

PARISH NEWS

October 2024



Wormleighton – Priors Marston – Priors Hardwick

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/>

WOMENS INSTITUTE: Jane Cowan 07979 550202

Fiona Spencer 01327 263423

FILM NIGHT: Lee Robinson 01327 263268 priorscinema@gmail.com

SPORTS CLUB: Elton James priorssportsclub@gmail.com

TENNIS CLUB: priorstennis@yahoo.co.uk

Dear Reader,

This month, Christine would like your ideas for dealing with wildlife eating her garden (Gardening Jottings). Paul Hobday has sent a photograph of the bell-ringers at St Mary's, Priors Hardwick. There is more news on curlews from Helen Franklin (Nature Notes). As ever, your ideas, suggestions and feedback are welcome.

Helen, Editor. hlnmnzs@gmail.com

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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

Wormleighton Harvest Lunch



6th October 12:30pm for 1:00pm

Tickets £12 adults £8 children (5-16)

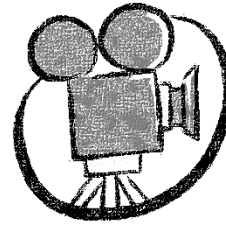
All profits go towards the upkeep of
St Peter's Church

For tickets please message:
treasurer.wormleightonpcc@gmail.com

BYO booze

Tickets will be on sale until
23rd September 2024

Film Nights at The Priors Hall



Friday 18 October

Dark Waters

Year of Release: 2019 Certificate 12 Running Time: 2 hrs 6 mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

Film starts at 7:30pm

In this legal thriller based on a true story, a tenacious lawyer uncovers a dark secret that connects a growing number of unexplained deaths to one of the world's largest corporations. While trying to expose the truth, he soon finds himself risking his future, his family and his own life.

Cast includes: *Mark Ruffalo, Anne Hathaway, Tim Robbins and Bill Pullman*

- Free tea, coffee and biscuits are served in the interval.
- Please feel free to bring your own refreshments.
- You may be glad to know that we have upgraded the old plastic chairs to upholstered ones, but you still might want to bring a cushion to enhance your viewing experience.
- There is no charge for admission, but there is a collection box for voluntary donations towards our costs.

If you have any questions or wish to receive e-mail updates

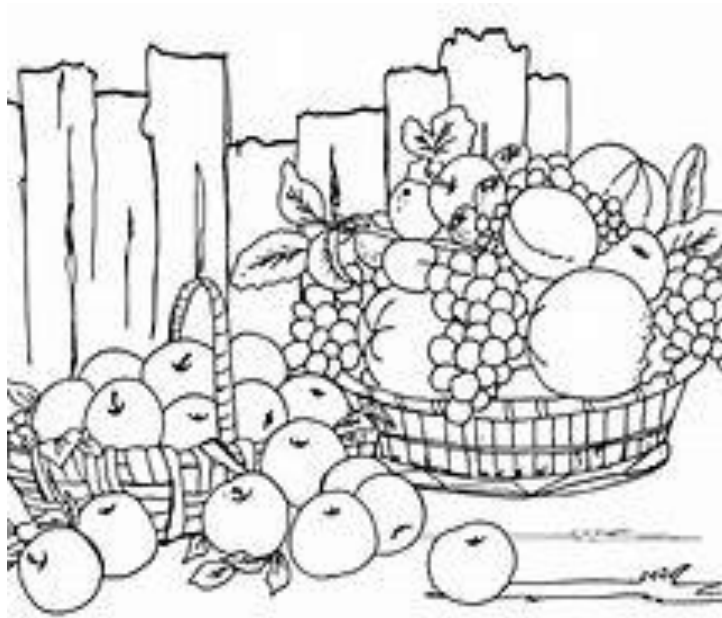
Contact The Priors Cinema Team at:

priorscinema@gmail.com

You can also call Lee Robinson Tel: 01327 263268

You are invited to

Harvest Thanksgiving



PRIORS MARSTON CHURCH

Sunday 20th October
10.30 am

Followed by refreshments

**Please bring a Harvest gift suitable for a Food Bank
(A packet or a tin)**

Coffee and Chat!

The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

Thursday 3rd October

10am – 11.30



**Please remember an item for the
foodbank!**



ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON Flower Rota

6th/13th October

Barbara Flint

20th/27th October

Jo Rawlings

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

6th October

Jennie Vendries/Jennie Vendries

13th/20th October

Miriam Price/Caroline Wilson

27th October/3rd November

Elaine Hacker/Elaine Hacker

PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

Wednesday 16th October 2024

7.30p.m.

Venue: The Priors Hall

Annual Meeting

This will be our Annual Meeting night where we will vote for a new committee for the coming year and supper will be provided by the outgoing committee.

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We would love to welcome any new committee members. It is always great to have some new ideas to keep our WI moving forward. If you would like to join the committee please have a chat with one of the current committee members.

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 are always welcome. If you are interested, please email Lee Robinson at priorscinema@gmail.com

LATEST NEWS

Solar panels have been installed on the Hall roof and Wi-Fi has been installed on the premises.

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.

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.

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SAVE THE DATE

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

WITH

SOUTHAM MELODY MAKERS

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2024

AT 6PM

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON, CV47 7RR

EVERYONE WELCOME

FURTHER DETAILS NEARER THE TIME

The Priors Hall
Notice of Annual General Meeting
Monday, 28th October 2024, 7.00pm

The Annual General Meeting of The Priors Hall will take place on Monday 28th **October 2024 at 7.00pm**, in the main hall.

This will be a business meeting to present the officers' reports and audited accounts for the 2023-2024 financial year, and to elect trustees for the forthcoming year.

This is an opportunity for residents of Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston to hear about the work done in the past financial year, current activities and plans for the future, including solar panels and improved heating.

The current trustees would also like to invite other villagers to get involved as users, service providers and trustees of this valuable and well-used community asset.

We look forward to seeing you there, but if you can't make it and would like to know more about what goes on at the Hall, please contact Lee Robinson (Chair): 01327 263268, priorscinema@gmail.com

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of Last AGM
4. Chair's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Appointment of Auditor
7. Election of Trustees
8. Any other business

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

Severn Trent

Nigel has been keeping in touch with Severn Trent over recent months, as various renewals have proceeded around Napton and Shuckburgh, and also from Rugby. Whilst the work to avoid future disruptions due to bursts and low pressure is needed, much disruption has been involved. Not all of the work has been done in a way that has been the best for local residents and businesses. Nigel has been asking for a meeting with Severn Trent which took place on 10 September. Nigel and Napton Parish Councillor Ian Williams heard about the remaining work to cross under the canal at Holt Road (this might be delayed until next spring) and a new ancillary pump at the top of Napton hill (for which timing was unknown). We raised concerns about signage, road closures, diversions and damage to verges and ditches. Wider area work to the supply pipe from Kites Hardwick continues, whilst locally the pipe renewal from Napton to Shuckburgh also continues, but we have been promised better monitoring of the highway traffic control on the A425 and improved signage for any future work.

Winter Fuel Allowance

There has been much publicity about the cut to payment of winter fuel allowance, which will now only be paid to pensioners on low incomes, mainly those who get pension credit. Nationally, an estimated 880,000 eligible pensioners don't claim pension credit who could. You can check if you are eligible on the government's web site: www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator or there is a help line: 0800 99 1234. The Citizens Advice Bureau can also help. www.casouthwarwickshire.org.uk 0808 250 5715.

If you would like independent advice on saving energy, the District Council provides this service. Call Act on Energy 0800 988 2881. www.stratford.gov.uk/people-communities/energy-warmth.cfm

Annual Canvass

Stratford-on-Avon District residents are being urged to check their electoral registration details or risk losing their chance to vote on decisions that affect them.

The annual canvass allows Stratford-on-Avon District Council to keep the electoral register up to date, to identify who risks losing their voice at elections, and to encourage them to register before it's too late.

If you're not currently registered, your name will not appear in the messages we send. If you want to register, the easiest way is [online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

Recent home-movers in particular are urged to check their details. Electoral Commission research has found that recent home-movers are less likely to be registered than those who have lived at the same address for a long time. In Great Britain, 92% of those who have lived in their home for 16 years will be registered, compared with 36% of people who have lived at an address for less than a year.

Information on registering to vote is available on the [Electoral Commission website](#).

Residents with questions about their registration status can contact their local council's electoral services team at elections@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Community Safety

Tuesday 10 September 2024 saw World Suicide Prevention Day. The theme this year was changing the narrative on suicide, with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of reducing the stigma around mental health and encouraging conversations to help to prevent suicides. Local residents and those in the Farming Community here will be aware of 'Len's Lights', and the work done to raise awareness and remembering the loss of young farmer Len Eadon. Len's Lights raised funds for Papyrus, the Farm Safety Foundation and The Farm Community Network. We attach a list of charities who are available to help – for everyone, whether you feel that the help is for you, or you are supporting a loved one.

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

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

Suicide Prevention Organisations

General

Samaritans - Call free day or night: 116 123 - www.samaritans.org
jo@samaritans.org

Young People

Papyrus – Prevention of young suicide - confidential 24/7 call: 0800 068 4141 or text 07860 039 967

www.papyrus-uk.org pat@papyrus-uk.org

Cameron Grant Memorial Trust Free, confidential, 24/7 support, Text CAM to 85258

www.camgrant.org.uk info@camgrant.org.uk

Farming Community

RABI – Helping farming people - 24/7 helpline: 0800 188 4444

www.rabi.org.uk caroline.harrison@rabi.org.uk

The Farm Community Network fcn.org.uk Help line 07:00 – 11:00pm 03000 111 999

Farm Safety Foundation www.yellowwellies.org

Military Veterans

Veterans' Mental Health, Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service

If you are in crisis or need urgent help, please go to A&E or contact your GP and ask to be seen by the mental health liaison team. Alternatively call 24/7 helpline: 0300 323 0139

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POPPY APPEAL 2024 PRIORS HARDWICK

The opportunity to donate to this appeal will be available at any of the October / November church services or from your usual volunteers:

either Isobel Davies or Mark Suddens

Arrangements have been made for the ordering of wreaths, so they are available for the November Act of Remembrance.

Should you require a wooden cross for a grave, please contact Isobel or Mark, for other information please contact me.....

Margaret Ingman, Honorary P.A.O. for Napton & District

The Poppy Appeal Campaign runs from October 17th to November 9th.

Further information will appear in the November issue of this magazine.

PRIORS MARSTON *venues to be confirmed*

Poppies will be available, during their respective business opening hours at The Holly Bush and at Lacey's Hairdressing salon.

THE CEDAR TREE



We very much regret having to close off the North side of the churchyard of St Leonard's Church in Priors Marston.

The recent branch fall is the third in the last two years. It occurred when there was neither the weight of snow on the branches nor a strong wind. Therefore, we have had to take measures to reduce the chances of a further fall endangering lives.

We have applied to the County authorities for a formal inspection and assessment, but at the time of writing there has been no response. We are looking at all possible ways of overcoming this problem.

May we respectfully remind you not to walk along either of the paths. If you do so, it is at your own risk.

Priors Marston Parish Church Council (PCC)

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

The Patronal Festival This was a great success, and we received many comments of appreciation. The actual date of the birth of the Virgin Mary is celebrated on 8th September, thus this year falling on the day itself. Our church bells were re-hung in 1924 but we're not sure of the precise date – probably a bit later in the year, as the bill was only paid on 31st December 1924! 45 people attended the service.

The service was in three parts: Firstly, the celebration of our Patron Saint, for which we used a shortened form of the Evensong Service. This service was first devised by Archbishop Cranmer in 1549 then updated by King Charles II in 1662. Our oldest bell was cast in 1560 and the other two were cast in 1670 in Cropredy, so our bells were 'in tune' with the language we were using. This part of the service involved a lot of participation from the congregation and, with the service sheets, this went very well. It was wonderful to have so many people actively engaged and we read the last prayer together as well!

The second part of the service was the celebration of the bells – as well, of course, of the ringing before and after the service, for which we are very grateful for the help of people outside the village, now that Paul Hobday is now the only village person fit and strong enough. The handbell ringers were with us and they had already learnt the tune for a bellringers' hymn, but on this occasion and after a couple of practices, the organ joined the handbells – and so did the congregation! I think that must have been a 'First' in the history of our church, if not in the Diocese! Paul gave us information about the history of the bells, and their different notes, as reported in last month's magazine, then we heard a poem on 'The Bells of long ago', offered prayers for bells, bellringers and those they call, followed by the final hymn 'Now thank we all our God' to end the service.

The third part was the refreshments – using our new area – and during this time Christopher Hodgson gave a brief resume of the work which had been done recently inside and outside the church, and the next project which is to provide a water supply to the church. There was also a display of items relevant to the history of the bells, including details of the estimate for the re-hanging - (transport to and from the re-hanging works in Kidlington, by rail via Fenny Compton station) and a small piece of wood from the wheel of the Treble bell which had broken while being rung for a wedding in 2001!

Our next 'special' celebration will be the **Harvest Festival, on Sunday 13th October**
For this service we shall follow the same order of service as in past years, with

several people taking part – and of course the popular Harvest Festival hymns! We shall decorate the church with flowers and invite you to donate harvest gifts of dry food, tins and packets which will be taken to the food bank in Southam, in due course. The Food Bank tends to become overwhelmed with gifts from many Harvest Festivals in and around Southam and storage space is limited, but don't let that reduce your enthusiasm – given time, we can cope!!!

The Churchyard Once again, our sincere thanks to the volunteers who have kept the churchyard in such wonderful condition during the past month. It really is a privilege to see the churchyard in such good condition. There are, however, small tasks that could also make a difference such as removing the ivy which is appearing on a few headstones, and tidying the very small areas where even the smallest mower can't go!! Please feel free!

The Interregnum At the time of writing, we are considering a different approach. We have been offered some financial support from the Diocese if we advertise for a stipendiary priest. This would increase our costs, of course, but not massively, and we'd be likely to attract better applicants. Several unknown factors are also attached to this plan. So, please watch this space!

Donations in the phone box This has produced some amazing surprises during the past month! Although the Food Bank can only accept items which are well in date, any which arrive by mistake can be found a home elsewhere.

Used Stamps And still the stamps arrive!! Thank you all so much. I'm so fortunate to have a friend in Byfield who is always ready to trim and sort them – UK from foreign, so sending them off is no great effort! Were on our way to filling the next A4 envelope!!

Margaret Clarke for the PCC

ST MARY the VIRGIN, PRIORS HARDWICK.

The three bells in this church were rung on Sunday September 8th 2024, as part of the Patronal Service Evensong and to commemorate one hundred years since the bells of this parish were re-hung.

Ringers taking part were: Paul Hobday, Tower captain, Margaret Ingman, Karen Colvin, John Thorne & Jennifer Thorne.

Methods rung: Plain Hunt & St. Remigius.

From left to right,

John Thorne, Karen Colvin, Jennifer Thorne, Paul Hobday, Margaret Ingman.



The Bridges Group Church Services

October 2024

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	6 th October Trinity 19 Green	13 th October Trinity 20 Green	20 th October Trinity 21 Green	27 th October Last after Trinity Green
PRIORS HARDWICK	Morning Worship 9.00am	Harvest Festival 6.00pm	BCP Holy Communion 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	
WORMLEIGHTON				Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	NO SERVICE	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Evensong 5.00pm
STOCKTON	Morning Worship Lay Led 10.30am	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am		CW Holy Communion 10.30am
LOWER SHUCKBURGH				BCP Holy Communion 9.00am

PRIORS SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

MEMBERS BAR NOW OPEN

5PM-9PM EVERY FRIDAY FROM 13TH SEPT



BOTTLED BEER FROM £3
WINE £4/GLASS £14/BOTTLE
PROSECCO £4.50/GLASS £15/BOTTLE
SPIRITS FROM £3.75
NON ALCOHOLIC OPTIONS & SOFT
DRINKS AVAILABLE

To ensure the club's success, the best way to show your support is by becoming a member & using the club.

This will help us fund ongoing improvements such as introducing draught beer & improving the current facilities. Thank you!!



Annual Membership
Available
On The Night

£25 per household
£15 per individual

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 the Vicar or a Group leader:

Every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Stockton	Wendy	01926 812694
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 NEWS

VILLAGE MEETING

The next Priors Hardwick Village Meeting will be held at 7.30pm in the Church on Thursday 24th October

MOWING IN PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE CENTRE

Sadly, Pete Brown has had to give up mowing the areas around the War Memorial and in front of the churchyard wall. We are very grateful to Alan Kinnear who has volunteered To take on this work, for the time being

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 11.00 am 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!

THANK-YOU!

Very many thanks to Gill Kinnear, our Village Chairman, and all in her team who contributed to the Family and Friends GetTogether on Saturday 14th September. Even the weather was well under control!! It certainly was a very successful event.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

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.

NATURE NOTES

Well, autumn has arrived - as I write this it is the middle of September - and the temperature outside has not yet reached 10°C!!

Many of you will be aware that I belong to a small group who have studied Curlews in this area under the guidance of the national group The Curlew Recovery Project. This initiative came to our attention when the Banbury Ornithological Society became involved a couple of years ago, in order to try to improve the fortunes of the Curlew making nesting attempts in the countryside around Banburyshire. Follow the links following this article for further information.

In early spring, Curlew return inland, from the coast where they have spent the winter on mudflats, where ice and snow have not prevented them digging for food. They look for nesting sites in grassland, which in the Cherwell valley are often fields in the river floodplain. Around us, they have made nesting attempts in the permanent grassland either being grazed or grown to cut for silage.

Over the last couple of years, a small group of birdwatchers have variously heard or seen Curlew half way along the road between here and Napton, down in the valley below the village of Priors Hardwick – sadly rather close to the HS2 working at Lower Radbourne, along the canal towpath between Marston Doles and the Folly at Napton and along the road between Marston Doles and Chapel Green.

In 2022, a pair chose a field along the Doles Road to nest in and the farmer kindly allowed us to place an electric fence around the nest, which successfully protected it from predators and three chicks fledged. This year, Curlews were seen and heard far and wide during early surveys, then as time drew closer to the nesting season (usually in April) a pair were seen displaying in fields near the canal and also chasing off a fox, which may indicate that they had started nesting there. Then, after many hours watching and waiting, birds were again observed chasing Crows (again a sign they have chosen a nest site) further up the road closer to Napton. We watched with a telescope from a suitable distance and were pretty sure we knew exactly where the nest was located in the grass, but sadly, when we came back to fence the nest, it held 2 eggs, but they had been eaten, the nest cup was scraped out and the eggs smashed.

Although birds were seen around for several weeks afterwards, we do not think there were any further nesting attempts. We shall have to wait for next summer to see if birds return and try again anywhere nearby.

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



<https://www.curlewrecoveryproject.co.uk/>

<http://www.banburyornithologicalsociety.org.uk/>

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WEATHER JOTTINGS AUGUST 2024

Total rainfall for August 2024 was 54mm – somewhat below the average for the month this century, which is 68.5mm. For the first fifteen years of this century, it was 70mm. The wettest August was in 2004 with 168mm of rain – the wettest month of all since 1998. The driest August was in 2003 with 8.5mm and next came August last year with 12mm.

Most of the rain, 33.5mm, fell during the first half of the month, but this only affected five days. The month began with 1 mm of rain early in the day, but this was followed by a thunderstorm between 6.30 and 7.15pm.

Most of the 25mm of rain fell during the first 30 minutes. It was truly torrential! We had a further 2.5mm on Tuesday 6th, with the remaining 5mm coming on three days during the week beginning Sunday 11th.

The second half of the month brought 20.5mm, and 14mm of this fell on Saturday 24th from the early hours until about 1.00pm. This was the tail-end of Storm Lilian which didn't turn out to be as disruptive as had been anticipated. Nevertheless, it did give us a

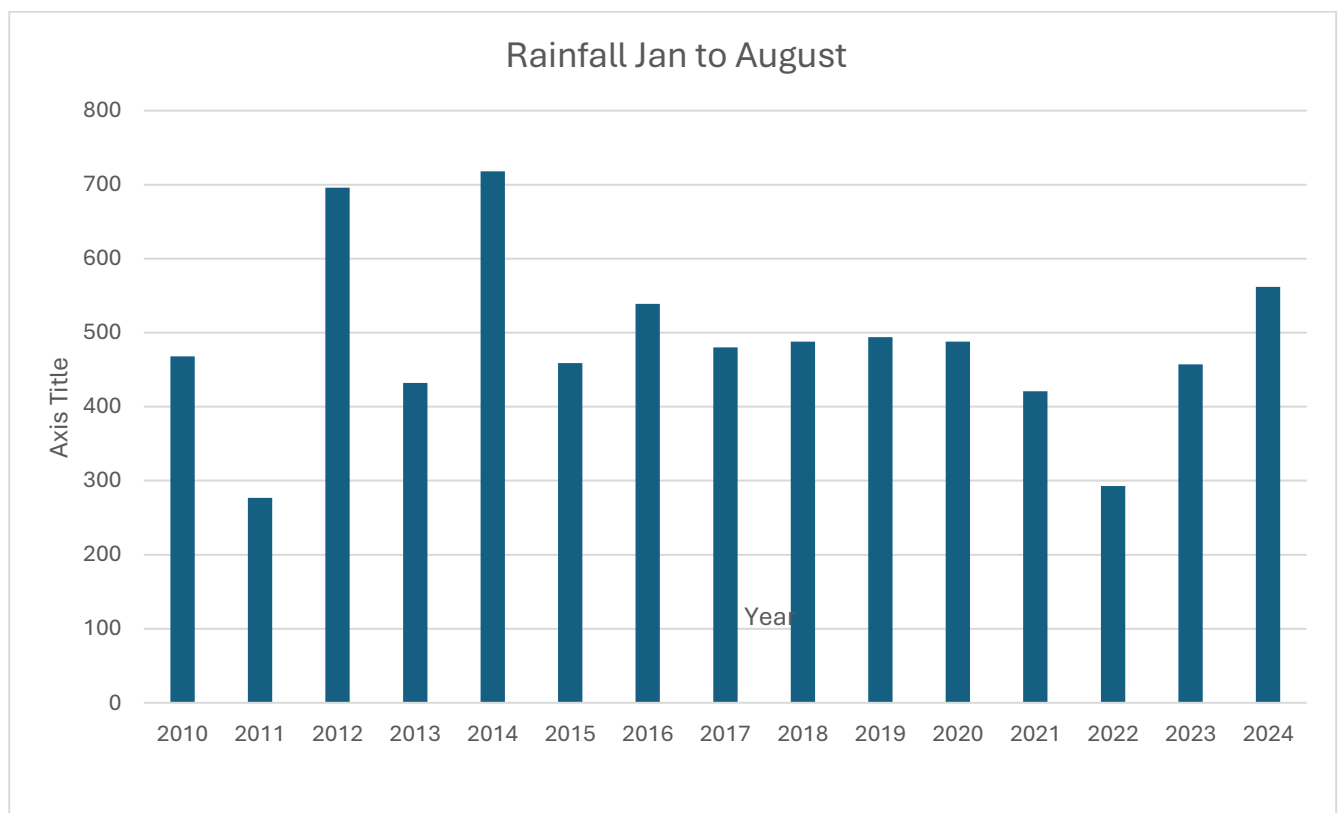
few rather windy days, which at this time of year, with most trees still in full leaf, can cause problems. The remaining rainfall came in 4 mm over 19th and 20th, 2mm on Friday, 23rd and 0.5mm of light rain early on Wednesday 28th.

Temperatures on the whole were disappointing. August began with three warm, sunny days at 25°C and 26°C. Then we had to wait until Sunday 11th for 25°C again and that was followed by Monday 12th at 28°C and Tuesday 13th at 26°C. Then, once again, we were back to levels below 25°C. The second half of the month was even cooler – below 25°C from Wednesday 21st until Sunday 25th, with only 17°C on Saturday 24th.

Wednesday 28th saw 24°C but then temperatures fell away again until 20°C on Saturday 31st. Summer had come in very small doses!

The official comment on the weather from the Met Office for summer 2024 was that it was the coolest the UK has seen in nearly a decade. The average summer temperature was 14.37°C, as northerly winds brought cold Arctic air to the country. This is 0.22°C below the UK long-term average between 1991 and 2020. The last time the average summer temperature was this low was in 2015. In spite of the rather grey weather, the UK had 5% less rainfall than average, although Scotland was particularly wet and England rather dry.

Margaret Clarke





GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

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Gardening to encourage wildlife is something I'm often speaking about, but the time has come when I've reached my limits. The appearance of a pair of roe deer has capped any issues with slugs, snails and rabbits. They are extremely destructive and are nibbling their way through the plants quite determinedly. Apparently, there are just five different plants which aren't to their liking. Fencing the site isn't an option, but I will try everything else I possibly can, including waving my arms and swearing loudly at them whenever I see them. Any suggestions to deter them will be most welcome.

Meanwhile, I have almost done my bulb order and will have fritillaries, camassia, alliums and anemones to pot up ready for spring/summer sales next year.

I hear the phrase 'putting the garden to bed' quite often. My approach is that this is a time to get a lot done right through the winter, if the weather is okay. It can be such a good time to prune, plant new plants, move things, remove things and divide things. The soil will be warm, roots can get established and there is generally less clutter, meaning you can see what needs to be done more easily. Happy autumn/winter gardening everyone!

Christine Dakin

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