

PARISH NEWS

February 2026



Priors Hardwick - Wormleighton - Priors Marston

PRIORS HARDWICK WITH PRIORS MARSTON AND WORMLEIGHTON

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

GROUP ADMINISTRATOR:

Susan Holloway 01926 812383 admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk

LOCAL CONTACTS:

Priors Marston:

Malcolm Monkhouse 01327 260915 / 07855 855063
malcolm-asserity@hotmail.co.uk
Peter Jackson 01327 260169 jackson.holly@btinternet.com

Priors Hardwick:

Margaret Clarke 01327 262233 margaret@latopus.com
Christopher Hodgson 01327 261941 cjhodgson@btconnect.com

Wormleighton:

Sam Burton wormleightonhall@btinternet.com
Sheilah Klegerman 01295 770517 sheilahkleg@gmail.com

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PARISH COUNCIL: <http://www.priormarston.org/parish-council/>

THE PRIORS HALL: Barbara Harvey 01327 260709
info.thepriorshall@gmail.com (Bookings)

PRIORS SCHOOL: <http://www.thepriorskool.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

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.priormarston.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

ODE TO A MILKMAN



We have been long-term admirers of the job that Pete Brown has done for his village over the years, such an important member of the Priors Marston Community, delivering the milk and mowing lawns and still going strong after all these years, was something to admire in our sector, wow!

We were really sad to hear Pete and Dot had made the difficult decision to retire from his Milk deliveries and when we heard we hoped we could not only continue Pete's legacy in the village, but also continue what we believe is a valuable service to all villages that really does keep a sense of community alive.

Zoe and I have run Dairy2Door for 10 years and I have worked in milk delivery for 26 years now. We hate to see the older generation retire, but our aim is to continue the great tradition they started or inherited from their families.

We offer a 2-day-a-week delivery, we sell over 400 products, as well as the usual milk, bread and eggs, to try and make village life as easy as possible. Our delivery days are Tuesdays and Fridays, we have a website [**Dairy2Door.com**](http://Dairy2Door.com).

Our app is available to download on the app store or google play (D2D-Dairy2Door) or if you are of the non tech generation (?not a fan of technology) simply call us for a chat on **0116 436 2452**.

We hope to serve the communities in Priors Marston, Priors Hardwick and other surrounding villages for many years to come and hope that you can support us in a small way to help achieve this.

We offer all new customers their first 4 pints delivered absolutely FREE!

Regards

Jason & Zoe

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

1 st /8 th February	Sue Butcher
15 th February	Shirley Monkhouse
22 nd Feb/1 st March	LENT

If you would like to help with cleaning, we meet on the first Saturday of every month at 10.00am in St Leonard's, to clean the church, enjoy coffee, biscuits and a chat.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, PRIORS HARDWICK Cleaning/Flower Rota

1 st February	Lucie Penruddock/Miriam Price
8 th /15 th February	Holly Marsh-Lazell/ Holly Marsh-Lazell
22 nd February/1 st March	Carolyn Bath/LENT

The Bridges Group Church Services

February 2026

BCP – Book of Common Prayer CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	1 st Feb Candlemas White	8 th Feb 2nd before Lent Green	15 th Feb Next before Lent Green	22 nd Feb 1 st Sunday in Lent Purple
PRIORS HARDWICK	Morning Worship 9.00am Lay Led	Evensong 5.00pm Lay Led	Holy Communion BCP 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am Lay Led	Morning Worship 10.30am Lay Led	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	
WORMLEIGHTON				Morning Worship 10.30am Lay Led
NAPTON	Holy Communion CW 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am Lay Led		Evensong 5.00pm Lay Led
STOCKTON	Morning Worship Lay Led 10.30am	Holy Communion In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am		Holy Communion CW 10.30am
LOWER SHUCKBURGH				Holy Communion BCP 9.00am

ASH WEDNESDAY – 18TH FEBRUARY
TBA

FROM THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

Our Services since the last issue of this magazine have covered the whole of the Liturgical Christmas Season. We began at the beginning of Advent, with our service relating to Mary and Joseph preparing to leave Nazareth and travel to Bethlehem, remembering how the Angel Gabriel had visited Mary back on 25th March to announce that Mary would give birth to a very special baby. Another angel had visited Joseph later with the same message. Mary and Joseph rode to the service on their ponies, but the ponies didn't join the service! Refreshments followed the service.

Carol Singing at The Lychgate on 18th December was relocated to the new area at the back of the church, with its new heating and lighting, due to the rain. The handbell ringers entertained us with several carols and we sang together another seven. This time, we added more musical accompaniment to that of the hymn machine, with a wonderful choice of percussion instruments, in the hands of the children, during the last carol. The Handbell Ringers very kindly provided mulled wine and mince pies. Very many thanks to the Handbell Ringers who support us so well!

The Christmas Eve Carol Service We followed the usual order of service, but added one carol. The great step forward this year was the huge advantage of the excellent sound system provided by Nick Ratcliffe. We are so grateful for the considerable amount of time and care Nick took to set this up and the result was amazing and very much appreciated. Nick's wife, Michelle, is also to be thanked as one of the ladies who provided the wonderful floral decorations for the church. Also to be thanked, are the ladies who provided and served the refreshments and mulled wine - AND those who took home and washed the glasses! Those carrying crates are very useful! Also to be thanked, are the gentlemen who assisted in bringing in and arranging far more chairs than we thought we might need – around 150 people once again attended the service, and we are beginning to see people who join us regularly just for this service. The collection amounted to £680.00, which, this year, we have used towards the £10,000 required for the repair to the damaged section of the East window. It was completed just in time for the carol service - as were the flood lights, which had failed in early December!

Epiphany – Sunday 4th January – a bit early, but we celebrated the coming of the Wise Men to the stable at Bethlehem at our 9.00am service. Once more, we used large maps to show just how far those men had travelled on and with their camels. There were more than three of them in church - all in costume - with a queen as well, which is not out of line with the Bible account. No specific number of Kings is actually mentioned, just the names of the content of the three gifts which represented the countries they'd come

from and also the characteristics of the man that the baby would grow up to be. This is where the tradition originated! The Kings had indeed brought their gifts and they came and placed them in front of the Nativity Scene for which, at last, we had space on the chancel step!! The children also took part in the reading of a poem about the Wise Men – and everyone took part in The Chocolate Nativity. We began the service by using ‘The First Nowell..’ to remind us of link between the shepherds and the Wise Men and completed the service with ‘We Three Kings....’, used in two parts. Very many thanks to all the children and to the Tredwell family and Christopher Hodgson for their organisation of this part of the service. Once more, refreshments were enjoyed after the service, provided and served by our wonderful ladies’ team. Again, very many thanks to them all. Candlemas – Sunday 1st February, which as I write is still in the preparatory stages, and we shall remember that 40 days after his birth, according to Jewish Law, Jesus was taken to the Temple to presented to the Lord. This event is actually the one that concludes the whole event of the Birth of Jesus, so it’s after this Sunday that the hangings are changed from white to green... and because of the date of Easter, they will change again to purple for Ash Wednesday on 18th February and Sunday 22nd February as we progress through Lent.

The Church Building

The East window Following our enquiries regarding another highly-recommended glazier/stone mason, we received a quote for a significantly lower cost and agreement from the diocese to accept this. The work was completed in time for the Carol service.

Project Enable In a document dated 13th January 2026, we have received formal approval, as a ‘List B Application’, for the installation of the new lights and heating in the Community Area – as it seems to have become known. This has proved to be a considerable improvement.

The Churchyard

Trees As I write, I can confirm that all the work required by the Quinquennial Report has been completed and I can hear the ‘chipper’ at work removing the smaller branches for removal elsewhere!

Grass Many thanks to the volunteers who have cut the grass on several occasions since the end of the formal rota. This made for a tidy churchyard in which people could leave their wreaths and floral tributes.

Unstable Headstones One of these which had become loose on its plinth has now been repaired and replaced and those which had been loose in the ground have now regained stability due the plentiful doses of rain in the late autumn!

Donations in the Phone Box I’m very sad to have to report that the large plastic box used for receipt of donations for the Food Bank was removed towards the end of November and in spite of my enquiry via email, there was no trace. But thanks to the generosity of one resident of the village, it has been replaced with an opaque box – and

donations are still welcomed, with the box checked at least once on every weekday. I still see people waiting to collect food most times when I take food in.

Used Postage Stamps So people are still sending Christmas cards!! I've gratefully received several 'multiple' donations since Christmas, and I shall soon be taking them to be trimmed – to a border of about 1cm. Sadly many of the cards seem to have been smaller this year and with the larger stamps, there's very little space!

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

The need in the Southam area is as great as ever!

Sadly, near the end of last year someone removed the large plastic box from the Kiosk and did not return it. A generous resident in the village has now replaced it so, hopefully, we can resume our donations which are taken to the Graham Adams Centre on Monday mornings.

Non-perishable and 'in date' food items may be left in the plastic 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

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.

There is no need to wait for our next meeting - 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!

Tuesday, 24th February





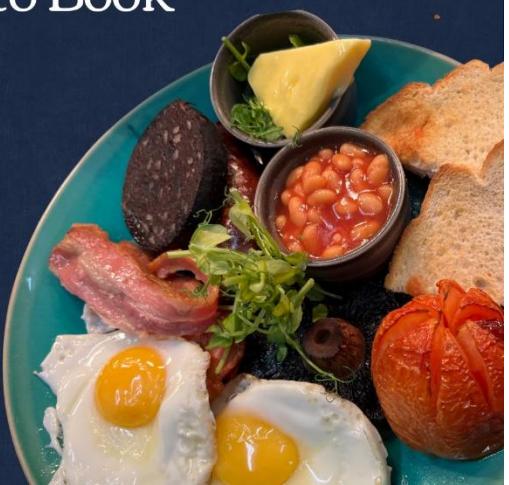
HONESBERIE RESTAURANT

Join us for all day Breakfast, Lunch
& Fresh Coffee

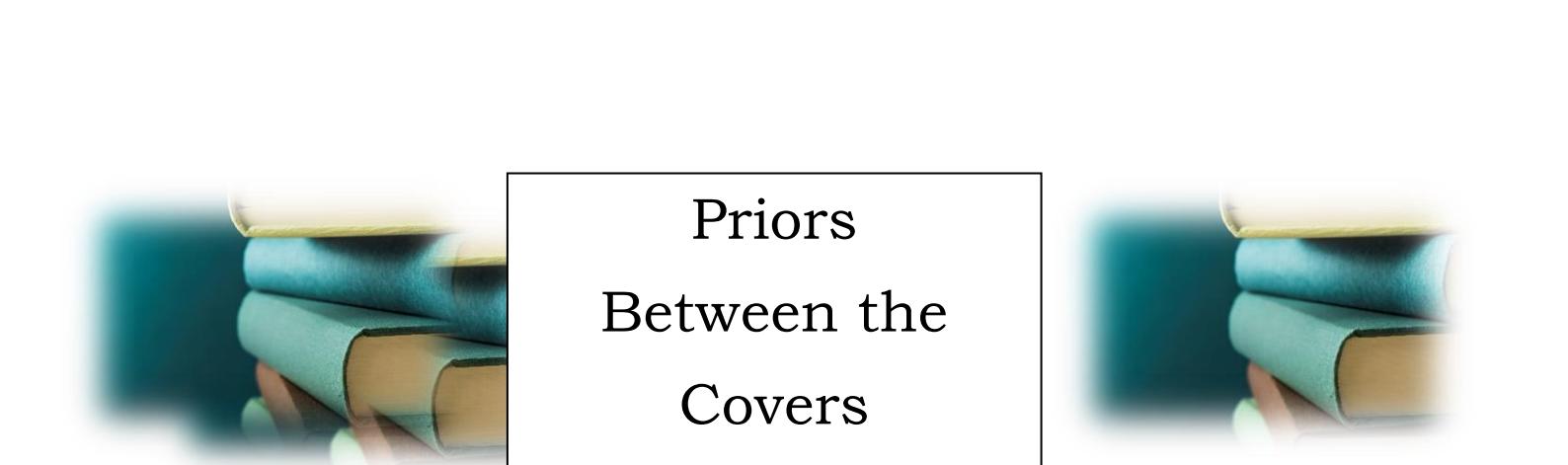
Tuesday-Friday: 9am-4pm

Saturday: 9am-3pm

Sunday Lunch: Call to Book



The Grange, Priors Marston, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 7SG
01327 262 922
office@honesberieshooting.co.uk



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

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

Needles and wool can be provided for new knitters, just let us know

Call Dawn 07949 095170

PRIORS MARSTON & HARDWICK WI

Wednesday 18th February 2026
7.30p.m.

Venue: The Priors Hall

Jury Service

Sue Moore, WI member from Ladbroke & Deppers Bridge, will be telling us about her time on Jury Service.

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At our December meeting, we enjoyed some great performances from The Harvesters. Bob & Ian, along with a vast array of instruments, told us stories of the Appalachian & Southern American state music. This music started during the slave trade and has kept that part of American with great rhythm for several hundred years. The performances were fabulous with a lot of foot tapping and audience participation.

Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Contact: Jane Cowen 07979 550202
 Fiona Spencer 01327 263423

Quiz Night

27th March 2026

7.00pm for 7.30pm start

at

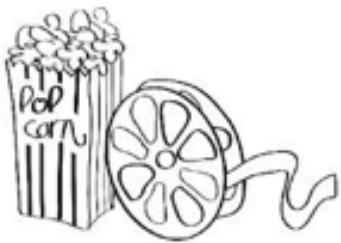
Wormleighton Hall Farm Shoot Barn

(by kind permission and invitation of Sam & Nicola Burton)

- Teams of up to 6 people
- Entry £5 per person (children under 12 free)
- Price includes crisps, nibbles and tray bakes
- Wine, beer and soft drinks available for purchase
Card payments will be possible on the night
- Raffle (donations of prizes would be much appreciated)

To reserve a table please call Wormleighton PCC on
07884 061135 or email us at
WormleightonPCC@gmail.com

This event is being organised by St Peter's Wormleighton PCC and all monies raised will be used for the running of the Church.



Film Nights at The Priors Hall

Friday 20 February

The Straight Story

Year of Release: 1999 Certificate U Running Time: 1 hr 52 mins

Doors Open at 7:00pm

Film starts at 7:30pm

Alvin Straight, a 73-year-old retired farmer in Iowa, learns that his estranged brother, who lives 240 miles away in Wisconsin, is critically ill. Determined to heal the rift between them while he still can, but no longer able to drive a car because of poor eyesight, Alvin embarks upon the journey on his old lawn mower. Based on a true story and highly acclaimed for its quiet authenticity and beautiful cinematography, The Straight Story is a poignant tale of family, forgiveness and the human spirit.

Cast includes: Richard Farnsworth, Sissy Spacek and Harry Dean Stanton.

- 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

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 &

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

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

Happy New Year!

Second Homes Council Tax

Stratford-on-Avon District Council has started a consultation on a proposal to introduce a Council Tax ‘premium’ on second homes across the District. From April 2025, councils were given powers to charge up to double council tax on second homes. Currently, second homes in the District pay the full Council Tax without any discounts. Central government has reduced the government contribution ‘settlement’ that comes to the Council by assuming that SDC has introduced this premium.

Following the consultation, the District Council will make the decision on whether to implement the Council Tax premium of up to 100% in February 2026. If approved, the extra figure would take effect from April 2027. To provide the required notice, owners of second homes would be notified by 31 March 2026.

The Council is considering how this could work locally. Second homes can reduce the availability of housing for local people, but careful consideration is needed. The views received through this consultation are essential in shaping this decision and deciding the right approach for the District.

The consultation remains open until Monday 2 February. For more information and to take part in the consultation, visit the District Council’s web site: [Council Tax Premiums on Second Homes Consultation | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](https://www.stratford.gov.uk/council-tax-premiums-on-second-homes-consultation)

Public consultations – budget time

There are other public consultations due, which are as follows:

1. Policing Budget for 2026/7

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is consulting on their proposals for the Police precept. Go to the home page of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner web site or the link is available here:

[Warwickshire PCC launches consultation as budget aims to strengthen policing services - Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire](#)

2. Stratford on Avon District Council Budget 2026/7

This will be coming out for consultation towards the end of the month and we welcome your views. It will be on the Stratford District Council website and we will circulate the link when it goes live.

HS2

The new Chief Executive, Mark Wilde, came and met Councillors at the MP's Forum in December. As you will have seen from the national news, he has a big agenda because the whole HS2 project has lots of problems. It was a welcome step that he took the time to come here to listen to local representatives. Whilst this was a bit of a first to get someone senior to listen, we tried to explain we wanted to see a change of attitude to the approach in the whole project and to improved consideration to local communities. Specific detailed local commitments were not expected at this senior level (although Nigel did raise the ongoing road closure we have around Priors and illustrated our difficulties with recent history of the inconvenience we have had and the wasteful practices residents have reported.) However, as a consequence of that meeting, he did say that community elements would now feature in his regular briefing from contractors.

Local Plan

Residents will recall that we reported that a large number of responses were received to the public consultation which closed in March 2025 (more than 22600 at the final count) and these are available to view online on the South Warwickshire Local Plan Web Site: [South Warwickshire Local Plan - Preferred Options 2025](#). The high return is one of a number of reasons for a delayed timetable, which was agreed in December by the Cabinets of the two Councils. Other reasons for delay come from national pressures to take into account changes in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published a year ago in December 2024. Many other Local Authorities are in the same situation, trying to get their Local Plan submission in by December 2026 (when the system will change). The government has provided monies to assist many of them, creating a peak demand for specialist resources across the country all at the same time. There are further related matters that have increased the burden on consultancy and staff resources, including dependency on others such as the county and national highway authority. The new timing plan intends to see a first draft of the plan (reg 19) sent to the Planning Inspectorate in June/July 26, where it will be tested for 'soundness'. Having considered responses to that, the plan is set to be submitted for independent examination (reg 22) before the last possible submission date of 12 December 26. Councillors have been concerned for some time that the shifting environment has placed timing at risk and the contingency 'slack' that was in the timing plan has been used up.

There is a summary of the responses also on South Warwickshire Local Plan Web Site, at [SWLP PO Consultation Statistics.pdf](#) by the various sections, but it must be borne in mind that the current assessment in progress is a technical one that considers the planning merit of the representations - not the number of comments. Reading through some of these, there would appear to be a degree of repetition and targeted campaigning in some cases.

Five Year Housing Land Supply

Councils have to be able to demonstrate that they have issued enough planning permissions to meet (revised) government forward housing targets for five years. The recent recalculation of the five-year housing land supply by a planning inspector, has, as expected, produced a rash of speculative applications that do not comply with the District's policy, generally because they are in open countryside. Because we no longer can demonstrate that five-year supply, some of these may have to be allowed. Our enquiries with Severn Trent show that Southam, Ladbroke, Stockton, Harbury, Bishops and Long Itchington are all served by the same sewage works at Southam. In a local plan response, Severn Trent have indicated a major risk in accommodating increased demand from now and over the next 25 years. There are outline applications in progress for almost 600 dwellings in this area that we know about. The closest large sites to our villages, that have been put forward at the moment, are clustered around Southam.

Police SNT Update

PC Hannah Rankin has been joined by two new community support officers for the Southam beat. They are PCSO Cowley 6007 and PCSO Withers 6013. We welcome them to our parishes where we need as much support as we can get for our rural villages. It is planned that Natalie and Nigel will meet with them soon.

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.thepriorshall@gmail.com, to book, or for more information. The hire rate is £20.00 per hour, with a village rate of £15.00 per hour. Hiring for longer periods is possible, subject to availability - the rates depend on precisely what is required. Two local businesses are based in offices upstairs at the Hall, as well as hairdressing and post office downstairs.

Current activities include:-

- Lacey's His and Hers Hairdressing: Tuesday to Saturday, by appointment, 01327 263330 and 07733 102564.
- Post Office: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm and 2.00 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.)



GARDEN JOTTINGS FROM BRIDGE NURSERY

Your local Hardy Plant Specialists

An unwelcome start to the year was the discovery of a large tear in the shade tunnel cover after the snow overnight on 8/9th Jan. It's done exceptionally well though and hasn't been renewed for maybe 20 years. It might be possible to mend it temporarily to delay getting a whole new cover for a year or two.

Other things are showing signs of aging (including me!). The pergola leading into the garden has some rotten timber which needs replacing before the rambling rose causes the whole thing to collapse. The garden benches all need some wood preservative applying and Polly the panda needs some patching with resin.

As soon as the weather starts to perk up, it will be time to cut down all the ornamental grasses. This takes quite a while because there are a lot of them. Interestingly, they are all shorter than normal after the dry summer last year. There is still time to plant bare-root trees and hedging, a much easier and cheaper way of adding native plants and fruit trees than buying pot grown specimens. Broad beans can be sown in trays but keep them out of reach of mice and voles, which will happily deprive you of a crop later in the year.

Christine Dakin
Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton
www.bridge-nursery.co.uk

¼ mile from Crossroads Garage – look for our Tourist Sign

WEATHER JOTTINGS NOVEMBER 2025

Rainfall for November came to 105mm, bringing the total so far this year to a more respectable 480mm, so 2025 now comes in as the second driest year over the first eleven months, following 396mm in 2011. However, the driest months of November this century were in 2021 with 21mm and 2021 and 2018 both with 41mm. All the other years had at least one month with very much less than 21mm!

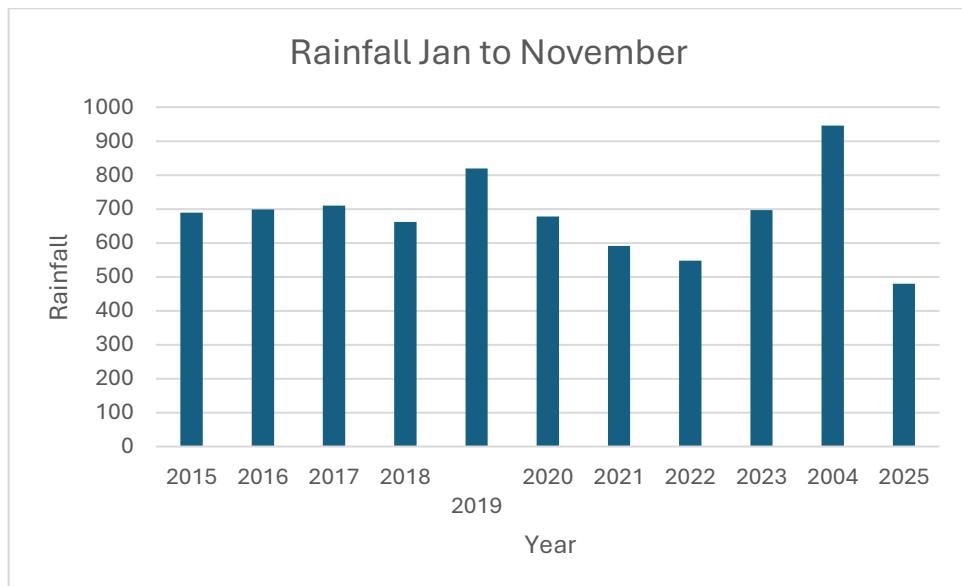
As for the wettest months, September 2024 comes top with 231mm of rain, followed by August 2004 with 168mm. The wettest November was in 2012 with 136mm and 2002 with 132mm. November has seen 100mm or more on six occasions so far this century. Only October has exceeded that with eight times! The average rainfall in November to 2022 was 79mm – with an average of 53mm over the past three years.

I recorded some rainfall on 19 of the 30 days of the month, mostly less than 10mm. Remembrance Sunday was cloudy and damp, with 6mm falling overnight and a further 6mm on Monday 10th. The main 'rain' feature was the result of Storm Claudia, overnight on Thursday 13th, with 8mm and most of the day on Friday 14th with 35mm. The storm, which originated to the south, first hit Spain and Portugal and was named by the Spanish Met Office. This was one of the very rare occasions when our area was included in an Amber rated zone, because of the intensity of the rain giving rise to flash flooding and potential loss of life.

During the first half of the month, temperatures ranged between 10°C and 15°C, which was generally a few degrees above the average for the time of year; but from Sunday 16th until the end of the month, only Friday 28th saw a temperature of above 10°C. I notice I've written 'cloudy' on the calendar many more times than 'sunny'!

There were frosts late in the month: a light frost on Thursday 20th followed by a hard frost the following morning; then again on Wednesday 26th followed by a fine but cold day and then on Sunday 30th, with a beautiful sunny day to end the month.

Margaret Clarke



WEATHER JOTTINGS DECEMBER 2025

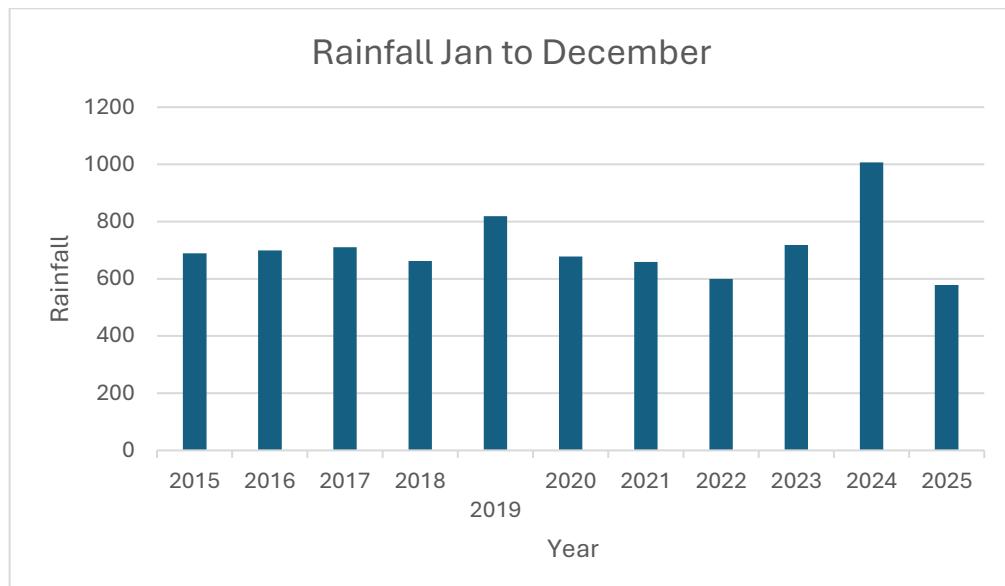
Rainfall for December came to 98mm, bringing the total for the year to 578mm. This leaves 2025 as the second driest year this century, after 2011 with only 396mm in total for that year.

Of the 98mm for the month, 56mm fell during the first 12 days, with the only dry days being Wednesday 3rd and Monday 8th. The wettest days were Monday 1st, with 14mm and Friday 5th, with 16mm. Storm Bram which caused so much havoc elsewhere in the country, on Tuesday 9th, left us with just 6mm in the early hours and a further 2mm that night; and windy, but not excessively so.

Monday 15th brought heavy rain from about 4.00am until mid-morning with a total of 24mm. The night of Wednesday 17th brought 2mm and was followed by 15mm on Thursday 18th. This began a short spell of dull damp days, ending with 3mm overnight on Sunday 21st. The only remaining rainfall came on Saturday 27th, for which I recorded 'Trace'.

Temperatures for the first twelve days of the month ranged from 6°C to 14°C, but from Saturday 13th, they fell gradually from 10°C to 4°C, with a cold East wind on several days. There were frosts on Wednesday 3rd and Friday 5th - which later gave 16mm of rain from mid-afternoon into the night. Further frosts opened the mornings on Saturday 13th, very slightly on Thursday 25th, then on 27th and 31st. But this cold ending to the year did not save it from being recorded as the warmest year on record.

Margaret Clarke



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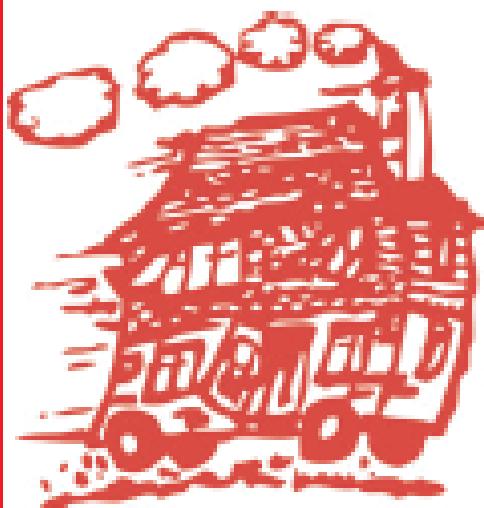
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