

The Constant Times

Volume 5, Issue 2

April-May 2016

Local Post Office CT Editorial Team

A well attended Public Meeting at the Church Hall held on 24th February looked at alternative options following the news that the Post Office in Constantine is set to close in early May. Colin Pound, the Field Change Advisor for the Post Office, discussed proposals put forward by people keen to keep the service in the village. He explained that a local Post Office would need to be an existing business that could run the service for at least 40 hours, have full disabled access and a turnover in excess of £150,000. The Spar was considered as the most obvious location but was not practical on various levels and due to the space required. The Church started investigations which would have included a café as an additional source of income, but again for various reasons this was not progressed.

A community run Post Office was mooted; it would need to be open for a minimum of 28 hours to be worthwhile and would need two guarantors of unlimited funds. The Social Club found its potential cost would not generate enough funds to pay for qualified staff to run it. The Tolmen Centre was looked at, but again its turnover is probably not sufficient to sustain it.

Unfortunately there is not Post Office van in Cornwall, but Mr Pound confirmed that a local Post Office could visit a venue in Constantine with all its equipment once or twice a week for a few hours offering a near full service. Gweek Post Office, for example, goes to several villages on The Lizard. Potential hosted outreach venues were looked at including the Social Club, Church Hall and Queens Arms.

Continued on page 2.

Inside this issue

Tremayne Quay Restored, Page 4



Calendar, Pages 8-9

Toe Wrestling, Page 6

Night Sky, Pages 14-15

Continued from page 1.

Looking ahead, from the beginning of May Constantine Stores hope to have installed a cash machine and a PAYZONE system which will allow electric key and mobile phone top ups, together with bill payments. It will still sell stamps, postage bags and stationery. The Spar is already a PAYPOINT for bills, provides gas and electricity key tops ups, TV licencing and media services, plus post parcels via carrier. Mr Pound believes that in due course a workable proposition for a Post Office Local in Constantine will be found. In the meantime, the Post Office in the Gweek village shop will be the closest service available from early May onwards.

Tolmen Organ Gets New Lease of Life Charlie Pugh

When the Tolmen Centre stopped being a place of worship (about 15 years ago now) we were left with an aged, but good quality Hammond Organ which had no further use. For years it just collected dust in the backstage area, rather unloved because no-one seemed to have any use for it, or knew how it worked. At that point it had stopped working and clearly needed some fixing up.

Then a few visiting music enthusiasts (led by Portishead band member Adrian Utley, who was playing a gig at the Tolmen) started pointing out that these instruments have become desirable to modern bands, especially those, like our one, with a 'Leslie' speaker attachment. I was unwilling to see this fine old instrument fade away, probably to be discarded as beyond economic repair, so it was decided to have it put back in order, using the services of Roy Davey, one of a select group of people who know how these things work, and can fix them. As a result of Roy's work, 'The Tolmen Hammond', with its Leslie Speaker, is now back in working order. What is needed now are people to use it. There seems little point in keeping it, and risking it once again falling into disrepair, if it is of no use to anyone.

So, if there is anyone out there who would like to use this instrument, please get in touch. I doubt if it can realistically be moved out of the Tolmen Centre, as it weighs nearly as much as a grand piano, but it can be moved to the stage area, and from there it produces that unique Hammond sound to fill the auditorium, made even more magical by the Leslie speaker. Surely someone would like to give this lovely old organ some use, privately or publicly? Please contact Charlie Pugh on 341 353 if you are interested.

* * * **Celestial Rugby Balls - Night Sky April-May** Robert Beeman
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*

The ancient constellations of Leo and Virgo dominate the springtime skies. Leo, with a bit of imagination, can look like a lion but Virgo looks like a large Y in the sky. Find Spica, a very bright star at the south eastern end of Virgo, and look slightly westwards. Spica is a hot blue white star, 13000 times brighter than the Sun. It has an orbiting companion some 18 million kilometres away (this is closer than Mercury orbits the Sun). Both have a huge gravitational effect on one another and thus resemble celestial rugby balls.

The bowl of Virgo is well worth a look with binoculars or a small telescope, as it is packed with faint fuzzy blobs which form the Virgo Cluster, a large collection of galaxies. Above Virgo find Arcturus at the foot of Boötes which is the fourth brightest star in the whole sky and the most brilliant star you can see on a fine May evening. It is a red giant and is therefore quite old, but even so is still 110 times as bright as the Sun. Move up the south eastern limb of Boötes to Izar which is a very nice blue and yellow double star.

There are several planets available over the two months. In early May after midnight, Saturn and Mars should be seen low in the south east just above Antares and it is worth comparing the different shades of red that these present. Move westwards to find Jupiter close to Regulus in Leo. Mercury will transit the Sun from 11.30am onwards on 9th May but specialist equipment will be required to view this event. Wishing you clear skies and warm evenings for star gazing.

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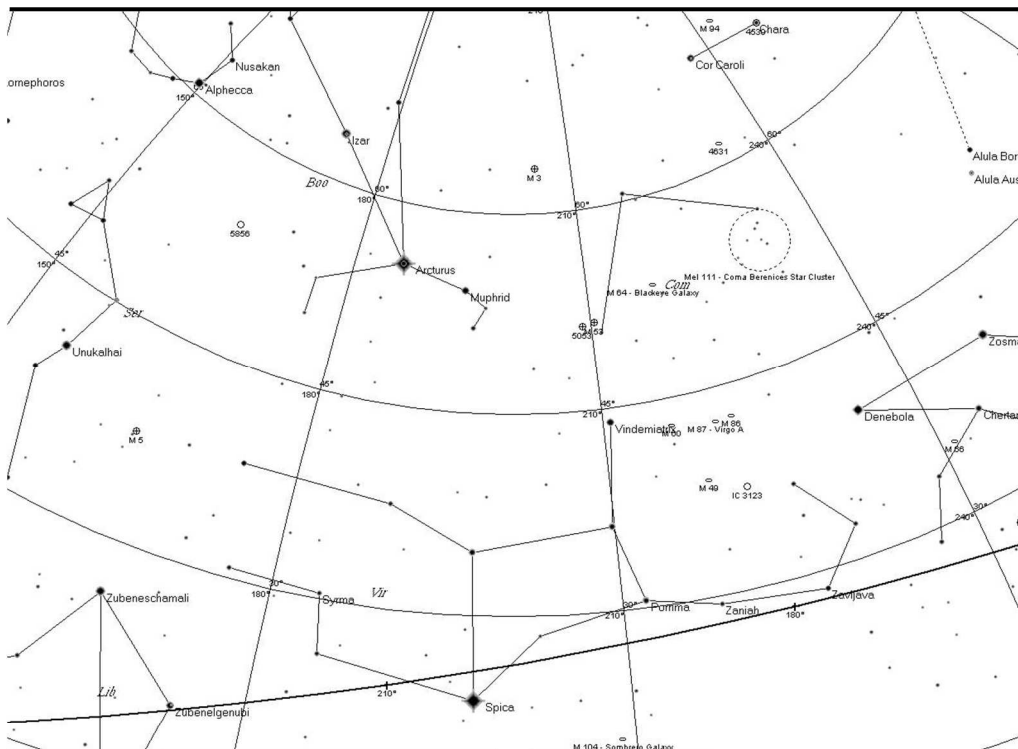
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Parish Council News Charlotte Evans

Abridged from the draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17h March.

Cornwall Councillor Bastin reported that the integrated transport scheme, which forms part of the agreed devolution of powers from central government, is expected to be in place in 2018. He has also been appointed to the Shadow Cabinet where he has responsibilities for localism.

Constantine Cottage Garden Society has been awarded £250.00 for financial help towards the costs and prizes for the Annual Show which will take place on the Recreation Ground, 14-18 July.

Members considered progress made in a proposal to site welcoming stones at each of the three entrances to the village. The Chairman reported that the supply of three suitable, rough-hewn boulders could be sourced locally. A quote for inscription is being prepared for the next meeting.

The Council voted in favour of refurbishing the existing bus shelter by replacing the Perspex sheets with laminated glass, which will cost in the region of £1,500 and is significantly cheaper than installing a new shelter.

Members considered a quotation for the repair and reinstatement of the public access slip-way at Port Navas. The Clerk was asked to ensure that the 'Public Slip-way' notice is in place.

The Clerk reported that SSE Contracting have been asked to replace both the bracket and the lantern on the street light opposite 4 Valley View.

In planning matters, an application for a replacement dwelling at Riverside, 6 Brillwater Road was approved, as was the conversion of an existing basement into a family annex at 10 Brillwater Road, both in Constantine. The proposed replacement of an existing boathouse with a new one at Shearwater Quay Road, Port Navas was rejected, as was the application to site a static caravan for residential and office use at Mean Penn Farm, Tresahor. Finally, a decision was approved to allow Plot no.5 to be rotated through 90 degrees at Trebarvah Court, Constantine.

Next meeting: Thursday 21st April at 7:00pm in the Vestery, Constantine

Clever Use of Recycling Rebuilds Tremayne Quay Anna Lydford

The National Trust have recently completed some sensitive repairs to Tremayne Quay on the Helford River. The quay was built in the 1840s by Sir Richard Vyvyan for a visit by Queen Victoria, this royal visit being the impetus for planting of beech into the woods at this time too. She never actually came, but her great grandson Edward Duke of Windsor, favoured the quay with a belated visit in 1921 when he was Prince of Wales.

The Quay has stood up to the passage of time fairly well, but the eastern side of it has always been a weakness, and the sea had worked out some of the main facing stones. The recent repairs, kindly funded by many individual donations, have seen substantial rebuilding on the eastern quay.

Some of the large granite coping stones were recycled from Mullion Harbour (where winter 2014 storm damage has been repaired in concrete for added strength) and the new metal mooring posts on the quay were recycled from the broken Mullion Harbour railings.

At the same time the Trust improved the parking area opposite the entrance to Tremayne, using stone from a cliff fall at Lizard Point - another bit of nifty recycling!

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the appeal to fund the quay repairs, which should see the quay in good stead for years to come. The quay is a popular stop for walkers and boaters alike, and a much loved picnic location.

In a similar vein, we've recently completed some repairs to the retaining wall at the head of Carne Creek, which edges the tidal path out to the woodland at Tregithey. The same 2014 storms that pounded Mullion Harbour and washed away the beach steps at Kynance scoured a hole in the stone wall.



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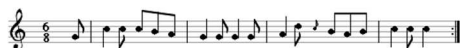
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Underground Heating Coming to Constantine Robin Curtis, Transition Constantine

Coastline have announced that they are proceeding with the installation of ground source, or geothermal heat pumps in twelve of their properties at Wheal Vyvyan. These systems will provide all of the heating and hot water by using pipes which are buried in the garden to extract heat from the ground.

The heat pumps are manufactured by the Cornish company Kensa, and the drilling and installation will be undertaken by a Cornish driller, and a local heating contractor respectively. Work is expected to begin in early April.

Given that they are replacing electric night storage heaters, the new systems should lead to improved comfort levels and reductions in heating bills for tenants. An example of one of these systems in Constantine is in the Pre-School, where it has now been successfully heating the building for over 10 years.



Please contact Chris Hussey with details of items to offer (340007) or email constant.times@gmail.com directly (with 'freecycle' in the subject line).

FREECYCLE OFFERED:

Wooden butcher's trolley. Supplied with a new oak top which needs fixing on.

Contact: Sandra Boreman on 01326 341 493

Full and Half Plots Now Available at Constantine Allotments

Aspiring organic gardeners sought for our small, friendly and laid-back community garden in Bridge. Enquiries to Liz Smith on 01326 250170.

Gardens and Homes Coffee Morning. Saturday 23rd April 10 – 12 noon.

Constantine Church Hall

Proceeds in aid of Constantine Church, Fantastic Plant Stall, Books, Handmade greeting cards, brilliant cakes, vintage/bric-a-brac, raffles, games of chance and skill, Teas – Coffee's and cakes. Everyone welcome, great fun for the whole family and plenty of parking.

This proved a particularly tricky job to organise, with the constraints of tide and limited space, but all has successfully been repaired. Although it's one of our tiniest properties, it is well worth the short walk through the woodland there, accessed from the Manaccan to Gillan road immediately to the south side of the head of the creek. There's a Creekside loop, as well as a higher path up to an open grassy knoll.

Our newest acquisition locally is Withan Woods and quay, 3.5 hectares of woodland at the head of Frenchman's Creek. This peaceful spot is accessed from the public footpath which crosses the stream below Smugglers Cottage, and we've created a new circular route that loops off this path, meandering above the creek via Withan Quay. Well recommended if you haven't discovered it yet!

The little abandoned quay at Withan is a lovely spot to view the river, and you may be able to catch a glimpse of a kingfisher if you are lucky. We're looking to carry out some archaeological recording of the structure, and may perhaps investigate partially rebuilding it, or at least preventing its further erosion, as a future project.

An Evening with a Cornish Culture Expert Anne Hussey

Constantine Literary Pod will be hosting an informal evening event with the author, film-maker and musician Will Colman on Friday 22nd April. The event is open to all.

Have you got a medieval Cornish amphitheatre in your back garden? Many people know about the two famous amphitheatres that still exist – St Piran's Round and the one at St Just. But working with Rod Lyon, former Grand Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd, the Plen an Gwari project has found sites at more than 30 places from St Mabyn to St Buryan (including two in Constantine). Will Coleman explains how and why the Plen an Gwari tradition flourished and died, what attending such a spectacle would have been like, what the contemporary cultural lessons are and how we can locate our local sites. Will Coleman is a film-maker, author and musician. His major interests are Cornish language and identity, traditional music and culture, and community celebration. He will be talking about his new beautifully illustrated book *Plen an Gwari (The Playing Places of Cornwall)*.

Light refreshments and bar from 6.30pm. Talk by Will Colman starts at 7.30pm. Tickets available from the Tolmen Centre on 01326 341353 – book early to avoid disappointment. Tickets £5.00 each. (Only 80 available)

Toe Wrestling - Constantine History Group Don Garman

The 2016 Sport Relief evening coincided with a talk on the History of Sport in Cornwall, given by former Cornwall Museum Development officer and local historian Jo Mattingley. In 1205 a dangerous sport called soule is recorded, which could be an early form of hurling. Players of this game were known to be killed! Cornish wrestling or "wrasslin" has a history probably lost in time and included out hurling which involved 12-15 participants and toe to toe wrestling, recorded by Edward Lhuys in 1700. Certainly the older established sports had a reputation for excessive drinking, gambling and violence. Not surprisingly the rise of Methodism saw chapel members protesting at wrestling matches.

Bowling was a game for the upper classes and many large houses had a bowling green. The one at Lanhydrock dates back to at least the 1690s and is one of the earliest in Cornwall. Kayles was a version of skittles played by the working class. Records of the game include complaints that men played all day instead of working and had to be brought their meals! Cockfighting and bull and bear baiting were common until banned in the 19th century. The Bull post can still be seen in Liskeard.

Cricket by 1856 was popular in the county with all communities with over 2000 inhabitants having cricket teas (apart from Saltash). In 1773 there was a match for married and unmarried gentlemen in Falmouth, whilst in 1813 the first Truro cricket ground was established on the Olympic Field. Later in Boscawen Park there was an early international game between the England and Indian Women's teams – England won by three wickets. An analysis of scores in the 19th century interestingly shows few over 80; centuries were very rare.

Sports days were common to many communities as were the regattas around the coast. On the water events provided opportunities for gig racing and on the Tamar and Fal there were flashboat competitions. Surfing has been a sport since the 1920s, Perranporth being an early centre.

Jo finished her talk by mentioning Lerryn's jumping postman, who competed for Cornwall at Crystal Palace. He won 510 competitions and used the prize money to build a row of cottages in his home village. Winning prize money meant that this Cornish star was not eligible for the Olympics.

Next talk: 15th April at 7.15pm in the Constantine WI Hall, when Janet Axten will be speaking on the History of St Ives.

at 2.30 pm. Ticket prices are £9 on Wednesday and Saturday and £10 on Thursday and Friday. Prices include a delicious dessert or cheese and biscuits in the interval.

Spring Has Sprung! Constantine Cottage Garden Society Howard Bolt

The March meeting in the W.I Hall concerned 'The Wonders of Bonsai Cultivation'. Owen Tregaskis gave an interesting, instructive and practical talk about the cultivation of Bonsai plants.

In April, we have two events Lucy Nottingham has kindly invited us to visit her garden at Trenarth on Saturday 2nd April at 10.30am. As well as looking round her garden, there is an opportunity to purchase plants, have refreshments and perhaps win a raffle prize.



On Thursday evening on 14th April at 7.30pm, we have the final talk of this season in the W.I Hall David and Tina Primmer from Poppy Cottage, Ruan High Lanes will give an illustrated talk 'A Year in the Life of Poppy Cottage Garden', possibly bringing plants for people to buy.

Looking forward, the Summer Garden Show will be held on Saturday 16th July at 2pm. Look out for schedules from the Post Office or The Spar.

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CLUBS, GROUPS AND GOINGS ON

China Treasures— W.I. Report Barbara Willoughby

Our speaker last month on 'Life on the QE2' was run aground due to unforeseen circumstances, but we were very lucky to welcome John Holmes with his collection of very fine porcelain. He explained that Royal Worcester and Staffordshire China has been made since 1700, but the Chinese had been making saleable fine porcelain since 700AD!

At its height between 1780 -1880 there were 600 potteries in Staffordshire producing the popular Blue & White design, but these went into decline from 1870. Now one small eight inch rare plate from that time could fetch £125! John surprised us by saying the very popular Willow pattern design was actually printed in 144 different designs - eg one, two or three bridges, birds or people. It was a very entertaining talk and all members are now checking their China cabinets for rare pieces - especially unused items passed down through the family.

Our speaker on Monday 11th April will be from The Cinnamon Trust and on Monday 9th May Pat Ward will tell us about Boconnoc Estate.

Our W.I celebrates its 65th Birthday in July and on Wednesday 6th we will hold an Open Day Exhibition and Tea in the W.I. Hall - all welcome.

NOTICES

Cake Bake and Coffee Morning—Cornwall Hospice Care

Friday 6th May - 10-12pm - Constantine W.I Hall

Following the first successful Cake Bake held last year, all Village Groups and interested individuals are invited to 'Bake a Cake' to help fundraising for Cornwall Hospice Care. Please bring your baking to the W.I Hall from 9am on Saturday 6th May where hopefully our village will improve on the £200 raised last year. We all know the excellent work carried out and great help given by this organisation!

Following their SOLD-OUT performances of *The 39 Steps* in November, Gweek Players will be presenting **The Importance of Being Earnest** on Wednesday 13, Thursday 14 & Friday 15 April at 7.30 pm and a matinee on Saturday, 16 April

Local Talent Shines Kerry Vincent

'How Long Will I Love You?' a play written by Kerry Vincent and directed by Ruth Nicholls, both from Constantine, was a great success at the Tolmen Centre recently. Melanie Uren, a local professional singing teacher put lots of effort into getting the village locals singing, and along with DJ in Cornwall, provided the music for the performance.

Inspired by her son's love of the stage and her friend's singing talents, Kerry wrote the play last year. She explained, "I always loved the Feast Concerts every March when I was a child. The laughter created when village locals stepped on the stage was infectious. My teenage son loves drama and, like me, making people laugh. I also knew that some friends had voices that needed to be heard!"



Lots of familiar faces from the village took to their given roles and threw themselves into rehearsals. Kerry who had no prior knowledge of drama was delighted with the result and said they did "absolutely brilliantly!" She went on to say she felt very lucky to see it staged. "Lots of people write scripts that are never performed. I only write for an hour or so late every night, like other mums might watch TV or read to unwind. My friend Ruth took the direction and made my words come alive on stage."

The play had lots of comedy touches and kept everyone in stitches, Kerry said that what went on backstage was just as funny as on stage. At one moment all 13 cast members were on their hands and knees searching for a lost pregnancy test in the dark, 20 mins before curtain up!

"We all had such fun that we are already planning the next one. Raising money for the village is a bonus", she said after confirming that they had raised £907.50 for the Constantine Defibrillator funds.

The Constant Times

CONSTANTINE CALENDAR

April 2016

Tue (every) – Yoga Grace. 6.30pm. Tolman Centre.

Tue (every) – Power Fusion Bounce. 6.30pm. Church Hall

Wed (every) – Todlins. 9.30am. Tolmen Centre.

Fri (every) – Fitness Fusion. 11.30am. Tolmen Centre.

Fri 1 – Thur 7 Doing the Ton in down-town Port Navas. Peggy Shepperd. Port Navas Village Hall.

Sun 3 - Helford Marine Group Heron and Egret Survey on the Helford with Martin Rule. 07772323502.

Thurs 7 – Save The Children Coffee morning and Great Helford River Bake-Off. 10-12noon. Budock Vean Hotel.

Sat 9 – Constantine Farmers Market. 5th Birthday. Church Hall, 9.30am—12noon

Sun 10. Helford Marine Group searching for Crabs and Critters on Bar Beach at Helford Passage with Matt Slater. 07772323502.

Mon 11 – WI meeting @7.15pm.'The Cinnamon Trust'.

Thurs 14 – Transition Constantine Meeting. 7pm. The Queens Arms. Chris Hussey 340007.

Thurs 14 - Constantine Cottage Garden Society, A Year in the Life of Poppy Cottage Garden'. 7.30pm. W.I. Hall.

Fri 15 – Constantine History Group. St Ives. Janet Axten. W.I.Hall. 7.15pm. Contact Geoff Roberts 340154 or geof-fdroberts@btinternet.com.

Thurs 21 – Parish Council meeting. 7pm. The Vestry, Constantine.

Fri 22 – Constantine Book Group Plus welcomes Will Coleman. 6.30 for a 7.30pm start. Tolmen Centre. £5. 01326 341353.

Sat 23 – Gardens and Homes Coffee morning. 10-12noon. Constantine Church Hall.

Tues 26 – Ladies' Circle. 2.15pm. W.I. Hall.

Wed 27 – Tolmen Movies. Brooklyn. 7.30pm. £4. Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353.

Sat 30 – Charity quiz in aid of Cornwall Children's Hospice. Constantine Social Club.

May 2016

Tue (every) – Yoga Grace. 6.30pm. Tolman Centre.

Tue (every) – Power Fusion Bounce. 6.30pm. Church Hall

Wed (every) – Todlins. 9.30am. Tolmen Centre.

Fri (every) – Fitness Fusion. 11.30am. Tolmen Centre.

Mon 2 – Save the Children Sponsored Walk. 10miles/4 miles/tea. 10/11.30am/3pm. Port Navas Village Hall. Mel 341484/Roger 340718.

Sat 7 – The Moulettes. 7.30pm. The Tolmen Centre. £11/£10/£5 (children). Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353 or online.

Mon 9 – WI meeting @7.15pm. 'Boconnoc Estate'

Wed 11 – Tolmen Movies. 20 Feet from Stardom. 7.30pm. £4. Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353.

Thurs 12 – Transition Constantine Meeting. 7pm. The Queens Arms. Chris Hussey 340007.

Thurs 12 - Constantine Cottage Garden Society (tbc). 7.30pm. W.I. Hall.

Sat 14 – Constantine Farmers Market. Church Hall, 9.30am—12noon

Sat 14 – The Gods are Fallen and All Safety Gone. Greyscale Theatre Company. 7.30pm. The Tolmen Centre. £10/£9. Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353 or online.

Thurs 19 – Annual Parish Council meeting. 7pm. The Vestry, Constantine.

Sat 21 – Chris Wood. 7.30pm. The Tolmen Centre. £11/£10. Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353 or online.

Tues 24 – Ladies' Circle. 2.15pm. W.I. Hall.

Wed 25 – Tolmen Movies. Bridge of Spies. 7.30pm. £4. Café Tolmen open (booking essential). 341353.

Sat 28 – An evening of live music from "Small Wonder". Constantine Social Club. Time tbc

Sat 28 – Sat 4 June Port Navas Art Group Exhibition. 11am-5pm. Port Navas Village Hall.

*Please send calendar items to
constant.times@gmail.com. Remember to
include: date/event title/time/place/
price(if any)/contact details. Thank you!*

The Constant Times

Contact Details

Email: constant.times@gmail.com

Post: Tolmen Centre or
47 Fore Street

Phone: 01326 341129

Editorial Team

Editor: Benjamin Symes

Calendar: Elly Van Veen

Layout: Antonia Mullaly

Printing: Chris Hussey

Distribution:

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Submission Deadlines:

News items, calendar entries and other submissions are required by two weeks prior to the publication date. Please send to constant.times@gmail.com or post to the addresses above.

**DEADLINE FOR JUNE -
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