Blackawton Beacon May 2025

published jointly by the Parochial Church Council and the Parish Council

Wormcharming

from **Hannah Smith**

Sunday 4th of May

The big day is nearly upon us! **Registration** for Wormcharming teams will be from 10.30 – 12.00 am outside the George Inn.

Please join the procession from the pub to the field with music and noisemaking paraphernalia! Get ready for a day of fun, laughter, and community spirit at this year's International Festival of Wormcharming!

The festivities will continue into the evening with **live music** at **The George Inn** and an auction you won't want to miss!

Help will be needed from 10.00 am on Saturday 3rd May for set up and 10.00 am on Monday 5th May for take down. Meet outside the George Inn.

We still have plenty of space free in the **Craft Fair** in the Village Hall for anyone who would like to have a table-top stall on the day. Get in touch with us at **chris.oughton@yahoo.co.uk** to secure your spot!

All hail the great worm!

Blackawton Wormcharming Auction

The auction takes place at 7.00 pm. Don't forget to collect your auction number from 6.00 pm! We're still after auction prizes, so if you can offer an object of desire, an interesting experience or something else we haven't thought of, get in touch with Jenny at **jennyertle@icloud.com**.

Wormcharming Fun Dog Show

from **Carey Burton**

Sunday 4th May

In the secret field, immediately following Wormcharming

£1.00 cash per dog per class –pay on entry

Wonderful ears	Hilary Hall memorial class (open to all dogs)
Beautiful eyes	Partnership between handler and dog
Smart paws	Good coat (long/short/smooth/wire/whatever!)
Best tail (little or large!)	Best in Show. Open for winners, free with donations please.

Blackawton welcomes thoughtful dog handlers. Please pick up after your dog.

For more information on the dog show please contact Carey **07754 493160**.

Christian Aid Jumble Sale

Blackawton Village Hall

Saturday 10th May at 2.00 pm

There will be clothes, bric-a-brac, books and toys as well as plants and cakes and a raffle. **Offers of help would be appreciated**, and jumble can be brought to the church on Saturday morning. If you would like anything collected, please ring **01803 712362** or email **kate.janman@gmail.com**. **Nothing is too big or too small**. Card payments will be accepted!

Envelopes will be delivered to homes during **Christian Aid Week**, but they will not be collected. Donations can be made online or brought to the Jumble Sale (instructions will be with your envelope).

St Michael's Church

Services for May

Date	*Time*	*Service*
Sunday 4th	9.30 am	Holy Communion (by extension)
Sunday 11th	9.30 am	Christian Aid Service
Sunday 18th	11.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 25th	9.30 am 4.00 pm	Rogation Service THE 4
Thursday 29th Ascension Day	7.00 pm	Holy Communion United Benefice service, followed by a light supper, *at St Peter's, Stoke Fleming*

The services above are correct at time of going to press. Please see weekly pew sheet, gate notices or "A Church Near You" website for the latest information. We will also email any changes or additions to our mailing list – if you're not on our mailing list and would like to be, please send an email saying "subscribe" with "Blackawton Church News" as the subject to **chris.janman@gmail.com**.

There is a Mini Food Bank in the Church porch, open 24 hours a day, every day. **Please give what you can and take what you need.**

From the registers

Thursday 24th April Funeral of Alice Collins

Reader's corner

from **Peter Barker**

'The existing world (economic) order has been destroyed.' The words, or sentiments, of many politicians and commentators at the time I am writing this in April. Day after day the chaos increases – doubling down, rowing back, taking a new tack altogether. And not only tariff wars but shooting wars as well – 'peace' said to be imminent one moment, redoubled fighting and destruction the next. It seems to be anyone's guess what will be happening on the world stage by the time we reach May 1st.

Better to focus on Easter! Easter Sunday is just a few days away as I write and the **Easter Season** will last throughout May, right up to Pentecost or Whit Sunday (on June 8th this year). Easter offers us reassurance about the past, that Jesus' historical resurrection marked the defeat of death: ultimately chaos and evil did not and will not prevail. Easter offers us joy in the present, the knowledge that Jesus lives and he loves us, that forgiveness is possible, that God wants us to be his children. Easter offers us hope for the future, that one day we too shall receive resurrection life in God's new creation.

May is a special month, full of the beauty of new growth, promising the hoped-for balm of summer to come, a month of bluebells and campion and wild garlic. A month with two special Sundays. May 11th is **Christian Aid Sunday**, an opportunity to show our concern for all our many fellow human beings living in dire need. This year we shall be learning how Aurelia has been helped by Christian Aid's local partner in Guatemala, and what she is now able to do for her local indigenous community. Let's show that Blackawton really means business as a compassionate community, by learning more about the issues, by prayer and by giving generously through Christian Aid.

May 25th is **Rogation Sunday** when we ask for God's blessing on the work of farmers, gardeners and fishermen. If the weather is kind it is a wonderful chance to move out from church to field or garden, or churchyard, thanking God for all he has given us in this beautiful location and praying for village and parish, for livestock and pets and wildlife. Please come and join in!

Wishing you the joy and hope of this Easter Season,

Our church team

Vicar	Rev'd Matt Gorton	01803 906861			
Churchwardens	Kate Janman	01803 712362	Lay Readers	Frank Robinson	01803 712249
	Chris Janman	01803 712362		Lyn Robinson	01803 712249

Blackawton Allotment Association

from **Jill Kelly**

Plant Sale Sunday 4th May

Blackawton Allotment Association will be holding a plant sale on Wormcharming day. It will take place from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm at Heyes, Main Street.

Calling all tennis players!

from **Tony Stevens**

We have a fantastic tennis court in the village, next to the Village Hall. Why not sign up to come and use it? The annual membership fee is £40 per family, with all proceeds going to the upkeep of the court and the village Playpark. For this you get access to our online booking system and the code for the padlock to gain entry to the court, so no disappointment of finding the court being used when you go down to use it!

If you would like to play, please email Tony Stevens at **ajstevens@ymail.com**. It is a wonderful village facility, so please don't hesitate if you are interested.

Blackawton Amateur Dramatic Society

from **Chris Janman**

The BADS AGM will be held on **Thursday 8th May** at 8.00 pm in the George Inn. If you are interested in the organisation of BADS or have ideas for the future, please come along.

There will be a BADS play reading in the George Inn on **Wednesday 18th June**. You are very welcome to join us.

For more information email **chris.janman@gmail.com**.

Blackawton WI

from **Sandra Tope**

It has been lovely to see some spring sunshine, although at the time of writing it is raining again. To take advantage of the good weather a group of us went to Coleton Fishacre for a walk. With the blossom looking beautiful, as well as tulips and rhododendrons in flower, we walked down as far as the coastal footpath and back up again. The afternoon was completed with a cup of tea sat in the sunshine. Our next planned walk is around Stokenham, starting and finishing at Stokeley Farm Shop. Let's hope we are blessed with dry sunny weather again!

April's meeting was an illustrated talk by Julia Fox from the Totnes Costume Museum. As well as slides of stunning clothing, she brought along some samples of Victorian clothes. How small the ladies were in those days! Julia was then asked to judge the competitions (Bloom of the Month and a Victoria Sandwich) both of which were won by Sandra Tope!

We will be holding our usual cake stall at the Wormcharming, so please come and find us in the field on the day! Our May meeting is our Annual meeting, when the committee and officers are elected. This doesn't usually take long, so no doubt there will be a quiz or some other fun to finish the morning.

The WI is an inclusive organisation for women of all ages and backgrounds. We may spread jam but we certainly don't sing Jerusalem! We would love to welcome more members, so if you've been a member in the past, in Blackawton or the surrounding villages, or have never tried it, please do come along, you would be very welcome. For more details please call Sue on **01803 712145** or Sandra on **01803 712622**.

Sustainable Blackawton

from **Ruth Coe**

Community composting of garden material

I had hoped to note progress in this May edition of the Beacon, but as ever there is more delay. The SHDC works team ran a test for access to the village hall site. This should have been straightforward, but parked cars in Vicarage Road prevented their tractor plus trailer reaching the hall. Consequently, they cannot confirm that shredding and turning of material by SHDC will be possible! This seems to have also delayed our grant funding application decision. However, the deposit (covers the ordering of steel uprights for the bays) has been paid, and work is expected to start on the groundworks to clear the site very soon, with shreddings from this activity, poles for beans, and maybe logs to store for winter, will be useful in a variety of schemes around the village. Grateful thanks to the usual helpful and constructive attitude of Matt Studd of Coppertops for the eventual progress of this scheme.

The recent showing of the film "Six inches of Soil" about regenerative farming was well attended, and seems to have been well received. Young farmers increasingly passionate about caring for soil health are inspirational. Our own small, local start is to compost "garden material", a resource we should not "waste"! The film was also a trial for our newly installed audio-visual system at the hall, definitely impressive!

The issue of decommissioning of renewable energy technology has been targeted in a Scandinavian project to recycle the large nacelle parts of wind turbines into housing! The resulting "pod" type accommodation is an attractive studio apartment for singles which could resolve a few housing issues. Another example of creativity applied to several problems simultaneously. Given the need for steel, also in the news of late, and other resources, the recycling of technology must surely be fundamental to our future infrastructure?

E-vehicles have also been in the news recently, for a variety of reasons. To learn more you may enjoy a visit to the event in Kingsbridge Town Square being organized by Kingsbridge Action Group on 26th May. The **GO Electric Show** will have e-Cars, e-Bikes, e-Boats, e-Charging, e-Owners and seriously Good Food! **Bank Holiday Monday 26th May** 11 am – 4 pm.

Blackawton forest school garden area is growing a variety of edible and floral crops. The children are keen to see these thrive, but summer holidays mean potential neglect just when watering becomes essential. If anyone in the village (with or without children!) is able to assist in an occasional visit to water the veg beds and the polytunnel then children and staff starting in September will be very grateful! They have also installed wormeries for processing the "fruit waste", apple cores, banana peel, and tea bags, coffee grounds etc. of the children and staff.

The George Inn

from **Paul Radford**

It has been a rather busy couple of weeks at the George Inn with the arrival of the Easter holidays. On Monday 14th we held our monthly quiz night hosted by Phil O'Toole. The pub was packed with all the regular village eggheads as well welcoming some newbies to the evening. Phil did a cracking job at hosting the evening with his Blackawton-themed crossword puzzle being one of the highlights for many that attended. Our next quiz will be on **Monday 12th May**, which will be hosted by Lorien Joyce, so we very much hope to see you all there!

We have a new seasonal ale coming online shortly called Merrivale Pale, it is a limited edition 3.4% Pale Ale from Dartmoor Brewery, which will be replacing Tribute for a short period of time and we also have some new gins in stock as well as all your usual favourite tipples! Also our opening hours will soon be changing to reflect the summer period as it approaches, with doors open from 12 pm on both Saturdays and Sundays.

To Follow us on Facebook please scan the QR Code

What's on at the George:

May	Monday 12th	Quiz night
	Friday 23rd	Open mic night
June	Monday 9th	Quiz night
	Friday 13th	Live music

The Big Lunch

from **Rosemary U'ren**

Sunday 2nd June from 12.00 noon

in **Blackawton Churchyard** (if wet in church)

Join other villagers for an informal bring-and-share lunch. If you can please bring something shareable to eat – savoury or sweet –and something to drink, and a plate, bowl, knife, fork and spoon. Tables and chairs provided. If you can't bring anything, come anyway and bring your friends and neighbours!

If you have any questions please phone Rosemary on **01548 521278**.

BaSH (Blackawton and Strete History Group)

from **Bob Harvey**

BaSH has a huge resource of archive material but no-one seems willing to continue with research on local history. In anticipation of an event to revive BaSH the display boards were set out ready last year and stored in the church for safe keeping. A recent check has found that the boards are still there but all the display material, photos etc. have gone. These include a specially-produced Ordnance Survey map which, uniquely, shows accurately the whole of the 1944 evacuation area on one sheet.

If anyone has any information about the display material please let Andrea Scott or Anne Harvey know.

Oakleigh

from **Ruth Coe & family**

After eight years of hard work refurbishing and considerable help from friends and family, we finally had our first guests stay at Oakleigh over the Easter break. As a thank you for the help and for putting up with us for so long, we would like to invite the village to our open house at Oakleigh from 6 pm - 8 pm on Friday, the 9th of May. Come through the gates at the end of the pub car park, and we'll see you there with a complimentary drink for anyone interested in what we've been doing.

If you can't make it that evening but are interested in our self-catering cottage, you can find more details at **www.southdevonholiday.com**.

West Dart Bus

Dartmouth Music Festival by bus

West Dart Bus is taking bookings for the Dartmouth Music Festival on 17th and 18th May.
Cost: £5 return, £2.50 single, under 16s free with an accompanying adult.

Saturday 17th May book with Dave Hawkes, call/text **0780 3017521**.
Sunday 18th May book with Claudia Benzies, call/text **0771 2210300**.

Depart: Blackawton bus shelter	10.30	14.30
Return: Dartmouth bus stop by M&S	14.00	22.00

This is the proposed timetable but it might change according to who books: so **please book**.

Regular services

Journeys are free (and donations welcome). Sit back, enjoy the views, save on fuel, parking & frayed nerves. **Please book** to ensure the bus does come for you; call **01752 690444** or email **info@ringandride.net**.

Where possible, passengers can be picked up/dropped off elsewhere on the route by request. (eg. outlying hamlets, Totnes, Paignton, Torbay Hospital, Newton Abbot Hospital, Newton Abbot Station …)

Timetable for May:

Friday 2nd	Dartmouth via Dittisham
Wednesday 7th	The Willows, Torquay via Totnes
Friday 9th	Dartmouth via Dittisham
Friday 16th	Dartmouth via Dittisham
Friday 23rd	Dartmouth via Dittisham
Wednesday 28th	Newton Abbot via Totnes
Friday 30th	Dartmouth via Dittisham

All trips depart from Blackawton Bus Shelter at 9.30 am. Return trips depart at 12.30 pm and arrive in Blackawton between 12.45 and 1.00 pm.

The West Dart Bus seats 16 people and is **available for hire** to local community groups and residents for only £65 + fuel and a volunteer driver - subject to availability. Call Claudia Benzies on **07712 210300**.

A year in a Blackawton garden

from **Jill Kelly**

The garden is awash with tulips and daffodils. Unfortunately, not all are the colour I was expecting. My main bed is dominated by vibrant red tulips instead of the subtle peach ones which I ordered, ruining the look I was going for. Unlike last month, I am no longer under the illusion that I am on top of things. There are weed seedlings everywhere and the bindweed is starting to show. But still, it all looks glorious. I have started staking and tying in because the herbaceous perennials are growing so exuberantly.

Also exuberant in the garden are the lily beetles. The first year I grew lily bulbs, I was delighted that I had no lily beetle and thought I was in for an easy time of it. But in year two, they discovered us. So now I have to keep a beady eye out for them. As they are bright scarlet, they are fairly easy to spot on my lilies, especially as there are usually two mating. However, they have a neat trick of dropping out of sight when I try to grab them so I have to be very careful to get hold of them securely.

I have been struggling to get flower seeds to germinate – even in a propagator, and those that have germinated have often produced few seedlings. There are no viola 'singing the blues', nicotiana sylvestris (although the seeds were old), ammi majus, cleome, lobelia or monarda. I had a few black knight scabious and heliotrope so sowed second trays, none of which have germinated. There is also a sparse scattering of mixed viola, annual sweet william, antirrhinum and rudbeckia, but they are not coming along with any rapidity. Even the sweet peas have had a poor germination rate. The only real success stories have been marigolds, zinnias and ammobium alatum (an everlasting flower).

Still, I suppose it means that I am not overwhelmed with more plantlets than I can cope with. The ones I have will therefore have a better chance. I have been working to harden seedlings off to go into the mini greenhouse in order to clear them out of the house. They go outside every morning and come back in every evening.

Next month, the alliums and lilies will take over from the tulips and daffodils as the dominant flowers pulling the garden together. And hopefully, my seedlings, and also dahlias, will have grown big enough to plant out once the risk of frost has passed, which will greatly reduce the time and effort needed looking after them.

Tree warden

from **Bob Harvey**

Are conifers more important?

Sir Henry Studholme (ex-head of Forestry Commission) and Prof. Michael Winter (OBE for services to the Rural Community) displayed an extensive knowledge of the whole area of the National Land Use Consultation at the SHS meeting in Follaton on 10th April. However, it was strongly felt that the very detailed questions in the Consultation were concerned with the implementation methods but failed to specify the actual priorities. These could include: ecological infrastructure (nature); food security; energy security; safety and defence; raw materials security (metals and timber); buildings, housing and transport; public health (healing and leisure).

In our unstable world where we can feed ourselves for only two days out of three, and without coniferous softwood timber from Russia's Baltic we could build only one in five of our houses, "need" becomes more important than "want". As Israel has shown, all mobile phones can be destroyed in a day. Few people today can even imagine what it's like to be alone in a wilderness with no safety, shelter, water or food, but if those are your essentials how would you prioritise the list above? "IF you have TWO loaves of bread, sell ONE and buy a lily."

Midsummer Ball

from **Shirley Smith**

Join us for an evening of food, drink and dancing to music from **Stereo Jacks**

Prosecco and canapes on arrival ~ 2 course buffet ~ raffle and auction

Saturday 21st June at 7.00 pm

Blackawton Village Hall

Tickets can be purchased from the Community Shop or
Shirley Smith **shirlsmithie1234@gmail.com 07790 980639** or
Jo Mills **jo@artyfartie.co.uk 07733 363932**

All proceeds go towards the Village Hall and Fireworks

£35 a ticket. Black tie

Community Shop

from **Kate Purver** and **Julie Duffy**

Shop telephone: **01803 712157**. Email: **blackawtonshop@gmail.com**.

Opening times

Shop:	Monday to Friday	8.30 am – 5.00 pm
	Saturday	9.00 am – 1.00 pm
	Sunday	10.00 am – 12.00 noon
Post Office:	Monday to Saturday	9.00 am – 1.00 pm

A big thank-you from Julie to all who came to the bingo evening at the Village Hall – with such fantastic support, this was a great success and raised around £750 to be donated to the Hall, the Community Shop and other village organisations. Amazing! Many thanks also to all those who helped set up, run the bar etc. and clear up afterwards, after a combination of mishaps put Julie temporarily out of commission. Watch this space in a few months for another cash bingo event!

Have you been in the shop lately? It's looking great – so much variation for such a small shop, and loads of affordable ranges. We now have Dartmouth ice-cream back in – do you have a favourite flavour? Let us

know! Or come and try one of the new cakes which we have in stock. The Stokeley meat is going down really well (have you tried their fabulous scotch eggs?), and we've got lots of delicious, home-made Heat & Eat ready meals. We're also now stocking vegan and olive oil spreads. Is there anything you wished we stocked and don't? Let Julie know and she'll see what can be done.

The shop will be open for worm-charming, selling picnic bags, drinks and treats and with games to entertain the younger generation (Pin the Worm on the Bird, anyone?). If you have ideas for other ways the shop could join in, get in touch!

Finally, an appeal from Julie: *if you could come and help in the shop you'd be so welcome! Full training given, you don't have to work alone, we are a friendly bunch and would love to meet you. No commitment if you don't want it – just 2 hours a month would help us, whatever suits you. I'm in the shop Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday mornings at the moment, come and grab a cuppa with me.*

Wines of the Month: £7.10

A red and a white selection this month; both from the Veneto region of north-east Italy.

Versare Merlot: a rich, full-bodied red, with an intense bouquet and packed with elegant aromas of plums, black cherries, red fruits, violets & chocolate. Perfectly balanced, with a good structure and delicate red fruit flavours. Enjoy this with pasta, risotto, roast meats – especially Devon lamb! – or mature cheese.

Versare Sauvignon Blanc: a lively white, well-balanced and smooth, with a harmonious crisp and citrussy flavour and an attractive bouquet. Its bright acidity and elegant finish make it a great choice for any occasion! Ideal as an appetiser or with pasta, white meat and fish dishes.

Village Hall

May events

from **Adrian Kyte**

Local Election Thursday 1st, 7.00 am – 10.00 pm.
Wormcharming Festival Sunday 4th, 9.00 am – 7.00 pm: crafts and light refreshments.
Christian Aid Jumble Sale Saturday 10th, donations from 9.00 am, entrance see posters.
Blackawton Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 13th, 7.30 pm.
WI Monthly Meeting Wednesday 21st, 10.30 am.

Weekly events
Dance with Flavia Saturday 17th, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm.
Hatha Yoga with Hannah Roberts (07951 079608).
Tuesdays 6th, 13th and 20th, 6.00 – 7.15 pm.
Wednesdays 7th, 14th and 28th, 9.00 – 10.15 am.
Chair Yoga Wednesdays 7th, 14th and 28th, 10.30 – 11.30 am.

Film club

The questionnaire in the April Beacon was completed, and returned, by approximately 7% of paper-Beacon recipients. If you have not yet submitted a questionnaire it is **not** too late! There are copies in the Community Shop for those that are emailed the Beacon, or those who have lost their April copy! Please do respond, we need to know that any time, effort or funds spent on setting up, and managing, a film club would be worthwhile.

Hall Booking

The best way to check availability and make a provisional booking of the Village Hall is to use the interactive calendar at the bottom of the page on the community website **blackawtoncommunity.com/community-page/blackawton-village-hall**. This page also gives an overview of our facilities and hire rates for various types of event, as well as a link to the Conditions of Hire.

If you don't have internet access, please complete a paper booking form available from the Village Shop and place it in the letter box near the Hall's main entrance. However your make your booking please don't enter into any other commitments until the booking is confirmed. All Thursday bookings are at risk of cancellation should a surprise election be called. All bookings require a security deposit. Hirers please

remember to include set up and clear down time in your booking request as there may be another event immediately before or after your.

Car Parking

Quite a few cars regularly use the Village Hall car park and normally this is not a problem but when there is an event at the hall the committee request that you park elsewhere. The dates this month are:
Saturday 3rd 8.00 am to 2.00 pm.
Sunday 4th 8.00 am to 8.00 pm.
Saturday 10th 8.00 am to 08.00 pm.

Hire of furniture and crockery

Village Hall furniture and crockery can be hired if not in use at the Hall. Details of what is available are on the hall website. Requests should be made to **villagehall@blackawtoncommunity.com**.

Blackawton School

from **Vicky Harris**

Blackawton School would like to thank the community for their support and kindness with sourcing some water butts and donating their discarded plant pots for us to reuse in the Polytunnel. Thank you to Julie's bingo, for their generous donation to our school garden.

The wet weather has allowed the slugs and snails to travel around more easily. Our garden has been plagued by some very hungry snail intruders, over the Easter holidays, who seemed to have nibbled our sunflower seedlings. But fear not, we have some back-up seedlings coming on nicely, ready for our launch of a new **Blackawton Community Sunflower Growing Competition**. Watch out for more information on how to enter very soon. Can you grow for the tallest sunflower? Who can grow the largest sunflower head?

Black Gold Worm Compost Update: Our resident Tiger worms have settled in very well, to our 2 new wormeries and are currently feasting on last term's leftover fruit waste. We are hoping they will produce some nutritious worm tea, to feed our plants.

Our community litter pickers have been a great success and have been put to great use around the village, with many residents and children borrowing them to clear hedgerows and areas that have become littered over time. Fantastic efforts, please do keep your photos coming in.

This term, there will be more excitement, amusement, and even more environmental interest being generated from Blackawton School. We are currently planning to host a summer community tea and cake afternoon/plant sale to launch our new 'Dough and Grow Garden'

Please do continue to drop off any unwanted plant pots, seed trays, divided plants or left over seedlings. We will definitely find them a home around our grounds. Thank you again for your community support and efforts to make Blackawton a thriving growing green school.

Blackawton Colour Fun Run

from **Sarah Bradford**

Saturday 28th June 2025

Blackawton School is hosting a 5km colour fun run at 11 am on Saturday 28th June. As well as being a school fundraiser, it's a community get-together, so volunteers and spectators are warmly welcomed. There will be a BBQ on the day as well as music and all-round feel-good vibes as families complete 1km laps of the village. Colour powder will be thrown at participants, but only on the school premises. This is completely eco-friendly and washes out.

The route will take runners (and walkers) from the school field, up through French Furze and down through the village, past the George and church before heading back up the hill to the school. The course will be fully signed and marshalled, with all signage removed before the end of the day. There will be no road closures but please expect some disruption for approximately 1 hour between 11 am and 12 noon.

We are actively seeking volunteers to help with water stations, first aid and acting as marshals, showing people the way and giving encouragement. If you would be interested in doing this, please email **colourrun@fobs.org.uk** - we'd love to hear from you!

To enter, please scan the QR code, which will take you directly to the entry form. Deadline to enter is **14th June**. There's no age limit, and running is optional – this is about getting active and plenty of feel-good camaraderie! Please spread the word to families in neighbouring villages – all welcome!

Devon County Council elections

The elections will be on **Thursday 1st May,** 7 am to 10 pm. Use your vote!

Annual Parish meeting

from **Annette Thom**

Tuesday 15 April 2025 at 7.30 pm in Blackawton Village Hall

Present: There were 27 people present, including Parish & South Hams District Cllr Rake (Chair), Parish Cllrs Oughton (Vice-Chair), Coe, Luckens, and Thomas, Devon County Cllr Brazil, guest speaker from Sustainable South Hams, and A. Thom (Clerk).

Report from Blackawton Parish Council Chair

Cllr Rake thanked the other Parish Councillors (all also volunteers) and the Clerk for their work over the past year. He discussed projects which have taken place over the year since the last Annual Parish Meeting. He said that the success of the Village Hall is a demonstration of the skill and dedication of the community pulling together, and that Councils can facilitate this to happen.

Cllr Rake discussed the management of some village green space (Churchyard and Cemetery) by the Parish Council. There was a great community day strimming the Churchyard last September. There is a continued program maintaining the edges and leaving some wild areas. It is looking fantastic at the moment and we expect this approach to pay increased dividends over time with increased biodiversity. We are looking to install an explanatory panel in the Churchyard this year to explain the management approach. This is particularly important at times of the year when it looks less attractive.

The success of Blackawton in Bloom which was led by a resident has added colour to the village and was supported by a grant from the Parish Council.

Cllr Rake discussed the Government's Devolution White Paper and the current reorganizing of local government – which will result in the merging of the functions of district councils and county councils into unitary councils. A likely consequence is that the ranges services provided will come under pressure and parishes will need to provide more services locally if we want them. Cllr Rake said that Blackawton Parish Council is well positioned to respond. We have professionalised our service over recent years and we are putting out feelers to other local parish councils to see if we're able to gain efficiencies by working together.

Report from Blackawton's Devon County Council Councillor

Devon County Cllr Brazil said that DCC has increased its component of council tax by 5%: the 3% maximum increased permitted, plus 2% for adult social services. DCC's financial settlement from central Government was reduced this year, including the loss of the Rural Services Delivery Grant which was to mitigate the extra cost to deliver services in a rural area, for example school transport. The majority of the new dual council tax on second homes, about 70%, goes to DCC.

Regarding Blackawton, Cllr Brazil thanked the Parish Councillors for what they do and said that the local resilience is evident. With local government reform parish councils may need to take on discretionary services. The Hall is a good example of partnership working.

Blackawton Community Groups

Representatives from some Groups spoke to the meeting.

Allotments Association. The Association is run by members. It is affordable (£12.50 annually for a single plot). There are some single plots available.

Bell Ringers. The Bell Ringers meet on Thursday evenings. There are seven ringers and three learners. New ringers are welcome. Come along and try it out.

Community Shop. It was sad to see the previous manager leave last October. The Shop has been pleased to welcome the current Manager and Assistant Manager. The Shop has a fabulous team of volunteers. It is lovely to be involved with, and is a fun and happy environment. There are two or three volunteer get togethers each year. The Shop is going well. If it makes a profit it contributes to the village, for example toward the cost of the annual fireworks. New volunteers are welcome. You can also become a member by buying one share at a cost of £10. Members can vote in the AGM and you receive extra information as a shareholder.

Blackawton Playing Fields Committee. The Committee looks after public spaces in the village: the fireworks field, the community meadow, and the playpark. There is a great group of volunteers. There was a successful wassailing event last year. The Committee is always looking for new people to join.

Community Composting Site. The project has achieved planning permission for the Site to be placed at the back of the Village Hall car park. It will take garden material and produce garden compost. They are

waiting for funding from South Hams District Council. They have received technical support and advice from Sustainable South Hams, for example to achieve planning permission.

Guest Speaker from Sustainable South Hams – Food Waste Composting

The speaker discussed the Bokashi method of anaerobic fermentation food waste composting. It is from Japan. Food waste, including meat, is placed into a bin and handful of a special bokashi bran starter sprinkled on top of about every 5 cm depth. The food waste is squashed down to remove air and an air-tight lid put on. The fermenting food waste doesn't smell unpleasant. When ready it can be buried and then planted on top of, or added to a traditional compost heap where it will break down faster and will not attract vermin. You can buy special bokashi bins or can make your own using a readily available bucket with an air-tight lid. The speaker hasn't found in the need to have a tap to remove liquid. They don't add much cooked food waste, which tends to produce more liquid.

There was a discussion about tumble bin composters which are used at a community and commercial level. There is the potential for their use by the School. There can be funding available to support the substantial purchase cost.

More Information and Contact Details

Community website: **www.blackawtoncommunity.com**.

Community Groups pages and News post about Bokashi Composting, with links to resources: contact the Clerk on **07979 391442** or **parishclerk@blackawtoncommunity.com**.

Blackawton Parish Council meeting

from **Annette Thom**

Notes of the Meeting of Blackawton Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, Blackawton. Complete minutes can be read at **www.blackawtoncommunity.com** or the parish noticeboard.

Present: Parish & South Hams District Council Cllr Rake (Chair), Parish Cllrs Oughton (Vice-Chair), Hadow, Luckens, Mardon, and Thomas were present, as was Clerk A Thom. Absent: Cllr Coe.

Open Forum

Hanging Flower Baskets on the Main Street Bus Shelter. A resident has emailed asking to spend Parish Council funds to refurbish the hanging flower baskets. It was agreed that Cllr Rake will contact the resident.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Cllr Coe and from DCC Cllr Brazil.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

It was resolved to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 March 2025. The approved minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting on 19 February 2025 were noted.

Report from Devon County Council Councillor

DCC Cllr Brazil was absent. Cllr Rake noted that we are in in the pre-election period which limits what DCC and SHDC Cllrs can say. The Blackawton Beacon has the timetable for the DCC elections.

Report from South Hams District Council Councillor

Cllr Rake noted that SHDC may receive negative feedback on the new car parking tariffs and the new double Council Tax regime. These changes were both necessary and integral to preparing a balanced budget for the Council.

French Furze Development Update

Cllr Rake reported that the Blackawton Business Units CIC is in discussion with SHDC about progressing the transfer of the Business Units to the CIC. Regarding the completion of the remainder of the French Furze development, there has been some progress and it is the drainage scheme which is holding things up. The drainage is sorted as far as the north side of road, but further down it is not.

Review of Meeting Action Items

The list was reviewed briefly.

Planning Applications

South Hams District Council's Planning Decisions

0496/25/AGR Broadley Farm Blackawton TQ9 7AJ. Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed roofing over existing silage store measuring 22.86m (L) x 20m (B) x 7.71m height to ridge. **Prior Approval Not Required**.

0614/25/ARC Woodford Farm, The Linney, Blackawton, TQ9 7AA. Application for approval of details reserved by condition 12 (CMP) of planning consent 3967/23/FUL. **Discharge of Condition Approved**.

Review of New Applications

0619/25/HHO Ebenezer Blackawton TQ9 7BN. Householder application to erect external terrace on rear elevation & replace windows. **Support** (by resolution, Cllrs Hadow and Rake abstained).

0876/25/PDM Land at SX801505, (Woodford Barn), Blackawton, Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings/barns to 2No dwellinghouses (class C3) & for associated development (Class Q (a+b)). This is a permitted development application. BPC is not commenting. The applicant has previously established that the agricultural use criterion is met.

New Premises Licence application Anzac Bistro Dartmouth, 2 Anzac Street, Dartmouth, TQ6 9DL. BPC is not commenting on this application.

Planning Appeal Notification of Decision

222/24/HHO Washwalk Mill Blackawton TQ9 7AE. Householder application for conversion & extension to the Secretary of State. The appeal follows the Refusal of Planning Permission of existing outbuildings as ancillary use only & additional parking. **Dismissed**.

Staffing Arrangements

BPC might look to work more closely with Dittisham Parish Council using the model used by SHDC: with each Council employing its own staff but staff being shared in some way, e.g. holiday cover, which might then follow on to a more formal arrangement. This would provide the benefit of using different skills and work preferences, and create efficiencies.

With the local government reorganisation to create unitaries, it is anticipated that the unitaries will do less locally and that if the Parish wants some services to continue we will need to do more ourselves, which will increase the number of staff hours required, and the knowledge and skills required of staff.

Parish Council Landline Phone number

It was agreed to cease to offering the landline number for the Clerk on 8 June. There is a mobile number.

Finance

Payments & Receipts. It was resolved to authorise the following payments:

Clerk March Expenses Reimbursement	£244.30
Accounting Software Annual Fee	£328.32
Cemetery Software Annual Fee	£207.36
Spring Bus Shelter Cleans	£222.00
Devon Communities Together Annual Fee	£50.00
Parish Council Insurance (year three of three year agreement)	£510.36

The following payment made since the last monthly meeting was noted:

Information Commissioner's Office Annual Fee	£35.00

It was noted that Lloyds Bank has taken the new monthly account fee in arrears by direct debit, £4.25 on 18 March, and that the charges were started early on 10 January instead of on 14 January 2025 as advised by Lloyds.

Application to BPC from the Village Hall Committee for Grant Funds

It was resolved to approve the request for 50% of the total audiovisual project cost of £8,470.92, i.e. to make a grant of £4,235.46.

Memorial Safety Inspections

The results of the inspections in the Churchyard and in the Cemetery were discussed. Two memorials were laid flat in each location. BPC will discuss with the Parochial Church Council the possible removal of a residual stone in the Churchyard. The Clerk will follow up whether action is required to fix memorials of approximately 580cm in height which have movement.

Specifications for Work to Maintain the Churchyard Gates

The proposed specifications were agreed. The Clerk will request quotes and also establish whether approval for the maintenance needs to be obtained from the Diocese.

Main Street Phone Box

The current options suggested for the refurbishment or removal of the Phone Box were:

- Refurbishment by volunteers: A budget of £300 has already been approved for materials.
- Paid refurbishment: An indicative cost for refurbishment by a specialist is £5,000, and by a contractor at least £1,200 plus materials.
- Sell the phone box.
- Partial restoration: To repair all the glass, then paint the glass black on the inside, screw the door closed, and just renovate the outside. If anyone has a suggestion for the interior in the future, the inside could then be completed.

The fourth option was amended by the Meeting to a picture being placed on the glass. It might be possible to work with the School or with local artists. It was agreed that Cllr Luckens will proceed to implement the fourth option as amended to use pictures instead of painting the glass black.

Correspondence & Contacts

The following was noted or considered. Meeting discussion is noted in italics:

- 14/3/25 Report submitted to DCC by the Clerk - Request to reposition School Lane grit bin to make safe. Done by DCC on 18/3/25.
- 10/3/25 Resident emailed BPC requesting information about ensuring the safe closure of the road while cattle are crossing. *The Meeting noted that this is a DCC matter and that BPC is assisting with local communication.*
- Review of the South Devon National Landscape Management Plan: Introductory meeting with Parish Clerks and Parish Chairs, 22 April at 6.00 pm, online.
- DALC Devolution Update for Smaller Councils 8 April, 10am-11.30am, online.
- Notice of the Devon County Council Election being held on Thursday 1 May 2025.
- P3 Footpaths Scheme forms returned to DCC. *The Clerk said they have not yet sent the forms. They will be sent on 2 April 2025.*

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held in the Village Hall on **Tuesday 13th May** at 7.30 pm. You are most welcome to join the meeting and to raise any issues which may be of concern to you.

Council contacts

Cllr Ruth Coe	01803 712131	ruth@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Sue Hadow	07306 007681	sue@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Rob Luckens	01803 712111	rob@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Charli Mardon		charli@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Chris Oughton, Vice chair	01803 302487	chriso@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Simon Rake, Chair	01803 861129	simon@blackawtoncommunity.com
Cllr Steve Thomas	01803 712840	steve@blackawtoncommunity.com
Annette Thom, Parish Clerk	07979 391442	parishclerk@blackawtoncommunity.com
Tree Warden, Bob Harvey	01803 712662	clyston23@gmail.com
Parish Lengthsman, Ian Cumberlidge	07773 691260	

Other contacts

South Hams Cllr Simon Rake	01803 861129	Cllr.Simon.Rake@southhams.gov.uk
South Hams District Council	01803 861234	customer.services@southhams.gov.uk
SHDC emergency out of hours	01803 867034	
Devon County Cllr Julian Brazil	01548 511109 07970 971140	julian.brazil@devon.gov.uk
Devon County Council	0845 155 1015 0345 155 1015	customer@devon.gov.uk
Police non-urgent reporting	101	101@dc.police.uk

or online form at www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/your-area/teams/Dartmouth/Contact

There are **Report It** buttons on www.blackawtoncommunity.com to report problems to DCC (eg. highway issues such as potholes and flooding) and SHDC (eg. planning enforcement, missed waste collection, fly tipping, and abandoned vehicles)

the Wider Community

Children's Hospice South West

from **Sue Tweed**

Thank you to everyone who supported us at our two fundraising events in April. Our Easter Fair in the Market on 5th April, where the support and generosity received was heart-warming, resulted in a total of £960 raised. This was boosted by Stephen Levy's wonderful Winkworth Easter Raffle drawn at the event which raised another £700. We received a generous £100 donation that day from Sue Payne and her Stand Up To Cancer friends. We held a Street Collection in Dartmouth that week where a much-appreciated £564 was donated. In total, a wonderful **£2,325.74** was raised. This will help CHSW to provide specialist care and support for over 550 families with life-limited children in the South West – making the most of short and precious lives.

New helpers are always welcome. For more information, please contact Sue Tweed on **07955 197721** or **tweed833@btinternet.com**.

The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming & District

from **Peter Hales**

Where friendliness matters above all else

The Probus Club of Stoke Fleming and District has been in existence since 1984. We meet fortnightly on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The meetings start at 10.30 am with coffee followed by a speaker at 11.00 am and on the first meeting of the month we also have lunch at 12.30 pm.

The club is keen to attract new members and a warm welcome will be given to guests. Please call Peter Hales on **01803 770739** or email **peterhales21@gmail.com** for more information and to arrange to be welcomed to a trial meeting.

Our meetings in May are:

Wednesday 14th lunch Jeremy Sackett: Guinness Brewing - a timely look at the black stuff
Wednesday 28th Summer outing lunch for members and partners at the Berry Head Hotel, Brixham

from the Editor

Printing the Beacon

For several years, the Beacon has been printed each month by Laura Howell, with occasional help from her son Charlie. She is no longer able to do this job and it has been taken over by Polly Morrow and Andrea Scott.

We are very grateful to Laura for doing this tricky job for so long. **Thank you.**

Collating the Beacon

The Beacon is edited, printed, collated and distributed entirely by volunteers.

We now need someone to collate it each month.

This job is quite simple and takes about 3 to 4 hours once a month. If you might be willing to take on this role for your community, please email **beacon@blackawtoncommunity.com** or ring Andrew Morrow on **01803 712242** for more information about what is involved.

Please volunteer if you can!

The Beacon is produced monthly and distributed to over 300 houses in the village and surrounding area. Email **beacon@blackawtoncommunity.com** if you would like a copy to be delivered to you. You can also ask to receive the Beacon by email.

Please send your Beacon contributions by email to **beacon@blackawtoncommunity.com**. Contributions on paper can be posted to, or dropped off at, 1 The Cross, Park Lane, Blackawton,TQ9 7BD. The deadline for the June edition is **Wednesday 21st May**.

If you would like to make a donation, please put **Beacon** on the outside of the envelope and put it in the Church's donation box beside the visitors book, or drop it off at 1, The Cross, Park Lane. Please note that cheques must be payable to **Blackawton Parish Church**. Thank you.

Andrew Morrow

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Parish Diary

May 2025

Thursday 1st	7.00 am	County Council elections	Village Hall
Friday 2nd	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth	Bus shelter
Sunday 4th	10.30 am	Wormcharming	Everywhere!
	6.00 pm	Wormcharming auction	The George Inn
Tuesday 6th	6.00 pm	Hatha Yoga Class	Village Hall
Wednesday 7th	9.00 am 10.30 am	Hatha Yoga Class Chair Yoga	Village Hall
	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to The Willows via Totnes	Bus shelter
Thursday 8th	8.00 pm	Blackawton Amateur Dramatic Society AGM	The George Inn
Friday 9th	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth	Bus shelter
	6.00 pm	Open house at Oakleigh	Oakleigh, Main Street
Saturday 10th	2.00 pm	Christian Aid Jumble Sale	Village Hall
Monday 12th		Quiz night	The George Inn
Tuesday 13th	6.00 pm	Hatha Yoga Class	Village Hall
	7.30 pm	Blackawton Parish Council meeting	Village Hall
Wednesday 14th	9.00 am 10.30 am	Hatha Yoga Class Chair Yoga	Village Hall
Friday 16th	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth	Bus shelter
Saturday 17th	10.00 am	Dance with Flavia	Village Hall
Saturday 17th Sunday 18th	10.30 am & 2.00 pm	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth Music Festival	Bus shelter
Tuesday 20th	6.00 pm	Hatha Yoga Class	Village Hall
Wednesday 21st	10.30 am	Blackawton WI meeting	Village Hall
		Beacon deadline for June edition	
Friday 23rd	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth	Bus shelter
		Open mic night	The George Inn
Monday 26th	11.00 am	GO Electric Show	Kingsbridge Town Square
Wednesday 28th	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Newton Abbot via Totnes	Bus shelter
	9.00 am 10.30 am	Hatha Yoga Class Chair Yoga	Village Hall
Friday 30th	9.30 am	West Dart Bus to Dartmouth	Bus shelter

June 2025

Sunday 2nd	12.00 am	The Big Lunch	Churchyard
Wednesday 18th		BADS play reading	The George Inn
Saturday 21st	7.00 pm	Midsummer Ball	Village Hall
Saturday 28th	11.00 am	Blackawton Colour Fun Run	School