

PARISH NEWS
February 2025



Wormleighton - Priors Marston - Priors Hardwick

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

BEST. WISHES TO OLD FRIENDS, KATE AND MIKE MORGAN.

Now that Christmas is over perhaps it is time for a little reflection.

It will not take long for most of us to realise that our Village Christmas was not as complete as usual and yes, many of you will have guessed the reason too, we have spent this special time without two of our most treasured parishioners, namely Mike and Kate Morgan.

Mike came to Priors Marston in 1963 and Kate in 1970, following their wedding in Broadwell, Kate's home village. That is a long time to live in the same village and, of course, they have moved house a few times. Following their wedding they lived in Blackdown Cottage, moving on later to The Malt Kiln, where they made quite a few alterations and finally on the death of Mike's father to North Farm.

Mike and Kate have always been a big part of Priors Marston life. Their children Susie and Alister were born here and their early education was at the local School. Of course, by this time Kate was teaching again and her career took her to a number of local villages, including here at Priors Marston, Napton, Stockton, Byfield and Bishops Itchington to name just a few.

By this time, Mike was busy at North Farm with his farming business with a heavy emphasis on sheep and the 24 x 7 schedule which livestock demand.

Despite a busy family life at North Farm, they were always part of the local scene. Many will remember the plays at the North Farm Barn with local talent showing just what is possible. This was not all, Vintage Machinery Show went well, as well as Floats and Fetes, two of which were at The Manor. All raising money for the School improvements, the New Hall and St. Leonards Church. Mike was also Churchwarden for many years and had a major role in the sale of some church land to enable the improvements to be made at the rear of the church with the installation of a kitchen and toilet facilities.

With a hobby in horology, Mike took over the care of the St. Leonard's Clock and only gave up the weekly winding and impeccable maintenance when they moved to Suffolk in September. But it was not only the clock that came under Mike's care, the shrubs surrounding the building were always neatly clipped

and a close eye kept on the churchyard too. Mike was responsible for the churchyard records and was very helpful to grieving families when deciding on a location for the burial of a loved one.

Kate will not have enough fingers and toes to count the number of meals she has cooked for events, to say nothing of the yummy cakes and Christmas mince pies to die for!! Catering was not Kates only forte - she was in charge of the flower rota and herself produced beautiful arrangements, often with blooms from her own colourful garden, which she was on one occasion persuaded to open and served the required scones with homemade strawberry jam and cream – all for charity.

But most of all Mike and Kate were our very special friends. The door at North Farm was always open and we will for ever thank and remember them for such special friendship. We wish them well in their new home in Suffolk.

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ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON Flower Rota

2nd-9th February

Sue Butcher

16th/23rd February

Shirley Monkhouse

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

2nd/9th February

Lucie Penruddock/Miriam Price

16th/23rd February

Holly Marsh-Lazell/Holly Marsh-Lazell

Dear Reader,

Thanks to readers who showed an interest in Howard Tissiman's article on the Commonwealth War Graves in St. Leonard's Churchyard. Comments on any article and suggestions are, as ever, welcome.

A big thank you, too, to our advertisers, most of whom renew their ads in January. Without their contributions, we would certainly struggle to cover the cost of printing.

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 much appreciated, especially by those who prefer to read the magazine in print.

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PARISH NEWS DEADLINES: Helen Menezes ___ 01327 261222

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

PRIORS PLAYGROUND CONSULTATION



The Parish Council (PC) is in the early stages of a process looking into the full replacement of the playground. The current equipment was installed approximately 25 years ago and is approaching the end of its life.

As part of this process, the PC is keen to hear the opinions of everyone who currently uses the playground, or who may use it in the future, to ensure that its replacement meets the needs of the whole community.

The first stage is to gather general opinions and comments. There will then be a further consultation after three to four months regarding its design and development, with examples of possible installations, materials and surfacing.

The first stage of this consultation process is in the form of a questionnaire which we invite you to complete over the next few weeks. The following link will take you directly to the questionnaire and all responses will be anonymous: [.https://forms.gle/3AGPx4BiMpauDykbA](https://forms.gle/3AGPx4BiMpauDykbA)

The questionnaire link has been emailed to everyone on the email database and the school has sent it to all parents and carers directly. If you have not received one and would like to, please email emma@priorsmarston.org for the link or to request a paper copy.

Thank you for taking the time to give your opinions and insight at the beginning of this exciting project.

Priors Marston Parish Council

FATHER CHRISTMAS VISIT

Thank you to all who turned out to see Father Christmas when he visited the village on Friday 13th December with the Southam Lions. He really enjoyed his visit and said he will be coming back next year, because of all the nice children he met. The Elves would like to thank all the people who put some money in their tins for Children's Air Ambulance and Friendship Project. Thank you to the Hollybush for saving him a parking space.

DOT BROWN FOR THE SOUTHAM LIONS

TREE LIGHT-UP AND LANTERN PARADE

The Priors events committee would like to say a big thank you to all who helped make The Tree Light-Up and Lantern Parade such a happy occasion. The weather wasn't kind, so we met in the Church, where mulled wine, mince pies and hot chocolate were served. We all joined in with some Christmas Carols and the competition for best decorated jar was won by Seb (aged 6). We then walked down to the Green with our lanterns and Seb (ably assisted by Simon Ducker) switched on the tree lights. We would like to thank Malcolm & Shirley Monkhouse, all the ladies who baked and served the refreshments and Simon, who made sure the lights were ready and working for us again.

THE PRIORS EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Bridges Group Church Services

January 2025

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	2nd Feb Candlemas White	9th Feb 4th before Lent Green	16th Feb 3rd before Lent Green	23rd Feb 2nd before Lent Green
Priors Hardwick	Morning Worship 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		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 MARSTON CHURCHYARD CEDAR TREE UPDATE



Many thanks to the members of St. Leonard's Church Parochial Church Council, who have now had the dangerous branches from the cedar tree on the north side of the churchyard removed, making it safe for all of us to use the pathway again.

Priors Marston Church Contacts

St Leonard's Church is normally open between 10am and 4pm in winter time, and between 10am and 6pm in summer time. Contacts are:

General enquiries	Malcolm Monkhouse Robert Holland	Tel/ text 07855 855 063 & malcolm-asserity@hotmail.co.uk Text: 07930 618 858 & robertholland629@gmail.com
Churchyard maintenance and Burial plot enquiries	Brett Smith	Tel/text: 07902 789 252 & brett@meadowcare.biz
Family history enquiries	Shirley Monkhouse	Tel/text 07870 685 124 & 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

Kay & Bradshaw Educational Foundation

Have you left school, got an apprenticeship, going on to further education, off to Uni? Maybe we can help you.

The Kay & Bradshaw Educational Foundation or, as it is more commonly known, 'Keys Charity' exists to provide financial assistance for the promotion of education, including social and physical training of persons under 25, who have a parent or parents residing in the parish of Priors Marston.

In these uncertain times we know students need all the help and support they can get, and Keys Charity can assist with the purchase of course books, tools and equipment for a trade or profession, cost of a field trip or training course, music and arts in fact anything connected to education.

Over several years, many young people from the village have benefited from its assistance.

Our next meeting will be held in March 2025, but the trustees will look at all applications as they are received. If you would like to make an application, please write to Malcolm Monkhouse, Dot Brown (priorsdot@gmail.com), Elaine Forsyth or Sue Benson together with your details and receipts for any books or equipment that you have purchased.

We are waiting to hear from you!

Coffee & Chat!



The Priors Hall

Thursday 6th February
10.00 am – 11.30 am

YOUNG FARMERS' CAROL CONCERT

St Peter's Wormleighton was once again privileged to host the Young Farmers' Carol Concert on December 18th 2024. A very warm welcome met everyone who came along, despite it being a cold, wet and windy night. The lanterns that lit our way into the church and the Christmas tree, Christmas foliage decorations and candles that greeted us inside all added to that heartwarming atmosphere which is such a unique and special part of any Christmas celebrations.

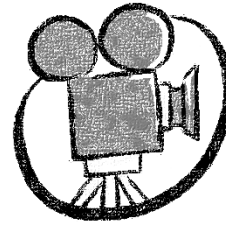
The Young Farmers led us in a traditional service of nine lessons and carols, reminding us of the Christmas story that lies at the heart of our festivities at this particular time of year and allowing us to indulge in singing the carols we all love so much. We were then treated to mulled wine and mince pies, which were much enjoyed by all and gave us the opportunity to chat and exchange Christmas greetings.

Every year, the Young Farmers' Carol Concert brings us together as a community just before we start to focus on our own families and friends. What a very special Christmas gift that is to us all.

St. Peter's Wormleighton PCC

WormleightonPCC@gmail.com.

Film Nights at The Priors Hall



Friday 21 February

The Apprentice

Year of Release: 2024 Certificate 15 Running Time: 1 hr 58 mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

Film starts at 7:30pm

Drama depicting how the young Donald Trump started his real estate business in 1970s and 1980s New York with the help and guidance of the infamous lawyer Roy Cohn. Trump is not a fan of this film!

Cast includes: Sebastian Stan, Jeremy Strong, Maria Bakalova, Martin Donovan and Catherine McNally

- 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

You can also call Lee Robinson Tel: 01327 263268

REPORT FROM YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS – FEBRUARY 2025

Local Government Reorganisation

The ‘English Devolution White Paper’ was presented to Parliament by the Deputy Prime Minister on 16 December 2024. (see link: [English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK](#)) The main thrust of the paper is the establishment of Mayoral authorities across England wherever possible, but it is clear many rural areas, including ours, do not fit easily with this approach.

Local government in Warwickshire currently has two main tiers of councils:- the County Council (education, social care, highways etc) and District Councils (benefits, planning, refuse collection etc.). Plus, across south Warwickshire, we have a third tier of Parish Councils. The Devolution White Paper proposes the abolition of District and Borough Councils and the formation of ‘unitary authorities’ over a larger geographical area.

There will be no public consultation on these proposals. In recent days, before this magazine item was written, there has been intense activity at Council level. This was summarised by the BBC here: [Warwickshire council leaders urge less 'haste' over devolution - BBC News](#)

The leaders of Stratford, Warwick, North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth Councils have written to government ministers ‘*to urgently enter meaningful, collaborative, and constructive discussions with the existing principal authorities within the County of Warwickshire to help properly consider the options that exist.*’: [Statement from the Leaders of North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

There are currently a number of proposals being discussed for Stratford District and the wider county area and how this might look going forward, which may or may not have taken greater shape by the time that this piece is published. Whilst it is difficult to say at this early stage what the future of local government looks like for our District, *it is clear that we will be doing our utmost to protect the valuable assets and finances raised by and for the people of Stratford District to be kept and used by, for and in Stratford District.*

South Warwickshire Local Plan

This is a matter that is now open for public consultation **and will run until 7 March**, described here: [South Warwickshire Local Plan - Preferred Options 2025](#). There is also further information for residents here: [South Warwickshire Local Plan](#).

The Preferred Options Consultation includes more sites for new settlements than are required for the District and therefore not all sites will be included going forward. The Plan will run until 2050 and development at the chosen sites will be phased. We will be responding as District Councillors, specifically with regard to the three sites in our ward and we urge residents to do the same so that all residents' views are clear.

There will be public consultation events, both online and in person which will be available for residents to attend and details of those nearby are below.

Date and day	In person/Online	Location/ Time
Thursday 16 th January	Online	6pm-7:30pm MS Teams
Saturday 25 th January	In Person	Royal Priors Shopping Centre, Royal Leamington Spa 10am - 4pm
Friday 31 st January	Online	2pm-4pm MS Teams
Thursday 6 th February	In Person	Newbold Leisure Centre, Leamington Spa 1pm - 7pm
Wednesday 12 th February	Online	10am - 12pm MS Teams
Tuesday 18 th February	In Person	Southam Library, Southam 10am - 4pm
Monday 24 th February	Online	6pm-7:30pm MS Teams

We know that some people are not 'on line', so if you want to see the documents and need help, please call in at the drop in sessions.

If you require further information, please feel free to contact the team as follows:

The SWLP Team, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6HX. swlp@stratford-dc.gov.uk 01789 267575.

Community Climate Change and Nature Fund – Phase Two

Phase Two of the fund opened on Friday 10 January 2025. The application window will be open until **Monday 10 February 2025**. Phase Two has a total budget of £55,863 available to successful applicants. **Phase Two has changed slightly following feedback from Phase One:**

- Sports Clubs are now eligible to apply for the Fund.
- Projects which will result in the enhancement of biodiversity will now be eligible as well.
- The name of the Fund has been changed to Community Climate and Nature Fund, to reflect the above change.

You can apply using the resource on Stratford on Avon District Council's website here: [Stratford-on-Avon Community Climate Change Fund | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#). Please submit your application via: climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk.

Policing and Community Safety

Appointment of the New Chief Constable

As a member of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel representing Stratford District, Natalie attended the Confirmation Hearing for the appointment of the new Chief Constable on Monday 16 December. After a robust question and answer session, the Police and Crime Panel resolved to confirm the appointment of Alex Franklin-Smith as the new Chief Constable for Warwickshire. Further information including the webcast of the meeting together with a BBC article may be found here:

[Information and Documents – Warwickshire County Council](#)

[Warwickshire Police appoints new chief constable - BBC News](#)

Independent Review into Policing of Fox-Hunting Related Activities in Warwickshire

There has been a lot of interest locally and nationally in relation to the Warwickshire Hunt. The Independent Review was published on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Website on 8 January 2025 and may be viewed here: [Independent](#)

[Review into Policing of Hunting-Related Activities in Warwickshire Published - Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire](#)

In addition, the Chief Constable has also published the now obsolete civil protocol, which is available on the Warwickshire Police website.

Severn Trent and HS2 Diversions

The works to improve the water supply pipework around Napton continue, resulting in excessive and confusing signage. Similarly, the HS2 diversions around Priors Hardwick and Boddington have timing and routing effects that have involved Nigel in many meetings and calls trying to improve matters, working with the organisations concerned, the County authorities, and in the case of HS2, MPs for both sides of the county boundary. We will continue to seek more consideration for local communities.

With best wishes to all residents for a happy and healthy 2025.

Nigel Rock
nigel.rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Natalie Gist
natalie.gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIORS HARDWICK

Our Celebrations for Christmas

Preparing - Sunday 1st December. In our Preparation for Christmas service, we remembered Mary and then Joseph, as they set out on their journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to comply with the Roman Census. We had a large map of the Holy Land to give us an idea of the distance. We heard the story from the Bible, and then as a poem, in which everyone took part by joining in with the refrain. We had an activity involving 17 camels (pictures on cardboard attached to upturned yoghurt pots) which were to be divided into groups of a half, a third and a ninth according to a man's Will. Of course, the children soon found that that this was a problem, but when another camel was added and the maths done, the distribution worked out – with one camel left over!!!! so all was well and peace reigned. That story reminded us that when Jesus came as a baby, he grew into a man whose work was to bring peace among people and we try to continue to

bring peace today. Among the carols were sang, were O Little Town of Bethlehem, and Little Donkey. Refreshments were served after the service.

Carol Singing - Wednesday 18th December. This had to be held in the church instead of at the Lych Gate because of the rain. Fewer people than last year came, but we enjoyed singing a variety of carols and the handbell ringers played carols for us as well. Mulled wine and mince pies completed a short but most enjoyable evening.

Our main Carol Service on Christmas Eve was once again a great success. The handbell ringers set the tone of the evening to begin with, and then, after the introduction and short prayers, the carols and readings ran seamlessly for about half an hour. This year, we included 'Joy to the world' instead of 'It came upon the midnight clear. Dr Gerard Hyland gave us all the organ could give in accompanying the carols.

Over 150 people were present at the service and there was a wonderful atmosphere of interest, reverence and respect as the readers came one by one to the front, each followed by the organ introducing the next carol. Our magnificent team once again served mulled wine and a variety of refreshments - and cleared and washed up and left the vestry tidy. This was the first time we'd made FULL use of the new area at the back of the church, using all the new chairs as well as the old ones and the sight, from the pulpit, of full pews right to the back of the church was wonderful. A collection was taken which amounted to £580, of which £290 was sent to the Farming Community Network. Our sincere thanks go to all who took part in the service, and all the preparation before and clearing up afterwards. ... and also to everyone who attended and donated to the two charities. This was a wonderful high-quality celebration of Christmas.

Epiphany Our final Christmas celebration was for the visit of the Three Wise Men/Kings to the baby Jesus. There is actually no evidence for just three visitors - that's an assumption due to the gifts they brought - so we were able to welcome several kings, in costume and one queen as well! Again, due to the weather they were unable to arrive on quadrupeds! This time the theme was surprises – that of the Kings on seeing the Star; of Herod, as he knew nothing about a new king; of the Kings again as they arrived at a stable and found a baby in a manger, when they were expecting a king; and Mary and Joseph of course, at seeing kings and being given presents not really suited to a baby! But then we all experienced a whole series of chocolate surprises to help us remember the Christmas story. And once again the refreshments were wonderful.

Services in February will be back to our normal routine.... BUT the 'official' Christmas/Epiphany season ends on first Sunday of February, Candlemas, so after that the hangings will change from white to green. That also means that all wreaths and artificial flowers should be removed from graves!!!

The Church building. I think we can blame storm Darragh for damage to one of the sets of leaded lights in the east window. Some of the masonry surrounding it has suffered damage and the lead has buckled. This requires very specialised attention and is likely to be a costly repair job. An initial quotation for the work of £12,196+VAT has been received.

The diocesan officers were not pleased with our new area – but could understand our motive. The additional space provided has been a great advantage. We now have to apply for a retrospective faculty, and, with this in mind, there is the opportunity to investigate further the provision of the toilet and servery, possibly in the vestry, in order to preserve the space we've become used to. To provide for this, the floor of the vestry would need to be levelled, requiring 'trial holes' on either side of the wall to establish the viability of the project. This would require another faculty costing about £3,500. At the present time, the application for the faculty is well in hand as is a Project Enquiry to the National Heritage Lottery Fund and we are very grateful indeed to Jenny Hoban who is undertaking this for us.

The Churchyard. The south side of the churchyard, many years ago, was supported by a ha-ha, but over the years most of the stones have fallen into the bank of the stream. We are most grateful to Mark Tredwell who has provided a post and rail fence where graves are now near to the stream.

Please don't forget to remove your Christmas wreaths etc from graves by 2nd Feb!

Donations in the Phone Box. Donations of food and toiletries have continued to arrive mysteriously in the phone box and are taken to the Food Bank, where I still see people waiting to be interviewed and receive food as required. The food is weighed and a note made of the weight. Details are kept, as they are of the number and details of recipients of food, and then forwarded to The Trussell Trust.

Used Stamps. These have continued to arrive in larger quantities since the beginning of the year. At the time of writing, I'm awaiting the delivery of the special A4 envelopes in which to send the trimmed stamps to the Royal National Institute of the Blind. I shall have at least enough to fill two envelopes.

Our next PCC meetings are on 20th January and 17th March.

Margaret Clarke for the PCC

PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

Wednesday 19th February 2025

7.30p.m.

Venue: The Priors Hall

Eddie Smallwood

Every Picture Tells a Story

Eddie is making a return visit to us with another of his very interesting talks.

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At our November meeting, we had a wonderful time creating our fabulous Christmas Table Centres, under instruction from Michele Ratcliffe. I am sure Michele was not put off by the almost full house of members & a few visitors to show us all what to do. With organised tables and lots of extras baubles ribbons & greenery, we all set about making our best creation.

Over 30 of these were completed and they all looked wonderful. Many thanks to Michele & her husband and to team Ukleja for their extra help.

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

LATEST NEWS Improved heating has been installed!

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 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 pm - 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.

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE NEWS

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETING

The next Village Meeting will be held
at 7.30pm in the Church on
Thursday 3rd April

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

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

Contact details are:

01926 851031 and: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

We have now received the boxes for collection of
used stamps and these 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 weekday.



GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

Your local Hardy Plant Specialists

I'm guessing not many of you will feel motivated to get out into your gardens this month, but at least you can spend some time planning for the year ahead in the comfort of your home. Take a good look at the garden while there isn't much happening, to see what could be changed. Are there plants which are past their best? Could the borders be made larger to add more plants? Perhaps some plants need moving or reducing in size? Maybe you have always wanted a water feature? Even a small pond can be an added attraction for wildlife. How about growing fruit and vegetables and herbs if you don't already do that? Plants growing in containers might be in need of re-potting. Fences could do with having some wood preservative.

My hopes are that more people will become more enthusiastic with their outdoor spaces, but the reality is that fewer people are gardening. The closing of some large garden centres and the photos on Facebook where landscapers have done a professional job of installing paving and turf (sometimes artificial grass), but leaving no room for plants, suggests that a lot of the population has other priorities. I just hope this isn't a growing (ha, a pun!) trend.

Christine Dakin

Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton

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NATURE NOTES FOR A NEW YEAR . . .

. . . it's that time of year again, 24th - 26th January

Every RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch counts

Last year, over 600,000 people took part, counting some 9.7 million birds. House Sparrows came top of the list, but their totals are down by 60% compared to the first Birdwatch in 1979. In total, we've lost 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 60 years. Every bird you do – or don't – see and count will give us a valuable insight into how garden birds are faring.

All it takes is one hour of your time and it is a wonderful contribution to the wildlife monitoring, which has now been taking place across the country for 45 years and has helped increase our understanding of the challenges faced by wildlife. On the RSPB website are links to all sorts of films, quizzes and resources for adults and children alike, which might be interesting and useful on a cold, wet and windy day stuck in the house. If you are reading this after the end of January, please do the survey anyway. They would rather have your records slightly late than not at all.

Looking forward, I shall be eagerly anticipating the returning birds come the spring. Last year, the Curlew started appearing or being heard in the valley from the Doles along to Napton. If you happen to be along that way and hear them, would you please let me know? Last year I first spotted one in February. We shall again be monitoring any nesting attempts and doing what we can to make their attempts more successful.

I would also be very pleased to hear from anyone who regularly has Swifts round their property in the summer. I would love to think we have them nesting somewhere in the villages, and that putting Swift boxes on other houses might increase their number, but sadly, I don't think there are any about in Priors Marston or Priors Hardwick. I'm less sure about Wormleighton.

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

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

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Rainfall in December 2024 amounted to 62mm, slightly below the average for this century. The wettest Decembers were in 2012 with 128mm and 2020 with 121mm. In three other years, December received more than 100mm. The driest Decembers were in 2010 with 19mm and 2001 with 23mm.

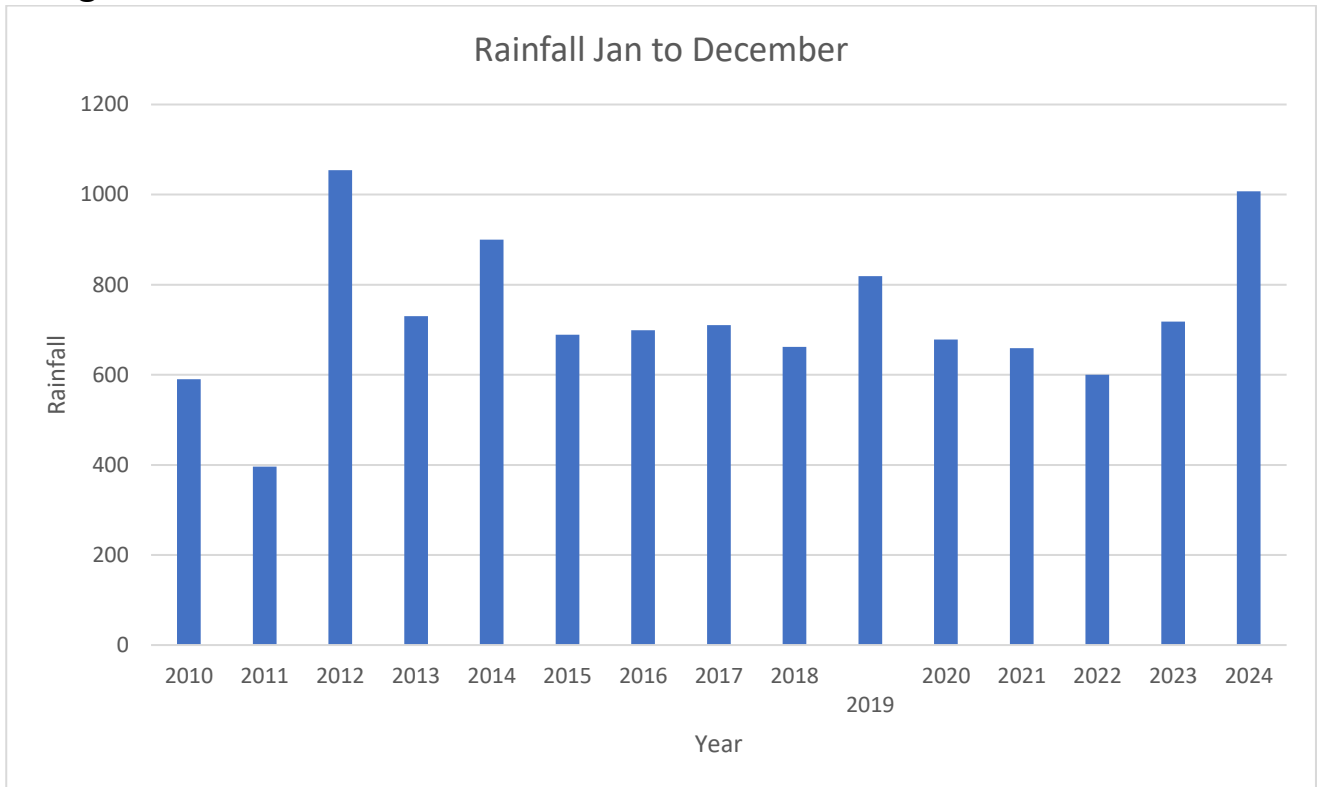
Total rainfall for 2024 came to 1,007mm, making it the second wettest year this century after 2012 with 1,054mm. It's interesting to note the variation in annual totals over six and seven year periods, but one feature is that the last three months of the year seem to receive a larger proportion of the annual rainfall than the first three. 2024 began with relatively low rainfall, but caught up gradually, then more quickly with 118mm in 2020 and 121mm in 2023.

December 2024 began with a temperature of 13°C and light drizzle(1.5mm), but this soon cleared to leave a pleasant brighter day. This fine weather continued for two more days, but with a lower temperature of 8°C. It turned cloudy again on Wednesday 4th with 8mm of rain coming after dark, and the temperature rising to 13°C again and another 10mm of rain on Thursday 5th. Friday 6th began fine, the rain began about 5.00pm heralding the arrival of Storm Darragh, which raged all day on Saturday and well into Sunday with very strong winds and 17mm of rain in all. The following week was cooler at 6°C, cloudy and damp with fine drizzle for most of the time, totalling 3mm. The weekend of 14th brought 9°C and then 12°C on the Sunday and Monday, before more dull damp weather and 'proper' rain on Wednesday 18th and 13°C and 13mm of rain.

Cooler weather returned on Thursday 19th with 6°C and a good frost on Friday 20th, but with a return to cloud and rain at the end of the day - 1.5mm overnight. Saturday 21st began fine, but soon turned cloudy with 3mm of rain overnight. From then until the last two days of the month, the cloudy, damp weather with drizzle returned - I measured 1mm for Monday 23rd and 2mm total over the next four days. Christmas Day, having begun foggy, was at least a bit brighter and warmer at 10°C. The last two days of the month/year were fine, even sunny, but becoming cloudy towards the end of New Year's Eve.

We didn't receive the worst of the much-threatened stormy weather until the early hours of the New Year!

Margaret Clarke



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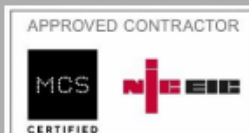
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