

*The*

# CREWKERNE

*Flyer*

SPRING 2024

GRATIS

THE FREE AREA GUIDE FOR CREWKERNE AND THE HAMSTONE VILLAGES  
PRODUCED QUARTERLY: SPRING • SUMMER • AUTUMN • WINTER

LOCAL NEWS & PHOTOS  
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS  
LOCAL BUSINESSES &  
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**We are delighted to bring you the first Crewkerne Flyer for 2024.**



Our Spring front cover features charming wild celandines, caught on camera nestling in the late winter sunshine on 12 February. Warmer days will soon be here!

On Page 12 we have a fresh update from **Crewkerne in Bloom**, and on Page 18 a “what’s-on” from **Crewkerne & District Museum and Heritage Centre**. As usual we have our informative local maps across Pages 24 & 25. On Page 29 **The British Legion** remind all of their breakfast club at Oscars Wine Bar. **The Friends of Crewkerne Station** have their report on Page 32.

For over 30 years Crewkerne has long awaited a **Relief Road** to take unnecessary through-traffic away from Crewkerne Town Centre. The Crewkerne Flyer have been following the progress with interest, and we bring you an up-to-date report on Pages 36 & 37.

This very wet winter has caused many problems for transport, not least for the railway line near Crewkerne Station. The Crewkerne Flyer visited the site of the “**mudslide**” in **December 2023**, which caused much disruption for passengers. We then re-visited the tunnel site on 10 February 2024. Please find more information on Page 40.

On Page 43 **Filmcrew** announce their last 2 films of the season. Finally on Page 44 our regular contributor, retired baker David Bryant brings us some fresh photos of “**Old Crewkerne**”.

If you have a story for our next edition, or would like us to cover a story for you, please contact us.

With best wishes for Spring 2024,

*Anthony Bucke.* Anthony Bucke. EDITOR.

Email: [crewkerne@theantiquetourist.com](mailto:crewkerne@theantiquetourist.com)

Tuesday 13 February 2024.



1928 Austin on a shopping errand in Market Square 23 December 2023



Musician, piano and violin tutor Rachel Coleshill bravely entertaining shoppers in The George Shopping Centre on 23 December 2023

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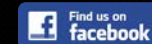
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## Crewkerne in Bloom - The Joys of Spring

Just as we were thinking of all the projects and plans we have in mind for 2024, we came across some news from the RHS.

It turns out that it's the 60th anniversary of Britain in Bloom this year and their theme for this milestone year is 'friendship' – which is really what Crewkerne in Bloom is all about, bringing local people together to enjoy themselves as they enhance the beauty of our lovely old town.

We're all volunteers and we'd welcome more!

Anyone can find a niche that suits them, working individually or in a group.

- Join Tuesday morning working parties around town
- Meet afterwards for coffee and a chat
- Look after a designated area
- Get together with neighbours to care for your locality
- Enlist children and grandchildren
- Lend a hand filling our famous hanging baskets
- Plant bulbs for our annual fund-raising Christmas sale
- Weeding and sprucing up for just 10 minutes will be appreciated
- Help decorate our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival
- Businesses can sponsor a planter or area

In short, no experience needed – just your enthusiasm for keeping Crewkerne colourful and looking its very best.

The RHS reminds us how heartwarming it is making neighbourhoods thriving, friendlier and greener places to live.

As Lesley Jelleyman, an RHS national judge and great supporter of our activities says about the joy of colourful blooms, "The magic of something so beautiful being created from elements from the sun, soil and rain...magic"

*Find out more about us on [www.crewkerneinbloom.org](http://www.crewkerneinbloom.org).*

*You can also sign up for our Newsletters and follow us on facebook and Instagram to keep up to date.*



For further information, to volunteer or to offer support in any way, please contact us on **01460 72665** or [hello@crewkerneinbloom.org](mailto:hello@crewkerneinbloom.org)  
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The Heritage Centre has been a busy place during January and there are lots of events planned for the coming months.

Creative workshops – printing and watercolour painting during February and March.

Talks & Teas – discover what sort of plants to grow for climate change; learn about various aspects of history.

In early February we will be holding a Music Day which will introduce visitors to events that are held locally and give them a chance to listen, take part and enjoy music at the museum.

We continue to have links with the Archaeological dig on the site and hope to plan another visit end of March.

The first special exhibition of the season will look at life in Crewkerne 100 years ago, what was the same, which businesses were operating, how did people live? Through photographs, objects from the period and information from the archive we will present the story of the time.



**The museum is open on Saturdays  
11am-2pm until we open for the  
2023 season on Saturday 1st April  
10am-4pm.**

For information on events and the new season visit  
[www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk](http://www.crewkernemuseum.co.uk)

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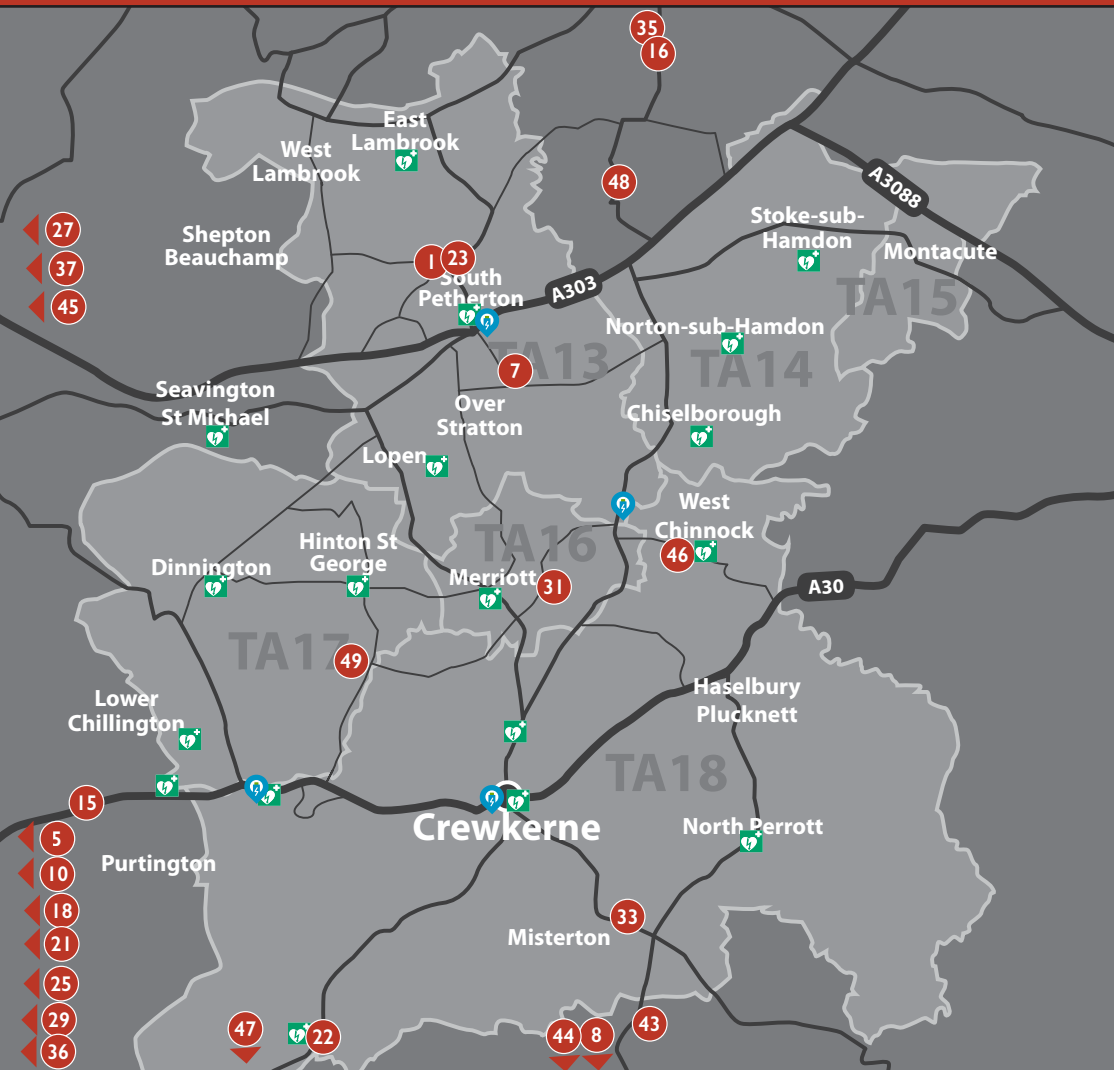
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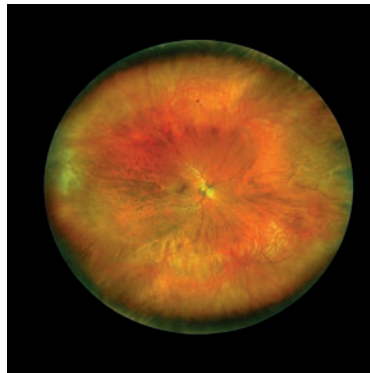
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There are two areas at the station where the Volunteers are trying to encourage wild life. The South Western Railway contractors now leave sections of the banks by the car park and the platform unstrimmed as 'wilding areas' and only trim back the grass at the edges twice a year. Unfortunately this does mean that the unstrimmed areas have become overrun with brambles and thick layers of long grass. So the volunteers work hard at this time of year to cut back the dead grass and the scrambles of brambles in order to encourage the natural wild flowers to spring to life. Last year they added some additional seeds and flower plants and are hoping to see results this year.

The volunteers and staff at the station work well together to make our station one of the most admired in the region. Faults and problems get reported via the Station Ambassador to the Stations manager and regular cleans of waiting room, windows, outside areas and litter picking help to keep it good for the passengers. The Planters put in by the volunteers make it even more attractive. The outside shelter supplied by the volunteers has been cleaned nicely by the staff and is seen being used by volunteers for a welcome rest. Another photo shows the volunteers hard at work liberating the spring bulbs from brambles and last years grass on the bank above the car park.

Network Rail have apologised for the disruption to rail service over the last winter when the weather has taken its toll of railway infrastructure that has not been regularly upgraded over decades. Hopefully all the repairs that have taken place at the Crewkerne tunnel and along the line from Salisbury to Exeter will save us from having another disrupted timetable next year.

If you want to travel locally by train, the Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership of Tisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe, Sherborne, Yeovil and Crewkerne have joined together to produce a line guide with all the attractions and advantages of local towns along our line. See link below:

[www.blackmorevaletrains.com/line-guide/](http://www.blackmorevaletrains.com/line-guide/)



From left to right  
**Frankie, Heather,  
Brian & Margaret**



**The Friends of the Station are interested in all things railway and transport and welcome additional members and volunteers to work on the platform with plants.**  
[www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofcrewkerne](https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofcrewkerne)  
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**View of proposed route of relief road from Station Road  
1 February**



In November 2023 The Crewkerne Flyer took a visit to Wool Gardens – part of the new Key Site development south of Crewkerne town centre. Also known as “CLR”, and sometimes erroneously expanded into “Crewkerne Link Road”. As Crewkerne has waited patiently over the past 30 years for the “Relief Road”, we fully expected to enter the development from the southern end, off Station Road. But NO, this access is just for materials being delivered to the construction site.

Instead the new Taylor Wimpey development at Wool Gardens is accessed via Blacknell Lane Trading Estate. How did that happen? As a long-term observer of the CLR (Cayser/Lawrence/Revell) proposals, which evolved into Crewkerne Key-Site, the relief road was a major factor, promoted for years by land investors Cayser Ullman (the “C”), Simon Lawrence (the “L”) and Geoff Revell (the “R”). Much public support also came from former District Councillor Martin Rousell, who also championed

the need for a relief road as long as 30 years ago.

***Martin is still very involved with Crewkerne so we sat and had a coffee with Martin on Monday 5 February 2024.***

***“It’s a big disappointment to me that the relief road has still not been built. All those years ago my worry was that large employers were leaving our town due to lack of infrastructure and poor access to Blacknell Lane and Cropmead. Varta Batteries were moving out, soon to be followed by Retail Products. Numatic were still in Beaminster and needed a new larger site. They dismissed Crewkerne and chose Chard instead, on the grounds of better road links.”***

***“I accept that the relief road will not solve east-west traffic, but it will take heavy traffic out of Crewkerne Town Centre, as it heads between the A303, our local industry, and on to Bridport”***

Access to Wool Gardens for prospective buyers, and new residents, is via Blacknell Lane. So, one passes the Singleton Engineering works, Royal Mail sorting office, Cronite Castings Factory, a new large, green emergency power generator site, Crewkerne sewage plant, Crewkerne Recycling Centre, Merriott Plastics’ factory, and then the rear of Western Power’s Crewkerne Depot. Renamed National Grid, this is probably the most sordid section of the access road, with a mixture of asbestos sheds, high-level security lighting, razor wire, further coils of security barbed wire, all in order to keep intruders out of their compound! Admittedly, further along the new road one finally arrives at the Taylor Wimpey show homes and sales office.

Now let us be totally accurate. All this industry and warehousing is in the right place! Blacknell Lane was created in the late 1950’s, as an employment opportunity for Crewkerne. But to use this route as the access to Wool Gardens seems “cheap” at best, and simply adds traffic to the already overloaded Blacknell Lane exit onto South Street, and thence into Market Street. Despite the historical “fix” of CLR, which was to alleviate congestion and traffic problems, Wool Gardens are simply adding to traffic congestion in our Town Centre!

On our November visit we then talked to contractors who told us that there was no relief road “on the horizon”. They showed me the route it will take, and said the work was meant to start

in 2024, yet no tenders had even been invited as at 4 November 2023. And one young man in particular (resident of North Somerset) could not believe the way HGV’s continue to travel around Market Square! Another contractor was very up-beat, saying that the new homes were selling very quickly, “but they are priced to sell!”

So we then chatted to residents. One young man had moved in at the end of September, having bought the house with his girl-friend. He is a long-term Crewkerne resident and loves it! Another couple from Bridport had just bought their home and recently moved in. They too love the location.

**Footnote**

The Crewkerne Flyer revisited the CLR site on 1st and 2nd of February 2024. Undoubtedly more houses have been completed, and are now occupied, which is very encouraging for the developers and residents. Our reservations over the approach road, and the lack of progress on the Relief Road are echoed by many local people. Several are of the opinion that the original planning consent required the Relief Road to be constructed within a certain time constraint. So where is the Relief Road? The latest rumour is that a watermain has to be moved from the Station Road entrance before the Relief Road can be commenced.



**View of proposed route of relief road from Higher Easthams  
2 February**

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**NEWS BULLETIN**

(Not available on Rockin' Daddys Radio)

The popular local community radio station Rockin' Daddys (RD) have now opened an emporion in The George Shopping Centre, Market Street, Crewkerne. The massive interest in all things vintage and retro prompted the idea to open an emporion. This is not only a shop, but also the radio station base, doubling up as a recording studio. Check out their Facebook page for the DJ's appearing most days.

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above the tunnel to flood, partly with water from Lyme Road, and with more surface water washing down the lane from Seaborough. The road drains in the lane could not cope, and overflowed down the embankment, taking over 300 tonnes of mud, soil and vegetation with it. This engulfed the rail track, making it impassable for trains.



*The drain which contributed to the 300 tonne mudslide on Monday 4 December.*

*This chain of events is very reminiscent of the fatal mud-slide at Beaminster Tunnel in 2012, although thankfully this time no lives were lost.*

Heavy plant, cranes and specialist earthmoving machinery were evident during our visit. A fresh works yard had been created in the flooded field to accommodate the extra plant and vehicles. A team of specialist tree surgeons were also working to remove trees on the south side of the railway line, in order to expose further areas for netting to restrain the steep slopes.

We understand the railway was reopened later, just after our visit, although trains were restricted to 20mph until the risks of further landslides are eliminated.



*Railway embankment stabilisation nearing completion 10 February 2024*

We visited the Octavius site on the Lyme Road, west of Crewkerne last Wednesday, 13 December 2023. Much plant and manpower had been brought in to deal with the mudslide which had occurred on Monday 4 December. Octavius were already onsite stabilising the embankments each side of the eastern entry into the tunnel, when the rain hit. The stabilising involved placing large nets over the embankments, then pinning the nets to the slopes in order to capture the undergrowth and soil. Unfortunately the heavy rain – recorded locally at 90mm – caused a field





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# "OLD" CREWKERNE

Photos kindly supplied  
by David Bryant.



Market Square; from left Lloyds Bank, The George Hotel. Bottom of Church Street, Westcotts Ironmongers. Then Nicholls & Gee and Frances, ladies hairdressers, again in Market Square.



A line-up of 5 Central Road Transport Scania trucks on the quay at Poole, waiting to ship out to France probably loaded with lamb. Mid 1980's. Central was founded by the late Charlie Chown and operated out of Viney Bridge Garage.



Chubbs Almshouse in Court Barton.



View looking up Church Street 1900.



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## SUDOKU 1

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## SUDOKU 2

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Level: **Hard**  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Start time: \_\_\_\_\_  
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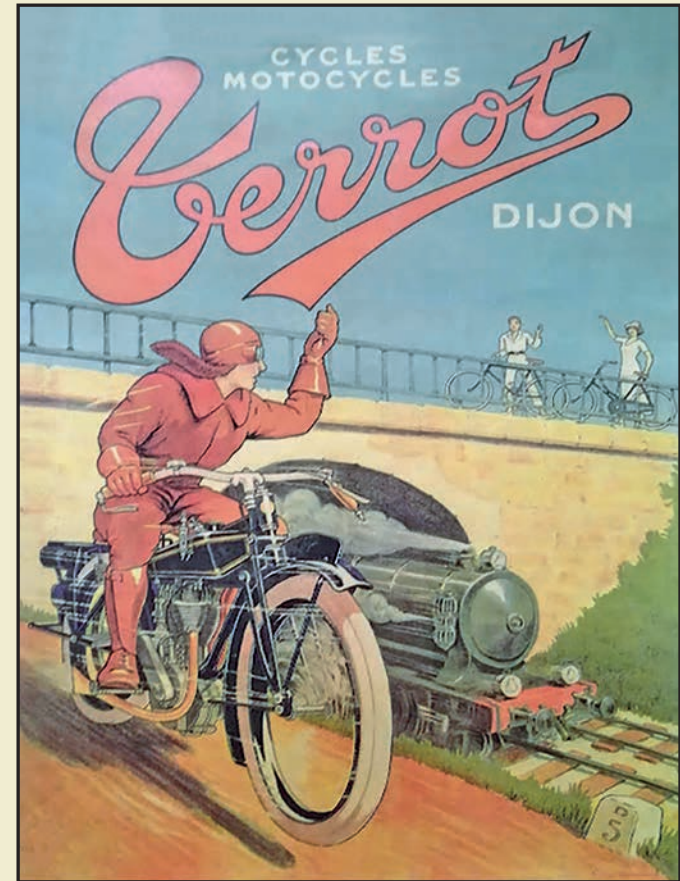
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SUDOKU 2 SUDOKU 1



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