

THE CALLING OAK

Issue 164 – August 2026



Photo credit: Wendy Easter

Deadline for the Sept 2026 Issue is 28th August

Editor's email Editor@TheCallingOak.co.uk

Advertising: Advert@TheCallingOak.co.uk

To see this months issue online, and our catalogue, please visit:

TheCallingOak.co.uk

Note from the Editor

Hello again,

Summer has been a scorcher so far! How hot has it been? I hope you haven't all melted under the intensity of those warm days we have had. It has been so hot this year and the poor lawns are a tad brown at the moment but they will soon be back as no doubt the rain will come soon enough.

I wanted to say a big thank you to **Mike Stilwell** who has been arranging for the football to be shown in the village hall and to his willing helpers who have ran the bar, flown the flags, set the tables up and cleared away afterwards. It has been such fun watching the footie on the screen with fellow villagers despite the stress and nailbiting moments we have had. Thanks again for making it happen despite the time differences and other obstacles.

The park is looking great as well. Lovely to see so many of you enjoying it and getting out there in the lovely weather. Make sure you get up there and have a look when you get the chance.

Till next month.

Louise

Looking for a peaceful time away and need a baby/dog sitter?

Hello All!

We have an exciting new update to our advert this month! Florian will now also be available for dogsitting/dogwalking, so if I am away with any events or University (from September), I will pass on any messages to him, so hopefully one of us is always around to help you out!

I have lots of experience with children of all age ranges and we both have lots of prior experience with dogs. We are available on both weekends and weekday evenings (and some weekday afternoons - if in doubt feel free to ask!).

Please contact us if you're interested.

For more details, you can reach us on 07512 757 434.

Thank you,
Sophie and Florian :)



The 100 club



Draw results June 2026

1st Prize £25 No 96 Rodger Farley
2nd Prize £15 No 100 Dave Alcock
3rd Prize £10 No 33 Klevis Hoxha
4th Prize £5. No 125 Lyndsey Hoxha

Draw results July 2026

1st Prize £25 No 172 Jean Walton
2nd Prize £15 No 99 Dorothy Snaddon
3rd Prize £10 No 208 Wendy Poole
4th Prize £5. No 85 Ianson

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you all for your support of the Rowney Green Park

The renewal of your membership numbers are due by the end of August 2026
Same price as last year £10 per membership number max 6 numbers per house

Again thank you for your support

The 1st draw for the new year will be September 2026. Payment can be made by bank transfer to the account below

Account Name: Rowney Green Village Hall Lottery

Sort Code: 54-30-35

Account No: 38776154

Payment Reference: "Your House Name or Full Name"

Or cash payments to the following
Richard Woodward Windrush
Sue Dutton
Will Savage
Pete Jeffs

We will be announcing soon the improvements made to the park from the 100 club profits.

Rowney Green Park

Have you visited Rowney Green Park lately? If not, now is the perfect time!

Whether you're looking for somewhere to burn off a little energy, enjoy a peaceful stroll or simply relax with family and friends, our beautiful village park has something for everyone.

Why not challenge someone to a game of tennis? The courts are free to use, and there's no need to bring your own equipment – rackets and tennis balls are available to borrow free of charge from the cupboard, making it easy for anyone to have a go.

Looking for even more fun? Have a game of cornhole, enjoy the bowling alley, let the children dig for hidden treasure in the sandpit, or explore the community orchard, which is beautifully laden with fruit at this time of year.

Need a breather? Take a seat on our cheerful pink 'Love You, Bye' bench before heading home – it's become a favourite photo spot!

Rowney Green Park is more than just a park – it's a place where neighbours meet, children play, families make memories and our village community comes together. We hope to see you there soon!

A Few Highlights



The community orchard is flourishing



Pears ripening beautifully this summer



Free tennis for everyone



Borrow rackets and balls and enjoy a game.



Don't miss the 'Love You, Bye' bench!



A park that brings the community together.





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Rowney Green Lamb

Would you like to try our locally reared lamb? Available to buy late Oct/early Nov but taking orders now.

Comes butchered with joints individually boxed, so ready for you to put straight in the freezer.

£180 for a whole lamb or £95 for a half.

Call, text or email me to discuss.

Andy *Cherry Tree Farm*

Tel: *0780 3702319*
Email: *andy1.dunkers@gmail.com*



Happy Birthday

**Matthew Stilwell who will be
12 years old.**

Wishing you a great day

To add your child's birthday to
future editions, please email
the editor.



Need a helping hand?

If you have any odd jobs around the house or garden or need a babysitter, my name is Lucy Porter, I am 16 years old and would love to help. I am free most weekends, Friday nights and sometimes in the school holidays. I live on

Rowney Green Lane.

Call or text me on 07494267570 for more information.



ROWNEY GREEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



ROWNEY GREEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY usually meet at The Village Hall on the second Thursday each month at 7.15pm.

We will not be holding our usual monthly meeting at the Village Hall on the second Thursday in August.

Should you wish to become a member of the Society you would be most welcome; speakers are arranged for at least 8 months of the year and visits to various gardens are organised for the summer months. So you can see it is a very active and friendly Horticultural Society.

Please note that our Flower and Produce Show is to be held on **Saturday 5th September 2026.**

This is a very exciting and wonderful Show with exhibits from each of the 100 Classes; ranging from various flowers, vegetables to photographs and craft work.

Everyone is welcome and entry is free of charge and the Hall is available to the public from 3.00pm when all judging has taken place.

Should you wish to enter the Flower and Produce Show simply go to the Website where you will find the Entry Form together with the Schedule which contains all the Classes available. There is also a Childrens Section. Paper copies are available in the G&T.

www.rowneygreenhorticultural.co.uk

For more information please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay Smith on 01527 592874,



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Synopsis of the Minutes of the Rowney Green Association meeting on Tuesday 7th July 2026 at 7:30pm



The Rowney Green Association (RGA) meets in the Village Hall every two months to discuss village issues and respond to problems affecting the RG community. Membership is open to all RG residents with an annual subscription of £5 per residence.

RGA Committee: John Cypher (Chair), Andy Dunkers (Vice Chair), Michael Corfield (Treasurer), Wendy Easter, James McManus, Margaret Rollason, Martin Miller (Secretary).

Email: rowneygreenassociation@gmail.com **Full minutes, attendees & information at**
www.rowneygreen.org/rga/

- Michael Corfield confirmed that the Defibrillator and bleed kit were housed in a new cabinet. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Worrall for getting the bleed kit. Michael Corfield said a request to Alvechurch PC has been made to adopt the Chapel Lane grit bin and this was yet to be discussed.
- Footpath/Bridleway by Alpine Lodge Farm. Michael Corfield had discussed this with the Parish Footpath Warden. Worcestershire County Council (WCC) still had this as low priority for improvement. Even if funding could be found for this by the RGA and volunteers could do the work this would still have to meet WCC specification. Cllr Bailes is in contact with WCC officers about this.
- Extra Flowers/Bulbs. Plants in containers need regular watering which was not practicable in Rowney Green (RG). Planting bulbs and shrubs was the best way forward and RGA funds could support this. Tom Webb and Will Savage had each kindly offered £100 towards this. Michael Corfield indicated the cost might be about £500. Dorothy Snaddon had advised about sourcing native English bulbs.
- Road Safety and Footpath Resurfacing. The limited footpaths on RG Lane are not continuous. John Cypher stated they were probably safe for the able bodied but not for the infirm or visually impaired due to unevenness and cracks, and were unsightly. Following the walk through the Village with Cllr Bailes the previous day a request for resurfacing is to be made to County Highways (**Action**).
- Road Signs. Wendy Easter is preparing a final proposal for Cllr Bailes to present to WCC for: 1) new road signs and better placement of signs on RG Lane, and 2) priority signage at the Holloway pinch point. (**Action**)
- Guidance from Government is still awaited following the new legislation about pavement parking. A recent local dispute on this was noted. One longstanding RG resident had written to the RGA expressing a view that they were not troubled by pavement parking and felt it more important to keep the narrow carriageway as clear as possible for traffic.

- Limited Alvechurch village Parking. John Cypher had presented RG's concerns about problems accessing Medical, Dental and Pharmacy facilities. Cllr Worrall said that this presentation had only been 'noted' by Alvechurch Parish Council (APC) because the BDC report on parking options was imminent and until then no decisions could be made. The Alvechurch Inn and The Red Lion had been contacted but were not willing to help. BDC had not implemented all the recommendations for improving Tanyard Lane parking with about 6 spaces being lost. Tanyard Lane parking spaces were being misused and parking charges could be considered as an approach to stop this. At the July APC planning committee meeting the development of ALV01 (Land opposite Lye Meadow sports ground) was discussed. A new medical facility is envisaged there with parking spaces. Hopefully Alvechurch Medical Centre will move there. Alvechurch village residents might be expected to walk there as it is less than 800m from the centre. Richard Woodward commented that selfish parking was commonplace and disabled spaces illegally used because of limited policing. Cllr Worrall indicated that when BDC look at developing employment land in or near Alvechurch centre the opportunities for added parking will be explored.
- There is no current BDC district plan and no 5-year supply of available housing land in the district. This favours developers in proposing green belt land sites as grey belt, with this not then enjoying green belt land protection around preserving *openness*. A Neighbourhood Priority Statement (NPS) is being prepared by APC covering Parish growth and development opportunities with a listing of priorities and potential problems. When adopted this would give new emphasis to policy aspects of the somewhat outdated Alvechurch neighbourhood plan, which adds a helpful balance to the planning decisions process. The Chairman of the working Group had resigned and Cllr Worrall said a new Chair should be appointed next week. Cllr Worrall said the previously expressed hostility to the APC response to the BDC consultation on future housing in Alvechurch was now more muted, suggesting appropriate recognition and reasoning on the need for parish growth was being applied. Cllr Worrall stated it was better for our Parish to work with developers to achieve the best result for residents, since decisions about moving forward on development were being made at a higher level. Wendy Easter speaking as a Parish Cllr said Cllr Worrall's steer at the APC meeting the previous evening had helped people recognise that development is going to happen and working with developers (Bloor Homes and Catesby Estates) would get the best result.
- Green Belt/Grey Belt. Cllr Worrall said recent changes in planning policy allow applying for planning in principle for up to 10 properties with technical issues covering highways, services and ecological matters to be handled by BDC later as reserved matters. In the past all these latter issues were officially open to the APC for comment and correction. Cllr Worrall was concerned that now they were reserved matters they may no longer be open to such scrutiny. This needs to be clarified (**Action**). Cllr Worrall reiterated that APC want 250 dwellings total and not the 500 proposed.

- Bordesley Hall (BH). Some properties were now sold with more already available. First occupancy might be towards the end of August/early September. John Cypher will write to the planning office requesting the heritage wall reinstatement be started before first occupancy. **(Action)**. Richard Woodward asked what was being done to include these new properties into RG. Michael Corfield said welcome packs encouraging village participation will be distributed which will include village information, invites for a free drink at the Goat & Trousers and invites to join the RGA. The grass triangle at the junction of RG Lane and BH entrance had been decimated and foliage was now obscuring the sight lines for motorists. Cllr Bailes has been alerted to make sure this is made good. A bat house was to be erected as many bats resided at BH. It was assumed that the upkeep of the bat house would be covered by the annual service charge for properties at BH.
- The RGA had placed an article in the Calling Oak about all RG bus services since numbers of passengers remained low. Cllr Bailes himself is a user of the Worcestershire on-demand service and Cllr Worrall said uptake of this service in Alvechurch is increasing. The 5 times a day regular service through RG may well be rerouted along Redditch Road in due course to help service the future residents of the Lye Meadow and ALV01 housing sites.
- Finances as of 30th June 2026 were £2407.07 in the bank, £239.51 as cash making £2646.58 in total. Only outstanding payment was £120 support for the Calling Oak. There were sufficient reserves for purchasing bulbs for the village.
- Cllr Easter said the APC had met with the National Grid to discuss emergency planning when there are power outages. NG have a limited budget for putting overhead lines underground such as across The Spinney. It was important for RG residents to register with NG for priority services if they were vulnerable to electricity black outs for medical or other reasons.
- Cllr Clarke said APC had invested in a programme to engage with young people in the parish via TikTok (Alvechurch Youth Voice). Cllr Worrall indicated that it was already gaining traction with the youth of the parish. Martin Miller asked what editorial controls were in place regarding content. Cllr Clarke said she would check on this **(Action)**.
- Cllr Worrall said that he had frequently asked in previous meetings for RG representation at APC but he was now delighted that this was no longer necessary as RG is very well represented by Cllrs Easter and Clarke.

Next meetings are on Sept 1st and Nov 3rd, then 2027: Jan 5th, March 2nd, May 4th

smALL & Sundry Shine in No Place Like Home

Our smALL & Sundry Youth Group recently delighted audiences with their production of *No Place Like Home*.

Under the direction of Laury Wiggins, Natasha Lane, Frankie Johnson and Eleanor Vernalls, the talented young cast delivered an entertaining performance filled with wonderful singing, energetic choreography and plenty of confidence on stage. Every member of the cast played their part in making the show a great success.

A huge thank you goes to our dedicated backstage team for all their hard work behind the scenes, and to our wonderful venue for making us feel so welcome.

Congratulations to everyone involved on a fantastic production—we're incredibly proud of you all!



This discovery was made by Gill Alleeson while researching the links between rural Rowney Green and industrial Redditch for the history display at the fete.

Do not read this if you are squeamish!

In 1921 a gruesome little cottage industry existed in our village.

Imagine that you lived in Rowney Green in 1921. Picture our village just over one hundred years ago. It was a lot smaller then and it was very different place. There were many more farmers and many more agricultural workers than there are now. Some households took in laundry and some ran small holdings. Others made fishing rod handles at home or travelled each day to the needle factories and fishing tackle works in industrial Redditch. Many walked there via the Needlemakers' Path. As a result of WWI there were fewer men, but those who had survived returned to find a shortage of jobs.

From 1920 to 1921 Britain was in recession. Of necessity, the economy included child labour. You would leave school at twelve years of age and start work. In rural areas helping with the harvest was a given. In addition, many worked for the needle industry. Nellie Eden (17) of Bordesley Lodge Cottages was a mill girl. She walked to work each day to toil long hours in H. Parr's water-powered paper mill in Beoley. It made the paper to wrap the needles. The shorter ten hour day introduced by Milwards Needle and Fishing Tackle factory, at Ipsley, was considered a luxury. Oh, and you even got a half day on Saturday if you worked for Milwards. This was revolutionary !. On Sundays you went to church. Many Rowney Green teenagers supplemented the family income by making artificial flies for fishing.. Eva Marguerite Evans of Rose Dale had no choice. Her father was out of work.

So, if you were thirteen years old, how would you like to process guts for a living? .What were 'gut drawers' anyway? What kind of guts did Elsie May Davis of Rose Cottage, Lower Rowney Green and Lily S. Satchwell .of Rowney Green Lane process? Well, they extracted silkworm guts to make fishing lines. What is wrong with nylon I hear you ask. Nylon fishing lines were not invented until 1937 (by DuPont by the way) so Elsie and Lily had to extract the filament from silkworms that were just about to spin their cocoons.

The worms were bred at home by the good people of Rowney Green. Before feeding them each day, the sickly and dead worms had to be removed. The survivors were kept for around fifty days and killed by immersing them in vinegar for six hours. They were then soaked in water. Next, these thirteen year olds had to break the silkworm in half to expose two little sacs.

They carefully pulled out the silkworm guts between their thumb and finger and finally cleaned the strands between their teeth, often cutting their mouths in the process. However, Rowney Green's contribution to silkworm fishing line production was miniscule. Elsie worked for S. Allcock & Co and this company also owned a large scale silkworm gut processing factory in Spain.

H. P. Wells, in *Fly-Rods and Fly-Tackle* (1885), described how each gut strand was handled and processed

Their first step is to free the gut from such portions of the ruptured envelope as may adhere to it. Formerly this was done by drawing the gut between the teeth, and thus stripping off this refuse, but chemical processes are said now largely to have superseded this. The eyewitness, to whom I am indebted for this information, describes the old method as a most disgusting spectacle. The rows of women and girls drawing the entrails of this caterpillar through their teeth, their mouths smeared with blood from the cuts inflicted by the thin gut, mingled with the offal scraped from it by their teeth — spitting and drawing, and spitting again — must indeed be far from a pleasant sight.

Suddenly (although we have battled through Covid and continue to have unresolved conflict in the world) for most of us, life in Rowney Green in 2026 doesn't seem so bad, does it?

Photos Child labour.



Silkworm sacs from which the gut was extracted.



SOMETHING NEW FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS...

FOREST & FRIENDSHIP

AT PECKWOOD FOREST SPACE 🌿

THURSDAY 30TH JULY AND THURSDAY 6TH, 20TH & 27TH AUGUST.



6PM - 7.30PM



BRING YOUR PICNIC TEA &
JOIN US FOR A TIME OF EXPLORATION. 🍏

STARTING WITH A STORY... FOLLOWED BY:
CONVERSATION FOR THE GROWN-UPS... WITH REV ANNE 🌸
CRAFTS & CHAT FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE... WITH JESS 🌸

📍 PECKWOOD, ALVECHURCH B48 7QE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JESS - JESS.PECKWOOD@GMAIL.COM

FIND US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM @PECKWOOD FOREST SPACE

Welcome to Rowney Green Shared Church

Services are held on the second Sunday of each month at 9:30am and everyone is welcome.

Upcoming services will be:

12th July, Methodist service
lead by
Rev Steve Levett

9th August, Church of England service
lead by
Rev Martin Allen

September Calling oak notice

Due to holidays, the next edition of the calling oak will not go to print until the beginning of September so will be a bit late coming through your door.

Contributions for the next edition are welcome until the 29th August and then the next edition should make its way to you the first week in September.

Normal service should resume for the October edition.

Rowney Green Useful Contacts

Alvechurch Parish council (RG Rep)	Wendy Easter	wendy.easter@alvechurch.gov.uk
The Calling Oak Editor	Louise Alcock	editor@thecallingoak.co.uk
Pilates	Steff Affleck	07759 590 830 www.steffaffleck.co.uk
Rowney Green Players	Sue Walker	0121 445 1562
Horticultural Society	Lindsay Smith (Secretary) Pat Davies (chairperson)	01527 592 874 07970 188 227
Sassy Lassies	Debbie Sally	07594 669166 07767 255728
Village Taxi	Clive	07907 928 399
Village hall chairperson	TBA	RGPMHTrustees@outlook.com
Rowney Green Association	Chair — John Cypher	rowneygreenassociation@gmail.com
ACE Rowney Green	Jude Louise	07551 950 840 07815 069703
Worcestershire Wildlife	Tom Watkins	01905 754919 enquiries@worcestershirowildlifetrust.org
Newspaper delivery	Hillcrest stores	01564 823 866
100 club	Richard Woodward	07720 537269
Rowney Green Park	Pete Jeffs	07583 846121
Green Barn bookings	Jill Wallis	07931 868744
Village Hall Bookings	Annie Cowles	Admin@rowneygreenvillagehall.org

THE VILLAGE HALL -

Bookings August 2026

Contact the Booking Team: admin@rowneygreenvillagehall.org All bookings can be seen in more detail by

Time	Event	Time	Event
Sunday, August 2		Tuesday, August 18	
10:00am - 1:00pm	Church Group MH MR SR	9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH
Monday, August 3		5:45pm - 6:45pm	Pilates MH
10:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee House SR	Wednesday, August 19	
12:00pm - 2:00pm	Caretaking MH MR SR	7:00pm - 8:30pm	Bible Meeting MR
5:45pm - 7:45pm	Pilates MH	Friday, August 21	
8:00pm - 10:00pm	RGP MH	9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH
Tuesday, August 4		6:00pm - 11:00pm	Goat & Trousers SR
9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Goat & Trousers MH
5:45pm - 6:45pm	Pilates MH	Saturday, August 22	
Wednesday, August 5		10:00am - 2:00pm	Private Booking MH
7:00pm - 8:30pm	Bible Meeting MR	Sunday, August 23	
Friday, August 7		10:00am - 1:00pm	Church Group MH MR SR
9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH	Monday, August 24	
6:00pm - 11:00pm	Goat & Trousers SR	10:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee House SR
6:30pm - 8:30pm	Goat & Trousers MH	12:00pm - 2:00pm	Caretaking MH MR SR
Saturday, August 8		5:45pm - 7:45pm	Pilates MH
12:00pm - 6:00pm	Private Booking MH MR SR	8:00pm - 10:00pm	RGP MH
Sunday, August 9		Tuesday, August 25	
10:00am - 1:00pm	Church Group MH MR SR	9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH
Monday, August 10		5:45pm - 6:45pm	Pilates MH
10:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee House SR	Wednesday, August 26	
12:00pm - 2:00pm	Caretaking MH MR SR	7:00pm - 8:30pm	Bible Meeting MR
5:45pm - 7:45pm	Pilates MH	Thursday, August 27	
8:00pm - 10:00pm	RGP MH	7:00pm - 8:00pm	Horticultural Society MR
Tuesday, August 11		Friday, August 28	
9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH	9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH
5:45pm - 6:45pm	Pilates MH	6:00pm - 11:00pm	Goat & Trousers SR
Wednesday, August 12		6:00pm - 8:00pm	Horticultural Society MH MR
7:00pm - 8:30pm	Bible Meeting MR	Saturday, August 29	
Friday, August 14		8:30am - 5:30pm	Horticultural Society MH MR
9:15am - 10:15am	Pilates MH	8:30am - 4:30pm	Horticultural Society SR
6:00pm - 11:00pm	Goat & Trousers SR	Sunday, August 30	
6:30pm - 8:30pm	Goat & Trousers MH	10:00am - 1:00pm	Church Group MH MR SR
Sunday, August 16		2:00pm - 6:00pm	All & Sundry MH
10:00am - 1:00pm	Church Group MH MR SR	6:30pm - 9:30pm	All & Sundry MH
Monday, August 17		Monday, August 31	
10:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee House SR	10:30am - 12:30pm	Coffee House SR
12:00pm - 2:00pm	Caretaking MH MR SR	12:00pm - 2:00pm	Caretaking MH MR SR
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Move It Or Lose It MH	5:45pm - 7:45pm	Pilates MH
5:45pm - 7:45pm	Pilates MH	8:00pm - 10:00pm	RGP MH
8:00pm - 10:00pm	RGP MH		

MH = Main Hall MR = Meeting Room SR = Social Room