

PARISH NEWS

December 2025 / January 2026



Wormleighton - Priors Marston - Priors Hardwick

PRIORS HARDWICK WITH PRIORS MARSTON AND WORMLEIGHTON

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

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LOCAL CONTACTS:

Priors Marston:

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jackson.holly@btinternet.com

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wormleightonhall@btinternet.com

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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/>

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SPORTS CLUB: Matthew Hawkins priorssportsclub@gmail.com

TENNIS CLUB: priorstennis@yahoo.co.uk

THE PARISH NEWS

If you want to contribute towards the cost of printing the Parish News in cash, please give it 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'.

Many thanks

Helen, Editor. hlnmnzs@gmail.com

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

The Bridges Group Church Services December 2025

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CP – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	7 th Dec Advent 2 Purple	14 th Dec Advent 3 Purple	21 st Dec Advent 4 Purple	CHRISTMAS DAY White	28 th Dec Christmas 1 White
PRIORS HARDWICK	Prep. for Christmas Family Service 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	BCP Holy Communion 9.00am		
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	Lessons and Carols 6.00pm	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Christmas Morning Service 10.30am	
WORMLEIGHTON			17 th Dec YFC CAROL SERVICE 7.30pm	BCP Holy Communion TBA	
NAPTON	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Christingle Service 10.30am	Carol Service 4.00pm	Family Service Lay Led 10.30am	Evensong 5.00pm
STOCKTON	CAROL SERVICE 4.00pm	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am	NO SERVICE	BCP Holy Communion TBA	TBA
LOWER SHUCKBURGH					TBA

OTHER CHRISTMAS SERVICES

30 th November	4.00pm	Christingle at Stockton
18 th December (Thursday)	5.30pm	Priors Hardwick Carol Singing at the Lychgate
22 nd December (Monday)	6.00pm	at Napton: Celebration of the Winter Solstice
24 th December	4.00pm	Lower Shuckburgh Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
24 th December	4.00pm	Crib Service at Stockton
24 th December	6.00pm	Traditional Carol Service Priors Hardwick
24 th December	10.45pm	Stockton for Mulled wine & mince pies.
	11.15pm	for Midnight Communion Methodist led
24 th December	11.30pm	Napton Midnight Communion CW

The Bridges Group Church Services January 2026

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CP – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	4 th Jan Epiphany White	11 th Jan Epiphany 1 White	18 th Jan Epiphany 2 White	25 th Jan Epiphany 3 White
PRIORS HARDWICK	Family Service for Epiphany 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	BCP Holy Communion 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	
WORMLEIGHTON				Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON	CW Holy Communion 10.30am	Morning Worship 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



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

21st/28th December Rachel Ducker

4th/11th January Lesley Hayward

18th/25th 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

7th/14th December Candy Kelly/Advent

21st/28th December Rosemary Hobday/Gabriel Hodgson

4th January Sue Talbot/Sue Talbot

11th/18th January Barbara Harvey/Barbara Harvey

25th January/1st February Lucie Penruddock/Miriam Price

Wake up - you at the back!!!

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

The Kay & and 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 is at the end of November 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!



The Priors PTA Christmas Fair

Saturday 6th December
Midday – 3pm

Local businesses wishing to have
a stall selling products - please
contact pta@thepriorsschool.co.uk
Pitches are £20!




SAVE THE DATE

**6TH DECEMBER 2025
FROM 5PM**

**THE ANNUAL LIGHTING OF
THE VILLAGE CHRISTMAS
TREE & LANTERN PARADE
WILL FOLLOW THE SCHOOL
CHRISTMAS FAIR**

Father Christmas will be pulling in to
The Hollybush Carpark

A detailed illustration of Father Christmas, an elderly man with a long white beard, wearing a red suit with white fur trim and a red hat. He is seated in a sleigh, holding the reins of a reindeer. The reindeer has large, brown antlers and a glowing red nose. The sleigh is filled with wrapped gifts. The background is a dark blue night sky with falling snow.

on his way back to Lapland
5.30pm Friday 12th December

*St Peter's Church
Wormleighton*

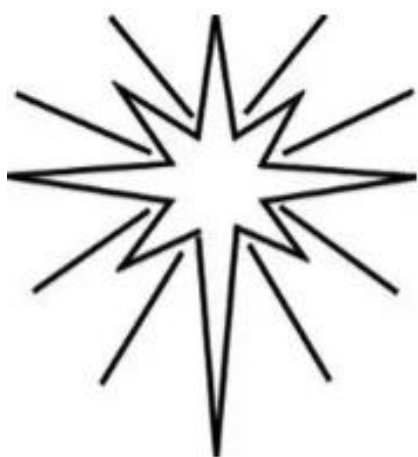
*Young Farmers Carol
Service*



*Christmas
Carols*

Wednesday 17th December 7:30pm

*Refreshments will be served after
the service.*



NATIVITY CRAFT AND TEA PARTY

**SATURDAY 2PM
DECEMBER 20**



PRIORS MARSTON CHURCH

Children aged 4 and over



**Please come
dressed as a
Nativity
character!**

PLEASE Text 07870 685 124 to book



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL 2025

PRIORS HARDWICK

The amount raised for the Appeal, by donations, selling of crosses and a wreath **amounted to £526.22p**

With **GRATEFUL THANKS TO**

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

PRIORS MARSTON

The amount raised for the Appeal, by donations. £53.50p

With **GRATEFUL THANKS TO**

Donna & Lacey's Hairdressing Salon.

Margaret Ingman,

Honorary Poppy Appeal organiser for Napton & District,

Registered number MGD20.

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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

TRADITIONAL LESSONS AND CAROLS

PRIORS MARSTON CHURCH

SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER

6pm

FOLLOWED BY
REFRESHMENTS



Candlelight

Priors Handbell Ringers

Priors School Singers

Where does our water come from? The tap silly!!

Severn Trent provides our water in Priors Marston and it comes from the River Leam, which rises at Hellidon Hill in Northamptonshire and then it winds its way across Warwickshire where it passes close to Draycote Water and then through Leamington Spa to Warwick where it joins the River Avon and then the River Severn.

To get to us, the water is pumped from the River Leam into Draycote Water, where it is stored before it flows along pipes towards Priors Marston. This is all quite interesting as water has a great deal of difficulty flowing uphill and Draycote Water is 302 feet (92m) above sea level and Priors Marston is 518 feet (158m), so it has to climb some 200 feet to get to us, which must involve a considerable amount of pumping by Severn Trent Water.

Draycote Water, where our water is stored, is an artificial reservoir near Dunchurch, which provides water to south and east Warwickshire (including Coventry and Rugby). It was built by Severn Trent between 1967 and 1969 (well before the water industry was privatised in 1989). It opened in 1970 and took two years to fill. At Draycote Water, five hills were linked by six dams to create the 'pond', which is 5 miles round and covers 650 acres. It is 70 feet deep and contains 5,000,000,000 gallons of water.

It has no natural feeds and all its water is pumped from the River Leam at Easthorpe, or filled by other Severn Trent reservoirs at Stanford and Brownsover. All worked well until 2012, when it reached its critical point of being only 50% full and a new pipe was built to the River Leam at Willes Meadow near Leamington Spa to uprate the in-flow of water to the reservoir. In summer, it has been used to increase the water level in the River Leam when necessary to keep the fish happy.

Starting this month, Severn Trent are spending £10m from our water bills to increase the depth of the reservoir so it can accommodate an additional 1.4m cubic m of water (which is about 560 Olympic sized swimming pools worth), whilst not increasing the surface area of the reservoir. We were lucky not to have hose pipe bans this year and this work hopefully will allow us to wash our cars and water our gardens with nice clean drinking water in the future! How Severn Trent are to undertake this work without our water coming out of the taps slightly muddy looking, I do not know, however it will still have to continue flowing uphill.



Getting rid of our poo must be easier, as it is all downhill from Priors Marston, but this has nothing to do with Severn Trent Water as Thames Water are responsible for sewage and Severn Trent simply add the cost to our bills and pass the money to Thames Water. The Priors Marston ‘water treatment’ plant is on Byfield Road, just beyond the sports ground. Thames Water have a three stage process for dealing with it with the Primary Treatment being a settlement tank where solid matter sinks to the bottom (don’t ask what ‘solid matter’ is!) as ‘sludge’ and is taken away for further treatment. The clearer water flows over the wall to aeration lanes where air is pumped in and where useful bacteria break down and eat the harmful bacteria. It then flows into a settlement tank, where the useful bacteria sink to the bottom and the ‘sludge’ this creates is transferred back to aeration lanes where it does its work again and the clean water is released into a local stream. Good job we are higher than the treatment works. The sludge is applied to agricultural land as fertilizer, or sometimes taken to an anaerobic digestion plant that heats the sludge and the bacteria breaks down the waste with the resulting gas being burnt to create heat or it may be dried into blocks which are then burnt to create electricity. We are all doing our bit to reduce the use of fossil fuels!

Priors Hardwick is catered for totally by Severn Trent, with its own water treatment works that serves its population of 154 with 4.4km of foul water pipes and 1km of public water sewers. The treatment works discharge treated effluent into a tributary of the River Itchen. It has the 574th biggest catchment area in the Severn Trent region, so is actually quite a small operation.

Report from Your District Councillors – October 2025

Stratford on Avon District Council

Housing Numbers - Planning

As previously reported, the loss of the 'five-year housing land supply' following a recent appeal judgement, requires a strategic response from Stratford to close a 'gap' in planning permission numbers for housing. The Council's action plan to bring our supply back up to 5 years is in page 83 of the Cabinet papers: [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for The Cabinet, 06/10/2025 10:00](#). Council officers will now be supported by an advisory group of councillors, with the difficult task of finding the 'least worst' way to release sites for development.

We have a significant amount of green belt land in the north of the District and the government has hoped that a new 'grey belt' designation might release more land for development in green belts. A recent information and training session by a planning barrister suggests that this has introduced complexity and lack of clarity and is unlikely to help us much, if at all.

All Councils find they are under pressure for staffing planning departments, as developers react to rapid changes in the planning regime, and Stratford is no exception in having to compete in the jobs market for planning professionals. For those interested, BBC panorama of 20 October is worth a watch.

Local Government Reorganisation

A special meeting of the Council is due on 17 November to consider how the area should be reorganised to reflect the government's wish for a unitary authority. By the time you read this, the council will have considered two options, although the government will have the final say. Either:

A single unitary Warwickshire – based on the current county council boundary;

Or

Two unitaries of: North Warwickshire – based on Nuneaton & Bedworth and Rugby; and South Warwickshire – based on Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick. Considerable work has gone into the background, which can be read here:

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for The Cabinet, 10/11/2025 10:00](#)

The recommendation from the Council's Cabinet is for the two unitary approach, after considering many factors which weigh in either direction. (WCC have decided to favour a

whole Warwickshire approach as a continuing authority). We think the main points are: to keep representation as close to residents as possible, the likely increase in council tax of the whole Warwickshire area option, and the implication for the formation of a strategic authority 'above' this level.

All of the reports and may be seen here: [Agenda for The Cabinet on Monday, 10th November, 2025, 10.00 a.m. | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

Each of the District and Borough Councils and the County Council are required to make a final submission to government by 28 November. The government will then consider which options they wish to formally consult on in the New Year.

Community Grant Scheme

Stratford on Avon District Council have recently announced their Community Grant Scheme 2025 to allow Town and Parish Councils, charities and community groups to apply for a share of £350,000 to support their valuable community assets during the 80th anniversary year of VE and VJ day. The fund has been made available to honour and secure an enduring legacy of the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ days by revitalising community spaces as living memorials to the sacrifice, resilience and community spirit that secured the peace, freedom and self-determination we now enjoy as a nation.

The scheme is for capital projects to improve local community facilities, such as community centres, village halls, parks and recreation areas, outdoor spaces and for the creation of new facilities, to enable communities to continue to support and enhance the services offered from these valuable resources. So, if you know of a community hall that needs a new roof, a park that needs some new play equipment or a memorial hall in need of a new kitchen, there are two different pots to apply for: Small Grants (£5,000-£20,000) or Large Grants (£20,001-£100,000).

More details can be found on the website: [Community Grant Scheme 2025 | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

The deadlines for applications are 31st January for Small Grants and 27th February for Large Grants.

If you have any questions, please email socialinclusion@stratford-dc.gov.uk."

Community Safety

Domestic Abuse Awareness

As October was Domestic Abuse Awareness month, we would like to highlight to residents the services that are available to victims of domestic abuse. For those online, there is more information on SDC's website here: [Domestic Abuse | Stratford-on-Avon](#)

[District Council](#). Nigel or Natalie can always be approached in confidence to help put residents in touch with those who can help.

In an emergency, always dial 999. If you are not able to speak, you can use the Silent Solution, which is:

1. Dial 999
2. Listen to the operator
3. If you can, cough or tap the handset to respond
4. If prompted, dial 55. This lets the operator know that it is a genuine emergency and you'll be put through to the police.

Southam Police SNT

We have met with Southam SNT to discuss ongoing concerns raised by residents, with regard to crime across the ward. We understand that a number of vehicle thefts have taken place where residents have left their vehicles unlocked. Please remember to lock your vehicles.

State of the District

At the Council meeting on 13 October, a report was presented which sets out a considerable number of facts and figures about Stratford District area. The full report can be read here in the Council papers (scroll to page 17): [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Council, 13/10/2025 14:00](#).

Some interesting points to note are:

Population. The population increased by 19.74% between 2014 and 2024. This is the 8th highest growth of all local authorities in England and Wales (average 7.74%). Over 65s make up 25% (average 19%).

Housing. The housing stock type availability does not follow the same pattern as Warwickshire or England. Stratford-on-Avon has far more detached houses and far fewer flats/maisonettes than the Warwickshire or English average. However, like the rest of the country, there are far fewer bungalows (10%) than any other type, despite the ageing population.

House price growth was negative - the median house represented a fall of £25,000 from September 2023. The 2024 median price was 19% above the Warwickshire median of £294,725, and 21% above the England median. Our District no longer has the highest median house price to median earnings ratio (9.07) in the West Midlands region: Wychavon has edged higher than Stratford.

The average overall monthly private rent payable in the District was £1,069. This was the third highest rent across the West Midlands, with Solihull and Warwick higher.

Approximately 2,287 dwellings were thought to be vacant across the District in October 2024.

A total net of 1,011 new dwellings was added to the housing stock in 2023/24. This represented 138% of the target for total new dwelling completions in 2023/24. Our District had the 15th highest figure of net completions out of 164 district authorities in 2023-24. (Bizarrely this high performance has not stopped the District being penalised and told it does not have a 5-year housing land supply.)

Crime. The total number of recorded crimes in the District in the year to July 2025 was 10,108. This reflects a rise of 2,204 on the previous year, although changes to the way data is released by Warwickshire Police may be responsible for some of this increase. This equates to a rate of 69 crimes per 1,000 people and is higher than the Warwickshire average of 56 crimes per 1,000 people.

The most prevalent crimes in the District were violent and sexual offences, with a rate of 22.6 per 1,000 people, which is lower than last year. This is lower than the rate across Warwickshire (30) and England (29.63).

The second most prevalent crime was vehicle crime, with a rate of 5.43 per 1,000 people. This is higher than the rate for England (4.58) and that for Warwickshire (5.38). The area with the highest numbers of vehicle crime was around Harbury (57 crimes), which possibly relates to how recording boundaries are drawn, noting the location of JLR.

Employment. 15% of the population aged between 16-64 years were classed as 'economically inactive'. In July 2025, there were 1,685 residents claiming unemployment benefit in the District.

Fuel Poverty. 14.9% of households in the District were in fuel poverty, according to the latest data for 2023, compared to 17% in the West Midlands and 11.4% in England. There was huge variation across the District in the proportion of households in fuel poverty, ranging from 25% in 'Ladbroke & Priors' to 5.9% in Wellesbourne South, with many of the areas in this Ward being similar poor performers. This is thought to be a combination of lack of mains gas heating, and lower rural incomes.

Summary Apart from the statistical review summarised above, the report includes an assessment by a local government association 'peer challenge' and lists 32 achievements by the council. The report also alludes to the challenges faced due to the government's proposed reorganisation of local councils.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Cllr Natalie Gist

natalie.gist@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Cllr Nigel Rock

nigel.rock@stratford-dc.gov.uk

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 &

malcolm-asserity@hotmail.co.uk

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

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 8th January, 2026.

FOOD BANK

Non-perishable and 'in date' items may be left
in the telephone box, in Priors Hardwick.

Toiletries are also welcome.

Donations are taken to the Food Bank at Southam,
which is open on Mondays (except Bank Holidays)
between 11.00am and 1.00pm.

The Food Bank is run and regulated by

THE TRUSSELL TRUST

which provides emergency food and support to people in crisis.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT HS2 ACTIVITY

Freephone 08081 434 434

You speak to a real person!

THANK YOU

To the volunteers who tidied up the area opposite the Butchers Arms
and to those who maintain the floral display below the village notice board.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

Used stamps are collected from the phone box at Priors Hardwick, where you will find a
small box labelled for this purpose.

Please leave space of at least 0.5cm all around the stamp.

Stamps are very welcome singly or 'in bulk'.

There is a collection in the church at Priors Marston,
from which stamps will be collected and brought to Priors Hardwick.

The box is emptied every weekday morning.

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

PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

Wednesday 10th December 2025
7.30p.m.

Venue: The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

Meeting: Christmas Party with
The Harvesters

Come & enjoy Traditions & Music from the Appalachian Mountains to start your Christmas season.

Wednesday 21st January 2026
7.30pm

Venue: The Priors Hall, Priors Marston

Meeting: The Work of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute (RABI)

Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Contact: Jane Cowen 07979 550202
 Fiona Spencer 01327 263423



75 Years Young – and Still Going Strong

Priors Marston & Hardwick WI

This year our WI reached a very special milestone - 75 years at the heart of village life. We celebrated at our October evening meeting in true WI style: with memories, laughter, a toast, and a generous slice of cake.

The evening began with a Memory Lane display, where scrapbooks, photos and treasures from decades past reminded us just how much has changed and how much has stayed the same (friendship, learning, and a good cup of tea never go out of fashion!).

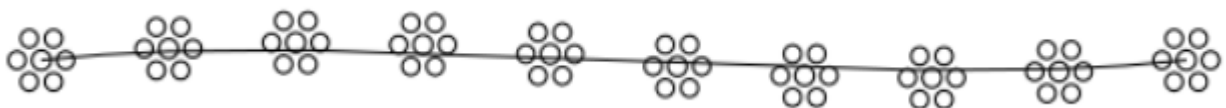
Members then shared 75-second speeches - from our oldest and longest-standing, to our youngest and newest - each offering a unique glimpse of what the WI means today.

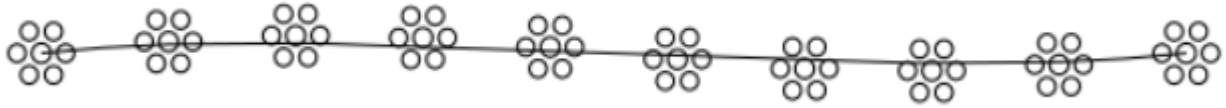
Of course, no milestone would be complete without a celebratory cake, which was enjoyed together after raising a toast to friendship and community.

Looking ahead, we've prepared a commemorative tree to plant in the village hall garden, beneath which a time capsule will be buried. Filled with members' handwritten notes, it will be opened at our centenary in 25 years' time.

It was an evening of pride, laughter and belonging - a reminder that while times change, the spirit of the WI endures. Here's to the next 25 years of fun, friendship, and yes... plenty more cake!







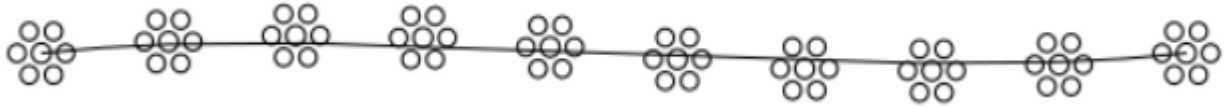
Written by Dot Brown for Priors Marston and Hardwick W.I. (1981)

Each month we all try to attend WI so,
we dash to the village hall, and we hang up our coats
The president greets you; the treasurer meets you
and gets your subscription by squeezing your throat!
We have a guest speaker, some tea in a beaker,
A scone or a biscuit and sometimes a cake
We go for a natter, in the back row we chatter
and discuss what is making your husband's back ache.

We have demonstrations, discuss tricky operations
Do First Aid or Keep Fit for just a small fee
Learnt to make a nice skirt from your husband's old shirt
and your goulash gets him guessing when he has his tea
There's a nice lot of outings and we all end up shouting
Let's call at The Holly Bush on our way back.
We go to stately homes look at flowers and gnomes
all dressed in our best hats and an old plastic mac.

Mrs Harvey makes prize jam, puts her fruit in the pan
adds water and sugar and a little drop of gin
It wins all the prizes from Leeds to Devizes
and it cleans her copper bottom much faster than vim
Last week she took a test but forgot her husband's vest
that was left in the jam pan to soak for three days
But the judges liked the flavour, 'twas a pleasure to savour
she wears a pink vest now instead of her stays.

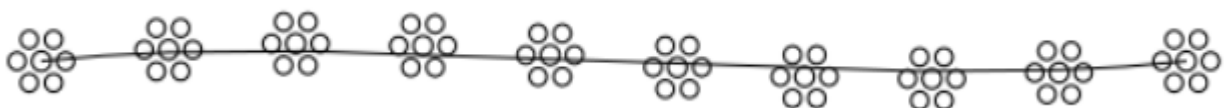




Mrs Hazlewood can make the very best cakes
Her sponges are so light and are heaven to bite
her tarts are so dreamy, and her doughnuts are creamy
and her husband has a melting moment each night
But she made one mistake when deciding to bake
a tray of rock cakes for the local shop,
The oven was too hot, it burnt the whole ruddy lot
Now she does quite a trade selling them for doorstops.

Flower arranging is a test and Mrs Leech does it best
her displays are a picture, and they all look a treat
She makes super posies with lilies and roses
in jugs and old tea pots they all look so neat
Last week came a blow when she entered a show,
it had taken her hours to arrange every bloom
When they started to wilt, she noticed the guilt
on her Ginger Toms face as he ran from the room.

We all are great pals, and I am one of the gals
and the fun that we have, well that is all free
We have to be friends even with her on the end
though her husband's very pally with a lady near me,
and there is one up the front we won't say she's plump
but we all have to move if we want to see,
No, we wouldn't miss it we won't even try
for we are all members of the W.I.



A “thank you” from Pete and Dot Brown

As many of you know, we have ceased delivering the milk around the village, but once more we would like to thank our past and present customers for all their support.

The milk round was started nearly 100 years ago by my grandmother, Emma Brown, and my auntie, Cath Brown, when she was a young girl. The milk came to them in churns, and they delivered it round the village 7 days a week in buckets with pint and half pint measures.

In the 1960s, my dad, Den Brown, took it over, together with my mother, Brenda, delivering it 6 days a week, but due to his ill health I took the milk round over in 1983.

We then started delivering 5 days a week. In 1985, I broke my leg, and a wonderful band of friends took it on delivering 3 days a week. for three months.

Years later, Covid struck and, because we were classed as vulnerable, our daughter Sam and granddaughter Evie came to the rescue and delivered it for us, wearing gloves and masks, keeping a social distance.

Because of the distance they had to travel during that time, we then dropped deliveries to twice a week. Since then, helped out by Sam's husband, Reuben, and our grandson, James, we have managed to carry on, but we reached an age thinking we really ought to retire, so we have hung up our milk crates and closed the milk shed.

We are very proud of the fact that, despite Covid, fog, floods and a lot of snow, we never missed a day... late maybe - but we got it there in the end.

Thank you once again, Pete and Dot Brown



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.

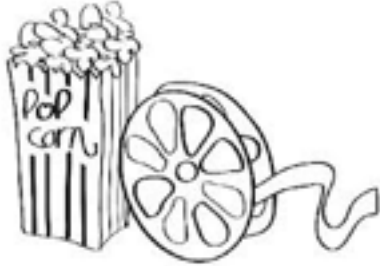
Current activities include:-

- 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. eleanorwakeford@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.)

**Film Nights
at
The Priors Hall**



Friday 19 December

Miracle On 34th Street

Year of Release: 1947 Certificate U Running Time: 1 hr 32 mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

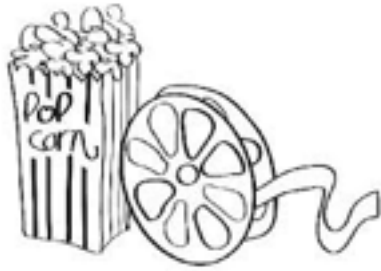
Film starts at 7:30pm

The best Christmas film ever?

An executive at Macy's department store in New York, believes in taking a common-sense approach to life and is consequently raising her daughter Susan not to believe in Santa Claus. This year however, the convictions of both mother and child are challenged when a kindly old man hired as the store Santa insists that he is in fact the real thing. No one believes him, some even think he's insane, but he is willing to go to court to prove his case.

This is the 1947 original version of the Christmas classic.

Cast includes: Maureen O'Hara, Edmund Gwenn, John Payne and Natalie Wood.



Friday 16 January

The Ballad of Wallis Island

Year of Release: 2025 Certificate PG13 Running Time: 1 hr 40 mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

Film starts at 7:30pm

In this British comedy drama, an eccentric lottery winner dreams of getting his favorite musicians, the duo McGwyer Mortimer, back together. His fantasy turns into reality when the bandmates and former lovers accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Old tensions resurface as he tries desperately to salvage his dream gig.

Cast includes: Tim Key, Tom Basden, Carey Mulligan and Sian Clifford.

- 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

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN PRIORS HARDWICK

Our Services

This has been a quieter time for our services, with the only additional service on Sunday 9th at 9.00am for Remembrance Sunday. Over thirty of us gathered on the Village Green on a dull slightly damp morning. We followed the traditional service, with Mark Cowley reading the lesson and Lieutenant Colonel Steve Webb laying the wreath on behalf of the village and reading out the names of those from the village who lost their lives: 1914-1918: G H Haynes, E T Haynes and W Taylor and in 1939-1945: C W Harrison, A E Haynes, A Haynes, K C Haynes. The grave of Private W H Haynes, who served in the Great War, but died as a result of his service in 1916, is commemorated with a War Graves Commission headstone near the South West corner of the churchyard. Volunteers from the War Graves Commission visit periodically to maintain this grave. Our gratitude is due to Christopher Hodgson who made all the arrangements for this service.

Services for December Advent begins this year on Sunday 30th November, when there will a gathering for all six parishes at Wormleighton, so we shall be celebrating on Sunday 7th December (second in Advent) - our usual service, when we remember Mary and Joseph and their preparations for the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, about 60 miles from where Joseph worked in his family carpentry business. His ancestors came from Bethlehem, so that was where he had to be registered.

On Thursday 18th December, we shall gather at 5.30pm at the Lychgate to sing well-known carols - with the 'hymn machine' to keep us in the correct key! The handbell ringers will also be present to play carols, and refreshments with mulled wine are likely to be served when our voices are exhausted. On Christmas Eve at 6.00pm, we shall once more engage in our traditional service of readings and carols. Mulled wine and refreshments will be served by our wonderful catering team after the service.

.....and then, Epiphany - Sunday 4th January, when we've all got over the New Year celebrations, we shall complete the Christmas celebrations by remembering the visit of the Wise Men to the new family in Bethlehem.

The Church Building

The East Window Since our last meeting, we have received information regarding another highly recommended craftsman in both glass and church masonry and we await a further quotation before proceeding.

Project Enable Following more thorough investigation, we have been able to 'bypass' an application for a full Faculty from the Diocese for the lighting and heating

in the community area of the church – and both heating and lighting are now installed. This has made a remarkable difference.

Grant and Donation We are most grateful to the Priors Education Trust, the Company and Charity now formally closed, which took over the existing school property when the County Council closed the school in 1996. PET then directed and financed its progress until 2011, when it was established as one of the first Free Schools in the country. The Parish Meeting was invited to apply for a grant for the enrichment of the community area in the church, especially regarding children. We were awarded £1,000 and then given a further £500 for the church from remaining PET funds, which we shall use in the same way. Huge thanks to all who contributed to the success of PET.

The Churchyard

Trees Now that the leaves are falling fast, we are urging our appointed tree surgeon to come as soon as he can!

Headstones We are now assured that arrangements are in hand to finance the repair of one of the unstable headstones. This is obviously a considerable expense and we have to be patient.

Visit from the new Bishop of Coventry

Bishop Sophie made a very brief stop here on 5th November during a flying visit around part of the Southam Deanery. She was keen to see the inside our church and especially to view the damage to the East window. Bishop Sophie joined us for a buffet lunch at Stockton before continuing her visit. Bishop Sophie's first parish was in the small village of Churt, Surrey for seven years, then for nine years in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. In 2019 she became Bishop of Doncaster, before coming to Coventry. Bishop Sophie is married with three grown-up children. She plays the violin and viola, and is a soprano singer.

I handed, to Bishop Sophie's PA, a dossier of all the wonderful things we're doing here. I hope she'll enjoy reading them!

Donations in the Phone Box Following the bounty received at the Harvest Festival, there have been fewer donations than usual, but I continue to check.

Used Postage Stamps continue to arrive and are gratefully received.

We wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and a happy and healthy year in 2026.

Margaret Clarke for the PCC

WEATHER JOTTINGS OCTOBER 2025

Rainfall for October 2025 came to 51mm, bringing the total for the year so far to 375mm, so 2025 remains in 2nd place as driest January-to-October this century, with 2011 having received just 302mm by the end of October. In October 2017, we received just 17mm of rain, and in four of the 26 years this century we received less than 50mm.

Average rainfall for October this century is 79mm, equalling November as the two wettest months this century. In the 26 years of this century, October received 100mm of rainfall or over in nine of them including the first three years. The wettest Octobers were in 2004 with 136mm; 2013 with 137mm and 2020 with 146mm.

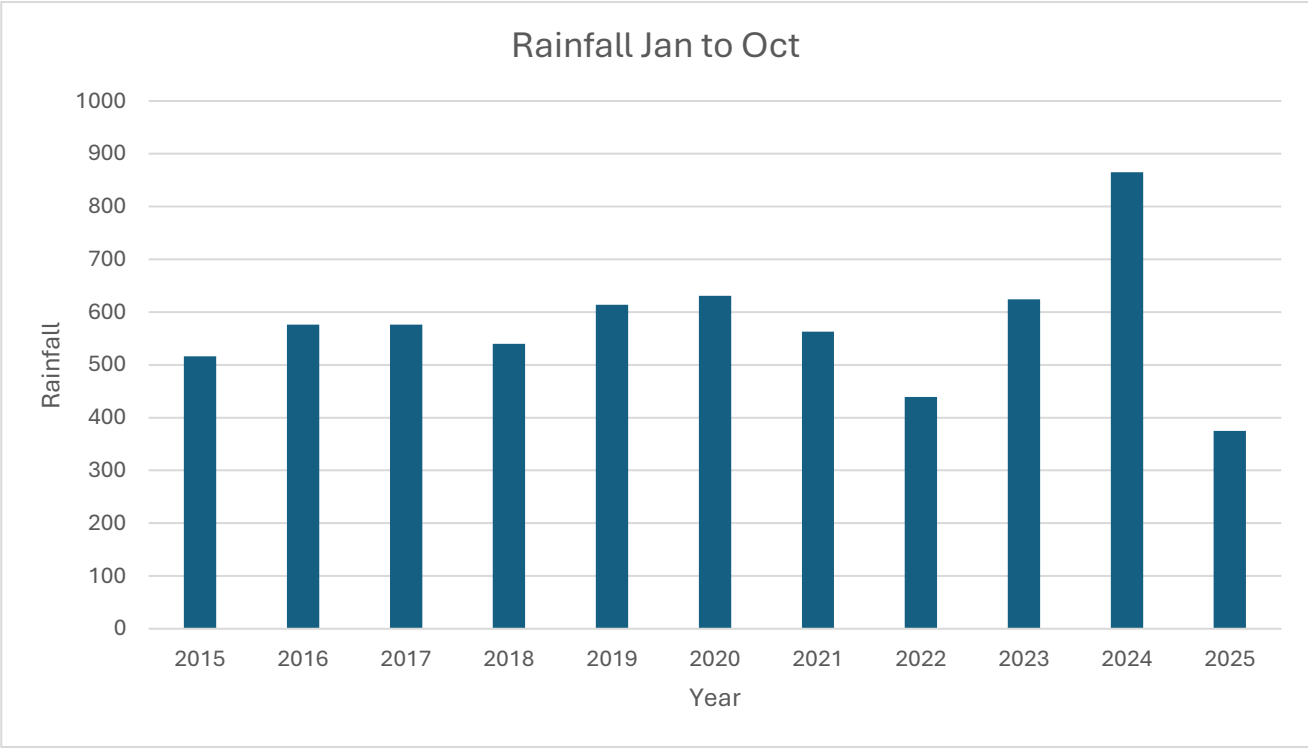
The first two days of the month were dry and cloudy, but overnight on 2nd, we received 5mm and another 9mm the following day. Saturday 4th was very windy, as Storm Amy passed over us. On Sunday 5th, the temperature rose to 15°C and then to 18°C the following day. The remainder of that week was warm but cloudy, the temperature only dropping to 14°C by the Saturday.

The week beginning Sunday 12th was dull and damp with drizzle on three days, when I could only record 'Trace'. The next decent rain came on Monday 20th – 7mm, with a further 2mm overnight. Then on Thursday 23rd, came Storm Benjamin, with another 7mm of rain. By the end of that week, the temperature had dropped to 11°C, with another 1mm overnight on Friday 24th – but with a fine day to follow. Sunday 26th began with a frost and a fine morning, but became cloudy and damp later. That was the coolest day of the month with only 10°C.

Temperatures then rose during that last week as far as 15°C on Friday 31st, but in the meantime, we'd received 5mm overnight on Tuesday 28th, light showers on Wednesday 29th and again overnight, a further 6mm. Thursday 30th was dry but cloudy, with Friday 31st noticeably warmer at 15°C, but with 9mm of rain during that night.

But we shall long remember, during the last days of October 2025, Storm Melissa which hit Jamaica and the Caribbean islands so disastrously with winds of up to 185mph: a category 5 Hurricane, the worst storm ever to have hit that region. The scale and severity of the devastation was incredible.

Margaret Clarke





GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

Your local Hardy Plant Specialists

The end of the year is almost here, a time of year when not much thought or time is given to the garden, so here is a little light relief for an armchair gardener.

Match the common names to the Latin ones, all are winter interest plants.

Arbutus unedo	Aconite
Helleborus niger	Winter Sweet
Cornus Midwinter	Fire Poinsettia
Bergenia	Christmas cactus
Acer griseum	Strawberry tree
Schlumbergera	Dogwood
Eranthis hyemalis	Paper bark maple
Chimonanthus	Christmas rose
Euphorbia pulcherrima	Heather
Erica	Elephant ears

November is usually the month when there are few flowers to be found in the garden, but not this year. There are roses, primroses, salvia, schizostylis, verbenas, Mexican daisy, hardy geraniums, astrantia and many more. I intend to walk round the garden on Boxing day to see what is flowering then, maybe you could do the same?

Christine Dakin

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Solar Battery Storage

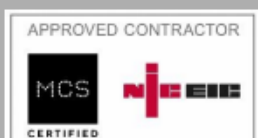
A solar battery captures the generated energy from the Solar PV in the daytime allowing access to free power in the evening.

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