app is selective to your geographical area.

<https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>

Feral by George Monbiot - Monbiot writes regular feature columns in The Guardian on matters of conservation and social issues amongst many other things.

**Please contact if you have any questions, ideas etc or want to be added to the WhatsApp Nature Group, please contact**

**Kate Jones via [jkate082@gmail.com](mailto:jkate082@gmail.com)**

**or text/phone/whatsapp 07881 503772**

**or Lisa Wilson on 07587 211150**

# Always look on the bright side...

Rainfall report 9th September 2024

It seems a long time ago but June was a dry month with 11 mm of rain compared to the Long Term Average of 56 mm, followed by a wet July with 88 mm (LTA 57 mm) and a dry August with 25 mm (LTA 63 mm). The up and down recordings continue with the first 8 days of September giving us 62 mm – more than the total month's LTA of 58 mm.

Despite the 2 dry months, on a rolling 12 month basis we are well over my average with 1,163 mm (LTA 900 mm). The latest report from the Environment Agency says that the 12 months to the end of July were the wettest since 1871.

The months of October to December are usually our wettest months – this is due to the Sea still being relatively warm and the winds blowing across the surface will pick up lots of moisture – then the atmosphere is cooling down due to less sun so the large amounts of moisture will then fall out on us as rain.

The West of the country gets the main amount of this kind of rain – the clouds are running out of moisture as they move East. The East of the UK gets most of its rain from thunderstorms which either build up as they roll from West to East or hop over from the near Continent.



  
**trading  
post**

FARM SHOP · SOMERSET



Trading Post Farm Shop  
Lopenhead | Somerset | TA13 5JH

01460 241666  
hello@tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk  
www.tradingpostfarmshop.co.uk

Westcountry Cheese Deli  
Large Organic Selection  
Exclusive Gin Collection  
Weekly Veg Box Scheme  
Local Beers & Ciders  
Fresh Eggs  
Daily Fresh Bread  
100+ Local Suppliers  
Ample Car Parking  
Refill Room  
Garden Centre

**"A Mini  
Borough  
Market"**

*- Sunday Times  
May 30 2021*

*Winners of the Muddy Stiletto Award  
for The Best Farm Shop/Deli in  
Somerset & Dorset 2021*



## Open History Casebook Chapter 6 - EDUCATING LOPEN

From 1500 to 1800, nearly all schools in Somerset were established by individuals or charities. Many small parish schools were run on the Monitorial system where the headmaster or mistress taught the older children, who then passed that knowledge on to the younger ones. It was very mechanical, and questioning was not allowed, but basic reading and writing was learnt. There may also have been a "Dame School", where the very young could be looked after by a woman (rarely trained) for a few pence a week. As well as letters and numbers, some girls were taught to sew. Many children were working from the age of five or six, so had no education at all. This pleased factory owners, as they claimed that "it would make the 'labouring classes' think, and that these classes would think of their lives so dissatisfying, and possibly encourage them to revolt". A few schools evolved into grammar schools and there were private institutions for those who could afford it.

By 1819, there were two schools in Lopen which taught reading to 37 children. A Sunday School began in 1832, churchwardens contributing in the first year. By 1836, there were 74 pupils. Ten years later, the Sunday School had 80 pupils and 2 day schools with 28 pupils. The Sunday School continued to grow and by 1847, ten teachers were employed.

In the 1880's Lord Poulett gave Church Farm cottages for use as a Sunday School room.

The Elementary Education Act of 1870, established Board Schools where there had not previously been an education. All children from 5-12 years had to attend. A Board school was established in Lopen in 1877, in what is now School Lane and a school with 2 classrooms was built, as well as a house for the teacher. Average attendance in 1902 was 63 pupils, and in that year the Act transferred both Board and Voluntary schools under the authority of the County Council.

During the twentieth century, the numbers fell rapidly as the flax industry declined. From 1948, senior pupils were transferred to Crewkerne, leaving only 13 in 1951. The school was closed in 1952, and children transferred to Hinton St George. The School and house were converted to private dwellings.

The present Sunday School Room is comprised of two much restored 17th century cottages. It had no heating until a stove was installed (hence the chimney). Fortunately, although in need of repair, it is now well used for Church and village activities. A delightful showcase of village evolution and pragmatism - a lesson in itself!

Joan Farris



PROUD SUPPLIERS OF OAK FOR THE  
ELKSTONE STUDIOS DEVELOPMENT  
BY RAM CONSTRUCTION



ELKSTONE STUDIOS