September 2026, Anniversary Edition

Celebrating 20 Years of THE MERRIOTT MESSENGER

Delivered free to 1,000+ homes



Merriott Messenger Information

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The information and views in the Merriott Messenger are those provided by the named individual contributors and are not necessarily supported by the Editorial Team. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the information given is accurate, the Merriott Messenger cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Back issues of Merriott Messenger (February 2016 - August 2026) can be found on the Parish website: *https://merriottpc.org.uk/the-merriott-messenger*

Copy date for the **October** issue is **10th September.**

The Merriott Messenger As We Know It, 20 Years and Counting

It is 20 years since the Messenger appeared in its present form. Originally, in its previous form, the Messenger was a quarterly village newsletter produced in black and white in an A5 format. Because it was produced so infrequently, it missed a lot of news items and also the opportunity to advertise a considerable number of events, except for those occurring a long while ahead.

A village such as Merriott, with a population over 2200, needed a regular means of advertising and reporting on local activities. It was *Brigadier Mullins* (chairman of the Parish Council at that time) who encouraged several residents, myself included, to set about producing a more regular publication, providing notice of and reporting on village activities. The Parish Council wished to become a Quality Council and to do this it needed a means of reporting its news and activities regularly.

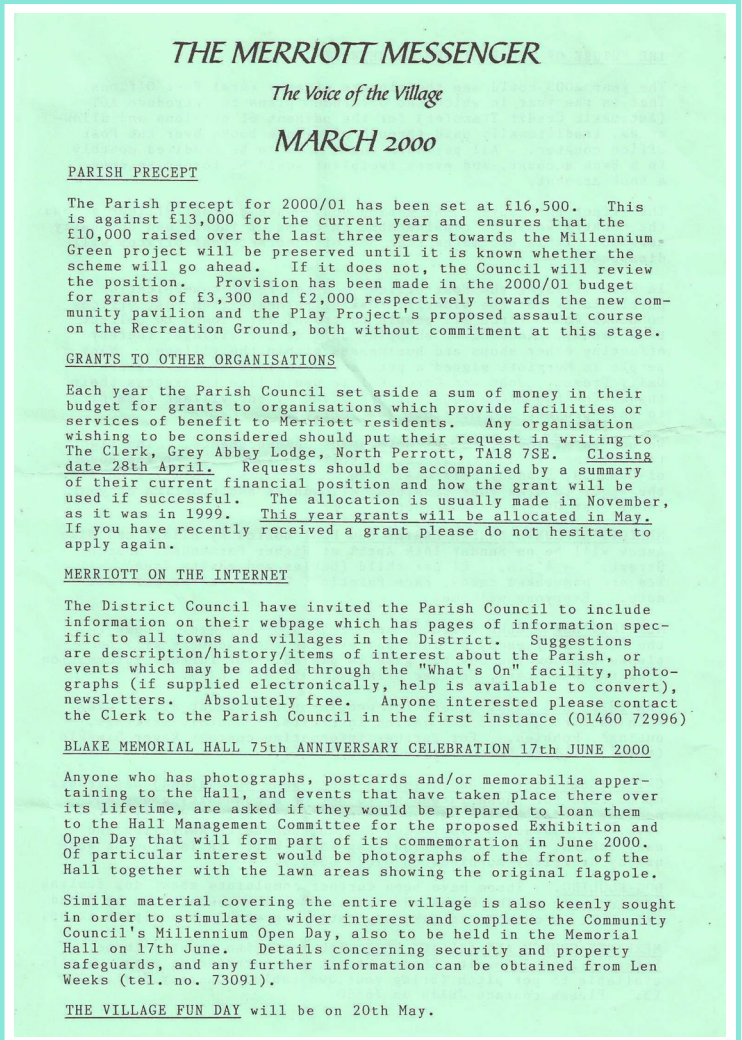
The Merriott Messenger was partly supported financially for several years by the Parish Council. In 2015, the Parish Council wished the Merriott Messenger to become independent and rely solely on financial support from local supporters. This was the case until around 18 months ago, when the rise in print costs for larger editions meant that a grant from the Parish Council was necessary to produce larger editions — we are grateful to the Council for their recent support.

With financial support from both the Parish Council and local businesses, the Merriott Messenger was born on a more regular basis. At first, it was produced in black, white, and one colour (blue) for only ten months (missing August and January) a year. It was well-supported by village traders and residents, and over the years it has been produced eleven months a year (still missing January) in colour. In the early years, an issue consisted of eight A4 pages; but, as financial support increased, occasional issues now consist of twelve A4 pages.

The Team producing the Messenger were aware that the church also produced '*The Link*' monthly. Attempts were made through the Vicar at the time to find a way of producing one publication for the village, whilst providing a way of showing that the church was independent of the Parish Council and village residents. For various reasons, this was not possible.

The aim was to provide a monthly delivery of the Messenger to every address in the village. The Team has been very fortunate that 30 to 40 residents have been willing to deliver the newsletter, free of charge, on a monthly basis to fulfil this objective.

The Team are also volunteers; apart from printing costs, the only person who is part-time employed by the Messenger is the Editor. For the past 25 years we have had 7 different editors — all of whom have been excellent and contributed to improving the



THE MERRIOTT MESSENGER

The Voice of the Village

MARCH 2000

PARISH PRECEPT

The Parish precept for 2000/01 has been set at £16,500. This is against £13,000 for the current year and ensures that the £10,000 raised over the last three years towards the Millennium Green project will be preserved until it is known whether the scheme will go ahead. If it does not, the Council will review the position. Provision has been made in the 2000/01 budget for grants of £3,300 and £2,000 respectively towards the new community pavilion and the Play Project's proposed assault course on the Recreation Ground, both without commitment at this stage.

GRANTS TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Each year the Parish Council set aside a sum of money in their budget for grants to organisations which provide facilities or services of benefit to Merriott residents. Any organisation wishing to be considered should put their request in writing to The Clerk, Grey Abbey Lodge, North Perrott, TA18 7SE. Closing date 28th April. Requests should be accompanied by a summary of their current financial position and how the grant will be used if successful. The allocation is usually made in November, as it was in 1999. This year grants will be allocated in May. If you have recently received a grant please do not hesitate to apply again.

MERRIOTT ON THE INTERNET

The District Council have invited the Parish Council to include information on their webpage which has pages of information specific to all towns and villages in the District. Suggestions are description/history/items of interest about the Parish, or events which may be added through the "What's On" facility, photographs (if supplied electronically, help is available to convert), newsletters. Absolutely free. Anyone interested please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council in the first instance (01460 72996)

BLAKE MEMORIAL HALL 75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION 17th JUNE 2000

Anyone who has photographs, postcards and/or memorabilia appertaining to the Hall, and events that have taken place there over its lifetime, are asked if they would be prepared to loan them to the Hall Management Committee for the proposed Exhibition and Open Day that will form part of its commemoration in June 2000. Of particular interest would be photographs of the front of the Hall together with the lawn areas showing the original flagpole.

Similar material covering the entire village is also keenly sought in order to stimulate a wider interest and complete the Community Council's Millennium Open Day, also to be held in the Memorial Hall on 17th June. Details concerning security and property safeguards, and any further information can be obtained from Len Weeks (tel. no. 73091).

THE VILLAGE FUN DAY will be on 20th May.



MERRIOTT MESSENGER

MARCH 2006

News from the Parish Council

There is no news from the Parish Council this month but please read the minutes on the board by the Coop or in the information Centre.

Dates for your Diary

All Saints Church Merriott Summer Fete - fun for all the family - will be held this year on Saturday 8th July between 12 noon and 4pm.
Stalls - side shows and much more
Further details in the July Merriott Messenger and, of course, in the monthly Benefice news.

New for You Sale

A new for you sale will be held on Saturday 25th March 10.00am - 12 noon in the Tithe Barn.
[any clothes books etc to Margaret Oliver, Cherry Tree Cottage Church Street before the event.]

Easter Bingo

There will be an Easter Bingo on Tuesday 4th April at the Social Club Merriott.
Doors open at 7.30pm for 8.00pm start.

BINGO! BINGO!

Craft Workshop

Easter Good Friday 14th April at 9.00am there will be a craft workshop at the Church - to all you children, do bring your parents and have breakfast! This will be followed by a Family Service at 10.00am to 10.45am with Hot Cross Buns to finish

quality of the Messenger.

The Messenger is produced for the village. The Team, which has a constitution and safeguarding policy, meets monthly to agree the content of the following month's issue. We are highly dependent on residents for their contributions, since it is the community which is served by the publication. From time to time, the Team has consulted the residents to learn what the content should be. We have also tried to keep the printing costs low by comparing costs from alternative printers — currently, the printers are based in North Devon. The Editor sends them the finalised copy by email and the printed issue is delivered to Merriott Post Office a few days later, then the deliverers perform their very important task of giving every address a copy. Over the years, our Editor has produced the issue from as far away as South Africa and the USA — the wonders of modern technology!

The Team thank you for consistently reading and supporting the Merriott Messenger, we hope you will enjoy this edition and many more to come!

John Bowman — The Merriott Messenger

March 2000
'A two-sided A4 sheet from the turn of the century'

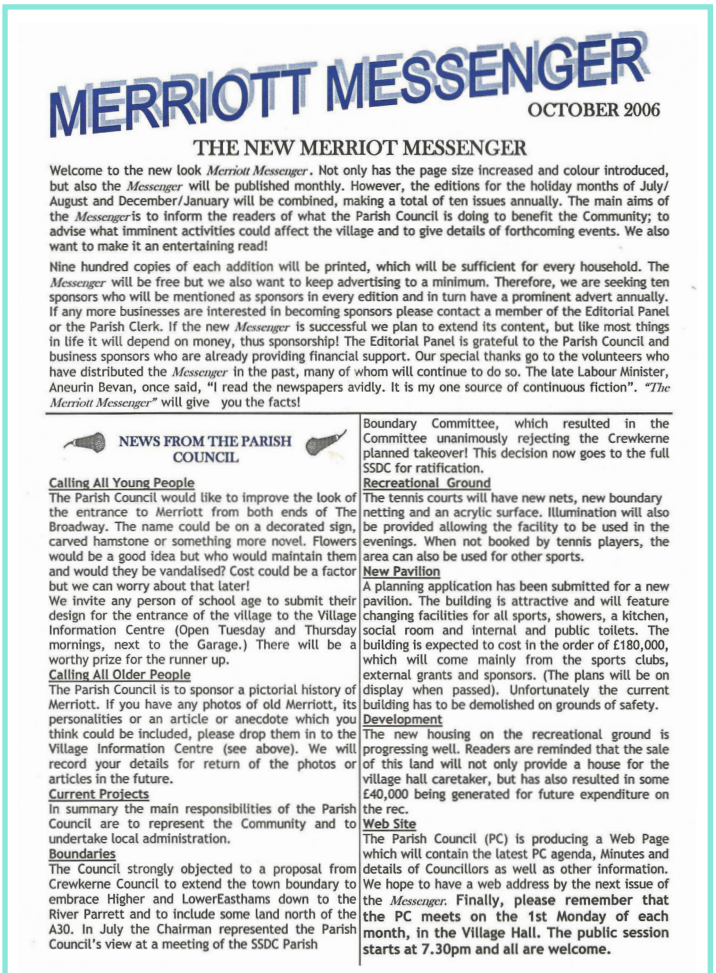
March 2006
'An 8-page A5 edition which was produced quarterly'

October 2006
'A new 4-page A4 edition — produced 10 months a year and delivered to every household in the village'

December 2012
'The first full colour 8-page edition'

I am grateful for loan of the older editions of the Merriott Messenger from the *Merriott Heritage Trust*.





MERRIOTT MESSENGER
OCTOBER 2006

THE NEW MERRIOT MESSENGER

Welcome to the new look *Merriott Messenger*. Not only has the page size increased and colour introduced, but also the *Messenger* will be published monthly. However, the editions for the holiday months of July/ August and December/January will be combined, making a total of ten issues annually. The main aims of the *Messenger* is to inform the readers of what the Parish Council is doing to benefit the Community; to advise what imminent activities could affect the village and to give details of forthcoming events. We also want to make it an entertaining read!

Nine hundred copies of each addition will be printed, which will be sufficient for every household. The *Messenger* will be free but we also want to keep advertising to a minimum. Therefore, we are seeking ten sponsors who will be mentioned as sponsors in every edition and in turn have a prominent advert annually. If any more businesses are interested in becoming sponsors please contact a member of the Editorial Panel or the Parish Clerk. If the new *Messenger* is successful we plan to extend its content, but like most things in life it will depend on money, thus sponsorship! The Editorial Panel is grateful to the Parish Council and business sponsors who are already providing financial support. Our special thanks go to the volunteers who have distributed the *Messenger* in the past, many of whom will continue to do so. The late Labour Minister, Aneurin Bevan, once said, "I read the newspapers avidly. It is my one source of continuous fiction". *"The Merriott Messenger"* will give you the facts!

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

Calling All Young People
The Parish Council would like to improve the look of the entrance to Merriott from both ends of The Broadway. The name could be on a decorated sign, carved hamstone or something more novel. Flowers would be a good idea but who would maintain them and would they be vandalised? Cost could be a factor but we can worry about that later!
We invite any person of school age to submit their design for the entrance of the village to the Village Information Centre (Open Tuesday and Thursday mornings, next to the Garage.) There will be a worthy prize for the runner up.

Calling All Older People
The Parish Council is to sponsor a pictorial history of Merriott. If you have any photos of old Merriott, its personalities or an article or anecdote which you think could be included, please drop them in to the Village Information Centre (see above). We will record your details for return of the photos or articles in the future.

Current Projects
In summary the main responsibilities of the Parish Council are to represent the Community and to undertake local administration.

Boundaries
The Council strongly objected to a proposal from Crewkerne Council to extend the town boundary to embrace Higher and LowerEasthams down to the River Parrett and to include some land north of the A30. In July the Chairman represented the Parish Council's view at a meeting of the SSDC Parish Boundary Committee, which resulted in the Committee unanimously rejecting the Crewkerne planned takeover! This decision now goes to the full SSDC for ratification.

Recreational Ground
The tennis courts will have new nets, new boundary netting and an acrylic surface. Illumination will also be provided allowing the facility to be used in the evenings. When not booked by tennis players, the area can also be used for other sports.

New Pavilion
A planning application has been submitted for a new pavilion. The building is attractive and will feature changing facilities for all sports, showers, a kitchen, social room and internal and public toilets. The building is expected to cost in the order of £180,000, which will come mainly from the sports clubs, external grants and sponsors. (The plans will be on display when passed). Unfortunately the current building has to be demolished on grounds of safety.

Development
The new housing on the recreational ground is progressing well. Readers are reminded that the sale of this land will not only provide a house for the village hall caretaker, but has also resulted in some £40,000 being generated for future expenditure on the rec.

Web Site
The Parish Council (PC) is producing a Web Page which will contain the latest PC agenda, Minutes and details of Councillors as well as other information. We hope to have a web address by the next issue of the *Messenger*. **Finally, please remember that the PC meets on the 1st Monday of each month, in the Village Hall. The public session starts at 7.30pm and all are welcome.**



December 2012

Merriott Messenger

www.merriottvillage.org.uk
Delivered FREE to 1,000 Homes

Merry Christmas to you all

We would like to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

A big thank you, also, to our distributors who ensure that the Merriott Messenger is delivered throughout the village each month.

Finally, thank you to our sponsors for their continued support, for which we are very grateful.
Merry Christmas!

Pantomines from the Past

Aladdin, 1970

Babes in the Wood, 1968

Courtesy of the Merriott History Group, here are some fabulous photographs of Merriott Junior Drama Group Productions. Do you recognise anyone?! You can also see images of the original programmes from the time.

There was a thriving amateur dramatics group in Merriott throughout the 1960s and 1970s which put on numerous successful productions—including the pantomimes here (and another on page 3). You can see more photos and get details of cast lists by logging onto the History Group website: www.merriottlocalhistorygroup.co.uk.

Inside

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Parish Council News

At the November meeting we welcomed Jessica Vale, our clerk for the next three months, who can be contacted on the usual email address merriott-clerk@hotmail.co.uk . or by phone 01935 477344
Pavilion: At the extra meeting in October details of the plans for the **new Pavilion** had been agreed and the architect has submitted the planning application. An invitation to tender for work will soon be advertised.
We would like any potential users of the new facility, clubs or individuals, to contact us please to indicate how often you may need the hall. It can be used for sports, parties, classes, meetings etc.
GP Surgery: By the time you read this, a decision should have been taken by the District Council, on the Moorlands Barns (inc GP Surgery) application.

1





All Saints Church Services in September

All at All Saints Merriott (unless stated otherwise)

Sunday 6th September
6.30pm *Praise Service*, **Merriott Tithe Barn**

Sunday 13th September
10.30am *Communion Service*

Sunday 20th September
10.30am *Morning Prayer*

Sunday 27rd September
9am *Communion Service*

Dates for Your Diaries

Sunday 11th October
11.30am *Harvest Festival*, **ARK @ Egwood**

Saturday 24th October
9am-1pm *Church Work Party*, **Merriott Church**



Somerset Mobile Library

The Mobile Library visits Merriott Church from 10.50-11.10am on Tuesdays (monthly).

Upcoming visits: 1st September, 29th September, 27th October, 24th November.

Summer at ARK!

Happy Summer Everyone! There are lots of things coming up over the next few months; here are but a few, so please keep your eyes open locally and on social media.

Regular Activities:

Tai Chi:
Mondays, **9.30-10.30am**, **£5**.

Community Lunches in Merriott Village Hall:
Every other Tuesday *(1st, 15th, etc.)*, **£6 for two courses** — must book via ARK.

Health Walks:
Every 2nd and 4th Thursday, **10.30am** from ARK for approx. 1 hour, **free of charge**.

Grief Support Group:
1st Tuesday of each month — 1st September onwards.

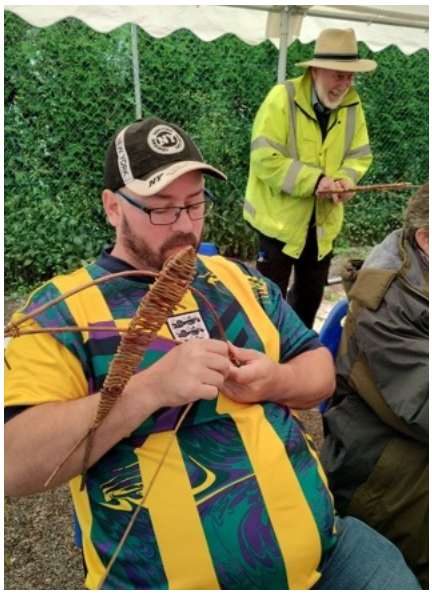




We are very excited to be partaking in **Somerset Art Weeks** this year; our theme '*Life in Willow*' will involve a murmuration of willow birds, created by all of our attendees, volunteers and staff. We will also have an installation of wire birds and another of 'milk bottle' birds, so it should be a stunning sight. **We shall be open on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 2-4pm during the Art Weeks, which run from 19th September until 4th October**. We will also be showcasing artwork from within our ARK community and running a silent auction of works from local professional artists in order to raise much needed funds, which enable us to support people of all ages and needs from within the local community. As such, if you know someone who may like to donate a piece of art to ARK, or are an artist yourself, we would be very grateful — all of our generous artists will be welcomed to showcase other artwork during this period too. Flower picking and refreshments will also be available.









We would to thank everyone for their ongoing and steadfast support — we really do appreciate it.

More information can be found on our website: **www.arkategwood.com**

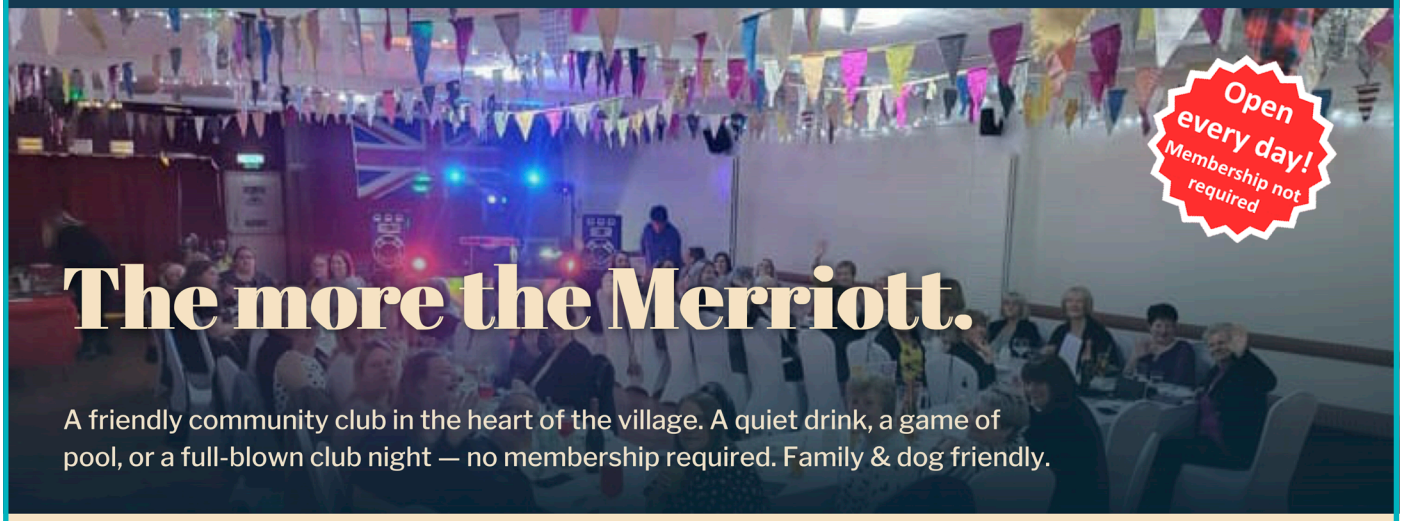
ARK at Egwood

Merriott

SOCIAL VENUE

71 Lower Street, Merriott

Est. 1844



The more the Merriott.

A friendly community club in the heart of the village. A quiet drink, a game of pool, or a full-blown club night — no membership required. Family & dog friendly.

WHO WE ARE

A non-profit, run by volunteers, for the village.

Merriott Social Venue is kept alive entirely by a committee of volunteers and our friendly bar staff. We're always looking for more hands on deck — if you fancy helping out, just ask at the bar.



STREET PARTY, LOWER STREET

What's on, every week

Times can vary — check at the bar or our socials for the latest.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Bingo Night Eyes down!	Karate All ages	Free Pool All evening Open Mic 3rd Wed/month	Karate All ages	*Live events monthly*	*Live events monthly*	Quiz Night Doors 7pm

Open every day — membership not required. We also host skittles, darts & pool league matches, plus street parties and seasonal socials through the year.

HIRE THE VENUE

Let us host it for you.

Weddings, birthdays, wakes, christenings — your day, your way. Regular hire from £25 — book online at merriottsocialvenue.co.uk

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Arcus Physiotherapy provides expert, evidence-based assessment, treatment and rehabilitation for a wide range of musculoskeletal conditions, injuries and persistent pain. Whether you're recovering from a recent sports injury, struggling with longstanding aches, or looking to improve your mobility and function, we're here to help you achieve your goals.

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All profit from our pet products goes to Pennypaws Rescue.

Best Wishes
Phil & Michelle



MVH

MERRIOTT VILLAGE HALL

(A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION)



Fully equipped, multi-use hall available for hire in the village of Merriott. This light and spacious hall can be booked for weekly sessions for that special occasion! We have availability in our timetable for those wishing to run regular user groups during the week. Additionally, we have weekend dates which are available for events throughout the year.

Large main hall with production stage, PA system, c/w hearing loop, WIFI and Bluetooth for streaming purposes. Eco-friendly and temperature controlled venue. Fully equipped kitchen, discreet meeting room (can be hired separately), parking with accessible entrances and toilets facilities.

CONTACT US NOW FOR MORE INFORMATION

To arrange a viewing or booking contact Michelle on:
merriottvillagehall@gmail.com
01460 72508
Website: merriottvillagehall.org.uk

Find us on Facebook to see the current timetable and upcoming events!



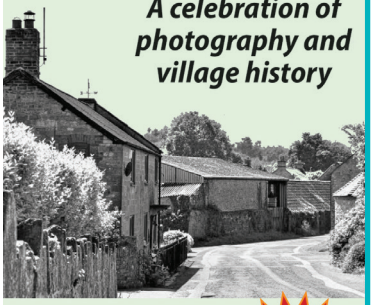




Merriott Camera Club and Heritage Trust

JOINT EXHIBITION

A celebration of photography and village history



Merriott Village Hall, 26th and 27th September 2026, 10am to 4pm

FREE ENTRY

Refreshments available from Mandie's Cakes and Bakes





Planning Applications

22 Shiremoor Hill: *Notification of intent to fell 1 tree within a conservation area.* **26/01827/TCA Status: Awaiting decision.**

Zephyrine Cottage, Shiremoor Hill: *Replacement of 5 Existing windows.* **26/01799/LBC Status: Awaiting decision.**

Merriott Pharmacy, 2 Broadway: *Prior approval for Proposed Change of use of Hairdresser (Class E) to Residential Dwelling (C3).* **26/01669/P3MA Status: Awaiting decision.**

The Old Bakehouse, 1 Church Street: *Notification of intent to carry out tree surgery to 1 tree within a conservation area.* **26/01652/TCA Status: Awaiting decision.**

Land South of Church Street: *Discharge of No7 (Biodiversity Enhancement Plan) of Planning Application 23/00296/REM.* **26/01620/DOC1 Status: Awaiting decision.**

The Old Vicarage, Church Street: *Notification of intent to fell and replace 1 tree within a Conservation area.* **26/01417/TCA Status: Application permitted.**

For further information, go to Somerset.gov.uk and "Search for planning application".

Marion Biggs

Climate Change Committee — 24th June 2026

In the April edition of the Messenger I was commenting about the terribly wet winter we suffered in the previous six months. Now we have recently suffered the highest temperatures ever recorded in the UK, as well as two heatwaves which makes living and sleeping very difficult. This mixture of extremely wet, followed by extremely hot weather, is something we are going to have to get used to according to the experts. It is a weather pattern which was predicted for decades, if we continue to pump greenhouse gases (mainly carbon dioxide and methane) into the atmosphere.

Whilst the UK is a relatively minor contributor (*about 2% in world terms*) to greenhouse gas emissions, compared to others such as China, the United States and India, there are those who say *why should we bother to make any effort to reduce our contribution to emissions?* The answer is that if we do not try, we are no example to the world as to how it should behave. China and India are doing their best to reduce emissions whilst the United States is going in totally the wrong direction. We, along with many other countries, need to show, by example, if and how we are to save the world from ever-more chaotic weather.

The **Climate Change Committee**, which was established more than three decades ago to advise the UK Government on greenhouse gas emissions, has recently published their assessment of how the UK is doing in meeting its objective of reducing its emissions of greenhouse gases to zero by 2050 (*Progress in reducing emissions: 2026 report to Parliament*, 24th June 2026) — the burden of the report is that we are not going fast enough towards our target. Between 1990 and 2025 the UK reduced its total greenhouse emissions by 50% in 35 years. However, another 50% of levels in 1990 need to be eliminated in the next 25 years if the UK is to meet its target of zero emissions in 2050. Most of the reduction to date has come from switching electricity generation from coal and oil to gas, wind and solar.

In particular, the report says that the UK needs to be more ambitious in planning for electrification. This will require continuing progress towards low-carbon (and lower cost) electricity, as well as more effort to increase the number of electric vehicles (particularly vans) and heat pumps for domestic use, and more industrial electrification. The report also emphasises that progress in the fields of agriculture, land use and aviation in reducing greenhouse emissions are going too slowly.

After the recent fossil fuel price increases caused by the Iran War, a household with a gas boiler and a petrol car now pays four times more than a household with a heat pump and an electric car. For a household with an oil boiler and a diesel car, they pay ten times more. The incentive for domestic consumers to rely more on electrical appliances and vehicles is now considerable.

John Bowman





Merriott Heritage Trust

10 Lower Street

Visit us and become an archeologist

Saturday September 5th

10.00 to 12.00

Activities for children and adults

We would love to see any of your finds







Donations and Assistance Requested

It is September again and **RAFT** (**Refugee Aid from Taunton**) seeks unwanted warm winter clothing (clean and washable) and suitable winter footwear for men, women, teenagers, children and babies — all sizes; new underwear and toiletries for all; unused medical supplies; disability aids; nursing bras and maternity clothes; blankets and sleeping bags are always needed.

RAFT has been seeking donations since 2015 when Syrians first began fleeing Assad's civil war and I, as part of the newly formed *Refugee Support Group*, *South Somerset* made my first delivery of donations to them ten years ago this month. The group also organised fundraising events, including those for overseas charities. For example: concerts, quizzes, supper evenings, coffee mornings, Burns' nights, a stall at country fairs, and Music in the Meadow on a Sunday afternoon in summer each year. Such events gradually ceased as caring duties, ill health and other projects diminished our numbers.

However, I continued accepting and collecting donations, storing them and, finally, delivering a car load to Raft. I am very grateful to the editors of local magazines who published my articles regularly and to the great number of thoughtful, kind people who responded and have donated goods over the years, some regularly since the beginning. Now I am seeking someone, or perhaps two together, to assist — particularly with driving during winter months, as my health becomes less reliable, and who, if possible, could slowly take over the project from me. I particularly do not want to suddenly leave everything in chaos, and I would prefer it not just to cease while still needed.

With grateful thanks — Geraldine Downey.
Tel: 01460 271358

Geraldine Downey



Changes of Boundaries for Elections

Times of change... We have all been used to the changes which are being made to many of the services and organisations we use, such as banks, schools, health care facilities, transport and faith communities. Some of these changes happen for 'business' reasons — maybe usage changes and financial factors. For other facilities, changes are made for a variety of reasons, but nearly always these happen and are, very largely, above and beyond our control.

An example of a national organisation introducing change is the role of the *Boundary Commission* in determining local boundaries for all levels of government. Their decisions affect Parliamentary (*Westminster*) constituencies and local government (councils), including Parish and Town Councils.

The latest Boundary Commission Review of Somerset, recently completed, has revised the areas for elections and numbers of councillors, affecting Merriott. This has resulted in Merriott now becoming part of the Crewkerne North and Merriott Division/Ward for Somerset Council with a single councillor. Merriott will no longer be part of the (current) South Petherton and Islemoor Division for which there are 2 Councillors (which has also been changed) for the next Somerset elections, due to take place in May 2027.

There are no changes to Parish Councils and there will be an election for Merriott Parish Council in Spring 2027.

Sue Weeks



Thank you to our sponsors for their support

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HERITAGE TRUST
10 Lower Street
Open Thursdays 10.00 to 12.00,
First Saturday of each month 10.00 to 12.00
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