

PARISH NEWS  
December 2024/January 2025



Priors Marston - Priors Hardwick - Wormleighton

PRIORS HARDWICK WITH PRIORS MARSTON AND WORMLEIGHTON

*part of The Bridges Group of Parishes* [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk)

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Dear Reader,

This issue has an article from Howard Tissiman on the Commonwealth War Graves in St. Leonard's Churchyard. A longer version is available from me, if you would like some more detail. Feedback on articles is always welcome.

Helen, Editor. [hlnmnzs@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:hlnmnzs@gmail.com) Hillside House, Keys Lane, Priors Marston, Southam, CV47 7SA. Deadline for inclusion, 15<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto:emma@priorsmarston.org)

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

[www.priorsmarston.org](http://www.priorsmarston.org)



priorsmarstonparishcouncil



## **REPORT FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

Father Christmas with Southam Lions will be visiting Priors Marston on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December on his way to the North Pole.

Thanks to The Holly Bush, he will be stopping off at their car park at 5.30pm to give his reindeer a rest. He will then leave for Napton.

Please listen and look out for him!

## LATEST PRIORS MARSTON CHURCHYARD CEDAR TREE UPDATE



We have permission from Stratford District Council to remove the dangerous branches from the substantial cedar tree on the north side of the churchyard. The tree professional is scheduled to do the work between Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 inclusive.

Meanwhile, there is a serious and continuing risk of those branches giving way and falling onto the ground immediately below the tree canopy. For health and safety reasons, the north side of the churchyard will remain taped off and closed to all pedestrians until further notice to avoid exposing people to the danger area.

**ST LEONARD'S CHURCH PCC**

16<sup>th</sup> November 2024



## **Commonwealth War Graves in St Leonard's Church Priors Marston:**

### **Helen Elizabeth Russell and Tommy Hart**

On Remembrance Sunday, about 65 residents of Priors Marston met at the War memorial for a service of remembrance for the 11 men from Priors Marston who died as a result of the First World War. The names of each of those men was included on the Roll of Honour read out as part of the service.

We have no one listed on the war memorial at Priors Marston who died in the Second World War and this, in part, may be down to the fact that a large proportion of young people in Priors Marston would have worked on the land at that time and farmers and agricultural workers were exempted from military service as they worked in a 'reserved occupation'.

However, we have in St Leonard's Churchyard two Commonwealth War Graves. One is from the First World War, Tommy Hart, whose name is engraved on the War Memorial and has an 'official war grave' grave marker in the south west corner of the churchyard. The second is from the Second World War, Helen Elizabeth Russell, who has a Commonwealth War Grave with a private headstone to the west north west of the church tower.

Commonwealth War Graves commemorate the men and women of the Commonwealth military or auxiliary forces who lost their lives during the

official dates of World War One (4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 1921 (when the war was officially declared to be over by Act of Parliament)) and World War Two (3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1947). The graves are recorded and maintained by the Commonwealth War Grave Commission (CWGC), which is an inter-governmental organisation consisting of six member states (UK, Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, and South Africa) whose principal function is to mark, record, and maintain the graves and places of commemoration of Commonwealth Nations military services who died in the two world wars. All the graves are recorded in the CWGC 'Debt of Honour Register', which has over 1.7 million entries, including Helen Elizabeth Russell, who was born in, and is buried in, Priors Marston. They include people killed in action, died of wounds, died of illness and accident and include those who died of suicide, homicide and judicial execution.

Helen joined the ATS at Mons Barracks in Aldershot in 1939 and gave her birth year as 1896 (seven years younger than her true birth date of 1889) so that she just fell inside the upper age limit of 43. In reality, she was 50. She must have looked a strange figure on the parade ground as all the other entrants at that time were aged between 21 and 25, but she obviously did well in the service as she became a warrant officer class 2 CSM, company sergeant major, with a service number of W/12756. She died whilst still serving in the ATS on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1945 and therefore qualified for an official Commonwealth War Grave and for her name to be engraved on a war memorial. At the time of her death, her address was Maybury House, The Ridge, Woking, which is a large Victorian building now converted into flats, but was no doubt requisitioned by the ATS at the time. However, she died in Rugby Emergency Hospital, so may have been staying with her family when she was admitted to hospital. The cause of death was carcinoma of the lung (lung cancer). The 1946 Probate records indicate that she owned 'Turvens' in Byfield, that she never married and that she left an estate valued at £4163 10s 11d (some £250,000 in today's money). Her executors were her sister Mary and her brother Joseph.



Helen's name is recorded on the Byfield War Memorial as she owned a house there when she died. However, as she was born in Priors Marston, lived much of her life here and is buried in our churchyard in a CWGC recognized war grave, then perhaps we could change the tradition of just including the 11 names from our war memorial (3 of whom also did not die of war wounds) and mention her alongside the First World War fatalities on the roll of honour read out as part of the Remembrance Sunday service.

Howard Tissiman with thanks to Shirley Monkhouse.

This is edited from the longer article Howard contributed. If you would like a copy of the full version, let me know and I will send you a copy (Ed).

#### **A MESSAGE FROM JO THURLEY**

Following the sad passing of my husband, Richard (Dick) Thurley, on 21<sup>st</sup> October, I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their very kind thoughts and expressions of condolence which were gratefully received.

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, Susan Barnes conducted a beautiful memorial service in Dick's honour at the Priors Village Hall, which was attended by Dick's closest family and friends. Lovely words were spoken, talking of Dick's love for fishing, motor biking, enjoying time in the pub with friends and the wonderful role he played as a Dad.

Special thanks go to Susan and also to Matt Barnes for the wonderful catering and to those who helped in making the day happen.

Dick will be greatly missed by many, but his smile and positive influence will last forever.

Thank you,

Jo

# **Festive Coffee & Chat!**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

**10 am – Noon**

*Seasonal refreshments*

*Please bring an item for the raffle &  
Something Christmassy for the Food  
Bank!*

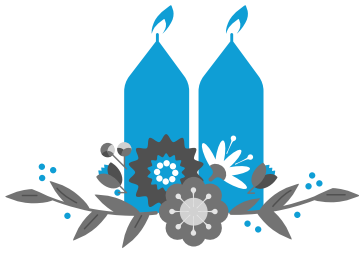
*Please RSVP as soon as possible*

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***PLEASE NOTE THE NEXT  
DATE!!***

***Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January***

**10 am – 11.30 am**



**“CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT”**  
**WITH THE LADIES CHOIR**  
**‘SOUTHAM MELODY MAKERS’**

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**SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

**AT 6PM**

**ST LEONARD’S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON, CV47 7RR**  
**ALL WELCOME TO SING ALONG OR JUST LISTEN, IT’S UP**  
**TO YOU**

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**SEASONAL REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE**  
**ALL DONATIONS APPRECIATED AND GO TOWARDS THE UPKEEP OF**  
**ST LEONARD’S CHURCH**

# Report from Your District Councillors

## State of the District

At the last Council meeting (14 October), the state of the District was reported upon in terms of information from different sources. It covers many different areas from health to the economy, not all of which Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) can influence. It is important to note that the figures included in the report are from the most recent data available, and reference to events happening at the Council refer to the year ending 31 March 2024 for the most part. We have selected some highlights.

**The population** of Stratford-on-Avon District in mid-2023 was 141,929. It is estimated to have increased by 16.8% between 2013-2023. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> highest growth seen out of all local authorities in England and Wales, with the average growth being 6.9%. Population density mid-2023 was estimated to be 145 people per km<sup>2</sup>. This places SDC in the 20% least densely populated local authorities. The population is heavily weighted towards the older age groups, with almost half the district's population - 47% - aged 50 or older.

**The median house price** for the District was £375,000 in the year to end March 2023, 27% above the Warwickshire median of £295,000, and 29% above the England median of £290,000. The median house price in the District has risen £130,000 or 53% over ten years since the end of March 2013. In comparison, according to the Bank of England inflation calculator, inflation over that ten-year period is estimated to total 34%. The average median house price increase between 2013 and 2023 across all England and Wales authorities was 65%; Stratford-on-Avon therefore saw below-average median house price growth, falling in the bottom quarter of all authorities.

The Ratio of House Prices to Earnings was reported to be the highest ratio in the West Midlands region, making homes more expensive relative to earnings both in the region and in England.

The median overall **monthly private rent** payable in the District in the year to end-March 2023 was £875. This was the third highest rent across the West Midlands, with Solihull and Warwick higher at £950 and £945 respectively. Median rent has increased by £100, or 13%, since 2019.

**House Building.** A total net of 1,435 new dwellings were added to the housing stock in 2022/23. This was the highest figure of net completions of all district authorities in 2022-23. (South Cambridgeshire was second with 1,320 completions.)

**Affordable Housing** is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework such as Social Rent; Affordable Rent; Build to Rent and Rent to Buy; Discount Market homes; First Homes; Shared Ownership; and Shared equity. In 2022/23, affordable housing made up 38% of net new dwellings, corresponding to 540 out of the total of 1,435.

**Recorded Crimes.** The total number of recorded crimes in the District in the year to July 2024 was 7,904. This is a rate of 60 crimes per 1,000 people, which is the lowest rate across Warwickshire. This reflects a slight fall on the previous year when the rate was 63 crimes per 1,000 people.

**Employment.** In March 2024, 14% of the population aged between 16 and 64 years was classed as 'economically inactive', i.e. not in work or looking for work, due to retirement, being a student, being too sick to work or some other reason. Over three quarters of people in employment were classed as employed (77%), while 23% were classed as self-employed.

In August 2024, there were 1,740 residents claiming unemployment benefit in the District. These were evenly split between males and females.

The median gross weekly earnings in 2023 for full time workers who live in the District was £725.40. This was higher than the average for the West Midlands at £651.60, and that for Great Britain at £682.60. However, while both the West Midlands and Great British average wages have risen since 2023, those in Stratford-on-Avon have fallen slightly. Women's weekly

median pay was found to be 79% that of men. and the decrease in median wages for the District is driven by a fall in full time women's wages over the past year.

There are loads of other data in the report which runs to 40 pages. See this link: [https://democracy.stratford.gov.uk/documents/g6529/Public reports pack 14th-Oct-2024 14.00 Council.pdf?T=10](https://democracy.stratford.gov.uk/documents/g6529/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Oct-2024%2014.00%20Council.pdf?T=10)

### **Online updates**

The District Council now produces a short monthly online version of the 'View' magazine previously printed somewhat irregularly. You can subscribe to this by going to [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) and searching for 'online View'. You can also find your District Councillors' face book page by scanning this box:



Nigel Rock

Natalie Gist

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## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL 2024

### PRIORS HARDWICK

**The amount** raised for the Appeal, by donations, selling of crosses and a wreath plus the Remembrance Sunday Service collection amounted to **£724.24**

With **GRATEFUL THANKS TO**

Priors Hardwick residents, Priors Hardwick Church collection, Honesberie Shooting School and our loyal and supportive volunteer collectors, Isabel Davies and Mark Suddens.

### PRIORS MARSTON

**The amount** raised for the Appeal, by donations.

With **GRATEFUL THANKS TO**

Donna, Lacey's Hairdressing Salon **£94.45**

Church Bellringers (jointly Napton, Priors Hardwick, Priors Marston).  
**£50.00**

*Margaret Ingman,  
Honorary Poppy Appeal organiser for Napton & District,  
Registered number MGD20.*

**THE BRIDGES GROUP**  
**CHRISTMAS SERVICES ETC. 2024**

Saturday 30th Nov - Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	PRIORS HARDWICK	PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS - A FAMILY SERVICE FEATURING THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM 9.00am
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	NAPTON	CAROLS AT THE VICTORY CLUB
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	CAROLS AROUND THE VILLAGE. MEET 6.30pm AT CHURCH
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	PRIORS MARSTON	CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT WITH SOUTHAM MELODY MAKERS 6.00pm
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	NAPTON	CHRISTINGLE SERVICE 10.30am
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	WI CAROL SERVICE (TICKETED EVENT) 7.30pm
Saturday. 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	LOWER SHUCKBURGH	CHRISTMAS FETE 2.00pm
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	MESSY CHRISTINGLE – 4.00pm
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	NAPTON	SCHOOL END OF TERM CHRISTMAS SERVICE 9.30am
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	PRIORS HARDWICK	CAROLS AT THE LYCHGATE 5.30pm
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	WORMLEIGHTON	YOUNG FARMERS CAROL SERVICE, 7.30pm
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	STOCKTON	END OF TERM SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE 2pm
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec	PRIORS MARSTON	THE PRIORS SCHOOL END OF TERM CHRISTMAS SERVICE 12.00 noon
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	NAPTON	CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	PRIORS MARSTON	LESSONS AND CAROLS 6.00pm



### CHRISTMAS EVE

STOCKTON	CRIB SERVICE 4.00pm
STOCKTON	MIDNIGHT COMMUNION IN THE METHODIST TRADITION - 11.45pm MINCE PIES & MULLED WINE FROM 11.00pm
LOWER SHUCKBURGH	VILLAGE CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm FOLLOWED BY MINCE PIES AND MULLED WINE
PRIORS HARDWICK	VILLAGE CAROL SERVICE 6.00pm
NAPTON	MIDNIGHT COMMUNION 11.00pm

### CHRISTMAS DAY

WORMLEIGHTON	HOLY COMMUNION - BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER LED BY ARCHDEACON TIM COCKELL 9.00am
PRIORS MARSTON	FAMILY SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS 10.30am

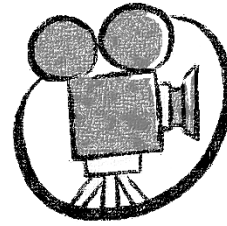
### SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

NAPTON	THE GATHERING HOLY COMMUNION LED BY REV DAVID HERBERT 10.30am
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### SUNDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025 - EPIPHANY

PRIORS HARDWICK	THE EPIPHANY - A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE - ESPECIALLY FAMILIES - FEATURING THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN 9.00am
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## Film Nights at The Priors Hall



**Friday 13 December**

### **The Holdovers**

*Year of Release: 2023   Certificate 15   Running Time: 2 hrs 13 mins*

**Doors Open at 7:00pm**

**Film starts at 7:30pm**

*Bittersweet comedy drama. It's the Christmas break at a New England boarding school in 1970 and a curmudgeonly teacher remains on campus to babysit a handful of students with nowhere to go. He soon forms an unlikely bond with a gifted but troubled pupil, and also with the school's head cook, who has just lost a son in the Vietnam War.*

**Cast includes:** Paul Giamatti, Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Dominic Sessa and Carrie Preston

**Friday 17 January**

## **Wonka**

*Year of Release: 2023   Certificate PG   Running Time: 1 hr 56 mins*

*Armed with nothing but a hatful of dreams, a young chocolatier manages to change the world, one delectable bite at a time.*

*Comedy musical telling the wondrous story of how a young and poor Willy Wonka became the world's greatest inventor, magician and chocolate-maker.*

**Cast includes:** Timothée Chalamet, Calah Lane, Rowan Atkinson, Olivia Colman, Jim Carter, Sally Hawkins, Matt Lucas and Hugh Grant

- Free tea, coffee and biscuits are served in the interval but please feel free to bring your own refreshments.
- 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](mailto:priorscinema@gmail.com)**

**You can also call Lee Robinson Tel: 01327 263268**

# **PRIORS MARSTON CHURCH**

**ST LEONARD'S CHURCH IS NORMALLY OPEN**

**10am – 4pm IN WINTER TIME**

**10am – 6pm IN SUMMER TIME**

## **CONTACTS:**

### **GENERAL ENQUIRIES:**

**MALCOLM MONKHOUSE**

**Tel/ text 07855 855 063 & [malcolm-asserity@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:malcolm-asserity@hotmail.co.uk)**

**ROBERT HOLLAND**

**Text: 07930 618 858 & [robertholland629@gmail.com](mailto:robertholland629@gmail.com)**

### **CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE and BURIAL PLOT ENQUIRIES:**

**BRETT SMITH**

**Tel/text: 07902 789 252 & [brett@meadowcare.biz](mailto:brett@meadowcare.biz)**

### **FAMILY HISTORY ENQUIRIES:**

**SHIRLEY MONKHOUSE**

**Tel/text 07870 685 124 & [s.a.monkhouse@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:s.a.monkhouse@hotmail.co.uk)**

### **FIND A GRAVE:**

**THERE IS AN INDEX OF GRAVES INSIDE THE CHURCH BY THE  
BLUE DISPLAY BOARD**

### **BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS, FUNERALS AND BURIALS:**

**SUSAN HOLLOWAY**

**[admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk](mailto:admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk)**

**TRADITIONAL LESSONS  
AND CAROLS  
PRIORS MARSTON CHURCH  
SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER**



**6pm**

**FOLLOWED BY REFRESHMENTS**

## **PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

**7.30p.m.**

**Venue:** The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

**Meeting:** Bob Clucas & His Band

Come & enjoy some festive cheer with Bob & his band to start your Christmas season.

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**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**7.30pm**

**Venue:** The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

**Meeting:** CPR Skills with Alexandra McCurdie-Baughan

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At our October meeting, we held our AGM. We said goodbye to one committee member but welcomed a new committee member for the coming year and we wish them well on this new experience. We were treated to a delicious supper from the outgoing committee. Our little grey cells were tested by Jane Cowen's quiz and we all enjoyed a good catch-up with friends.

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

Contact:	Jane Cowen	07979 550202
	Fiona Spencer	01327 263423



## THE PRIORS HALL

New committee members are needed. If you are interested, please email Lee Robinson at [priorscinema@gmail.com](mailto:priorscinema@gmail.com)

LATEST NEWS New funding to improve heating has been raised – we will keep you informed of progress Wi-Fi now available.

The Priors Hall serves Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston. It is available for meetings and functions. Please contact Barbara Harvey, 01327 260709, [info.thepriorshall@gmail.com](mailto:info.thepriorshall@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 upstairs at the Hall, as well as hairdressing and post office downstairs.

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. [eleanorwakeford@outlook.com](mailto:eleanorwakeford@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](mailto: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.

## **FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN**

### Our Services

#### Harvest Festival

The church was beautifully decorated with flowers, food, fruit and vegetables, and our hymns, readings prayers and thoughts all contributed to our wonder and thanksgiving for all the gifts of the natural world. We noted that many vegetables look like the parts of the body they nourish, for instance carrots, if you look at the cross section, look a bit like an eye and carrots are good for the eyes. Tomatoes have 4 chambers and are red (mostly) and research shows that tomatoes are good for your heart; and so are grapes which hang in a cluster shaped like a heart! And many more as well. We discovered something that even many vicars didn't know! After the Feeding of the 5,000 the disciples collected up 12 baskets full of the left-overs, Jesus said so that nothing should be wasted. But what happened to that food? The disciples did as Jesus told them and went straight back across Lake Galilee where crowds were waiting for Jesus – so of course, those hungry crowds were given the food - no more than a few hours old! Was that the first Food Bank?

The handbell ringers played a harvest hymn plus other well-known tunes; families brought examples of various harvest gifts with prayers of thanks to the display; we sang the well-known harvest hymns and brought gifts of food to the altar. In all, about 20 people took part in some way. A collection was taken and half was sent to The Farming Community Network, for which we prayed in the service prayers, a sum of £157.25. Refreshments were served after the service in the new area at the back of the church. Huge thanks were offered all those who took part in any way. Almost 70 people were present at the service.

The gifts of dry food have now all been taken to the Food Bank in Southam and have been very warmly welcomed! The fresh fruit and veg. was offered in the Lychgate and gratefully accepted.

#### Remembrance Sunday

We met, 34 of us, at 9.00am at the War Memorial on a dull drizzly morning and followed the short service, which so many parishes would have been using up and down the land. We are very grateful to Ian and Carolyn Bath who brought to the Lychgate the portable sound system which they use to provide the Last Post and Reveille. (One person actually told me he'd looked for the bugler, it sounded so well!) We sang four verses of 'O God our help in ages past' and two verses of the National Anthem to end the service, both accompanied by the 'music machine'. Steve Webb, a new resident in the village, read out the names of the Fallen and laid the wreath.



Delicious refreshments were served after the service in the welcoming warmth and comfort of the new area at the back of the church, and many thanks to the ladies who provided, served and cleared up afterwards!

A collection was taken at the end of the service which amounted to £165. This was sent to the Royal British Legion, together with the collection from the village, making a grand total of £724.24.

### December Services

Our first service will be on 1<sup>st</sup> December, which is also the first Sunday of Advent. The altar frontals will be purple and the Advent Candle in its floral base will be lit. We shall celebrate in a special family service following Mary and Joseph as they made their way to Bethlehem. Then on 18<sup>th</sup> December, there will be informal carol singing at the Lychgate accompanied by the hymn machine at 5.30pm. Our usual Christmas Eve Carol service will be at 6.00pm and then on Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> January at 9.00am, we shall have our usual celebration of Epiphany with the coming of the Wise Men. Refreshments have now become a usual part of our celebrations!

### The Church Building

We are now in the process of making arrangements for the installation of a water supply. This involves our architect and the Diocese, and a meeting is to be held in church on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December to decide how this should be done and the way forward.

### The Churchyard

Once more, many thanks to those who have continued to cut the grass which has been growing rather more than it should have done recently. The last cutting turned out to be real challenge! We certainly have a churchyard to be proud of!

### Donations in the Phone Box

Thanks to the generosity of people who donated gifts of food at the Harvest Festival, in addition to the regular gifts in the phone box. I've taken a maximum 'consignment' for the last four weeks. I still meet people there waiting to receive food, and the volunteers working there are fully occupied.

### Used Stamps

These continue to arrive, mostly in small quantities but nevertheless very welcome. So very many thanks on behalf of the Guide Dogs Association.

We wish all our readers a very safe, happy and well-blessed Christmas and a healthy and successful year in 2025.

Margaret Clarke for the PCC

## The Bridges Group Church Services

**December 2024**

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

<b>The Bridges Group</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Dec Advent 1 Purple</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Dec Advent 2 Purple</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> Dec Advent 3 Purple</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Dec Advent 4 Purple</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE / DAY White</b>
Priors Hardwick	Prep. for Christmas Family Service 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	Holy Communion BCP 9.00am		<b>24<sup>th</sup></b> Carol Service 6.00pm
Priors Marston	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30.m	LESSONS & CAROLS 6.00PM	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b> Morning Worship 10.30am
Wormleighton			<u>18<sup>th</sup> Dec</u> Young Farmers CAROL SERVICE 7.30pm		<b>25<sup>th</sup></b> Holy Communion BCP 9.00am
Napton	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Christingle Service 10.30am	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm	<b>24<sup>th</sup></b> Midnight Communion CW 11.00
Stockton	CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am	Christingle Service 10.30am		<b>24<sup>th</sup></b> Crib Service 4.00pm <b>24<sup>th</sup></b> Midnight Communion 11.45pm Methodist Tradition
Lower Shuckburgh				Holy Communion BCP 9.00am	<b>24<sup>th</sup></b> CAROL SERVICE 4.00PM

NB SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER - THE GATHERING  
10.30AM HOLY COMMUNION CW AT 10.30AM NAPTON

## The Bridges Group Church Services

January 2025

BCP – Book of Common Prayer    CW – Common Worship

<b>THE BRIDGES GROUP</b>	<b>5th Jan Epiphany White</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Jan Epiphany 1 White</b>	<b>19th Jan Epiphany 2 White</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> Jan Epiphany 3 White</b>
Priors Hardwick	Family Service for Epiphany 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	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	Morning Worship 10.30am	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Evensong 5.00pm
Stockton	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am		CW Holy Communion 10.30am
Lower Shuckburgh				BCP Holy Communion 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](mailto: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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk)

## **Priors Events Committee – Update**

We would like to thank everyone for a fantastic night in October, kindly hosted by the Sports Club.

This raised over £450, which will be used to fund future events for our community!

### **Next Event - Christmas is coming!**



### **Priors Marston Christmas Lights**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December  
4:30 pm St. Leonards Church

Priors Events Committee are hosting the Priors Marston Light Switch-on this year and would like all of our community, friends and family to join us on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 4:30 pm.

We encourage people to make and decorate their own homemade lanterns for this event - this is your chance to recycle those jam jars! One of the lantern entrants will be chosen to switch on the village Christmas tree lights.

4:30 Meet at the church for mulled wine, mince pies, and refreshments for children  
5:00 Judging of the Lantern competition  
5:15 Walk down from the church with lanterns  
5:30 Christmas light switch-on

We would love to see all the village lit up, so the walk from the church is festive for all our community. If you'd like to join in, please switch your Christmas lights on early this evening.

Any donations of mulled wine, mince pies and children's cakes gratefully received.



## **PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE NEWS**

### **VILLAGE MEETING**

The next Village Meeting will be held at 7.30pm in the Church on Tuesday  
7<sup>th</sup> January.

### **REFUSE DISPOSAL COLLECTION DATES OVER CHRISTMAS**

Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	»	Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> December
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> December	»	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> December
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	»	Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> January
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	»	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January

There is now a now copy of the Collection dates on the Village notice board

### **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!

### **LIBRARY SERVICE**

A volunteer-operated personal delivery service for the housebound is available. Contact details are:

01926 851031 and: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries)

### **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.

## WEATHER JOTTINGS    OCTOBER 2024

October 2024 brought 72mm of rain – just below the average for October this century, of 79mm. The driest Octobers were in 2017 with 17mm and 2011 with 25mm. The wettest Octobers were in 2020 – 146mm and 2013 with 137mm.

Most of the rain - 68mm of it - fell during the first 20 days of the month, with only 7 days without rain; but from 21<sup>st</sup> onwards, there was brief rainfall on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of 1mm and then overnight on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> a further 3mm in total.

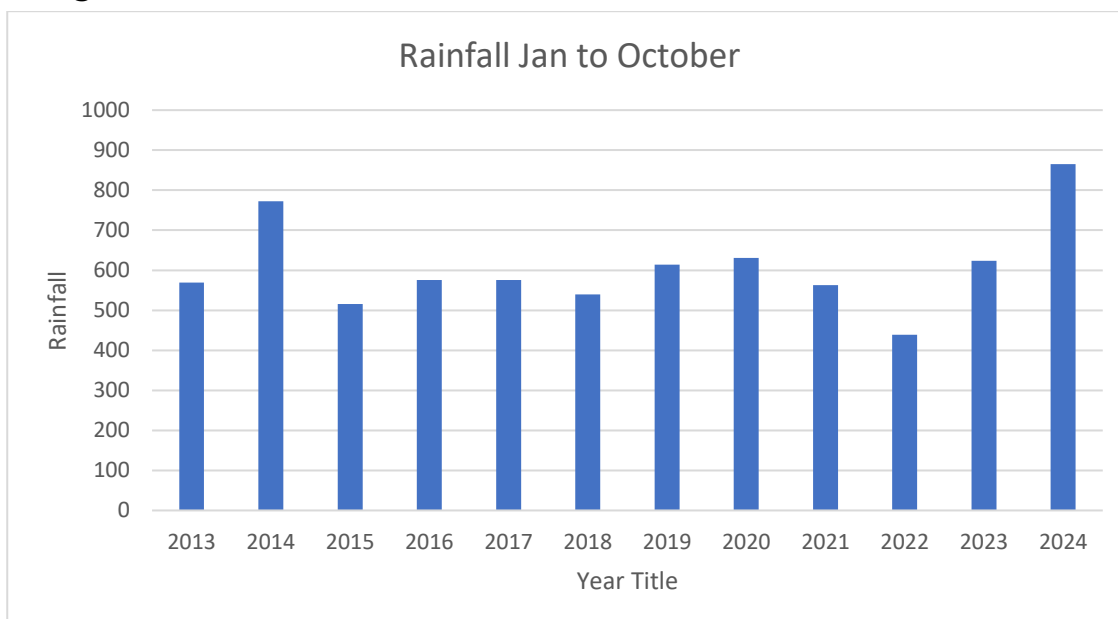
Most of the rain during those first 20 days came in small doses. The wettest 'day' was overnight between Friday and Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> (St Luke's Day) and 19<sup>th</sup> with 20mm, but with the days either side of it both fine and breezy. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> brought 15mm, beginning at about 3.00pm. Storm Ashley passed over during the early hours of Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>, but only produced 5mm of rain.

Temperatures for the whole month varied between 11°C and 17°C, somewhat above the average, but no longer exceeding the record.

The warmest days were 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, with 17°C. 18<sup>th</sup> October is St Luke's Day and is reputed for fine weather – "St Luke's little summer" and the coolest was Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> with 11°C.

There were frosts on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, but most of these were only very slight at about 7.00am in more exposed places. The month began with temperatures of 13°C and 14°C and ended in the same way.

Margaret Clarke





## GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

*Your local Hardy Plant Specialists*

Another year draws to a close and what a year it has been. The mostly abysmal weather has caused much annoyance and frustration. It has definitely affected plant sales and I know I'm not alone because the rep from the horticultural supplies company has confirmed that it is the same for many others in this business.

Grumble over, things don't seem so bad after 3 or 4 weeks of being able to work in the garden and tackle some neglected areas.

Do you remember the trend of growing living willow structures? People planted willow arches, domes, tunnels and so on. Over 25 years ago, we fell for it and started a willow dome. It looked good for a few years, although it needed a lot of time to weave and trim the fast growing stems. During the last few years, it had become a mess and much harder to keep the shape. I made the radical decision to chop it all down and start again. Masses of dead wood has been removed by my helper Sarah. Little of the original is left and that will soon be gone too. New rods will be stuck in the ground and it will then be much easier to control for the next few years. If you also have parts of the garden which are either out of control or not looking as good as you would like, don't be afraid of change, it can be very satisfying.

Seasons greetings to all those of you who read these ramblings.

Christine Dakin

Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton

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## ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON Flower Rota

22 <sup>nd</sup> /29 <sup>th</sup> December	Barbara Flint
5 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> January	Rosemary Nash
19 <sup>th</sup> /26 <sup>th</sup> January	Donna Winfield

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

1 <sup>st</sup> December	Ann Ukleja/Advent
8 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup> December	Candy Kelly/Advent
22 <sup>nd</sup> /29 <sup>th</sup> December	Rosemary Hobday/Gabrielle Hodgson
5 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup> January	Sue Talbot/Barbara Salwey
19 <sup>th</sup> /26 <sup>th</sup> January	Barbara Harvey/Barbara Harvey

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# *Paul King*

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