

PARISH NEWS

July/August 2024



Martin Jezzard

Priors Hardwick * Wormleighton * Priors Marston

PRIORS HARDWICK WITH PRIORS MARSTON AND WORMLEIGHTON

part of The Bridges Group of Parishes www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk

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PARISH COUNCIL: <http://www.priorsmarston.org/parish-council/>

THE PRIORS HALL: Barbara Harvey 01327 260709

info.thepriorsshall@gmail.com (Bookings)

PRIORS SCHOOL: <http://www.thepriorsschool.co.uk/>

ST.LAWRENCE SCHOOL: <http://www.stlawrenceprimaryschool.co.uk/>

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SPORTS CLUB: Elton James priorssports@gmail.com

TENNIS CLUB: priorstennis@yahoo.co.uk

FEEDBACK WELCOME – What do you like about the Parish News? What do you hate? Are there things you would like to see more or less of? Feel free to let me know.

Helen, Editor. hlnmnzs@gmail.com

FUNDING THE PARISH NEWS

If you would like to contribute towards the cost of printing the Parish News in cash, please place in an envelope and give to the volunteer who delivers your magazine, anyone named in the box on page 2 or hand in at the Post Office in the Priors Hall. If you prefer to contribute electronically, you can use the QR code shown or, for direct transfers, bank details are as follows:-

Account name: Priors Marston PCC

Sort code 30-98-97

Account number 80353963.

Please reference your donation as 'Parish News'.



Your support is appreciated.

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PARISH NEWS DEADLINES: Helen Menezes [01327 261222](tel:01327261222)

hlnmnzs@gmail.com Hillside House, Keys Lane, Priors Marston, Southam, CV47 7SA. **Deadline for inclusion, 15th of the month before** (except for January and August magazines, which are combined with the December and July issues respectively).

PARISH NEWS PDF: You can read the Parish News in PDF format, by sending a request to the editor – hlnmnzs@gmail.com. You can also read the latest edition on the Priors Marston Parish Council website <http://www.priorsmarston.org>

Disclaimer: Please note that views expressed in articles in The Parish News are the views of the authors.

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PRIORS HARDWICK WEBSITE

You can keep up-to-date with what's going on in and around Priors Hardwick here:- <http://www.priorshardwick.org.uk>

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PRIORS MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL

VILLAGE COMMUNICATION

If you would like to be added to the village email list, to keep up to date with village news, or are new to Priors Marston and would like a copy of the Parish Plan, please email the Clerk, emma@priorsmarston.org

The Parish Council also has a Facebook page - please find us @Priors Marston parish council.

www.priorsmarston.org



priorsmarstonparishcouncil

Coffee and Chat!

The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

Please note the dates!

Thursdays 11th July

1st August

10am – 11.30



July Special!

Video scenes from

Priors Marston village life!

PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

**Wednesday 17th July 2024
7.30 p.m.**

Venue: The Priors Hall, Priors Marston
Speaker: Lis Mann

Lis will be telling us about her life and her work with embroidery with her talk called 'Thread Running Through'

AUGUST – NO MEETING

At our May meeting, we discussed and voted on the Resolution. The Resolution process in the WI is a long-established way for the members to lobby Parliament about matters which concern everyone. This year, the Resolution we voted on was to make more NHS Dentists available, so that there is affordable dental healthcare for all. Some of the previous Resolutions have included: the Keep Britain Tidy campaign; in 1943 Equal Pay for Equal Work; in 1964 Stop smoking in public places and in 1971 the WI called for research into the production of disintegrating plastic packaging materials and the effects it has on animals and the environment. And we all thought plastic was a problem of the new century!

Visitors and new members are always very welcome.
Come and see what happens in your local WI.

Contact:	Jane Cowen	07979 550202
	Fiona Spencer	01327 263423



THE PRIORS HALL

New committee members needed. If you are interested, please email Lee Robinson at priorscinema@gmail.com

The Priors Hall serves Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston. It is available for meetings and functions. Please contact Barbara Harvey, 01327 260709, info.thepriorsshall@gmail.com, to book, or for more information. The hire rate is £20.00 per hour, with a village rate of £15.00 per hour. Hiring for longer periods is possible, subject to availability - the rates depend on precisely what is required. Two local businesses are based in offices at the Hall, as well as hairdressing and post office.

Current activities include:-

Lacey's His and Hers Hairdressing: Tuesday to Saturday, by appointment, 01327 263330 and 07733 102564.

Post Office: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm and 2.00 - 4.00 pm, 01327 261743.

Table Tennis: Tuesdays at 7.30pm. All welcome. No equipment or skill needed. Just £2. Come along and have some fun.

Play Group: Wednesday mornings. eleonorwakeford@outlook.com

Women's Institute: Meet on the third Wednesday of the month, 7.30 pm.

Coffee & Chat: Meet on the first Thursday of the month, 10.00 - 11.30 am.

Film Nights: Film nights are on the third Friday of the month, from September to May, at 7.30 pm. priorscinema@gmail.com Lee Robinson, 01327 263268.

Badminton, darts, short mat bowls and table tennis equipment are available for use. The hall committee is always pleased to hear from people with ideas for new activities and events.

Air Ambulance: A clothing bank is situated in the car park of The Priors Hall, for donations.

TIME...

... in the form of St. Leonard's Tower Clockface, is bright and clean and easy on the eye as so many pass by on the pathways next to the Tower.

The clock face has been cleaned and is ready for the summer season in memory of the late Neil Justice.

Many will remember the delightful Neil for many different reasons. As the tutor to those still in education, he was always fun, respected and revered for his patient approach, making learning a pleasure and a lasting memory. We were all grateful for the offerings of fruit and vegetables in season, left at the end of the garden for us to collect and make a difference to any meal.

Not everyone perhaps was aware of his love of clocks and timepieces. His generous family and loved ones, therefore, for this reason, decided to undertake the cleaning of the Church Clock in his memory. What a delightful and appropriate gift to remember such a lovely man and a gift for which St. Leonard's is most appreciative and grateful.

PROTECT OUR HISTORY

There are many reasons for giving and all are special in some way.

St. Leonard's Church has been most fortunate of late to receive gifts in memory of loved ones and of special occasions to be remembered.

Any gift is special and equally of great value to St. Leonard's, which, with its own particular place in the history of Priors Marston, has so many reasons to be supported in this way.

There still remain so many aspects of this loved historic building which require costly attention and there are diverse and different ways in which donations for upkeep and maintenance are helpful to keep this great building available for the benefit of the parishioners and others.

Any St. Leonard's PCC member will be available with information and to answer questions if you wish to help keep this beautiful old building alive and open to everyone. Please contact the PCC if you would like to donate or scan the QR code below.



FROM YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS FOR BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON, FENNY COMPTON AND NAPTON WARD

General Election

As you will know, there is a General Election on 4 July 2024. In the pre-election period, Government departments and councils will observe discretion about making new major announcements or decisions that might influence voters. The pre-election period commenced on Thursday 30 May and will end when polls close on 4 July 2024. This Ward falls within the Kenilworth and Southam Parliamentary Constituency and the actual election will probably be supervised by officers from Warwick District, but the arrangement of electoral registration, polling stations etc. before the election will be managed by Stratford-on-Avon District Council 01789 260208.

Annual Meetings

It has been the time of year when all local Councils hold their annual meetings. Although in Stratford-on-Avon District there have been no routine elections, the District and Parishes decide who will be the Chairs and Vice Chairs of their Councils for the coming year. Parishes make an annual public report to residents, which is an opportunity for a two-way review between the Parish Council and residents in the local community. Normally, Natalie and Nigel attend regular Parish Councils individually according to diary - and geography - Natalie in the southern villages and Nigel in the northern ones. For these annual meetings, we have attended the Parish meetings together across the Ward, so we can best stay in touch with local communities. We think this is important for our joint two-councillor ward. We have attended together, Bishops Itchington, Napton, Fenny Compton, Priors Marston, Priors Hardwick, Farnborough, Avon Dassett, Shotteswell, and Warmington so far. Some meetings have been quite well attended by members of the public and community groups and it has been a pleasure to meet and talk with people.

At the District Council, there is a new Chair and Vice Chair, these being largely non-political civic roles representing the whole Council. The main decision-making body of the Council (rather like national government) is the Cabinet. A new Leader's statement has been published, which sets out changes to the Cabinet. Cllr George Cowcher (Wellesbourne South - Lib Dem) has been appointed the new Deputy Leader for Stratford-on-Avon District, stepping up from the Cabinet role he has performed over the past year. He will keep his Planning and Economic Development Portfolio. The other change is that Cllr Mike Rice (Henley - Lib Dem) has been appointed to the Cabinet with responsibility for Projects, Asset Management and Communications. Both of these changes result from Nigel Rock stepping down as Deputy Leader. He will, however, continue to chair the Local Plan Advisory Group as well as the Regulatory Committee, and of course continue as your Ward Councillor.

Cllr Juned, the Leader of Stratford-on-Avon District Council, said: "I would like to thank Nigel for his hard work and unflagging enthusiasm as Deputy Leader." Nigel has written to thank staff and councillors of all political parties for their support. Natalie Gist continues to serve on the Cabinet with responsibility for the Law and Governance Portfolio.

The Leader of the Council included the following summary in the statement: "It's been a year since we won the election and installed as the new administration for the District Council and we have achieved a great deal in that time. The Council adopted a new Council Plan; passed a prudent, but ambitious budget for initiating changes; funded 37 community projects; created a £100,000 Community Climate Change fund for parish councils, community and charity groups to undertake green initiatives and approved a new South Warwickshire Economic Development Strategy.

"Decisions have been taken on many projects, including safeguarding the Stratford Shopmobility service, maintaining UBUS assistance across the District, supporting medical and community facilities in Upper Lighthorne, investing in more Rural Crime Advisers and a more environmentally friendly grounds-maintenance contract, plus adopting new planning guidance for open spaces to address concerns about the private management companies. Going forward, we have changed the way we allocate public funds. We have moved from a bid-centred to an evidence-led process to better target money at providing infrastructure."

Stratford-on-Avon District Council Climate Change Fund

In November 2023, the Council's Climate Change Fund was established to invest in work to tackle climate change and allow the District Council to aid initiatives from community groups, charities and Town and Parish Councils to progress climate change agendas.

The successful projects put forward for the First Phase of the Community Climate Change Fund (CCCF) includes two projects in our Ward: for Napton, the replacement of sodium bulbs in floodlights with LED bulbs for the sports ground courts (£10,000) and Shotteswell Village Hall's bid to install a battery storage system to operate alongside the solar panel system (£2,500).

The first round of the Community Climate Change Fund had a budget of £50,000. The successful grants represent a combined total of £44,137 capital. The remaining £5,863 will be carried over to the second round of the Fund, where a total of £55,863 will be available to successful applicants. Dates for the second round are to be confirmed. The Community Climate Change Fund is one of a number of District Council initiatives which

aim to assist and work with local community groups and Town and Parish Councils, who want to address the climate and ecological emergencies. This is one of the aims of the Council Plan.

Additionally, the Council has managed to determine a £25,000 award for The Priors Hall in Priors Marston for energy improvement to be funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. (There are some other grants from that same fund for Town Centre improvements in Southam.)

Livestock Worrying

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Rural Crime Advisors are participating in '**Operation Recall**', a national initiative to raise awareness of livestock worrying and the potential for death and injury due to attacks by dogs on all kinds of animals, especially sheep. The District Council's team is visiting rural areas where dog attacks on livestock have already been reported, to discuss safe dog walking with members of the public and provide the National Sheep Association's [Enjoy your dog walks](#) information leaflet ([Sheep worrying leaflet \(stratford.gov.uk\)](#))

Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953, it is a criminal offence for a dog to actively worry livestock and dog owners risk prosecution. Whilst the majority of dog owners do walk their dogs in a responsible manner, unfortunately there are a small minority whose recklessness puts the welfare of other animals at risk.

Natalie says: "This is a significant initiative in a rural area like Stratford-on-Avon District, where livestock worrying is a perennial problem. It is important that the District Council's Rural Crime Advisors continue to build on the work they have already done with local communities last year and carry on taking an active role in Operation Recall."

If you would like further information or think your local area would benefit from a visit from the District Council's Rural Crime Advisors, Rebecca Jenkins and Alison Packer, or would like '[Operation Recall](#)' leaflets ([Op Recall - Leaflet A5 \(New Brand\).indd \(stratford.gov.uk\)](#)) to distribute in your local area, please email: community.safety@stratford-dc.gov.uk or visit [Rural Crime | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#) If you have livestock and would like a 'Dog on Lead' sign, please email: ruralwatch@warwickshire.police.uk. If you are having regular issues with livestock worrying near you and would like additional support, please get in contact with the Warwickshire Police Rural Crime Team at RuralCrimeTeam@warwickshire.police.uk

Cllr Natalie Gist Natalie.Gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Cllr Nigel Rock Nigel.Rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

Our Services: Sunday 2nd June was the first Sunday of the long succession of Sundays after Trinity Sunday, which last until Advent Sunday - 4 Sundays before Christmas, which in this year will be 3rd December. During this time there are no major festivals, so we try to liven things up with The Pet Service on 7th July, our Patronal Festival on 8th September, Harvest Festival on 13th October and Remembrance Sunday on 10th November. Please come and join us for as many of these services as you can!

Funeral: We were fortunate to have held the funeral here for Alec Moore of Priors Marston, who died at the age of 92. His parents and sister are already buried here. Alec was an Agricultural Contractor and a widely known and popular character in our area. He was brought to the church from Priors Marston on a trailer pulled by a very old but very well-turned-out Massey Ferguson tractor. About seventy people attended the service and we sang hymns related to harvest and nature. The Wake was held in the Priors Hall.

The Pet Service: This year will take place on The Green (weather permitting) on Sunday 7th July. All animals must be on leads, in cages or otherwise confined – or ridden! Dr Gerard Hyland will play the keyboard for a couple of well-known hymns; there will be a collection for Guide Dogs and refreshments will be served after the service.

Wedding: On Saturday 3rd August, Will Richardson, a former resident of the village, will wed his bride, Jess. The couple currently live in London. The Banns of Marriage, which need to be read on three Sundays before the wedding, will therefore be read for the first time at the beginning of the Pet Service, because we have no service here on 4th Sunday of the month.

The Church Building: As I write, we have a date of 18th June for laying the carpet at the back of the church - one more step forward in our improvement programme for the use of the church. The next target is a water supply, but that will involve rather more administrative preparation!

The Wheel Chair: For several years we have kept, under cover in the belfry, a relatively modern wheelchair, which is available on loan to anyone in need. It was recently used by Nathalie Bull when her father came to stay. After a good clean of the dust acquired in the belfry – even under its cover, Nathalie reported that it served very well indeed.

The Churchyard: With the somewhat perverse weather in May and June, we struggled with the grass in the Churchyard for a while, but fortunately, several people came to the rescue and we are very grateful indeed!

Radbourne Reburials: The documentation for this is now virtually complete and payment has been received. Very many thanks to Christopher Hodgson, who has patiently and diligently completed all the paperwork for this! The space reserved is on the north side of the chancel, near to the church wall, opposite Orchard House. Please check the notices on the village and Lychgate boards for any comments you wish to make, by 30th

June. As scientific research on the remains may still be required, no further progress is expected in the foreseeable future.

The Interregnum: Our advertisement for two House for Duty priests is now running again in The Church Times, with a closing date for applications of Friday 5th July at midday.

Donations in the Phone Box: Once more, donations for the Southam Food Bank have continued to arrive and are taken to Southam on Monday mornings. There is obviously still a very real need for these in the Southam Area, so very many thanks to the donors.

Used Stamps still come as well - some in small numbers some in envelopes stuffed full. Thank you all very much indeed!

We wish all our readers a very happy, refreshing and safe holiday.
Margaret Clarke for the PCC



ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON Flower Rota

Please contact Kate Morgan on 260617 if you would like to help with flowers.

7 th /14 th July	Kim Morgan
21 st /28 th July	Clare Fulford
4 th /11 th August	Kate Morgan
18 th /25 th August	Lesley Hayward

If you would like to help with cleaning, we meet on the first Saturday of every month at 10.00am in St Leonard's, to clean the church, enjoy coffee, biscuits and a chat!

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, PRIORS HARDWICK Cleaning/Flower Rota

7 th /14 th July	Gail Holland/Gail Holland
21 st /28 th July	Jenny Hoban/Ann Ukleja
4 th /11 th August	Margaret Clarke/Margaret Clarke
18 th /25 th August	Michelle Ratcliffe/Michelle Ratcliffe

The Bridges Group Church Services

July 2024

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	7 th July Trinity 6 Green	14 th July Trinity 7 Green	21 st July Trinity 8 Green	28 th July Trinity 9 Green
PRIORS HARDWICK	PET SERVICE 9.00am Banns	Evensong 5.00pm Banns	Holy Communion BCP 9.00am Banns	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	‘4 th Sunday’ 3.00pm TBC
WORMLEIGHTON				Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON	Holy Communion CW 10.30am Banns	Morning Worship 10.30am Banns	Holy Communion CW 10.30am Banns	Evensong 5.00pm
STOCKTON	Morning Worship Lay Led 10.30am	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am		Morning Worship Methodist Led 10.30am
LOWER SHUCKBURGH				Holy Communion BCP 9.00am

The Bridges Group Church Services

August 2024

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	4 th August Trinity 10 Green	11 th August Trinity 11 Green	18 th August Trinity 12 Green	25 th August Trinity 13 Green
PRIORS HARDWICK	Morning Worship 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	Holy Communion BCP 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	‘4 th Sunday’ 3.00pm TBC
WORMLEIGHTON				Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	No Service	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Evensong 5.00pm
STOCKTON	Morning Worship Lay Led 10.30am	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am		Holy Communion CW 10.30am
LOWER SHUCKBURGH				Holy Communion BCP 9.00am

The Bridges Group of Parishes

Notices

Programme for Children and Youth

Create & Play: Tuesday mornings from 9.30 - 10.45am (term-times) in Stockton Church
- for further details, contact: Deborah Dutton on 01926 819016 or

deborahduttoncreative@gmail.com

Babies & Toddlers Group: Monday mornings from 9.30 – 11.00am (term-times) in
Napton Village Hall - for further details, contact: Helen Eadon on 07811 010440

Messy Church – now on 3rd Sundays of the month at 4.00pm, venues to be confirmed.

Mid-week programme for Adults - Home Bible Study Groups

The following groups meet for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. If you would like to join, please contact a Group leader:

Every Wednesday at 8pm in Stockton	Wendy	01926 812694
	Rachel	07915 056184
1 st & 3 rd Thursdays at 2.30pm in Stockton	Jan	01926 817991
Every Thursday at 8.00pm in Napton	Julia	01926 811476
Weekly (day varies) at 7.30pm in Napton	Angie	01926 812225

Social get-togethers

Knit & Natter: Mondays at 2.00pm in Stockton Church	Jan	01926 817991
Knit & Natter: Mondays at 2.00pm in Napton	Jayne	01926 813227

Parish enquiries

For initial enquiries about baptisms, weddings, funerals and graveyard matters etc., please contact Susan, our Group Administrator, on 01926 812383 or email: admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk. Please note that Susan works part-time, but she will get back to you as quickly as she can.

See elsewhere in the magazine for details of other church activities & events or visit our website: www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETING

The next Village Meeting is
at 7.30pm in the Church on
Thursday 25th July.

FOOD BANK

Non-perishable and 'in date' items may be left in the telephone box in
Priors Hardwick. Toiletries are also welcome.

Donations are taken to the Food Bank at Southam, which is open on
Mondays (except Bank Holidays)
between 11.00am and 1.00pm. The Food Bank is run and regulated by
THE TRUSSELL TRUST
which provides emergency food and support
to people in crisis.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT HS2 ACTIVITY

Freephone 08081 434 434
You speak to a real person!

LIBRARY SERVICE

The mobile library service to the village has been discontinued. However,
the volunteer-operated personal delivery
library service for the housebound does still operate.

Contact details are:

01926 851031 and: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries>

DEFIBRILLATOR

Several village residents will have completed the 2½ hour
training in use of the Defibrillator on Friday 14th July.
Please look out for further information.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

The boxes for collection of used stamps are in the church at Priors
Marston and in the phone box at Priors Hardwick. They are clearly
labelled. Please leave your stamps singly or 'in bulk.' The box in Priors
Hardwick is emptied every day.

WEATHER JOTTINGS MAY 2024

Total rainfall for May 2024 came to 70mm, bringing the total for the year so far to 426mm. This made 2024 the second wettest year to date after 2014, when we'd received 490mm by the end of May - and that year ended up the third wettest this century (911mm) after 2007 with 911mm and 2012 with 1,054mm. The driest May was 2020 with 2mm followed by 2019 - 35mm. Average rainfall for May this century until 2022 was 58.7mm.

The first half of the month was quite dry, with 11mm falling on Friday 3rd, when it rained all day with a temperature of only 14°C. We received a further 5mm overnight on Monday 14th and 2mm on Thursday 16th, when light rain fell from 11.00am until 5.00pm. A heavy storm on Monday 6th had added 0.5mm.

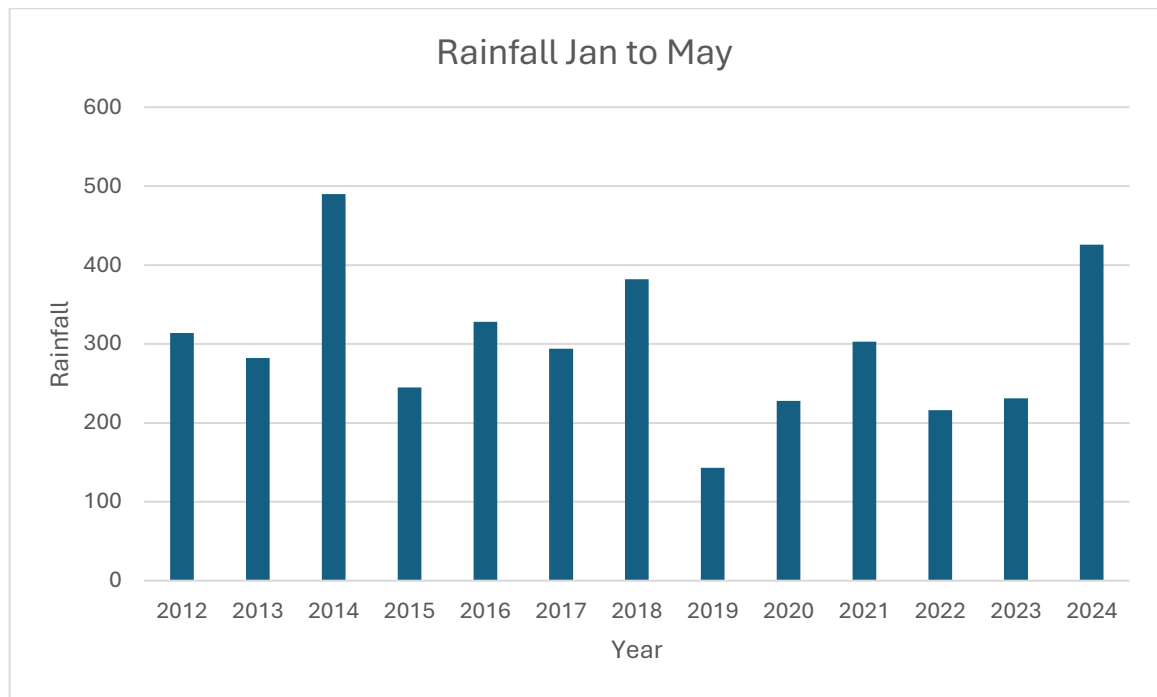
The second half of the month included two distinctly very wet episodes. On Tuesday 21st, it began to rain lightly at about 6.00pm and then overnight and through Wednesday 22nd until about 7.00pm. Some of this rain was quite heavy and the result was 36mm, very nearly 1mm per hour, which would have been an acceptable amount for a full month!

Sunday 26th brought another brief spell of wet weather. There were heavy showers morning and evening producing 3.5mm, and a rainbow during the evening rain. Monday 27th brought more heavy showers and thunder with 3mm of rain and there were more heavy showers on Tuesday 28th, which brought 4mm. Further rain on the evening of Thursday 30th followed showers during the day amounting to another 5mm.


Temperatures during the month seemed on the cool side, possibly because of the frequent NE breeze. From mid-teens °C at the beginning of the month, they rose gradually to a high of 26°C for just one day on Sunday 12th, before falling off again, down to 14°C on 23rd and 24th. Saturday 25th - the beginning of the Late Spring Bank Holiday - was a beautiful sunny day, before thunder and rain on the Sunday and Monday, with temperatures below 20°C. The month ended on 16°C, a bit below average for the month.

General official assessment of the month's weather was that once more average May temperatures exceeded previous records, but that this was mainly due to higher overnight temperatures. There were no frosts.


Interesting to note that in 2014, I wrote "May 2014 completed the third warmest spring since Met. Office records began"!



Margaret Clarke



Priors Between the Covers



Hi, do you enjoy reading or listening to books? Do you feel you would like to expand your reading knowledge, make new friends, go out on field trips?

Then the Priors Between the Covers Book Club is for you.

Do you have a book you think you would like to share?

Do you want read or listen to books you may never have picked up?

Do you want to go on field trips to discover some of the local and not so local areas that inspired a book you loved? Then join us!!

Meeting 1st Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm.

Venue The Hollybush Inn, Priors Marston.

Contact Dawn for more information at [dagosing70@gmail.com](mailto:dagosling70@gmail.com)



GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

Your local Hardy Plant Specialists

The results of the endlessly wet winter are that some plants have been saturated for too long and are now dying, including some roses, a viburnum and a ceanothus. Inevitably, these were ideal conditions for slugs to breed and everyone is now plagued with them. They are destroying many plants which I'd normally say are bomb proof. Asters are dwindling, lupins are shredded, even some clematis have been eaten down to the ground. I've tried beer traps, which were more or less ignored, bought some eco friendly slug pellets with slightly better results and most effective is the bucket of soapy water into which I put any slugs or snails I find lurking under pots. There are also plenty of toads, frogs and birds, which I hope are doing their bit to reduce the problem. I wonder what your best remedy is?

There are other things to do if you have any time left after hunting these pests.

Pick peas and beans before they get too big; pick sweet peas to help get more flowers rather than letting them set seed; take cuttings of shrubs such as mock orange and physocarpus; dead-head roses or cut flowering stems to take into the house to encourage more flowers; early potatoes can be harvested; bearded iris can be split up and the old rhizomes discarded. Arrange for a friend or neighbour to water your plants while you are on holiday.

Christine Dakin Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton
www.bridge-nursery.co.uk ¼ mile from Crossroads Garage – look for our
Tourist Sign

NATURE NOTES

July will be a very important month for the natural world this year

Firstly, after the long drawn-out cold, wet spring, everything is struggling. Flowering trees and plants have been slow to bloom, insects have consequently been slow to appear and birds need insects to feed to their young – even the seed-eating birds feed their young insects until their digestive systems are mature enough to digest their parent's diet. As summer progresses, it would be good to see conditions improving allowing the wildlife to play catch-up and thrive. It's already too late for the bird species who only have one brood per year – Blue Tits and Great Tits for example. Several nest boxes, which I monitor, were found this year with young, abandoned presumably when the parents either could not find enough food to bring them, or were not quick enough with the food supply and the young died of cold. I hope in the weeks to come, the birds attempting second or even third broods, find the food they need and have the warmth essential for their chicks to survive in the nest.

Secondly, the upcoming election will take place. I am not a very political person and I have no intention of discussing it here BUT, and it is a BIG BUT, whoever you support or are discussing your vote with, PLEASE, PLEASE, ask them to consider the natural world in their plans and work in the future. It seems that there is not nearly enough about the environment and climate change in any of the party manifestos. Whether it is big, national plans, or small and local plans, this is needed to get us where we need to be for life on this planet to survive.

And lastly, please would you let me know if your Swallows and House Martins came back this year. Numbers have been dwindling for the last few years, but it seems that they came back very, very late and/or in smaller numbers than ever this year. I would love to know of any in the villages please.

As ever, please feel free to keep in touch on any local wildlife matters.

Helen Franklin, The Latch, Holly Bush Lane, Priors Marston

helen_franklin@talk21.com Mob – 07794 909699

PRIORS TENNIS



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