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FOR ALL FOCAL POINT INQUIRIES:

Becky Feather

Editor

Phone: 0117 932 5037

Email: bittonfocalpoint@live.co.uk

Website: www.stmarysbitton.org.uk





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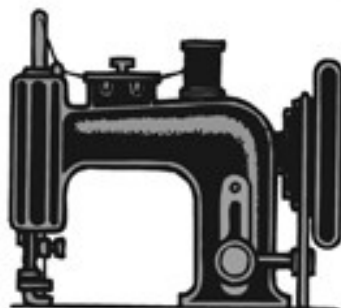


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
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USEFUL CONTACTS

Bitton AFC

(Western League Premier Division)
www.pitchero.com/clubs/bittonafc

Bitton AFC Juniors

Contact: Dave Fletcher
Tel: 0117 932 2521
Email:
fletchandcarol@btinternet.com

Bitton Archers

Shoot at Bitton AFC
www.bittonarchers.com

Bitton Bellringers

Practice night Mondays
Tower captain: Sue Jay
Tel: 0117 932 2424

Bitton Combined Charities

Contact: Ken Gibson
Tel: 0117 932 2122

Bitton Community Choir

Contact: Nicola Bennetts
Tel: 0117 932 4696

Bitton Cricket Club

Bitton Recreation Ground
3 Saturday senior teams, 1 Sunday senior team and 5 youth teams
bitton.play-cricket.com

Chairman: Tim Dyer
Tel: 0117 985 9139

Bitton Flower Arranging Club

3rd Tuesday afternoon of the month at St Mary's Church Hall
Contact: Janet Ballinger
Tel: 0117 932 4728

Bitton Gardening Club

St Mary's Church Hall, 3rd Monday in the month (plus garden visits)
Email: b.hetzel@btinternet.com

Bitton Ladies Football Club

Bitton Recreation Ground
bittonlfc.weebly.com/

Bitton Lunch Club

Last Thursday of each month
Contact: Jill Gibson
Tel: 0117 932 2122

Bitton Parish Council

www.bittonparishcouncil.co.uk
Clerk: Sharon Robbins
Tel: 01454 868 102
Email: bittonpc@blueyonder.co.uk

Bitton Parish History Group

www.bittonhistory.org.uk
Secretary: Mike Gates
Tel: 0117 932 8777
Email: mg122@btinternet.com

Bitton Pre-School

www.bittonpreschool.com/
Tel: 0117 932 6042
Email:
bittonpreschool@googlemail.com

Bitton Road Runners

Every Tuesday & Thursday - everyone welcome!
www.bittonroadrunners.co.uk

Bitton Sports & Social Club

Tel: 0117 932 3222

(More overleaf)

USEFUL CONTACTS

Bitton Village Residents' Association

www.bvra.uk

Contact: Andrew Ward

Email: andrew@wardandrew.com

Bitton WI

Second Monday of the month at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall

Tel: 0117 932 2059

Flicks in the Sticks

Free film nights in St Mary's Church Hall on the 3rd Friday of the month, September to April (not December)

Email: b.hetzal@btinternet.com

Girl Guide HQ, Cherry Gardens

Guides, Brownies & Rainbows

Contact: Gill Boyes

Tel: 0117 970 8056

Email: gill.boyes@blueyonder.co.uk

Kingswood MP: Chris Skidmore

www.chrisskidmore.com

Tel: 0117 908 1524 (Constituency)

Tel: 0207 219 7094 (Westminster)

Email: chris@chrisskidmore.com

Royal British Legion

(Bitton & Oldland branch)

Contact: Jeff Dando

Tel: 0117 932 2608

Email: jeffjeffdando@gmail.com

Scouts: 34th Kingswood/1st St Mary's

Beavers meet Monday evenings at

St Mary's Church Hall. Cubs &

Scouts Thursday evenings at

The Meadows Primary School

Contact: David Harris

Tel: 0117 932 7755

Email: djaharris@hotmail.com

South Gloucestershire councillor for Bitton: Erica Williams

Tel: 0786 018 1215

Email:

erica.williams@southglos.gov.uk

St Mary's Baby & Toddler Group

(Wednesday mornings at St Mary's Church Hall)

Contact: Ali Smith

Email: alismsith241@gmail.com

St Mary's Church

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk/

Vicar: Rev Jeremy Andrew

Tel: 0117 967 2724

Curate: Rev Anika Gardiner

Tel: 0117 932 5305

Churchwardens:

Barbara Merritt

Tel: 0117 932 3926

Jacqui Harris

Tel: 0117 937 4706

St Mary's Church Hall

Bookings secretary: Jill Gibson

Tel: 0117 932 2122

Email:

kenandjill@gibsonuk.freemove.co.uk

The Meadows Primary School

Tel: 0117 932 2203

Upton Cheyney URC

Minister: Rev Meryl White

Tel: 0775 914 6645

Email: Meryl.white@btinternet.com

Churches & services



UPTON CHEYNEY URC

Elder: Muriel Williams
0117 961 6843

Minister: Meryl White
0775 914 6645

Sunday services are at 3pm

July 1	Service led by Chris Perkins
July 8	Service led by Margaret White
July 15	Service led by Meryl White
July 22	Service led by Phillip White
July 29	Service led by Des & Hilary Colchin

Our coffee afternoon will be held on Tuesday July 24 at 2pm

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Vicar:
Rev Jeremy Andrew
The Vicarage, Warmley
0117 967 2724

Ordained minister:
Rev Richard Humphrey
Splinters
Kenilworth Drive
Willsbridge
0117 949 0502

Continued overleaf



Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson, 8 Church Road,
Bitton
0117 932 2122

David Bailey, Westover,
Bath Road, Bitton
0117 932 8949

Churchwardens:

Pete Midgley
30 Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge
0117 932 6898

Jacqui Harris
29 St Anne's Drive, Wick
0117 937 4706

From the Honorary Curate

As churches we find ourselves in the seasonal calendar of 'ordinary' time, when life continues without lots of celebratory services, like Christmas and Easter, but rather is a time of continuing faith, and being nurtured by God's word. So with that in mind, I wanted to share with you what the word of God has been teaching me. And it's all about God raising up!



Susie Bishop

There are numerous verses in the bible that talk about how God raises up. Various Old Testament characters, like Elijah, Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel and David talk about God raising them up. In the Psalms there are frequent verses like this one from Psalm 145:14: *The LORD sustains all who fall. And raises up all who are bowed down.*

The character of God is such that he loves to raise us up! Two elements of this raising up fascinate me. The raising up of people for specific tasks or specific times and season. And the raising up of those who are bowed down and brought low by trouble and concerns.

A little while ago a colleague said the following statement: "Stand as tall as you are." Simple words but also quite extraordinary words. How easy it is to try and reach for what is above our reach, maybe a symptom of an overinflated ego! Or

about when we expect others to reach higher than they are able? Equally how easy it can be to underplay ourselves, to not stand tall in who we are and in what we know are able to do, but maybe through timidity or a lack of self-confidence we hamper our growth; or the cares and worries of life have left us overburdened and stooped.

Jesus calls us to come and follow him, as we are, right now. Whether 'tall' or 'short' in our abilities! So how might God be calling you to stand up and be as tall as you are? Might God be calling you to a specific task? Or for a season, to play your part in a particular area of work, community or church life? Why not read the story of Esther, an incredible woman, who God raised up for "such a time as this". Maybe you feel short in ability, under confident and therefore underplaying yourself? You are in good company! Moses suffered with the same complaint! Yet what a difference he made, when he stood as tall as he was and trusted God.

Lastly maybe you are in a place where you really need God to be the lifter of your head? The troubles and concerns of life have left you bowed down. God simply invites you to come. To be still and know that He is God; the God who loves to minister to the broken, the weary and the needy, and to raise up the bowed down. So that you too can stand as tall as you are!

So...happy summer time, happy ordinary time and happy standing tall time!

Rev Susie Bishop

CREAM TEAS AT ST MARY'S

Cream Teas will be served in St Mary's Church from 3pm to 5pm through July and August.
Enjoy a perfect stop-off on your summer Sunday afternoon walk!

Christian Aid collection

The house-to-house collection for Christian Aid raised £1,393,29. Very many thanks to the hard-working collectors and very many thanks to the 181 generous people who put money in their envelopes.

Thanks too to those who were out when the envelopes were collected but who took the trouble to deliver their gift to the collector or to me. Finally thank you to those who completed the Gift Aid slip of the envelopes.

Nicola Bennetts

Family Café Church

Sunday 22 July at 9.30am

A relaxed and informal service on each fourth Sunday.

It is aimed at families with primary school and pre-school aged children, although everyone is very welcome. There is a café feel to it with refreshments available throughout.

The story this month is entitled 'The Wedding at Cana'
The theme will focus on Jesus describing himself with the words
'I am the true vine'

St Mary's flower rota

7 July	Wedding
14 July	Nicola Bennetts
21 July	Jean Hook & Ros Knight
28 July	Helen Pugsley



Services at St Mary's in July

Sunday, July 1	10.30: Parish Communion
Sunday, July 8	8am: Holy Communion 10.30am: Family Parade Service followed by a barbecue in aid of Scout Group funds
Sunday, July 15	10.30am: Morning Worship
Sunday, July 22	8am: Holy Communion 9.30am: Family Café Church
Friday, July 27	9.30am: Celtic Communion, followed by coffee and cakes
Sunday, July 29	10.30am: Benefice Communion at St Mary's followed by a bring and share lunch



From the parish register

26th May

Wedding

Aaron Saunders & Stephanie Muse

15th June

Wedding vows renewal

Chris & Michelle Whittle

St Mary's Matters

A very big 'thank you' to Barbara for the seven years she faithfully served as churchwarden.

Thank you too that she is willing to continue in an assisting role. I'm looking forward to working together with her and Jacqui and I think we will make a great team.

As I take over I am aware of the responsibility of looking after an historic and ancient building and everything that entails, as well as ensuring that St Mary's continues to be a place of worship as it has been for centuries past. And there, of course, lies the challenge.

As well as honouring the past, St Mary's must be looking to the future. Increasingly people in the village will be aware of the changes that are taking place inside the church and the increased flexibility which this is allowing. The church family and the local community are benefitting from the increased space and the hope is that we are able to 'give the church back to the community'. Worship styles are changing too, and a further challenge we face is to offer a variety of services which allow for contemporary, as well as traditional worship. Music plays a big part in this of course, and we are always on the lookout for anyone with musical talent of any kind.

Don't forget, if you want to see inside the church it is open during the day over the summer. Alternatively, why not come along to one of the events or services taking place. Details are on the website www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

We also have a Facebook page – [stmarysbitton](https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbitton)



Pete Midgley

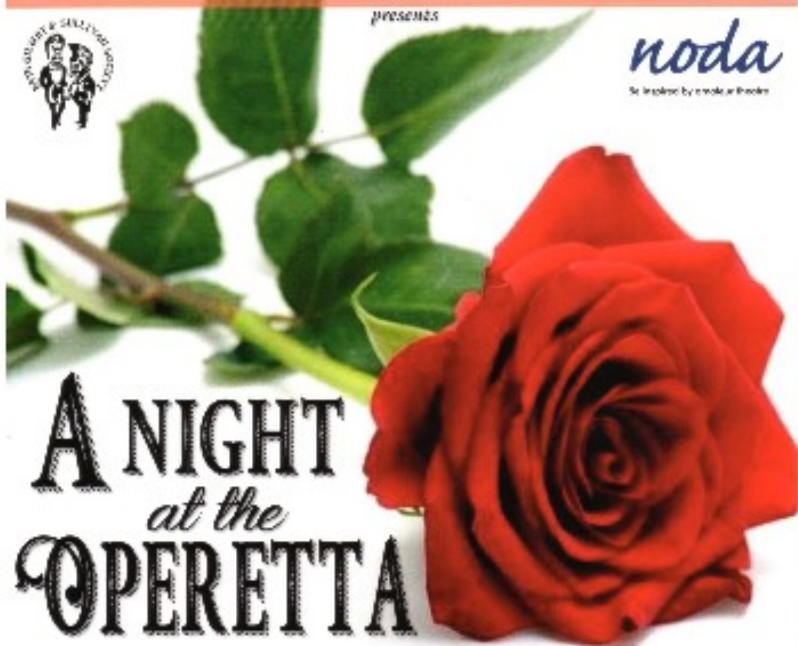
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Sat 28th July at 7.30 pm

St. Mary's Church, Bitton

Tickets : £8

**Please Contact Jenny Harris on 07970 325927 for
tickets**

Fundraising concerts at St Mary's

Nomine, a local choir directed by Naomi Reed, gave a special concert at St Mary's Church on 21st April. A programme of works was sung including Fauré's Requiem, the Easter Hymn by Pietro Mascagni and ending with the Grand March from Aida by Verdi.

Jannie Harris and Natalie Morton accompanied on the flute and piano and performed two solo pieces, Gabriel's Oboe by Ennio Morricone and Meditation from Thais by Jules Masenet. Dave Hooper, Richard Matthews and Ken Comely also supported on percussion, trumpet and organ respectively.

The concert was well attended and people were able to benefit from the increased space that the temporary removal of pews has provided both at the front of the church, where the choir performed, and at the rear where an extensive after-concert tea of cakes was provided. £407 was raised for church funds and £146 for the Children's Hospice South West.

And Westerly Winds Staple Hill gave a concert at St Mary's on 12th May. There were also performances by Jeremy Andrew, Bitton Community Choir, Olivia Roberts, Natalie Morton and Jenny Harris. The evening raised £489.50 for church funds.

Jim Heavens & Jenny Harris

You are invited
to a barbecue
at St Mary's Church
at noon
on Sunday 8 July

Proceeds will go to
Scout Group Funds



St Mary's Fete

Saturday 1st September

2pm – 5pm



Traditional Village Fete

with Somerset Morris,
Companions of the Longbow,
& the Jazz Beans

If you wish to help out, please call Ann on 431 0270.
Also items are needed for all stalls.
Ring the stallholder or leave items in the church porch.
The church is open every day.

BOOKS	Sarah Heavens	932 5376
BOTTLES	Sarah Craddock	932 8644
CAKES & JAMS	Janet Ballinger	932 4728
HANDICRAFTS	Barbara Merritt	932 3926
NEARLY NEW	Annette Vowles	932 6352
TOMBOLA	Ann Willis	431 0270
TOYS	Anne Carrington	935 3475
WHITE ELEPHANT	Nicola Bennetts	932 4696

News from Upton Cheyney URC

How many Sundays recently have been glorious sunshine. How many different birds have been singing in the trees and bushes. How many beautiful flowers are blooming in the Quiet Garden and around the church. How warm has the chapel been compared to last winter. How many smiling faces have we had inside and around. So many blessings.

That's the backdrop against which our preachers have painted pictures of God and Jesus. Steve Britten, Janet Hawkins and Neville Lintern are so different, individual and stimulating in their own special ways. We contemplated how a chapel might define success and concluded that it should be the spread of God's word, rather than full pews or financial viability as is sometimes prevalent. Neville played the organ for the first time in almost a year, reminding us of Mervyn's unique contribution. There was a lovely wedding on a lovely day with a lovely couple. So many blessings.

We have finally been granted listed building approval for our renovation work although are still awaiting the certificate to drop through the post! To aid this we have also been awarded a grant of £10,000 to kickstart the work. So many blessings.

Stuart Turner

**HOUSE COMMUNION FOLLOWED BY A SUMMER PARTY
WEDNESDAY 18 JULY**

7.30pm

*The Summer Season ends at the Baileys' home,
Westover, Bath Road, Bitton. All are welcome.*

*The party is a Bring and Share so just bring a plate and a
bottle of something you enjoy and we will no doubt have
our usual excellent 'Sharing Table'*

BITTON GARDENING CLUB

Invites you to
Our next meeting

on

MONDAY 16th July

in the

Church Hall, Church Lane, Bitton

Doors Open 7.15pm. Meeting Starts 7.30pm.

Our speaker is

**Georgie Newberry
of Common Farm Flowers**

The title of her illustrated talk is

A Year at Common Farm

You will remember the lovely evening we had with Georgie when she came to talk to us last year and demonstrated how to make a hand-tied bouquet. This evening she will be telling us how they grow the flowers for their bouquets all year round.

For more information contact Bridget Hetzel at
b.hetzel@btinternet.com or
just come along to the meeting.
New members and guests are always welcome

Bible Yarns at Cathedral

Knitted displays of Bible stories that went on display at local churches including St Mary's last autumn will all come together at Bristol Cathedral from 1st to 20th August.

St Anne's Church at Siston and St Barnabas at Warmley had knitted displays depicting the Parables and Miracles, while St James at Mangotsfield told the story of Jesus' birth, and St Mary's had a display showing the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Nature watch

Today has been a glorious day, sunny and warm with just a light, delicately scented breeze, *writes Brenda Claxton*. The flowering shrubs and plants in my garden are full of blossoms, as if they are celebrating having survived the dismal wet and cold spring. Masses of roses climb the fence, their weight pulling down the brackets erected to keep them in place. A large orange poppy is flowing with blossoms like a waterfall, shining in the early morning light.

A friend excitedly described seeing a large bumblebee rolling in pollen at the centre of a flower, until her entire coat was smothered. Bees collect pollen to feed their young larvae for the first three days of their life, as pollen is high in protein and is essential for raising strong and healthy bees. Interestingly, when a queen bee egg is laid, the larvae is fed large amounts of pollen and this continues for the rest of her life. The queen bee egg is identical to the other eggs but a queen develops instead of a worker bee due to the extra pollen and nutrients fed to her throughout her life.

When the bee visits a flower to collect nectar, pollen sticks to the hairs on her body and it is this pollen which she takes back to feed her young. The balance in nature now comes into play and in return for this bounty, the bees fertilise the flower, enabling it to set seed. When a bee has sucked all the nectar from a flower, the flower gives off a scent. This scent or pheromone tells the next bee that the flower is empty of nectar so that she does not waste energy searching in an empty blossom but instead flies past and onto the next flower, which may be full of nectar. Watch carefully and you can see this happening as the bees scout around and give some flowers a miss and then delve into the next one.

Today I visited a friend's garden and found it buzzing with all sorts of bees. Bumblebees come in various colours and assorted sizes. My friend has planted her garden with different

types of herbs, all of which attract bees as they are ancient plants full of both nectar and pollen. I am often asked which plants attract bees and I asked Anne for a list of the plants in her garden, all of which she has planted or sown as seeds.

Best of all was the tall English sage, a deep purple and covered in bees. Euphorbia attracted honey bees whereas the Hebe plants were mainly visited by the bumblebees. Wild geranium also attracted bumblebees, as did the flowers of chives, scabius and lavender. Anne suggests you avoid modern hybrid plants if you want to attract bees as they are bred for their flowers at the expense of nectar and pollen production.

I hope I see more butterflies this summer as insects are much less common in my garden nowadays. I read that all insect numbers are reduced by about 75% yet we need insects in nature. They are the staple food for birds and I am sure have other roles which are essential for a properly balanced natural environment. I love nature and learning about the interaction of plants and insects helps us understand what a beautiful and alive place is this world in which we live.

Christine & Nicola

Invite you to a

Pimm's & Cream Tea Afternoon

Saturday 28th July

2pm - 4.30pm

At Splinters, Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge

0117 949 0502

No ticket needed

Donations accepted in aid of Jessie May Trust
(Children's Hospice at Home)

*Also come and enjoy Richard's
garden railway!*



Our 177-walk for charity

In 1985, while in my 20s, I was unlucky enough to have kidney failure - and in 1987 I was lucky enough to have a kidney transplant, *writes Pete Sayers.*

That kidney's still going strong and I've enjoyed a normal, healthy life the entire time - because the donated kidney was such a good match and because of the fantastic care I've received from everyone at Southmead Hospital Renal Unit.

Jacqui and I had planned to spend a fortnight in Spring 2017 walking the 177-mile Offa's Dyke, celebrating 30 years of my



Pete & Jacqui

transplant and aiming to encourage as many more people as possible to join the organ donor register.

Unfortunately we each sustained injuries that prevented us from doing a long-distance walk, and we had to postpone it until Spring 2018. So earlier this year we trained hard whenever we could - some days walking up to 15 miles to build up strength and confidence - until on 27 April we caught the train to Prestatyn, ready at last to start the long walk to Chepstow!

We chose to walk Offa's Dyke because it marks the boundary between Wales, where there is a 'presumed consent' system for organ donation, and England, where people currently have to 'opt in'. Walking it was designed to draw attention to the difference and to highlight the need for more donors; the ability to walk the whole of Offa's Dyke demonstrates just how enabling a transplant can be.

It felt like a real adventure to be walking out of Prestatyn on that first day, up over the hills to leave the sea behind, heading for the next night's B&B accommodation. During the

first few days the weather was kind - cold and windy but dry - and the landscape glorious. Three days' walking through the wonderful Clwydian Range saw us cover the first 45 miles and these were followed by a welcome rest day in Llangollen. It was while wandering around Plas Newydd there (from 1780 the home of the Ladies of Llangollen) that I was contacted by BBC Radio Bristol and asked to do a live phone interview with Claire Cavanagh on the following day's morning programme! So at 8 o' clock on the Wednesday, looking out from our B&B window at a rainy Llangollen, Jacqui and I did a pretty respectable job of putting the case for organ donation and the need for families to discuss the topic.

It was just the type of publicity we were aiming for, and we learned later that it prompted much discussion about organ donation during the rest of the programme. Marlene Gallop emailed me to say how surprised she was to hear us speaking on the radio! After our five minutes of fame, we set off once more, in the only rain of the entire walk, along the peaceful Llangollen Canal in the direction of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct: an amazing structure that's safer to cross on foot than on a narrowboat!

This was to be the first of six consecutive days' walking through the Welsh Marches - traditional farming country with small, attractive market towns: Welshpool, Montgomery, Knighton, Kington. As we neared home territory we were joined on different days by family and good friends, including some of our lovely friends from Bitton who shared our walking days as the temperature rose. On a sweltering Bank Holiday Monday we finally reached Hay-on-Wye, having stopped en route to rescue lambs who'd fallen into a brook, and were obviously even more exhausted than we were!

A restorative rest day in Hay was followed by four days' walking across the Black Mountains, again with friends, before heading down to Chepstow where we were met by

representatives of the Bristol Area Kidney Patients Association who'd driven over from Bristol to welcome and thank us! A couple more hours' walking took us to Sedbury Cliffs, the Severn Estuary and the end of our walk - we felt sad that it was over but so happy to have been able to publicise the benefits of organ donation - and we raised over £2,600 for BAKPA!

Alan and Sue Murtagh, who had walked the last two days with us, kindly gave us a lift back to Bitton and at home we lit the fire, prepared dinner and marked the end of our walk with a celebratory dinner with friends.

So what were the highlights? There were many: the walking (obviously), magnificent landscapes, the exercise, the exploring, the break from a desk-based job, the company of friends and family, the variety of accommodation and the helpful hosts, the evening drinks and meals, the sense of achievement.

Would we do another long-distance walk? Definitely - and we'd arrange it through The Walking Holiday Company, who did such a great job of organising this third-time-lucky walk for us!

Brace yourself for roadworks

From Monday 2nd July, South Gloucestershire Council will be starting a project to repair and improve drainage on the A431 Bath Road and A4175 Cherry Garden Road at Bitton.

For the first month or so, there will be temporary traffic lights but August will see the start of closures on some sections of Cherry Garden Road and Bath Road, with lengthy diversions.

Concerns have been raised about the impact on the lanes around the Golden Valley and council officers assure us they will monitor the situation. As we went to print we were waiting to hear how bus services and bin collections will be affected.

Meanwhile there will also be drainage works at Swineford some time over the summer which will involve traffic lights.

Bitton WI report

The June meeting of Bitton WI was arranged by a group of members to give the committee a break. Georgina Bond acted as president and Sue Sampson took the minutes.

Members were reminded of the outing to Barrington Court in August which replaces the August meeting, and to note events advertised in the Avon Newsletter. Ros Knight gave an interesting report on the National Annual Meeting which had been held in Cardiff. The resolution, Mental Health Matters, received overwhelming support.

Georgina introduced Sue Duggan from Teach Me Sugar Craft, who demonstrated how to decorate cup cakes. All members then had a go at decorating four cakes as a butterfly, a flower, an owl and a unicorn, accompanied by much chat and laughter. The evening ended after refreshments, the raffle and a thank you to Georgina and her team. Bitton WI meets on the second Monday of every month in St Mary's Church Hall - do join us.

Ann Coales

June's quiz answers

In this puzzle, one common word linked the other three. The answers (with alternatives allowed) are: **1. Square, 2. Foot, 3. Bus, 4. Sheet, 5. Head, (Ball), 6. Hold (Shut) , 7. Face, 8. Pipe, 9. Table (Black), 10. Court, 11. Off, 12. Quality, 13. Top, 14. Full, 15. Question, 16. Town, 17. Door, 18. Time, 19. Game, 20. Card (Bill).**

Well done to Carolyn Russell's team, Alan & Sue Murtagh, Frank FitzGibbon & co, Martin & Bridget Hetzel, Ros & Charles Knight, Jenny & David Harris, Pam & Jon Booth, Jan Wookey & Diane, and Ken & Jill Gibson. The winner of the draw and the prize was Frank's team! Turn the page for this month's quiz.



The July quiz

This month's quiz is about famous film stars, past and present. The deadline for entries (also adverts/copy) is **15th July**. Send to The Editor, 18 Church Road, Bitton, Bristol BS30 6HH or email *bittonfocalpoint@live.co.uk*

1. M----- B-----
2. C----- E-----
3. M----- D-----
4. S----- M-----
5. G----- K-----
6. D----- H-----
7. K----- H-----
8. M----- S-----
9. J----- N-----
10. I----- B-----
11. D----- W-----
12. J----- G-----
13. A----- H-----
14. J----- C-----
15. M----- C-----
16. C----- B-----
17. G----- C-----
18. E----- T-----
19. J----- S-----
20. J----- R-----

Name:

Contact:

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