

The **Grapevine**

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ST LAURENCE CHURCH ALVECHURCH



OCTOBER 2021

Online at www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org/monthly-magazine

St Laurence Church Alvechurch

In person church services

We are planning the following church services in October, subject to any current restrictions:

9.30am - Family worship services, with communion on 3 October
(Revd Richard Clark).

11:15 am - Morning Prayer, with communion on 17 October
(Revd Francis Moloney).

Online services

The last online service was on 18 July. You can view all the previous services on our YouTube channel -

www.youtube.com/channel/UCVQ6tgn7g6qT7vJ1Rh3vxpq

You can access various prayer, bible reading, reflection and worship links on our website by visiting -

<http://www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org/resources>

The Churchwardens may be contacted by telephoning 0121 445 1087 or emailing - stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk

GROUPS (still currently suspended)

Sunday Club - Sundays during term time 9.30am Church & Ark

Choir - Thursdays at 7.45pm in Church (445 3569)

Bellringers - Sundays at 10.45am

Tuesday Practice at 7.30pm (01527 64077)

Ark Tots and Toddlers - Thursdays 9.30am to 11.10am in The Ark

Tiny Tots Service - 10.45am 4th Thursday of the month
(sarah100work@gmail.com)

Home Group - Thursdays 7.30pm at the Coach House (445 2547)

THE ARK

Enquiries to Ian Price 0121 447 7955 (admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk)

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Martin Allen writes...

By the time you read this a chapter will have finished in our family's life – the one titled *“having a child/young adult in full time schooling”*. Like many parents before us, it's a big change with our youngest heading off to university. So, we send many thanks to those who have contributed and taught our daughters down the years from Crown Meadow, Alvechurch Middle School and South Bromsgrove. We're grateful that, as parents, we can echo the AMS motto *“And the child grew strong; (s)he was full of wisdom and God's blessings were upon them”* Luke 2:40.

I've been thinking about education in preparation for an upcoming church service because one of the readings seems to connect with our change. The verses from James 3 start *“Don't be in any rush to become a teacher, my friends. Teaching is highly responsible work. Teachers are held to the strictest standards.”* Those words seem to be wise although I'm not sure they will help recruitment!

It led me to thinking about how the past eighteen months have been for our teachers and those involved in the wider spheres of education. They have, like many sectors of society, had to grapple with changing how they do their job. They have had to get more familiar with online delivery of teaching, being able to understand the rules and regulations about Covid, as well as allay student and parental fears. All that against the backdrop of their own concerns about health and that of their families. Having to do this in a public facing arena must have been tough!

I hope you will agree our teachers are important to children and that you yourself can look back at least to one inspiring educator. What defines a good or great teacher? There are many facets from explaining things, making things memorable, helping with skills development and having fun. We know too what makes for a teacher who is less than ideal and sometimes our press vilifies those teachers who for whatever reason can't hold to the highest standards. Just sometimes seeing our teachers as being human and prone to failure themselves helps us to appreciate them.

The end of the paragraph in James goes on to highlight that *“If you could find someone whose speech was perfectly true, you'd have a perfect person, in perfect control of life.”* You might well say there is no-one like that teacher or human being. If we see ourselves as Christian then there is one person who fits that bill; whose speech was both true in content and always to the point. One whose words and actions were in perfect control and who was perfectly able to teach people of all backgrounds and abilities -Jesus. How about trying out His school, the church? Term has started but you're always welcome and never late!

3 1-2 Don't be in any rush to become a teacher, my friends. Teaching is highly responsible work. Teachers are held to the strictest standards. And none of us is perfectly qualified..... If you could find someone whose speech was perfectly true, you'd have a perfect person, in perfect control of life.

James 3 The Message

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Prisons' Sunday 10th October in 2021

Each year, the Diocesan Criminal Justice Affairs Group (CJAG) works with the Cathedral on a specific theme – this year, the focus will be on the Church Welcome Pilot which commenced in Autumn.

This scheme is being delivered by CJAG, in partnership with the Safeguarding team and the probation service. It aims to support those who have committed low risk offences to be introduced to and join a local church if they wish to do so.

Charmian Manship, from the CJAG, said: *"This is a potentially exciting opportunity to widen doors and welcome people safely into the church family."*

CJAG aims to offer a Christian perspective and advise the diocese on criminal justice matters. Members have experience of working within the criminal justice system, through the courts (crown and magistrates), crown prosecution service, police, prisons, probation, youth justice, the parole board and defence lawyers, as well as the Church.

The pandemic has had a heavy toll on those in the criminal justice system - on staff, prisoners, those under supervision in the community and their families, alike. The impact on an already stretched and under-resourced system continues to be largely hidden and there are very real concerns about the breaching of human rights.

Prisons' Week 10th to 16th October

Supported by all the major church denominations and the leading Christian organisations in the sector, Prisons Week has prepared prayer literature for the Christian community for over forty years, to use as they pray for the needs of all those affected by prisons: prisoners and victims, their families, their communities, those working and volunteering in prisons and the criminal justice system. For more information visit <https://prisonsweek.org>

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Support Safeguarding Sunday

The Church of England is supporting this year's Safeguarding Sunday, 10 October 2021, encouraging local churches to use their regular Sunday service to explore together what safer places look like, and to thank all those working behind the scenes to make our churches safer for all. There are already more churches signed up at this stage than all participants last year and General Synod members will be encouraged at the July Synod meeting to promote the dedicated day in their dioceses.

The ecumenical initiative from specialist safeguarding charity thirtyone:eight (www.thirtyoneeight.org/news-and-events/safeguarding-Sunday) provides bespoke resources including films and animations, prayers, preaching notes, children's activity sheets, hymns and songs and a safeguarding pledge.

A short sermon for use on the day will be provided by Bishop Jonathan Gibbs, the Church of England's lead safeguarding bishop who will be speaking about Safeguarding Sunday in his General Synod presentation next month.

"Whether churches can give just a few minutes or dedicate their whole service, Safeguarding Sunday is a really helpful and important way of focusing on all the work that goes on 365 days a year in our churches to make them safe places.

"From our children's and young people's activities to clubs for the elderly and foodbanks, our churches are involved in every community. Protecting vulnerable people is at the heart of the Christian message.

"Safeguarding Sunday is all about creating an opportunity for churches to show their communities that they take this responsibility seriously," said Bishop Jonathan.

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Third Time Lucky

After having to move their wedding date three times due to Covid restrictions, Daniel Richards and Stephanie Hosking were finally able to 'tie the knot' at St Laurence's Church, Alvechurch on 7th August 2021. The church bells rang out to celebrate the occasion.

Daniel, the son of Isobel & Nicholas Richards is an Ecommerce Manager and Stephanie, the daughter of Alison & Neil Hosking works as a Financial Analyst. The couple met through a mutual friend 5 years ago.

Stephanie, wearing an 'A' line ivory silk dress, was escorted down the aisle by her father, with her sister, Charlotte, as chief bridesmaid and her best friends, Jessica Northall, Philippa Jones, Eleanor Bamford, Helen Robertson, Rachael Holland and Emily Claydon in attendance as bridesmaids.

Daniel chose his brother, Scott, as his best man and best friends, James Chaffe & Alex Rice as ushers.

The reception took place in a marquee at the bride's parents home, High House Farm, Alvechurch, just a stone's throw from the church. The couple took their honeymoon in Cornwall after which they have made their married home in Bromsgrove together with their rescue dog, Fawn.



Spiritual resources during Covid-19

You will also find a link to resources for personal prayer, reflection and worship on the home page of our website - www.alvechurch-stlaurence.org

Please feel free to try whatever you may find helpful.

Lectio365 (www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional) this free app is a daily devotional resource that helps you encounter God and shape your life by praying the Bible every day. The readings and the prayers may be read and/or listened to.

Time to Pray (www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/time-to-pray) - this free app presents everything you need for Prayer During the Day, with variations according to the day of the week and the season of the Church's year.

Daily Prayer (www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/daily-prayer) - this free app helps you follow any of Morning, Evening and Night Prayer (Anglican Common Worship). It presents the three services in full with NRSV Bible readings for each day.

If you are looking for a **free reflection/meditation** any day of the week, try the Franciscan Richard Rohr from the Centre for Action and Contemplation: www.cac.org/category/daily-meditations/

If you are looking for a useful resource for **reshaping your daily pattern of living** in a way that fits with how your life is, try the Rule of life booklet from St Aldates Church in Oxford: <http://www.staldates.org.uk/about/vision>

The Church of England has launched a new programme to help families to talk about faith and pray together. **Faith at Home** will explore themes including courage, patience, generosity, resilience, love and hope. Faith at Home can be accessed at www.churchofengland.org/faithathome

Other worship at home ideas for children and families: ideas and resources to help you share your faith with your family at home – see the Worcester Diocese website at - www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/children-family-worship-at-home

Online church services across the Diocese – see: www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/news/online-church-services-across-the-diocese.php

Daily chants from Taize may be found at - www.churchtimes.co.uk/coronavirus-resources

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Alvechurch Village Society

WALKS

Sunday 3rd October 2pm

A country stroll around Studley.

Meet at Studley church car park, Castle Road, B80 7AB
Led by Sue & Roger Wardle 07838 737234

Sunday 7th November 2pm

Charlie's autumnal mystery tour.

Meet at Tanyard Lane car park
Led by Charlie Simmonds 0121 445 3447

Walks are held on 2pm of the first Sunday of the month unless noted otherwise. For walks starting outside the village, contact the walk leader if you need a lift. Weather conditions occasionally mean that a walk must be cancelled: check with the leaders if necessary. Wear appropriate footwear.

EVENTS & TALKS

Talks are held in the Village hall, starting at 7:30pm. £1 for members and £2 for guests, including a drink and biscuit. Other events are by ticket, and details of venue, start time and price will be published nearer the time.

Sunday 10th October Litter picking family session, 10am.
Meet at the village square

Wednesday 13th October "The Bletchley Park Story" – an illustrated talk by John Chapman, 7:30pm

Wednesday 17th November An Evening of Story telling by Chris Davies and colleagues, 7:30pm

Join the Society to support your local community

The quality of life in the Alvechurch, Rowney Green, Hopwood, Weatheroak and Bordesley area is praised by many, but cannot be taken for granted. The AVS works to maintain this quality and while volunteers do all the work, we rely on the annual membership to maintain our programme of walks, talks and social events.

If you want to support us and join the Society, our membership is only £10 per year (£5 for young adults 14-20 years). Please check that you have renewed your membership: subscription runs from January to December. You can get more information from our website: www.alvechurchvs.org or contact the society chairperson: chairalvechurchvillagesociety@gmail.com

Praying as we grow as Kingdom People

Nikki Groarke., Archdeacon of Dudley writes...



During the month of September we asked everyone across the diocese to join in a month of prayer . for the work we are undertaking in transformation and change, which I have the privilege to lead. I hope you were part of that, and I write now to say, “Please don’t stop praying!”

Our transformation work is all about our wonderful and varied churches becoming more healthy and sustainable as we grow as kingdom people. You will notice an increasing focus on health and sustainability this autumn as we hopefully begin to emerge from the constraints of the pandemic. There will be things for us all to do, decisions to be taken, plans to be made, local visions to be dreamed and put into practice. You will hear lots more over the next few months, particularly about how we will be providing support for churches in working out what it means to be healthy and sustainable in your individual context, setting and tradition, and taking some steps towards this.

But none of this is of value if it’s not underpinned in prayer. God promises to build his church, and invites us to join in with what he’s doing. How we discern this is in prayer, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And how it takes effect, is through God blessing our efforts as we cry out in prayer, recognising our utter dependence on him as we seek to be the body of Christ in Dudley and Worcestershire.

The four key elements of our **Growing as Kingdom People** (www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/about-us/growing-kingdom-people) vision are making disciples, transforming communities, sharing hope and worshipping God creatively, which when woven together make for healthier churches. Please continue to pray about your church’s engagement, and get involved where you can, in ways which suit your gifts, skills and passions.

Please pray too for our churches as sustainability is addressed through our new Ministry Share system, about which PCCs have received letters, explaining how the costs of providing ministry in your parish or benefice are worked out. God is interested in our giving, so praying about it is key, and can help us to prioritise our church expenditure wisely and generously.

So please pray regularly and passionately with me for all these things. Praying is how we grow in our relationship with God, and loving him and knowing ourselves to be loved by him are the most important parts of our vision.

You may like to commit to daily praying our **Growing as Kingdom People Prayer**:

*Gracious God, who pours out the life-giving Holy Spirit on your kingdom people,
Fill our hearts with love to worship you creatively,
Equip us to make disciples, inspire us to share hope
And anoint us to transform our communities,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen*



iChild.co.uk

Autumn Wordsearch

Find all the words listed below and cross them off. Words can be across, diagonal, up, down and backwards.



LEAVES CONKER ACORN PUMPKIN BERRIES AUTUMN
GOLDEN APPLE TREE RUSSET MIGRATION OCTOBER

What did one autumn leaf say to another?

I'm falling for you!

How do trees get on the internet?

They log in!

Why did the scarecrow win the Nobel Prize? Because he was out-standing in his field!

I would tell you another autumn joke but you probably wouldn't fall for it!

Alvechurch Historical Society

The Historical Society successfully re-restarted their monthly meetings in September with a well attended talk on 'The Tudor Story'. The monthly meetings are now held in the main hall at The Ark, St Laurence Church starting at 7.45pm.

PROGRAMME 2021

- 4 October** - Redditch History: Bordesley Abbey *Anthony Green*
1 November - The Story of the Unknown Warrior *Ron Gallivan*
6 December - Egypt: Three Sides to the Pyramid *John Butterworth*

We look forward to seeing current members and welcoming new visitors.

In case of any future changes due to Covid please contact Anne Humphries 0121 445 5955 if you need to confirm that meetings are going ahead.

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Help to preserve the church for future generations by making a donation to the mission and ministry of St Laurence's.

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Or please send a cheque payable to **Alvechurch PCC**, posted to our parish office address at The Ark, St Laurence Church, School Lane, Alvechurch, Birmingham B48 7SB.

Or, if you would like to set up a direct debit (under the Parish Giving Scheme), this can now be done over the telephone – please leave a brief message on our church answerphone (0121 445 1087), or email the church email address - (stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk), with your name and telephone number, so that our church treasurer may contact you.

With our thanks and prayers.

Alvechurch PCC - Registered charity number 1131783

Eco-Church. What next?

Roger Wardle writes...

I hope by now you will have logged on to some of the websites mentioned in the previous article. In case you missed them, the list is repeated below.

Of the five key areas mentioned in the Eco-Church survey, some progress has already been made. For example, in relation to Worship and Teaching we have already held two services devoted to this theme, we frequently include hymns/songs on this subject in our worship and we regularly pray about caring for God's creation.

As far as the Management of Church Buildings is concerned, where possible LED lights have been fitted and, of course, the Ark as a relatively new building is reasonably well insulated. As a matter of some urgency we need to calculate the church's carbon footprint and find ways of reducing it. Tackling other issues such as the use of green energy, the proper recycling of waste products and the extent to which Fair Traded goods are used, will be a priority over the coming months.

We have a large churchyard which is a wonderful habitat for plants and trees as well as birds, insects and other small animals. Obviously, it is important to have full regard for the use of the churchyard for burials and interment of ashes; a great many people visit the area to honour their deceased loved ones. With the help of a local ecologist, in early Autumn it is hoped to carry out a full survey of just what flora and fauna is currently to be found there and once that is done to prepare a plan to enhance even further its bio-diversity.

The other two key areas highlighted, those of Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyle, present a real challenge. They pose serious questions about the extent to which we as Christians are committed to take the way we care for God's creation out into the community and beyond. Do we as a church community and individually, take a lead in championing the reduction of greenhouse gases and increase in biodiversity in our parish; do we raise these issues with our MP or even make direct approach to the Prime Minister; do we support international organisations working in this field; what about any investments the church may have, are they ethically sound?

In response to all these issues and more, and as an indication of the seriousness with which we regard the issue of saving our planet and all God's creatures for future generations, it is intended to seek expert help. We are investigating the possibility of holding a weekend devoted to highlighting the worsening situation and what we as a church, as well as individually, can and should be doing. It is hoped to invite expert speakers to increase our knowledge and offer advice.

Next month I will highlight what we as individuals and households need to do to redress the negative impact of climate change on this wonderful world, God's creation.

Please use one of these links to learn more and check out what you can do.

- 1. Individual households:** <https://creationcare.org.uk/>
- 2. Church family:** <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>
- 3. Local community:** www.cleanergreenevalvechurch.org.uk/home;
<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/y rheK1kp#/0>
www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/called-to-action--the-time-is-now-.php
- 4. Nation:** www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/ethical-investment-advisory-group

Rowney Green Horticultural Society

Lindsay Smith writes...

Rowney Green Horticultural Society meets at The Village Hall on the second Thursday of each month at 7.15pm for 7.30pm.

On 14th October we welcome Nigel Hopes, Head Gardener at Ashwood Nurseries and his subject will be East Cape, South Africa. His passion for plants started as a boy, when he was inspired by a family friend and the promise of free plants thanks to some fuchsia cuttings! Since then he was hooked! He studied Horticulture at Rodbaston College to National Diploma, then became a student at Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Glasshouses, ultimately achieving the role of Senior Outdoor Supervisor. He built up a huge knowledge, enriching his work with placements at the RHS Garden Wisley, a plant hunting trip to South Africa, and contributing and showing plants as a committee member with the Primula and Auricula Society. He took up a new challenge in June 2018 as Head Gardener for John Massey in his Private Garden at Ashwood Nurseries.

Guests are always welcome - £3.50 including refreshments. For more information please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874.

Ministry Share

Ministry Share is the new name for our Parish Share Scheme. Each year, every parish is asked to contribute to diocesan funds to pay for the clergy and other ministry received in parishes. From January 2022, this is changing to create a clearer link between the amount of stipendiary (paid) ministry in a parish or group of parishes and the amount contributed by those parishes.

We have lots of information and resources on the diocesan website -

www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/ministry-share as we move to the new system and there are several drop-in Zoom sessions if you have any questions on :-

Friday 8th October; 2pm

Monday 18th October; 11am

Called to Action

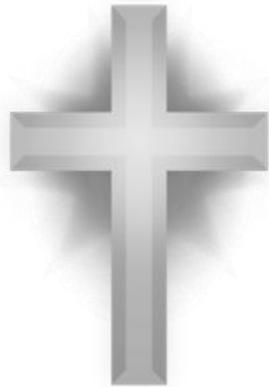
The latest edition of 'Called to Action' provides a chance to get involved in a number of Eco Church webinars being hosted by the Church of England. Download it here -

https://mcusercontent.com/f1418a979753a3f276c9eebe2/files/54520a1f-2b1c-1e61-e13f-6d175ee29b99/CtA_2021_9_6_Eco_Church_webinars.pdf



Parish Prayers

At this time, we pray for all those who live and work in our community and especially those who live and work in:



3 October – Alvechurch Road

10 October – Aqueduct Lane

17 October – Ash Lane

24 October – Bear Hill

31 October – Bear Hill Drive

From The Registers



Funerals and Cremations

May they rest in the peace of Christ

2 September Jacqueline May Erguenc



Marriages

Those whom God has joined together

4 September Edward McKay and Natasha Farlow

Who's who

Rector	To be confirmed, The Rectory, School Lane, 445 1087 stlaurencealvechurch@yahoo.co.uk
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mrs Sue Phillips Wardle, 55 Birmingham Road, 445 0505 Mrs Helen Ayling, "Tarncroft", Hewell Lane, Vigo, 445 6176
Authorised Lay Ministers	Mrs Helena Allen Mr Martin Allen, 445 5605 Mrs Philippa Brakes, 56 Callow Hill Road, 445 3983 Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Mr Michael Fletcher, 13 Red Lion Street, 447 8451
Churchwardens	Mr Graham Clark, The Coach House, School Lane, 445 2547 Mr Mick Fletcher, 13 Red Lion Street, 447 8451
Deputy Wardens	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road, 01527 64077 Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane, 445 3569 Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LP Mr Andy Notley, 445 5653 Mr Roger Wardle, 55 Birmingham Road, 445 0505 Mr Michael Davenport
PCC Secretary	Mrs Lysandra Notley, lysnotley@icloud.com, 07989327043
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Sue Lambert, 7 Cygnet Close, B48 7PX, 07769110608
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, Alvechurch, B48 7LP
Organist & Choirmaster	Mr David Richmond, The Ferns, Chapel Lane, 445 3569
Electoral Roll Officer	Mrs Janet Wright, 28 Callow Hill Road, 445 4335
Tower Captain	Mr Colin Bennett, 122 Redditch Road, 01527 64077
Singing Group	Mrs Lynda Wolstencroft, 49 Hinton Avenue, 445 3212
Ark Tots & Toddlers	Mrs Sarah Linton, sarah100work@gmail.com
Flower Co-ordinator	Mrs Ann Thurrell, Top Barn, Scarfield Hill, 447 7668
Ark Bookings Secretary & Grapevine Editor	Mr Ian Price, The Ark, School Lane, 447 7955 admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

PCC Special Responsibilities

Finance and Standing Committee

Graham Clark	Mick Fletcher
Bob Dale	Janet Wright
Peter Freeman	

Buildings, Fabric and Churchyard for Mission Committee

Bob Dale	Colin Bennett
Graham Clark	Peter Freeman
Mick Fletcher	Andy Humphries
Janet Wright	

Children and Youth Committee

Martin Allen	Mick Fletcher
Thomas Birchall	Lynne Clark
Kate Birchall	Sarah Linton

Missionary Committee

Sue Phillips Wardle	Dick Russell
Gordon Parsons	Margaret Haste
Sue Lambert	

Calendar for OCTOBER



- Sunday 3 2.00pm Alvechurch Village Society: A country stroll around Studley
Meet at Studley church car park, Castle Road, B80 7AB
Led by Sue & Roger Wardle
- Monday 4 7.45pm Alvechurch Historical Society: Talk by Anthony
Green: Redditch History: *"Bordesley Abbey"*: The Ark hall
- Wednesday 6 7.30pm Hillside WI: The Ark
- Sunday 10 10.00am Alvechurch Historical Society: Litter picking family session
Meet at the village square
- Monday 11 7.30pm Alvechurch WI: Village Hall
- Wednesday 13 7.30pm Alvechurch Village Society: *"The Bletchley Park Story"*
Illustrated talk by John Chapman: Alvechurch Village Hall
- Thursday 14 7.30pm Rowney Green Horticultural Society: Talk by Nigel Hopes on
East Cape South Africa: Rowney Green Village Hall

NOVEMBER 2021 GRAPEVINE GOES TO PRESS:

articles to - admin@thearkalvechurch.co.uk

Classes Running at THE ARK

We have a variety of wonderful classes running at the Ark.

ART CLASSES Tuesday morning and afternoon sessions and now also on a Friday morning.
Call 0121 251 0080.

KARATE CLASS for all the family on Tuesday evenings. Call Chris on 07507696926.

YOGA with Sally Wednesday afternoon and evening. Call 07903663085.

Our **ARK TOTS & TODDLERS** Thursday group is not currently running.

FLORISTRY CLASS with Claire Thursday evenings. Call 07564 339157.

DANCE CLASSES with Zoe and Tamara (Endeavour Dance Academy), Monday and Friday
early evenings. Call 07307 854414.