



Annual Parish Meeting Community Reports

Slapton Village Community Shop

In common with most businesses in the area, the Community Shop has experienced a downturn in sales since the closure of the A379, following the storms in January. However, we remain upbeat and focused on providing a good range of products for both locals and visitors. We have an excellent team of volunteers, ensuring the shop can remain open every day of the year (apart from Christmas Day). Led by our marvellous manager Paula, we offer a warm welcome, supplying locally sourced goods wherever reasonably possible.

With the start of the holiday season, we have seen a resilience both within the village and in visitors who have not been deterred by the more difficult road access. The year-round support from the Field Studies Centre is much valued and helps to underpin the ongoing viability of the shop. We have also extended the loyalty card for the rest of the year (as opposed to just the quieter Winter months) to support our regular customers, which has been very well received.

Without the energy and commitment from both our volunteers and the hard-working Management Committee, the shop would simply not be sustainable. We feel it is essential to maintain this important facility within the village and, to this end, will shortly be signing a lease renewal agreement to retain the existing building and service for the next 10 years. As a Community Shop, we also aim to provide wider support to the village and wider Slapton Parish. To this end, from our accumulated reserves, we do offer grants towards the cost of running local events and facilities and welcome applications – just speak to someone in the shop and we can provide further information.

Peter Osborne, Chair

Slapton Village Hall

Over the last 12 months the Hall Committee have continued to make improvements to the Village Hall. The main hall floor has been sanded and revarnished and the car park fence has been renewed. At present we are looking into replacing the wall heaters for something more efficient.

We are also making progress with improving, putting into place all the policies the Hall now needs. We are part of the Village Hall Hub organised by DCT and have very useful meetings with other Hall Committees about every three months.

We are keen to get more bookings for the Hall. If you would like more information about booking it for an event or private booking please contact our bookings secretary. All information is on our website.

Shirley Sullock, Chair

Slapton Horticultural Show

Last year's Show (the 113th) was an early one being held on August 9th. Even by then, through lack of rain, many vegetables and flowers, were starting to go over their best. The Committee were concerned that entries might be down but of course our village came up trumps as usual, with 328 entries from 52 entrants. The day was a great success, being well supported by the exhibitors, the judges who give their time and expertise, and all those who come to appreciate the entries in the afternoon and take the opportunity to meet up with friends old and new.

The Show this year was opened by Terry Hallett, a long- standing Committee member, who has now stood down from organising the judge's lunch and running the raffle, and the cups were presented by Mike Bowles.

The Show held its AGM in April where we welcomed Holly Short and Jane Cumberlidge onto the Committee. The schedule for this year's Show has been finalised and it will be distributed in June. Anyone who has any queries or questions about the show, schedule or exhibiting please contact any of the committee members whose names will be on the schedule.

Our finances are now much more stable, and we would like to thank the now wound up Slapton Ladies Activity Group for their donation of £132 from their outstanding funds. The recent coffee morning raised just over £379.70 after expenses. The Committee would like to thank all those who supported the event. The Show is the earliest it can be this year being on Saturday August 8th.

Patsy Edgecombe

Short Mat Bowls

The Slapton Short Mat Bowling Club, having recently completed the winter season, playing competitively in the South Hams League, can look back at a very successful campaign.

We have two teams, of which the Cygnets play in Division 1, and the Swans in Division 2.

The Cygnets proved yet again, that they were a force to be reckoned with, by winning the two league knockout trophies, and just by a narrow margin, taking the runners up spot to Totnes, the League champions.

The Swans, although obtaining a few good results, were unable to make inroads.

The membership of approx. 20 members means we can comfortably honour commitments, but we would welcome anyone interested, to join us on a Wednesday evening, commencing on 2nd September.

Financially, the club is paying it's way, irrespective of running costs, and will go into next season, without having to raise subscriptions.

Arthur Wotton

Slapton Badminton Club

The badminton club meets on Tuesday evening at 7.30pm-9.30pm. We have ages ranging from 9 years old to some members over 70. The children leave at 8.30pm.

It is a very friendly club, with a wide range of ability.

We currently charge £5 for the evening.

We are always looking for new members. Why not come along and join us and see for yourself. We have spare rackets available.

Gill Harris

Pilates, Zumba and Yoga

Pilates: This class is held using recordings by Lara Christopher and projected onto the screen, with an occasional masterclass. The class has had its ups and downs, with attendance of around four November/December and now has an average of six/seven. We have lost two regulars due to the road closure.

Zumba: Sadly, the last Zumba class was a masterclass by Lara Christopher on 11 November 25. We have a laptop with Zumba recordings, if there is enough interest the class can restart. I am happy to show interested parties how to use the equipment to facilitate this.

Band/Body Strengthening and Conditioning: This class was started by Lara Christopher September last year but struggled to get enough support for it to be viable and had finished prior to the road closure. Lara held a masterclass on 28th April this year and we are restarting the class on May 18th. If it is not viable for Lara to run the class in person, we may be able to keep it going with a mixture of recordings with the odd masterclass!

The Monday yoga class started April 25. It had a small regular following, but not enough to make it viable, certainly once the road closed. It would take too long to get to and from Slapton from Stokenham where Laura lives.

Mandy Mitchelmore

Slapton Gospel Hall

Slapton Gospel Hall is run by a group of local Christians who have faith in Jesus Christ.

The Chapel has been a witness to the community for over 100 years with the aim of sharing the Gospel message which is the good news of Jesus Christ. Currently this is done by regular services held throughout the week:

- Remembrance service held on Sunday mornings.
- Prayer and bible study Wednesday evenings.
- Family service on the 2nd Sunday of each month.
- Hymn sing along on 5th Sunday of each month.
- Special Easter, Christmas, and Harvest thanksgiving services.

A warm welcome is extended to all.

John Ch 3v16

Jonathan Harris

St. James the Great

2025/26 has been another busy year for St James the Great – the Parish Church of Slapton. Services of worship have been held on almost every Sunday throughout the year, generally at 9.30 am, although the current closure of the Slapton Line is making the journey to Slapton a little more tortuous for those coming from west of Stokenham. There have also been a number of special services at Christmas, Easter and Harvest, as well as the annual All Souls service – a quiet service at the beginning of November to remember those who have died, and the Service of Remembrance on 9 November, at which £190 was raised for the Royal British Legion. And on Sunday 14 September, there was a joint service at St James for all nine churches within the Start Bay Group, led by Rev Mark Kichenside, assisted by Andy McMullin.

It has been a good year for weddings at St James. On 14 June, we witnessed the wedding of Jenny and Ace Kimber, and then on 26 July, Jemima Mann and Richard Forman tied the knot. Finally (for 2025) on 20 September, the wedding of Josephine Morrison and Cameron Blackwood took place – with much tartan on show, and a piper leading the guests through the village!

Sadly, the past year has also seen a number of funerals at St James – Jenny Stephenson on 29 January 2025, Bill Humpries on 13 October, and Hazel Wills on 6 November. Our sincere condolences go to all their families. Then, on 5 March 2026, we learnt of the sad death of Colin Staines after an extended period in and out of hospital. Colin had been a long-standing member of the PCC and the Parish Council, and founder member of the committee that established the Slapton Community Shop. His funeral was held in St James Church on 30 March. Our condolences go to Sue – Colin will be greatly missed.

It's amazing how often the work of the church centre on hospitality. Throughout the summer months (from Easter through to October) the Church Café is open in the church on Sunday afternoons, and Bank Holiday Mondays, serving a wide range of hot and cold drinks, and scrumptious cakes. It always seems to be very well attended, and in 2025 raised in excess of £3500. And during Lent (the six weeks before Easter), the church organises a series of Lent Lunches, comprising soup, bread and cheese in different houses around the village. This supports a range of charities (a different one each week), and in 2026 just over £1000 was raised for Shelterbox, Parkinson's Society, Tools for Self-Reliance, National Youth Orchestra and Alzheimer's UK.

During the year, the church has also organised a couple of plant sales, and is always keen to support other activities going on in and around the village, such as the Easter Egg hunt and Cocktail Party at White Close, the Horticultural Show, Celebrate Start Bat, and many more. It is always good to see how the church and community work together, and I am deeply grateful for the support that the Parish Council gives to the church.

Revd Mark Neave, Rector, Start Bay Group of Churches

Tree Wardens

As tree wardens we are responsible for the health and protection of trees in our parish. We have the responsibility to check for native trees potentially at risk, including tree preservation orders TPO -tree wardens can enforce any damage & instigate procedures to get law enforcement and fines implemented. We are voluntary & are part of the nation's Tree Council.

Tree wardens are tasked with the assessment of any tree that will be affected by a planning application & are drawn to visit, review, photograph & report back to the county Tree Officer at SHDC, commenting on its likely risk, neglect or loss.

This year brings the responsibilities of observing and protecting any vulnerable native hedges. We have also be asked to look for any ancient native trees (14 native broad leaf) or any historic tree so a county wide data is built up on their location ..our report of the discovery of an amazing row of ancient elms we found 4 years ago will go on this list. Further currently we are looking at the health of our sweet chestnut population, reports in the county of a rust that affecting the chestnut trees needs to monitored to check its spread.

In the last 12 months we have visited 14 applications in the parish regarding potential tree work. Applications involved single trees and groups, from ones to remove dead /dying trees to limb removal, raising canopies, reshaping, conservation area issues & assessing existing TPOs requiring work or in one case removal.

Consideration on ash trees is more complicated since the now widespread national Ash Die Back (ADB) -the policy changes and currently we are instructed to leave any affected tree with the goal one will produce its own immunity ,previous instructions to remove /fell are reversed ,reduction of crown height /branches advocated -the one exception is if the affected tree may affect a highway or footpath if it drops limbs .

In particular Slapton has a conservation area which means trees have increased protection & damage to them can invoke substantial county lead fines

Applications do occur from parishioners who are wanting to remove native trees merely to improve their views (especially of the sea) this is absolutely not a valid reason to remove or indeed reduce the height /canopy of a tree.

We strongly encourage and parishioner considering any tree surgery to contact the TWs at an early stage.

The SHDC tree officer ultimately decides on each case & actively pushes for prosecution in cases of breach. If there is a breach of protection the system these days means the tree officer can enforce large fines running into thousands off any breaches.

The Tree warden Committee I sit on in the South Hams produced a healthy hedgerow leaflet, in autumn 25 which has been distributed to all parishes in each county -more are available if required.

James Curtis and Mike Hitch, Tree Wardens