

PARISH NEWS

April 2026



Wormleighton - Priors Marston - Priors Hardwick

PRIORS HARDWICK WITH PRIORS MARSTON AND WORMLEIGHTON

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

GROUP ADMINISTRATOR:		
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Priors Marston:		
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PARISH COUNCIL: <http://www.priorsmarston.org/parish-council/>

THE PRIORS HALL: Barbara Harvey 01327 260709
info.thepriorshall@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: Matthew Hawkins priorssportsclub@gmail.com

TENNIS CLUB: priorstennis@yahoo.co.uk

THE PARISH NEWS

Thanks to those of you who have donated funds towards the cost of printing the Parish News. Some of you may have found the QR code wasn't working properly if you tried to use it last month. Well, it is now, so if you missed your chance to donate, feel free to try again. Many thanks to those who alerted us to the problem.



Brown envelopes are still being accepted by volunteers who deliver the magazine, anyone named in the box on page 2 or at the Post Office in the Priors Hall. 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'.

Many thanks

Helen, Editor. hlnmnzs@gmail.com

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PARISH NEWS DEADLINES: Helen Menezes 07719 807915
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.

Cover image from a water colour by Martin Jezzard, mjezzard@gmail.com

Musician needed!

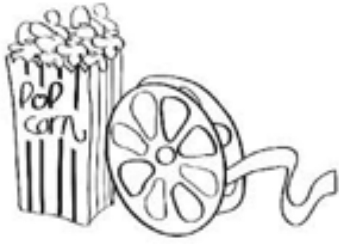
Would anybody like to play the piano/clavinova for a Sunday morning service once a month and maybe on special occasions?

There are usually 3 or 4 hymns in a short service, which starts at 10.30 am.

A fee can be arranged. This might suit a young pianist looking for some practice and pocket money!

Contact Malcolm on 07855 855 063.





**Film Nights
at
The Priors Hall**

Friday 17 April

The Choral

Year of Release: 2025 Certificate 12A Running Time: 1 hr 53mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

Film starts at 7:30pm

As the First World War rages on, the Choral Society in a small Yorkshire town has lost most of its men to the army. The Choral's committee is determined to press ahead with new recruits. They engage a driven new chorus master, Dr. Henry Guthrie – recently returned from a career in Germany. As conscription papers start to arrive, the community discovers that the best response to the war is to make music together.

Cast includes: Ralph Fiennes, Roger Allam, Mark Addy and Simon Russell Beale.

- 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

FREE FIRST AID AND DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING SESSION

The Parish Council is pleased to invite you to a free First Aid and Defibrillator Training session for our village.

The session will be delivered by Jan Southam, a trained First Responder with the East Midlands Ambulance Service and owner of JMS First Aid Training. Jan lives locally and has very kindly offered to provide this training free of charge for the community.

This practical, confidence-building session will cover basic first aid and how to use a defibrillator. Knowing what to do in an emergency really can make the difference - survival rates can increase from around 7% to as much as 50% when people feel confident to act.

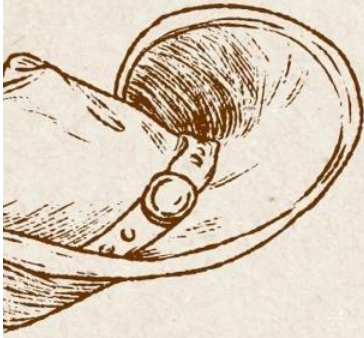
Session details:

- Date: Wednesday 22nd April
- Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm
- Venue: The Priors Hall
- Who can attend: Everyone welcome, aged 11 years and over

While the training is free, donations on the night (cash) would be very welcome. All donations will go to the Air Ambulance charity, helping to support their vital, life-saving work.

emma@priorsmarston.org

You are cordially invited to



THE PRIORS SCHOOL BALL

Black tie with a touch of
Yellowstone

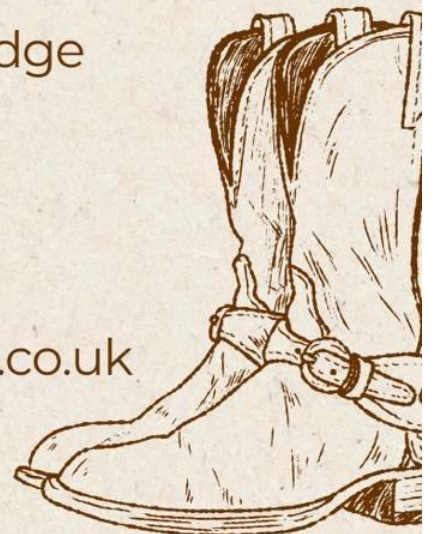
JULY 4TH FROM 7PM

Honesberie Shooting Lodge

Tickets now on sale

via

www.thepriorsschoolball.co.uk



PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

Wednesday 15th April 2026

7.30p.m.

Venue: The Priors Hall

**Speaker: Lyndon Jeremiah
Memoirs of Nobody Important**

We will be hearing from Lyndon, who is a local villager, about his life & times.

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At our February meeting, Sue Moore told us about her time on Jury Service. There is a lengthy process to selecting a jury and the case Sue heard lasted for 5 weeks. Sue gave an animated speech about her experience and how proud she was to do her duty.

Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Contact : Jane Cowen 07979 550202

Fiona Spencer 01327 263423

Baptism or Christening?

Have you ever wondered why we have two words? Is there any difference?

To **Christen** comes from an Old English word, meaning to make a Christian, somebody who follows the way of Jesus Christ.

To **Baptise** comes from the Greek word Baptizo, meaning to immerse, submerge or dip in water. In the early years of the Christian Church, new believers were immersed in water at Easter, in a special pool. Some churches nowadays have a pool for baptisms.



Whichever word you prefer, the ceremony has the same meaning. It is a Sacrament, which means an outward sign of God's grace. It symbolises entering a new life; starting a pilgrimage is one image. And some Ministers use a scallop shell to pour the water, as a symbol.

Most people are baptised as babies, so their parents and godparents make promises for them, promising to bring up the child in the Christian life.

Of course, most of us do not remember this ceremony, so some people choose to renew their vows as adults.

Some people may be drawn to the Christian life and decide to be baptised as adults. Sometimes, adult baptism can take place in a swimming pool or a river or the sea! A church ceremony is the most usual.

Saint Leonard's Church is our Parish Church. It is and has been open to everybody in the village and surroundings since the late 13th century. It welcomes all who wish to be christened.

If you would like a baby or child to be christened, you do not have to have been christened yourself. There is no fee to pay, though some families like to give a donation to the upkeep of the church. In the first instance, contact the Bridges Group Administrator, Susan Holloway, at: admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk She will arrange for a Minister to take the service and fix a date with St Leonard's. There will be a meeting with the Minister to talk about the ceremony and any requests, like music.

If you would like to renew your vows or be baptised as an adult, it would be good to have a preliminary chat with a Minister linked to the Bridges Group of Churches.

Contact Shirley Monkhouse: s.a.monkhouse@hotmail.co.uk to arrange a meeting.

COFFEE, CAKE AND COMPANY

at The Priors Hall





YOU'RE INVITED!

Priors Marston & Hardwick WI
warmly invite everyone to our monthly
community coffee morning

When & where

 Date: Tuesday 21st April 2026

 Time: 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

 Location: The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

Exciting **PLANT SALE**
included!



We can't wait to see you there!

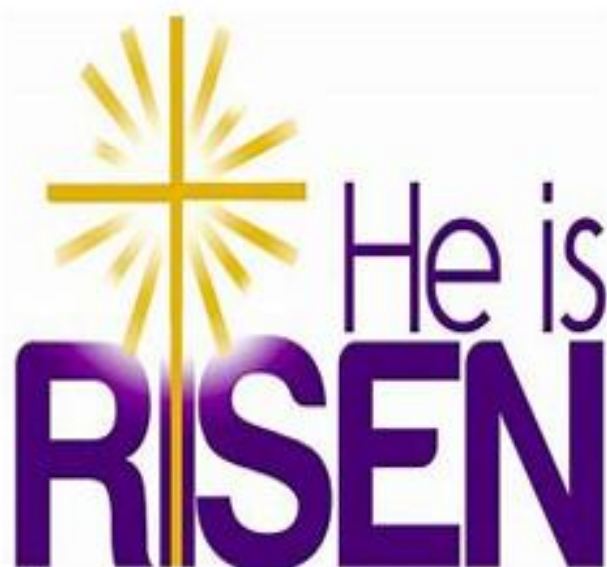
**PRIORS MARSTON
CHURCH**

**EASTER SUNDAY
CELEBRATION**

APRIL 5TH

10.30

***MUSIC AND
READINGS***



***FOLLOWED BY
REFRESHMENTS***

The Bridges Group Sunday Church Services

April 2026

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship=

THE BRIDGES GROUP	29th Mar Palm Sunday <i>red</i>	5th Apr Easter Sunday <i>white</i>	12th Apr Easter 2 <i>white</i>	19th Apr Easter 3 <i>white</i>	26th Apr Easter 4 <i>white</i>
PRIORS HARDWICK	All-Age Worship & procession 9.00am	Morning Worship 9.00am	Easter Carol Service 6.00pm	Holy Communion BCP 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON		Morning Worship 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	
WORMLEIGHTON					Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON		Holy Communion CW Easter Sunday 10.30am		Family Service 10.30am	Evensong 5.00pm
STOCKTON	Holy Communion CW 'The Gathering' 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Communion Methodist Tradition 10.30am		Holy Communion CW 10.30am
LOWER SHUCKBURGH					Holy Communion BCP 9.00am

(Note: All services other than Holy Communion are Lay Led)

Special Church Services for Easter Week 2026

2nd April Maundy Thursday	3rd April Good Friday	4th April Easter Eve	5th April Easter Sunday
6.45pm Holy Communion Tenebrae & meal Stockton Church	10.30am ‘Seven words from the Cross’ Priors Marston <hr/> 2.00-3.00pm Prayer & Reflection Lower Shuckburgh <hr/> 7.00pm Meditations on the Cross Napton		See Sunday Grid above



ST. LEONARD’S CHURCH, PRIORS MARSTON Flower Rota:

5th/12th April

Lydia Hatton

19th/26th April

Sue Smith

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

5th/12th April

Sue Talbot/Tricia Wilson

19th/26th April

Jane Richards/Jane Richards

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

Our Services

By the time this magazine arrives in the villages, we shall have celebrated Mothering Sunday, 15th March, hopefully with lots of families, in a very special service led by our visiting priest Rev David Herbert.

We shall also have completed the Arts and Crafts morning on Sunday 22nd March, led by Christian Nessler and Gill Kinnear, and we look forward to seeing the results of their work on display in the Community Area.

Palm Sunday 29th March will be the 5th Sunday of the month which would normally be a joint service for all six parishes; but we shall have our service here with the usual procession, including ponies, followed by a very short service in church. This magazine should be with you by now! Please look out for more details!

Maundy Thursday, 2nd April there will be a service for all six churches, of Holy Communion with Tenebrae at 6.45pm Napton. This is a very beautiful service.

But you'll need to book your place if you wish to attend the meal.

Good Friday There will be quiet devotional services at Priors Marston at 10.30, at Lower Shuckburgh at 2.00pm and at Napton at 7.00pm.

EASTER DAY

According to the liturgical calendar, this is the day which marks three years of being without a priest for our 6 parishes!! so it's also a day when we give thanks for our visiting priest, Rev David Herbert!! For two of our churches, this has meant little or no change, but the rest of us have felt a considerable impact. It's happened for us this time as we shall be unable to hold a service of Holy Communion on Easter Day, but nevertheless we shall hold our usual service at 9.00am and endeavour to make it the 100% joyful celebration it really is! There will certainly be chocolate eggs after the service!

EASTER CAROL SERVICE

With Easter being so early this year, we seem to have been thinking about the events of Jesus's birth and then his death and Resurrection in a very short time. But we need to remember there were more than 30 years between these two events. The event of Jesus's Resurrection was so very great that it's worth celebrating again after a week – perhaps when we've had time to think more about

it. So, on Sunday 12th April, we shall once more hold the Easter Carol Service at 6.00pm in place of Evensong. This service is a real feast of well-known hymns – and tunes, which remind us that Christmas and Easter are both part of our reason for church: because without Christmas, there'd be no Easter; and without Easter, there'd be no Christmas.

The Churchyard

PLEASE LOOK OUT FOR THE CLEAR-UP DAY – SATURDAY 28TH MARCH!

Trees Most of the work, apart from removing dead branches, although approved by the specialist officers at the District Council, is complete, but a retrospective Faculty is required!

Headstones The Booth family headstone has now been removed and replaced - today - 14th March, even as I write. It is now upright on its plinth.

Research continues relating to another loose headstone.

WARNING! DANGEROUS DISTURBANCE TO THE SURFACE – TWO AREAS

What I can only describe as “SURFACE BURROWING” has occurred.

Possibly badgers, or rats, fleeing upwards from water gathering below the surface. This result of the wet winter was reported recently in the Daily Telegraph:

Firstly, a wide area beside the stream opposite the nave and chancel

Secondly, in a wide area inside the footpath entrance opposite Orchard House. Even a small growth of grass hides these tracks.

Donations in the Phone box

The Southam Food Bank Very many thanks for the items which continue to arrive – both food and toiletries. All are very much appreciated.

Used Postage Stamps for the Royal National Institute of Blind People

And still the stamps arrive!! Some individually into the small box and others in quite large numbers in envelopes; some trimmed, some not trimmed. And especial thanks for those who donated and brought them over from Priors Marston!

Margaret Clarke for the PCC

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE NEWS

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>

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETING

The next Village Meeting will be held
at 7.30pm in the Church on
Thursday 30th April, 2026.

FOOD BANK

Non-perishable and 'in date' food items may be left in the plastic box in the phone box
and toiletries are also very welcome.

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!

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

There is a small box in the Kiosk for used stamps, from where they will be
collected and sent to RNIB in the A4 envelopes provided.

Please leave space of at least 1cm around the stamp.

Stamps are very welcome singly or in bulk, trimmed or un-trimmed.

The box is checked/emptied every weekday morning.

FREE entry



FAMILY FUN DAY

HAVE-A-GO STANDS

A perfect day to have a go at all of the shooting activities that Honesberie have to offer, including clay shooting, rifles, archery and air rifles! Shooting from £5 and all ages welcome!



All Day BBQ



Bouncy
Castle



Shooting Activities
until 6pm

Saturday 11 April 2026 10 AM - 7PM

Honesberie Shooting, The Grange, Priors
Marston, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 7SG

Register Your Interest 



[01327 262 922](tel:01327262922)



www.honesberieshooting.co.uk



GOOD FRIDAY

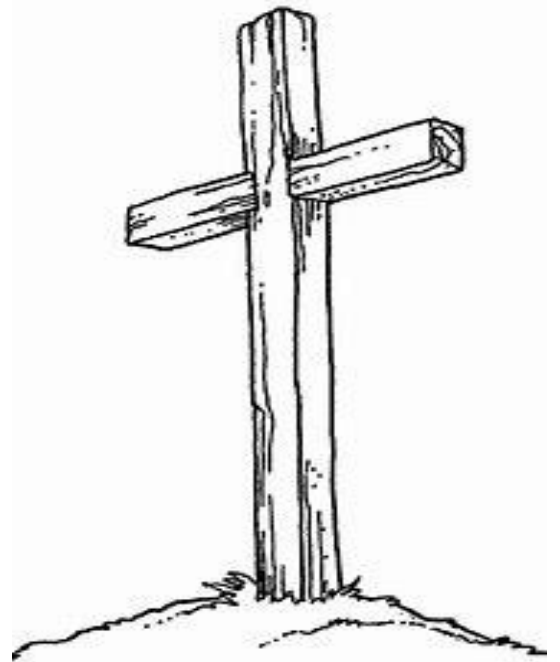
PRIORS MARSTON

CHURCH

3RD APRIL 10.30

JOURNEYS TO THE CROSS

***SOME WORDS, SOME MUSIC
SOME SILENCE***



**THIS WILL LAST ABOUT 45 MINUTES AND WILL BE FOLLOWED BY
REFRESHMENTS**

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

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WELCOME TO ST. LEONARD'S

THE CHURCH IS NORMALLY OPEN

10am-4pm IN WINTERTIME

10am-6pm IN SUMMERTIME

CONTACTS

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE and

BURIAL PLOT ENQUIRIES

MALCOLM MONKHOUSE Tel/ text 07855 855 063 &

malcolmonkhouse92@gmail.com

ROBERT HOLLAND Tel/Text: 07930 618 858 &

robertholland679@gmail.com

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

Report from Your District Councillors – April 2026
Stratford on Avon District Council

Council Tax

Stratford-on-Avon District Councillors have set the district element of the Council Tax at a meeting of the Council on Monday 23 February for 2026/27. The amount residents will be asked to pay for a Band D property is £174.18, an increase of 2.99%, which, for an average, home represents just an additional 42p per month to the District Council next year. This means that all the services provided by the District Council cost £3.35 a week for a Band D household.

Last council year, Stratford District was one of the lowest taxing authorities (18th out of 164). This contributes to meeting the cost of providing a wide range of services, including recycling and waste collection, planning, street cleaning, housing, housing benefits, leisure services and children's play areas. The Council Tax from Stratford-on-Avon District Council for residents for 2026/27 for each of the valuation bands is:

A=£116.12 B=£135.47
C=£154.83 D=£174.18

E=£212.89 F=£251.59 G=£290.30 H=£348.36.

Although the District Council acts as the collecting agent for Council Tax, it only receives 7.0% of the Council Tax paid by residents. Warwickshire County Council receives the lion's share of 76.7%, the Police 12.8% and Towns/Parishes 3.5%. This means the District Council only retains 7p out of every £1 paid in Council Tax to provide its range of services.

Depending on the Parish where you live in this Council Ward, a Band D total Council tax varies between £2396.75 and £2575.90.

Anyone who thinks they could be struggling to pay their Council Tax is encouraged to contact the District Council as soon as possible, by calling 01789 260990 or email revenues@stratford-dc.gov.uk, where the team will be able to advise what help is available.

Budget items of particular interest to residents in the ward

There are a number of items in this year's budget, which we think will be of particular interest to residents in this ward. Many of these are related to supporting rural communities, residents, Parishes and the environment. They include:

- **Neighbourhood Development Plans** - £100,000 (over 3 years) Supports parish councils following this funding being cut by central government.
- **Rural Crime Advisors** – We continue to fund the Rural Crime Advisors, whom we hope many residents across the ward have already met, and if not met, heard about. Not only do the Advisors give crime prevention advice and support to residents, they are also able to loan crime prevention equipment, so that residents can “try before they buy” and the Advisors also hold crime prevention toolbox events. Enquiries can be made of the Rural Crime Advisors via SDC's website here: [Rural Crime Advisor Enquiry | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)
- **Community Safety Deputy Manager** – two year fixed term. This will introduce additional capacity into the Community Safety Team working with partners, such as the Police. As Cabinet member, Natalie is very proud to let you know that the Community Safety Team was a runner up for a national award for dealing with Anti Social Behaviour.
- **Housing to Rent** - £1,000,000 (one-off). To secure additional social housing units and reduce reliance on costly temporary accommodation. This will include residents fleeing domestic violence.
- **Climate Change Fund** - £500,000 (one-off). Fifth consecutive year of funding for local climate initiatives.
- **Volunteer Driver Scheme** - £12,000 (for 3 years). Supports transport for older and mobility-impaired residents. This is a District-wide scheme (VASA), which builds on local schemes in our area. Transport can be requested by residents here: [Community Transport – Vasa](#). You will need to register first, by calling 01789 262889 and selecting option 1, or by following the link on the webpage. Once you have registered, you can book online or call the above number and also select option 1.

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- **Veterans Healthcare and Development Officer** - £8,000 (for 2 years). Contribution to veterans support services.
- **Cost of Living Crisis Mitigation Fund** - £250,000 (one-off). Adds to projected £250,000 rollover to create a £500,000 hardship support fund. Further information is available on our website: [Cost of Living Support | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)
- **Health Screening Events** – SDC is supporting Health Screening Events with the Graham Fulford Trust for the second year in a row, with events across the District. More information is below.

Health Screening Events – Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

The District Council Promoted a number of Health Screen events last year. The 2025 screening programme demonstrated the significant value of proactive, community-based health checks. Across seven events, 1,137 tests were completed:

- 663 men underwent PSA testing, with 24% referred to their GP for further investigation;
- 11% of all participants recorded blood sugar levels outside the normal range;
- 80% had cholesterol readings requiring GP follow-up.

These outcomes underline the vital role screening plays in enabling early diagnosis, empowering residents to seek timely medical advice, and improving long-term health outcomes.

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is launching the first of its 2026 Health Screening events on Saturday 21 March, coinciding with National Screening Day (NSD), during Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. This will be followed up by events in our area as follows:

- Saturday 18th April - Lighthorne Heath Village Hall, Upper Lighthorne, Valiant Close, CV33 9UF
- Saturday 9th May - Graham Adams Centre, Saint James Road, Southam, CV47 0LY
- Saturday 30th May - Wellesbourne Village Hall, The School House, School Road, Wellesbourne, CV35 9NH

Tests are available at a discounted rate of £14 each, supported by District Council funding, and include:

- PSA (Prostate Screening) for men over 40
- Diabetes screening for men and women aged 18+
- Cholesterol checks for men and women aged 18+

Appointments must be booked in advance at: <https://sdc.mypsatests.org.uk/> or call 01926 419959 or email info@myhealthtests.org.uk

A full list of all 2026 health screening events is available at: [PSA Health Screening Events | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

Road Closures

We have continued to ask for the 'best of a bad job', with the road from London End Priors Hardwick to Boddington, which is now in a very poor state (as we all predicted). Following Nigel's exchanges with the new chief executive, HS2's National Head of Engagement has recently offered a meeting, but prefaced it by implying nothing can be done. We are considering how to respond to this.

Residents will also be aware that there have been long-running and repetitive road closures around the villages for other reasons. A common factor has been poor and misleading signage. Among other effects, this has created an adverse trading environment for Napton village stores, which has remained open and accessible throughout, although signs have suggested otherwise. Nigel has had detailed conversations with Severn Trent about their works and the impact on trade. It has been suggested that 'Local Business Open signs' are stored locally as a stop gap. Meanwhile, all residents are encouraged to support this local business and indeed all local businesses. Nigel has asked Severn Trent to make a complete review of their activities here and report back to the community.

And finally....

Elections - Latest News

Nigel has decided to retire as a Councillor and not serve beyond the end of this Council year. This means there will be a by-election on 7 May. Because it is a shared council Ward, the election will be for a new District Councillor to work closely with the existing Councillor, Natalie. [REDACTED]

The by-election rules say there has to be a period before the election date, where Nigel's seat falls vacant and this means that by the time you read this, Nigel will have ceased to be your District Councillor. During that time Natalie will be your sole District Councillor. More information to follow.

Cllr Natalie Gist

natalie.gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Cllr Nigel Rock

nigel.rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

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 –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 to pray for our communities. 4 groups are in-person and 1 is online. If you would like to join, please contact the group leader below:

Every Tuesday online at 6.15pm on Zoom	Katie	07965 209075
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.

www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk



THE PRIORS HALL

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.
- 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. (Air Ambulance may not collect bags left outside the bank if they become wet, as the contents cannot be reused. If the bank is full, please do not leave bags outside.)



GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

Your local Hardy Plant Specialists

Hopefully, the weather will be suitable to be able to get outside and get on with some of the many jobs there are to do this month. Forsythias and flowering currant shrubs aren't as popular as they once were, but if you have them, now is the time to prune the old stems, removing roughly a third as low down as you can. Also, prune buddleias, fuchsias, winter honeysuckle and trim back lavender. Finish pruning roses and feed with rose fertilizer or well-rotted manure. There seem to be plenty of ladybirds at the moment, which will remove any greenfly, rather than apply an insecticide.

Easter is the traditional time to plant potatoes. You can grow them in large buckets if your soil is too sticky and claggy. Sow cabbages and other brassicas, radish, peas, beetroot, carrots and spinach. Home-grown carrots have a 'proper' carrot taste, unlike those bought in the supermarket.

The garden here will be open every weekend starting on Good Friday, until the end of September, to raise money for the National Garden scheme. Last year, I was able to send £1456.50 to headquarters, which is then distributed to several caring charities, including Marie Curie and Macmillan nursing. Thank you to those of you who contributed.

Christine Dakin

Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton

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WEATHER JOTTINGS FEBRUARY 2026

If Candlemas Day be bright and clear, half the winter's to come this year.

If Candlemas Day be cloudy and black, it bears the winter on its back.

Wiltshire – my home county!!

Candlemas Day was Monday 2nd this year, but we celebrated in church on Sunday 1st, as you will have read in the March magazine. It was damp with drizzle on and off all day, but not cold. Monday 2nd was similar, but it was colder and began to rain seriously that evening, with the rain turning to snow, resulting in a covering by 10.00pm. By the morning, the snow had gone, but I took 6mm of rain from the rain gauge! Wednesday 5th was a beautiful sunny day, with the temperature up to 9°C!

Total rainfall for the month was 102mm – but last year, it was only 36mm! And in 2023 only 8mm. There was a well-known phrase many years ago about 'February Fill-dyke' – meaning a wet month, but since the beginning of this century, 2020 was the first time February brought 100mm or more rain!

And the variation in the total rainfall for the past ten years is quite remarkable.....Climate Change?

In spite of the impressive total for the month, the wettest day was Thursday 5th, when it was rained lightly, on and off, from the early hours for 24 hours - but only 16mm - and then continued in a similar way for the following two days. The total for the first eight days was 32.5mm.

Monday 9th began fine, clouded over later, but remained dry, and it only began to rain again in the early hours of Tuesday 10th, resulting in 6mm. Light rain and cooler more variable weather took over for a few days in the middle of the month with heavy showers and sunny spells. There was a frost on the morning of Saturday 14th and a wonderful rainbow in the afternoon.

A further frost came on Tuesday 17th - Shrove Tuesday -and no rain at all on that day! However, Ash Wednesday was a really miserable day! Only 4°C and heavy rain from about 6.00pm. Not a pleasant drive to Ash Wednesday services - and plenty of weather warnings about flooding. 10mm in the rain gauge, but all was well around here.

The last ten days of the month continued in much the same way. A lovely sunny day on Tuesday 24th with a temperature of 13°C and only dropping by a couple of

degrees until the end of the month with another 4mm of rain between the four days.

With 100mm in January we now have a total of 202mm so far this year!

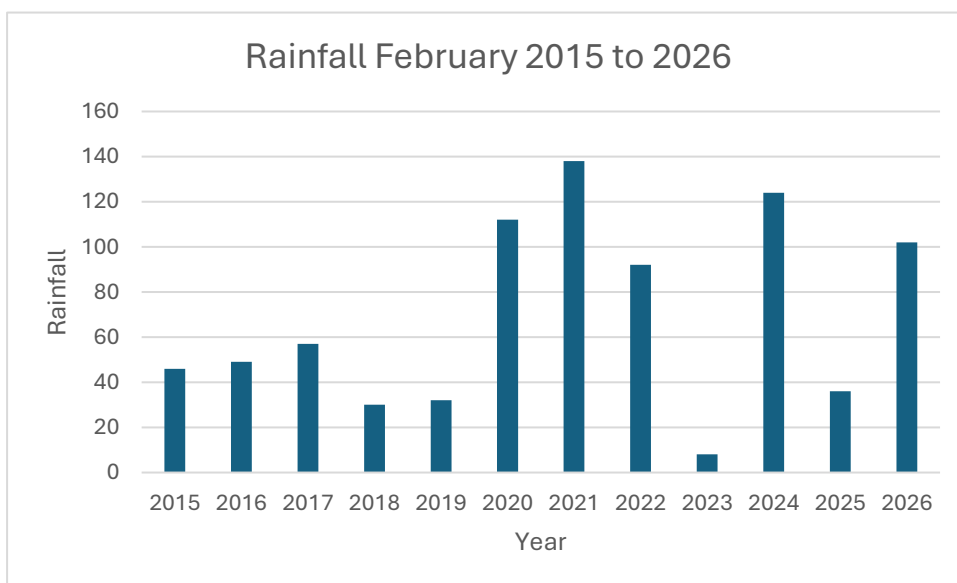
There have been widespread assertions that this winter has been the wettest ever: it certainly was as far as my records show. December 98mm; January 100mm and February 102mm! As far as monthly rainfall was concerned, February was the last of the months to achieve 100+mm this century - not until 2020, with 112mm, did February receive 100mm or over, as you can see below. After that, there came another three, quite quickly! The first 15 years of the century netted an average of 50mm. That has now risen to 53.8mm.

Although I don't claim detailed knowledge of the temperatures, it's quite clear that these are rising: less snowfall (hope I'm not tempting fate!) and fewer frosts - just two in January and two in February! I think it was just the persistence of the rain that made the most difference round here.

But there was one other notable feature of this change in our climate: the well-being of rats. The Daily Telegraph ran an article on 2nd March noting that 'The wet winter has sent rats scurrying to higher ground'! 'Rats can swim and cope with strong currents in open water; they can enter exposed pipes and sewers, but what they cannot tolerate is prolonged submersion - so they're forced to seek higher ground leading to a risk of infestation of properties.'

The report ends by adding another awful fact that the increased milder weather could lead to an increase in their breeding season!

Margaret Clarke





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July	1 st	4 th	8 th	11 th	15 th	22 nd	
August	3 rd	5 th	10 th	12 th			

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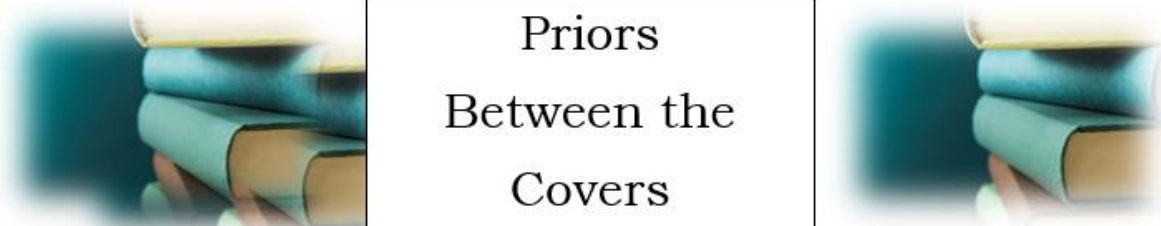
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Priors Between the Covers

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

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

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

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

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

Meeting 1st Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm.

Venue The Hollybush Inn, Priors Marston.

Contact Dawn for more information at dagosling70@gmail.com

The Knitwits meet every Thursday evening at the Hollybush Pub from 6:30. to 8:00.
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