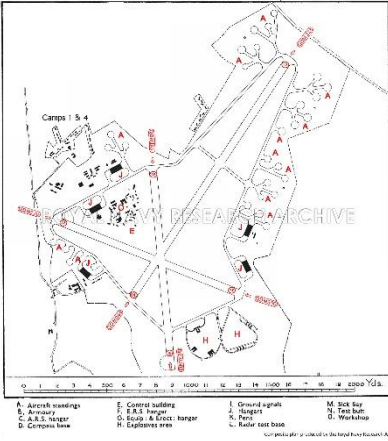


Community News

April 2026



RAF Peplow - a vital wartime role



For those in the parish who regularly walk around the old airfield, it is likely that they could be forgiven for wondering what it was really like during the time it was operational during the war, and the contribution it made to the war effort.

The old airfield now blends quietly into the local countryside. Formerly known as RAF Childs Ercall, it was renamed to RAF Peplow by 1943 to avoid confusion with nearby High Ercall, although local residents continued to call it Childs Ercall airfield. It played a significant part in Britain's air operations during the Second World War. Opened in 1941, the station served as a satellite landing

ground for RAF Tern Hill, supporting training and operational readiness at a time when the nation's need for skilled aircrew was at its peak. The site expanded with paved runways and additional training facilities, including the use of Airspeed Oxfords from No. 11 Service Flying Training School at Shawbury. From August 1943 to March 1945, it became home to No. 83 Operational Training Unit (OTU). Here, crews trained on Vickers Wellington bombers, preparing for the dangerous missions that Bomber Command undertook nightly over occupied Europe. The airfield also hosted a Heavy Glider Training Unit, contributing to the development of airborne operations — a crucial component of the later stages of the war. In March 1945, as the conflict neared its end, the station transferred to the Fleet Air Arm and was renamed HMS Godwit II, continuing its training role under naval command. It closed in 1949, but it is recorded in the Shropshire Historic Environment Record as a significant WWII military airfield.

The airfield may no longer echo with the sound of engines, but its contribution to the war effort and the memories of those who lived alongside it remain an important part of our parish heritage. The airfield trained the crews who would go on to serve with courage across Europe,

In and around....

Spring Sneaks Back In (Trying Not to Be Noticed)



After a winter so wet the ducks briefly considered unionising, spring has finally made an appearance in the parish, looking guilty, as though it nipped out for milk in November and forgot to return. The daffodils are attempting enthusiasm, though a few look like they'd rather go back to bed with a hot water bottle. The farmers can now get their tractors onto the fields without buoyancy aids, and our enthusiastic walkers report that they can now venture out without needing a snorkel! Still, the air feels lighter, the

hedgerows are fluffing themselves up, and the sun has made a few cameo appearances, just enough to remind us it still exists. Spring may be late, damp, and slightly dishevelled, but it's back. And frankly, we'll take it.

Wishing our parishioners a very Happy Easter

As we gather once again to celebrate Easter, it's worth pausing to appreciate the many small miracles of the season. The sun is staying out a little longer, the daffodils are bravely poking their heads above ground, and, perhaps most miraculous of all, some of us have managed not to eat our entire stash of chocolate eggs before Easter Sunday. Easter is, of course, a time of joy and renewal. It's the moment we celebrate the triumph of life over death, hope over despair, and patience over chaos. Whether you're someone who approaches Easter with quiet reflection, or someone who approaches it armed with a hot cross bun in each hand, we're delighted to share this season with you. Our parish is at its best when we come together and occasionally trying to remember where we put the palm crosses from last year!

Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed, joyful, and wonderfully chocolate-filled Easter

What's on....

Monday night is loyalty card night at the **Childs Ercall Village Club**. Events scheduled:

2nd & 19th April – Coffee & Cake (11am – 1pm)

24th April – Pop up Pizza

27th April – “Bring a block” – Cheese & Port Night

A message from Neil (Unitary Councillor, Cheswardine Ward)



Over the past few months many residents will have noticed the significant discussion around Shropshire Council's finances and the increase in council tax for the coming year. I know this is never welcome news, particularly at a time when many households are already feeling pressure on their own budgets. Please do get in touch with the council if you are struggling financially because options are available. The reality is that councils across the country are facing very challenging financial circumstances, with rising demand for services such as adult social care and children's services placing considerable strain on local authority finances. I continue to work on a number of issues affecting Childs Ercall. Speeding through the village remains a concern for residents and I have recently been in contact with the Police and Crime Commissioner's office. I will shortly be meeting with Deputy PCC Tracey Onslow in the parish to discuss potential locations for speed monitoring, along with other highway matters including the ongoing A41 works.

Have Your Say

The next Parish Council meeting will be at the Jubilee Hall on **Wednesday 15th April** at 7.00pm. All are welcome to attend.

An on-line version of this newsletter can be found on the website. (www.childsercall-pc.gov.uk)
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