

Greenmount January 2024

Monday, 1st January 2024

Having not stayed up to see in the New Year and not celebrating the event in the usual way (i.e. we had an alcohol-free evening), I thought I would be fresh and alert this morning. In fact, the opposite was the case.

I struggled out of bed at 9 a.m., only because the alarm woke me to administer Jenny's eye drops, which I did in my dressing-gown, at the breakfast table. Jenny had already washed, dressed and was munching away.

I managed to make it to my chair opposite and breakfasted in my nightwear.

Afterwards I reclined in my lounge chair and dealt with my e-mails. The looming outstanding event was the house insurance renewal and yet another financial battle to find the cover I needed at a reasonable price. Gone were the easy days when one could trust a company to provide a reliable, ongoing service at a fair price. I put a recurring reminder into my Outlook calendar, not that it did much good. Microsoft still hadn't fixed the problem of new recurring reminders not showing in the reminder window. Yet another issue to resolve for which I did not have the time.

I commenced my New Year diary while the weather outside was trying to make up its mind whether it should remain fine with sunny periods or, more probably, pour with rain yet again. I didn't really have the time to build a boat, let alone an ark.

I thought it was time (11:45 a.m.) I stirred, washed, dressed and proceeded with the usual pot washing duty before putting my head in the oven.

I stopped oven-cleaning for lunch and then settled in my comfy chair to relax for about half an hour.

I was interrupted by Rachel asking where the Glym car wash solution was and I told her it was at the bottom of the tall cupboard unit in the garage. For some reason, Jenny joined Rachel in the garage and came back declaring there was water in the cupboard, probably from a leak caused by the plumber who refitted out bathroom.

I rushed out to the garage to investigate. There were no water pipes near the cupboard and the shelves above the one that was wet were all dry. Moreover, the wet part was confined to the two lowest shelves, at the front, on the left. The only item that could have caused the leak was a container of engine oil that was laid on its side because it was too tall for the shelf. I checked the top and it was not tight. I wiped the shelves and put everything back in the cupboard, finding a higher shelf to stand the oil upright.

While I was there, I rolled out the hose to Jenny who passed it to Rachel and I connected it up to the outside tap at the back so she could wash her car.

Now suffering from slight indigestion, I came in and relaxed again, but not for long. I had to put the oven back together so Jenny could cook the leg of lamb for tea.

With the lamb roasting nicely, my last useful task of the day was to wrap up the hose for Rachel.

Tuesday, 2nd January 2024

It was almost 10:30 by the time we'd breakfasted and washed up from last evening.

I fitted the new inlet valve to the separate small toilet cistern. The nut securing the inlet valve and the nut on the flexible hose feed were both only finger tight so I didn't need my spanners. I couldn't detect any leaks after fitting the new valve but I left some cloths in place under the connection just in case for a day or so. The only dampness I could detect was from condensation.

After lunch, I scanned a couple of documents relating to the filling valve I had fitted and saved them for future reference. One of the documents was the five-year guarantee.

I was satisfied there were no leaks, so I decided to remove the cloths and to put the cover on the unit, after cleaning it.

I turned my attention to one of the steps on the stairs that needed repairing. Rachel had fallen downstairs a long time ago and had broken the front lip off one of the steps. Since it did not cause any major problem and was covered by the carpet, I had not bothered to do anything about it until now. It needed repairing before the new carpet was fitted on the 15th January.

I glued the broken part back onto the step and put four screws horizontally into the end of the lip to hold it in place. It did not marry exactly and would require a little sanding to smooth it off when the glue had set in a day or two's time. Meanwhile, I put the carpet back in place so the stairs could be used.

The damage was to the fifth step up and I had removed all the perished underlay from that step and all the steps below it, which was a messy job because it was all crumbling away. The bulk of it went into a refuse sack and the rest I vacuumed up. I also removed the staples that had held the underlay in place but I had to leave some tacks because I did not have my nippers handy.

The bottom step also had a large split in it and needed some glue and a longer screw to pull the wood together. That was a job for another day.

Wednesday, 3rd January 2024

Rachel's car needed some attention. The tyres needed checking but before I tackled that, I needed to jump start it again. I managed to do that on the road using my car just before it started to rain and I brought Rachel's car down the drive so I could charge the battery.

I came in and brought my e-mail and calendar of events up to date while the battery charged up. I thought it wouldn't take long because the battery needed replacing. It actually took longer than I expected so I continued with my administrative tasks.

I left off, once the batter was charged, to bring the tyres up to pressure.

One of the objectives that had been on my long list was to order a dehumidifier for the conservatory. Because it was very cold and humid in winter, it needed a decent-sized dehumidifier

that would work in very low temperatures. That meant a desiccant model as opposed to a condensing device.

I settled on the Meaco DD8L Zambezi.

Thursday, 4th January 2024

After the usual morning tasks and the routine administrative work of checking and dealing with e-mails, the dehumidifier I had ordered arrived. I unpacked it and installed it in the conservatory. I brought the documentation regarding the purchase and warranty I had purchased, up to date, on the PC.

During this activity, I had a quick snack lunch and on completion, went to the old school to populate our electrical stall with the items Jenny and I had tested and priced in readiness for the table-top sale on Saturday. Jenny joined me after “Cuppa and a Chat” had finished. Lorna, who came with Jenny, went home on her own.

We finished and came home at about 5 p.m.

Friday, 5th January 2024

We called to look at Matthew’s building project on the way to Sainsbury’s store at Heaton Park for our weekly grocery shop. The new garden office development was progressing very well indeed and looked impressive, more so because Matthew had never tackled anything like this before and he had planned it and built it with help from Carrie, one or two friends and me on the odd occasion.

We came home up the M66 to Bury, being the quickest route, given we had a box full of cold and frozen produce.

After a late lunch, we went round to the old school to test and price a few more items for our stall at tomorrow’s sale.

Saturday, 6th January 2024

We have had a long morning at the old school. We were up at about 6:45 and we didn't make it to the old school until about 8:45, having spent 15 minutes scraping the ice off the car windows.

Trading was slow but we managed to keep busy, mostly talking to people. Our takings were just under £50, which included a pre-sale £10 and £16 on a card transaction.

We started packing up at 11:15 even though the sale officially ended at noon and a good deal of our stock was consigned to Father John, father Wyatt having retired, in Salford. We saved about 25% of our tested items for next time. I finished off by tidying up all the untested stock and there was a lot of it, so, if we spent some time at the old school on Saturdays or Sundays, we might clear some of it to add new items for the next sale in a month's time.

We came home for about 1 p.m. and, after lunch, I dealt with my e-mails and did my weekly (when I had time) system back-up.

Sunday 7th January 2024

The usual pot washing session was followed by a thorough cleaning of the table candelabra, which was covered in wax. That revealed the extent of wear and tear and it really needed a coat of Hammerite black paint but I didn't have the time at present.

After that, we dumped our sorted rubbish into the appropriate bins and tidied up the patio a little.

We finally managed to start the planned task of cleaning the bathroom. Since I wiped down the whole of the shower area, the tiles and the window and frame after each shower, there wasn't a great deal to do. The floor was quite dusty and needed vacuuming before wiping it over. The radiator and metal, free-standing toilet roll holder needed polishing, Jenny dealing with the latter. I finished off by polishing the wooden door on both sides. The door frame still needed painting so I left that.

It was time for lunch and a break before starting the afternoon's jobs.

I fetched the ladders from the garage to inspect the damage to the painted wall high up on the staircase. It turned out to be a kind of blistering of the paint so I sanded it ready for painting. I also dusted the coving and the wall to remove a few cobwebs and such.

I found some other spots on the staircase walls that needed touching up and a couple needed sanding first. There were also some on the landing, not including the bits I had already painted after the bathroom refit and the areas in the back bedroom that needed another coat of paint.

I dealt with the staircase and cut in round the coving and door frame on the wall adjoining the bathroom, then Rachel painted the rest of the wall while I attended to the back bedroom. The back corner of the internal wall I had previously filled and painted was rough and needed sanding before painting again.

There was also one spot on the landing that was going to need some filling before repainting.

The bathroom refit had really created a lot of work elsewhere.

Monday, 8th January 2024

The first order of the day, after pot washing, was to sort out the house insurance renewal.

I had a price for renewal from Esure which I thought was a little high so I searched for a better quotation. I discovered the Esure price was reasonable, so I checked the details of my policy and they required a few minor changes. I decided to leave that until later.

I telephoned Finneys garage to request a courtesy car for tomorrow but they were not sure whether one was available and sked me to call back later in the afternoon.

I took Jenny to Bury for her podiatry appointment and then we went to B&Q for a few items before returning to Tesco in Bury.

We came home for lunch.

I sorted out the house insurance renewal. I checked with the garage to see if a courtesy car was available for tomorrow and it seemed unlikely.

I spoke to Rita, one of the D-CaFF team, to make sure one of the guests I normally accompanied was well looked after in Jenny's and my absence this coming Friday. I put Rachel's car battery back on charge since she was going to use her car tomorrow. I dealt with my e-mails and, in particular, one from our friends, Lynn and John, with nineteen pictures from their short stay in Whitby during the Christmas period, after which we viewed the photos on the TV screen.

Tuesday, 9th January 2024

I was up at 7:30, intending to get an early start, taking the car into Finneys garage, just the other side of Bury, for its annual service and MOT, before the mad rush started.

The new Meaco dehumidifier put a stop to that. It had stopped working and I thought the tank was full. It wasn't and the display was showing an error code of C1. I sent an e-mail to Meaco.

I then decided to try the general fix of switching the dehumidifier off and then back on again. That worked.

I finally hit the road at about 8:30 a.m. and headed for Bury via Tottington to avoid the road works we encountered yesterday on Brandlesholme Road. I immediately joined a long queue of traffic at Tottington. That did start to move, gradually and there was no sign of what caused the delay. Traffic through Bury was heavy, due largely to the school run and it occurred to me that there should be a law against driving children to school. I used to walk a good three miles each way in all weathers every day so I didn't see why children of today couldn't.

I arrived at the garage just before 9 a.m. and left at 9:02 to walk home – a good 4 miles, most of it up the old railway line to Greenmount. I was home for 10:40 a.m., which I didn't think was bad considering I was out of practice. I was considerably slower than I used to be. I did enjoy the walk; it was a nice sunny morning but very cold with a biting, northerly breeze.

I had breakfast when I returned home and a bit of a rest.

I needed a shower after walking. Jenny nipped in first and I wiped everything down afterwards, which took ages.

I telephoned the garage to find out when the car would be ready so that I could decide whether to start on the bathroom door jamb. The car would be ready in about an hour.

I decided to abort any attempt at work in the house and we both walked down to Longsight Road, in the cold, northerly wind, to catch the 472 bus to Bury. The bus came within a few minutes and we transferred to the 135 bus at Bury interchange, again within a few minutes. The bus stopped opposite the access to the garage and there was very little traffic on the usually very busy road, so we were able to cross without much of a delay.

The cost of the service required and the repair to the front brakes required for the MOT was far less than I had expected and I drove home, having paid the bill.

After parking the car on the drive, I noticed that the off-side, dipped headlight was not working and I telephoned the garage. I was assured it was working when tested for the MOT and I made arrangements to take the car back to the garage tomorrow or Thursday after 9:30 a.m. to have the bulb replaced before our planned visit to York on Friday.

Wednesday, 10th January 2024

I had planned to paint the bathroom door frame but a telephone call from the dentist put that on hold.

I had asked to see the dentist because I had some sensitivity in my upper left teeth and I thought it better to have it checked before it became worse. I was told I would be notified if they had a cancellation and I was offered an appointment at 10:50 a.m.

I did not see my usual dentist, but the one that treats Rachel. She examined the tooth and said the problem was a gap between two fillings allowing food to become trapped, resulting in a mild infection of my gum. She cleaned out the debris and flushed the gap with saltwater. I was given a flexible toothpick and told to use these regularly, after meals and to also wash my mouth with saltwater and then discuss the problem with my usual dentist at my next scheduled check-up in May.

I popped into the Co-op shop at Holcombe Brook for next week's Radio Times and then drove down to Finney's garage, where the very helpful chap I usually see on reception replaced my headlight bulb.

As I was driving away, he called me back. One of my brake lights was not working. He went in to check the video of the part of the MOT where he tested my lights yesterday. He said they were all working then. He replaced that bulb and also one adjacent to it that looked burnt out. He said he couldn't understand why three lights should fail all around the same time but I said it was just one of those things – lights can fail anytime. I thanked him and came home.

After lunch, about 2:30 p.m., I started work on the bathroom door jamb. I removed the door, sanded the door jamb and vacuumed up all the dust. I undercoated the door jamb on both sides. Afterwards, I cleaned my brushes and packed up. It was 6 p.m. I couldn't believe it had taken me 3½ hours. There was a lot of cutting-in to do, though.

I had a single letter in the post. It was the DVLC reminding me that the car needed taxing. This year it was £200.

I managed to catch a little of the news on TV. There was an item about the Post Office fiasco which resulted in the imprisonment of several innocent people which could have been avoided and for which no-one has yet been punished.

There was also an item about the junior doctors' strike so I thought I'd take a look at how much a junior doctor is paid. The basic pay was £32,397. MPs received £86,584. Now, I asked myself,

who is more essential, a doctor and an MP? It was a no-brainer, really. I reckoned that junior doctors and nurses ought to receive at least as much as MPs, if not more.

Thursday, 11th January 2024

The first major job of the day was to place an online order with Ocado for items we could not obtain elsewhere. That took a while and I concluded that it was not significantly quicker than shopping in-store at Sainsbury's.

Even then, Ocado did not have everything we wanted and some of what they did have was not in large enough quantities. I doubted this would be a regular experience.

After lunch and a rest, I refitted the bathroom door so that we could use the shower. That meant I would not be able to put the finishing gloss coat of paint the door jamb until Saturday, when I would have to remove the door again and refit it early Monday morning, before the new carpets were laid.

Jenny and I then set about clearing as much from the back bedroom as possible in readiness for the carpet fitting on Monday. I could also then do some preparatory work on Saturday while Rachel took Jenny to Sainsbury's store for the weekly grocery shop.

Friday, 12th January 2024

It was Rachel's birthday.

To celebrate, we all went to York for the day, pottering round the shops and lunching at Bailey's Tea Rooms as usual. The journey in both directions was surprisingly trouble-free but there was one moment when I was confused by the road signs and made a bit of a mess of a manoeuvre to take the slip road onto the M1. Fortunately, I was able to just make it by crossing the area with chevrons on it, having made sure there was no traffic coming from the M62 in the fast lane of the turnoff.

The problem was that the sign showed the M1 and I knew I wanted to be on the A1. The sign did not indicate that the M1 led onto the A1, which it did just before the turnoff to the A64, which led to York and I had temporarily forgotten that was the case. This was the second bad piece of signing I had encountered in less than six months.

We had a very nice time, pottering round the shops.

While walking down The Shambles, I missed my footing on the edge of a high kerbstone and hurtled to the ground after almost landing in the lap of a disabled lady and bouncing off her wheelchair. She asked me if I was alright. Fortunately, neither of us was hurt and we both went our separate ways.

We came home as it started to turn dark, at about 4:30 and went for a meal at 6:00 p.m., at Oscar's Restaurant at the Red Hall Hotel, just across the Irwell Valley, about ten minutes' drive from home.

The service was excellent and the meal was very good. The only disappointment was that there was only one gluten-free option for a sweet and we all declined.

Saturday, 13th January 2024

There was a change of plan. Jenny and I went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park. I had removed the bathroom door for the second time beforehand and Rachel had volunteered to gloss the door jamb for me while we were out.

We had planned to drop off some empty egg boxes at the community centre at Brandlesholme on the way. The Centre operated a food bank. Today, it was closed.

We had also planned to drop off the old back bedroom radiator at the scrap merchant in Bury but, again, the office was closed.

I was going to call at B&Q for some more screws because I knew I did not have enough to secure all the creaking boards before the new carpet was laid. Unfortunately, I forgot to do so. Still, I could always nip down tomorrow.

We came home for a late lunch. Rachel had made an excellent job of the paintwork. By the time we had finished lunch it wasn't worth starting anything major.

Sunday, 14th January 2024

It was a day of feverish activity for all three of us, tidying up in the garage, moving the car boot out of the back bedroom and off the landing, some of which ended up in the garage loft and some under and at the end of our bed and moving furniture about.

Rachel and I took up the rest of the back bedroom underlay and the bedroom carpet. I sanded down the staircase step I had repaired and dealt with the bottom step that was also cracked, while Rachel took up the stair-carpet and the remainder of the underlay on the stairs.

I finished at about 6 p.m. I couldn't help thinking that the back bedroom floor should really have been re-boarded with tongue and grooving, screwed down rather than nailed, like the landing. I could easily have done that if I had a couple of days to spare. Unfortunately, the carpet fitters were coming tomorrow.

Monday, 15th January 2024

We were up at 7 a.m. and I put the bathroom door back on before breakfast.

The carpet fitters didn't arrive at 9 a.m. as expected and I telephoned Tottington House Carpets at about 9:20. The chap who answered the telephone said they would be here in about 20 minutes. They were loading the van.

The fitters arrived and started work as I was sanding the bottom step, which I had repaired a couple of days ago.

After that, I left them to it, dealt with a bit of administrative work on the laptop and, after lunch, Jenny and I went to the waste transfer station in Bury to dump the rubbish from the garage loft. We would have disposed of the old back bedroom radiator at the scrap metal merchant's yard but it was closed again.

We drove on to the Home Bargains store at Pilsworth. Jenny wanted to return a faulty pair of pyjamas and we needed some more mealworms for our friendly robin, not forgetting our friendly blackbird. The refund for the former paid for the latter.

We called at Tesco in Bury on the way home for a few groceries. We tried to deliver the egg boxes to Brandlesholm community centre. That was closed again.

Our penultimate visit was to the post office at Holcombe Brook to send off some birthday cards and finally we stopped at the village pharmacy. Jenny walked down to the medical centre to leave a document for one of the doctors while I went to collect a further supply of statins. Unfortunately, the packet I currently had with one tablet left for tonight was the last in the present batch and I had to ask my GP for another prescription. I made my way to the surgery, meeting Jenny coming the other way. The lady on reception was most helpful and arranged for the tablets to be available tomorrow.

We came home, at last, to find that the carpet fitters had done very well. The new carpet was very nice indeed. They had left an invoice, which I paid directly.

In the evening I started to feel rather ill with strong pain in my abdomen. I couldn't work out whether it was my fall in York or whether it was lifting the very heavy oak door to refit it to the bathroom entrance, or a combination of both.

I felt a little better after half-a-dozen strong mints and when I laid down in bed. I had a fairly comfortable night.

Tuesday, 16th January 2024

We woke to a decent covering of snow and it was still snowing.

I didn't feel very well at breakfast and I seemed to have developed a thirst, so I had a fair amount of water.

My morning was one of sitting in my chair and dealing with the finances.

Despite not feeling well, I tackled the small job of cleaning the window and frame and the radiator in the back bedroom and helped Jenny hang the curtains. I was still in a fair amount of discomfort so I asked Jenny for a tonic water and that seemed to help matters considerably.

I took some photos of the new carpets and sent them to Matthew.

Jenny fetched my Statins from the pharmacy for me. She said it was very slippery underfoot. Some of the snow had melted and then frozen towards evening.

Wednesday, 17th January 2024

I spent my day in the lounge, mostly dealing with a backlog of e-mails, since I was still feeling poorly.

Thursday, 18th January 2024

After breakfast, still not at my best, I went out and dealt with the rubbish, which included putting out the waste paper bin for collection tomorrow and picking up the remaining apples that had fallen off the tree, putting them in the garden waste bin.

I also emptied the bucket of waste food into the compost bin and, as I did so, the plastic bucket broke up and the bulk of it went into the bin with the waste frozen solid in it. I put on my gardening gloves and fished it out, dropping it onto the patio to free up the contents and putting them in the bin. The bucket went into the general waste bin and I replaced it with a metal one.

After all that feverish activity, I cleared enough of the driveway so that I could put my car on the road, jump-start Rachel's car and bring it down to charge the battery for her again. She had arranged for a new battery to be fitted on Monday.

With my car poised to connect up the two batteries, I decided to give Rachel's car the opportunity to start and it did – first time. I was amazed. I put her car on the drive and connected up the battery charger, which I removed later on, after it had charged up the battery.

Meanwhile, I put my car across the top of the drive, ready for grocery shopping tomorrow.

I came in for lunch and did not feel well again. My internals were very painful and I spent the first half of the afternoon dealing with Meaco. I had not heard anything from the company after I had submitted the fault report after repeated C1 errors. This time, the device had stopped with a C3 error. I sent the after-sales department an ultimatum, giving them a week to sort out the problem.

There was a fairly quick response. They were going to ship me a new dehumidifier. Meanwhile, they wanted the old one back and arranged collection tomorrow. I replied informing them there would be no-one in tomorrow and I would reschedule the collection, which I did, for Monday.

I also submitted an entry on Trustpilot. I quite liked the DD8L Zambezi dehumidifier and when it was running it was excellent, ideal for a conservatory which was very cold overnight, being a desiccant model. Unfortunately, while the manual advises that error codes C1, C2, C3 and C4 should be reported to Meaco, the company needed a significant nudge to do anything with the information, which involved taking three pictures to upload, providing the serial number when it was clearly in one of the pictures and uploading the proof of purchase when I bought it from the company. All they had to do was to look at their sales records. Meaco really needed to shake up their customer, after-sales service.

I started to process the TV recordings I had for the past few days. I felt dreadful and cold and wrapped myself up in warm clothing and a blanket even though the central-heating was on and I managed to fall asleep for a few short periods.

As tea-time beckoned, I had no appetite and didn't eat much. As the evening wore on, I started to feel a little better and looked forward to bedtime.

Friday, 19th January 2024

I had an early morning text message from DPD saying that my replacement dehumidifier would be delivered today, so I changed that to Monday as well.

I took Jenny grocery shopping at Unicorn in Chorlton and I slept in the car while she gathered up what she wanted.

We came back along the scenic route, through Manchester, calling to collect Rachel from her flat, before heading for Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park. Rachel and Jenny went shopping and I slept in the car again.

I managed a tea of seabass and salad.

Most of my aches and pains had subsided considerably except for my stomach and I had a good night's sleep.

Saturday, 20th January 2024

I spent my day in my chair planning the TV recordings for the coming week. I managed to complete the week's worth of the various series we watched but only up to and including Tuesday for other programmes, leaving the remaining three days until tomorrow.

Jenny and Rachel started sorting out the small, front bedroom and briefly needed my advice. The plan had been to enlist Matthew's help to carry the bed-settee from the conservatory to the back bedroom but he was ill as well, so neither of us was in any fit state to lift it.

I still wasn't eating a lot and tea comprised a small portion of venison and salad.

Over the last couple of days, I noticed I had been a bit unsteady on my feet and I thought my vertigo was back.

Sunday, 21st January 2024

I had planned to do some jumble at the old school but I was still too ill.

I found enough work to do on the laptop. I also gave Rachel a little help with connecting up her TV in the back bedroom but it did not detect an aerial cable was connected. We added the DVD player/TV recorder and that did scan the channels but not all of them. I wasn't really feeling well enough to sort it out so I left it until I was better.

Monday, 22nd January 2024

I decided it was time to consult a professional about my health and telephoned the Greenmount surgery at 8 a.m. I was 4th in the queue even though the lines had just opened. I thought it was going to take about 40 minutes to reach someone but it took less than half that time and a very helpful lady took my details and symptoms, offering me a telephone conversation with Dr Ali, for whom I was going to ask.

Dr Ali telephoned me and we discussed my symptoms in more detail. He asked me if I would like to see him for a consultation. I said "Yes please".

I saw Dr Ali around lunchtime. I thought I was early for the appointment but he saw me more or less straight away.

After a discussion about my symptoms in more detail and some preliminary tests I received a thorough examination on the table.

The good news was that there did not seem to be any internal damage. The bad news was that Dr Ali believed I was suffering from an infection of the norovirus and that caused dehydration, which can affect the brain in a similar way to vertigo. There was no cure. The only option was to allow the virus to run its course and to keep my fluid intake up, which I had been doing. He expected me to be better towards the end of the month.

I was relieved that my fall in York and lifting the bathroom door had not caused any permanent damage.

Apart from the late morning stroll, I had concentrated on PC work again.

Over the last few weeks we had watched a lot of recorded programmes and they needed tidying up. That process came to an abrupt halt at the first hurdle, in that one of my discs was having problems. I decided to run “chkdsk /f /v /r” which was supposed to find any issues and fix them where possible, with a running commentary.

I started that at about 3:30 p.m. and it was going fine until it reached stage 4 – Looking for bad clusters in user data. 2 hours later, it still had another 12 hours to run.

Tidying my discs was shelved for today.

Tuesday, 23rd January 2024

We had to be up reasonably early because Jenny had a dental check-up at 9:40. We were about to leave, with no time to spare, when a DPD delivery arrived. I had asked Rachel to deal with it but Jenny insisted on getting out of the car and opening the front door for the parcel to be delivered. That left me two minutes to reach Holcombe Brook, which could be done, given light traffic and no obstruction.

I took the quickest route, via Bolton Road West. That worked well until the traffic lights at the village, with no right turn into Longsight Road due to some work at the electricity sub-station. I had to drop Jenny off at the Hare and Hounds so she could walk across the road and another 50 paces or so to the surgery. Meanwhile, I drove back down to Greenmount and approached Holcombe Brook via Longsight Road, parking in the precinct as I had intended.

I had brought a CD to which I could listen while Jenny was otherwise occupied, except the CD case was empty. I settled for watching what I could see of the activity at the power sub-station through the wet windscreen, using the wipers now and again to clear the raindrops.

What a wonderful day this was thus far.

I saw Jenny leaving the surgery, so I put on the car's headlights and then I rang her mobile to tell her where I was. She spotted the car, came across and then went into the co-op store for next week's Radio Times. I turned off the car lights until she came back.

Safely home, I looked at the disk check results and there were no problems. I looked at the Windows 11 built-in disk analysis and none of the disks needed defragmenting. All my disks were automatically and regularly optimised.

I carried on tidying up the watched TV programmes.

Wednesday, 24th January 2024

It seemed it would be another day of wearing out my tatty armchair. The norovirus was still disrupting my brain and I was thinking of charging it a month's rent.

Guess what I was going to do today. Here's a clue: Absolutely everything on part of a green field (3,3).

According to the doctor, I had another week of this tiredness and discomfort.

I spent a while trying to sort out access to my BT account. I had an online chat for a while with a helpful person, who finally sorted out my log in. Unfortunately, I had asked her if I could use a different user name and that worked fine but I couldn't see any details. To do that I had to supply the account name, which was easy and a bill reference number. Since I couldn't access my account, I couldn't see any bills. It was a catch-22 situation and I gave up.

I had a look at fitting the spare thermostat to the radiator in the back bedroom. It would not fit on the valve.

Someone dropped off the second key to the old dungeon in Tottington.

Thursday, 25th January 2024

After a night with a migraine, I was not exactly eager to leave my bed but things needed doing.

I spent the day working on the laptop.

Friday, 26th January 2024

We were in Ramsbottom for most of the day. Jenny had her hair appointment and I spent a couple of hours asleep in the car. We bought a few items from Plentiful and obtained a refund for items we had ordered and for which we had pre-paid because they were no longer available. We also toured the charity shops.

Saturday, 27th January 2024

It was Jenny's birthday and we would have been going out for a meal had I not been poorly. My appetite did seem to be returning and I was eating more but I was still not 100%.

As it was, I drove Jenny and Rachel to the Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park so they could stock up with groceries.

Sunday, 28th January 2024

I had planned on tackling some of the electrical jumble in the old school while Jenny and Rachel went walked down to the garden centre in Summerseat for a wander round the store and lunch.

In the event, I didn't feel well enough to go out and I spent the day working on my family research.

Monday, 29th January 2024

It was almost lunchtime before I had finished the routine jobs of pot washing and cleaning the cooker hob and worktops in the kitchen.

I had slotted in a bit of filing of receipts and the payment of my car tax which I kept forgetting to do.

After lunch, I started trying to clear my desk in the conservatory by scanning and filing a load of documents, mostly relating to the bathroom refit in December.

Tuesday, 30th January 2024

We were working in the garage most of the day, tidying up the car boot stock. We moved a lot of boxes around, the end result being the removal of the old adjustable beds from the far front corner of the garage, the laying and levelling an old piece of worktop in that large space we had created and then stacking the sorted car booty from floor to ceiling.

There was still a lot to do but at least we managed to push the trailer, with rubbish for the tip in it, into the garage and the car boot was full of car booty we no longer wanted, which was destined for the old school.

Wednesday, 31st January 2024

It was another day in the garage, this time concentrating on the back end.