

BRIDE VALLEY NEWS

JOY

Share the Joy this Christmas at one of
the Carol Services in the Bride Valley
and Chesil Churches.

7th December

Puncknowle 5pm

12th December

Langton Herring 6.30pm

14th December

Abbotsbury 4pm and Burton Bradstock 6.30pm

18th December

Portesham 5.30pm

21st December

Long Bredy Live Nativity and Carols

Littlebredy 4.30pm

Shipton Gorge 5pm

Litton Cheney 6pm.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

December 2025

**We wish all our friends and neighbours
A Happy Christmas and Best wishes for 2026**

Alan, Rosemary & Ruby

All at Norburton Hall

All at the Post Office

and Flora Fry

Andrew & Eve Bailey

Anne & Derek Thomas

Anne Combe

Anne Southgate

Barbara James

Betty Champkins

Carol Houghton

Catherine & Philip Williams

Chris & Gay Sundt

Chrissie & Andrew Bailey

Christine Hynds

Christine Lawrence

Cilla Jones

Clare Viney

David & Pauline Woodford

David & Ruth Cullingford

David & Sue @ The Stables

David & Yvette Smith

David & Yvonne Buckland

David and Ethna Jenkins

Elaine Colbert

Elaine Upson, Darby Lane

Gary and Sarah Tabner

Geoff & Sandy Adderley

Geoffrey Fry

Gill Robertson

Graham and Steph Skinner

Hazel Coulter

Helen & John Sinclair

Helen, Andrew, Isobel & Flora Fry

Howard Bongers

Ian & Elizabeth Wigglesworth

Ian & Irene Halsey

Ian & Mary Ibbotson

Irene Smith

Jane Stubbs

We wish all our friends and neighbours
A Happy Christmas and Best wishes for 2026

Janet & Steve Tolputt

Jean Ayers

Jenny & Tony Malyon

Jenny Conway

Joan Allan

John & Jill Harper

John Bowden

Joyce & Gilbert Roberts

Judy Clarke

Julia Wermig-Morgan

Julian & Irene Piper

Keith & Pat Lewis Badgett

Ken & Sheila Pett

Liz Orza

Mags and Chue

Marge & Geoff Langwith

Marion, Steve & Hamish

Michael Read

Pat & Peter Broomhead

Peter & Pauline Tompkins

Rob & Rebecca Bryan

Roger & Linda Ashman

Roy & Gill Perkins

Ryder & Heather, Aaron & Kiera

Sheila Fry

Sheila Spencer-Smith

Sue and Bryan Brown

Sue Haines & Bob Ponchaud

Susan Paul

Tim Linford and Family

Tom Holmes and Pauline Mackie

Tony & Mo Williams

Trevor Ekins

Val & Richard Ferre

Veda Bull

Vicky & Ernie Thomas

Wendy & Robert Froy

Wynne and Ilva

Bride Valley News – the magazine of the Bride Valley Communities and the Bride Valley & Chesil Churches

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January 2026 issue deadlines: Articles, photographs, etc must be sent to the appropriate Village Correspondent (contact details at the head of each village section) by 5th December for the January issue. Contributions from outside the Bride Valley should be emailed to bvnburton@gmail.com. Handwritten or typed copy should be delivered to village correspondents well before the deadline. Please contact bvnadverts@bvn.org.uk for information on advertising in the BVN. Articles, notices and advertisements in this magazine may not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the Editor or the people and organisations funding and supporting the BVN. Copies of the BVN, in colour, can be found at bvn.org.uk or via links on Bride Valley village websites.

Note: Contributors are asked to note that space in the BVN is strictly limited and the Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse submissions and cannot guarantee that items will be included.

The Bride Valley News is delivered to every home in the valley and is entirely produced and distributed by volunteers. Donations to help us continue to provide the magazine would be welcome and if you feel able to contribute - please make a BACS payment to:
Account: 'Bride Valley Churches Team Council', Sort code 30-91-21
Account number 00074071.....and please quote BVN.

The Bride Valley & Chesil Churches

St Mary The Virgin: Burton Bradstock
St Mary: Litton Cheney
St Michael & All Angels: Littlebredy
St Peter: Long Bredy
Chilcombe (dedication unknown)
St Mary The Blessed Virgin: Puncknowle
St Martin: Shipton Gorge
Holy Trinity: Swyre

Rector: Rev'd Andrew Rawding (01308) 898799 Associate

To enquire about Baptisms, Marriages or Funeral arrangements in the Bride Valley Churches please contact

Rev'd Rawding by phone (see above) or
email rectorbridevalleychesil@gmail.com

Lay Pastoral Assistants

We have 2 Lay Pastoral Assistants in our team and they are available for anyone throughout our community and can respond to any need, great or small, for pastoral care. The team are: Jenny: 01308 898768, Liz: 01308 897451 alternatively you can get in touch with your churchwarden, or Helen Fry, Benefice Administrator on 01308 897260. Home communion is available by arrangement. If you would like to become an LPA, please have a look at the Diocese of Salisbury webpage:

<https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/whoweare/news/is-god-calling-you-to-be-a-lay-pastoral-assistant->, and then chat with Rector Andrew.

Safeguarding

The Churches of this Benefice have adopted the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and are 'Promoting Safer Churches'. The Benefice Churches have an open door to all survivors.

For further information or support please contact our Safeguarding Officer: - Les Keatley. Tel: - 07833545450 email: - Les@Keatley.me.uk

From the Rectory

Dear friends,

Greetings from Berlin. I arrived on Remembrance Sunday eve with my Godfather Malcolm, disciple of Columba ('dove' in Latin), of the Maguire clan whose motto is 'justitia et fortitudo invincibilia sunt' ('justice and fortitude are invincible'). Malcolm is my mother's brother. Today we completed a 'Pilgrimage of Peace' around Berlin: Checkpoint Charlie; the Berlin Wall; East German watchtowers; 'Das Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas' (Memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe); the Reichstag; The Brandenburg Gate; The Siegessäule (Victory Column) and the Kaiser-Wilhelm Memorial Church. It was a humbling and haunting pilgrimage. Symbols of Empire. Pillars of pain.

The terrible impact of dehumanisation, violence and war. Reminders of the subtle, hidden, or sometimes not so hidden checkpoints, walls, watchtowers, divisions that exist in our churches and communities. We found fragments of hope and inspiration at the 'Reconciliation Chapel' built from the rubble of a church which when the wall was erected in 1961 stood within the death strip, inaccessible to the people of both East and the West and finally blown up by order of the GDR government in 1985, four years before the wall fell. I reflected that there is where our churches should be, places of refuge from 'sniper fire', confronting the powers that try and divide us and set us against each other. It is written 'Christ is our peace, he has broken down the wall of hostility that divides us' (Ephesians 2), but what am I or should I be doing in the real world that makes a difference? Tomorrow, we travel to Wittenberg. If like Martin Luther, you could nail 95 theses to a church door to change the world – what would they be?



The Church door at Wittenberg

The 'Weihnachtmarkts' (Christmas markets) are already opening in Berlin. I've also been reflecting on Christmas songs. First, which artists or bands sang these opening lines?
"I'm dreaming of a white Christmas just like the ones we used to know..."

“Last Christmas I gave you my heart but the very next day you gave it away”

“I’ll have a blue Christmas without you...”

“You better watch out, you better not pout...”

“It was Christmas eve babe, in the drunk tank...”

Secondly, which of the above lines is closest to your anticipated Christmas this year. Maybe it feels like your best Christmases are in the past, ‘like the ones you used to know’. Maybe this Christmas will be another reminder of heartache and heartbreak as someone ‘gave it away’. Maybe the emptiness of loss means a ‘blue Christmas’ for you, without him or her or them. Maybe Christmas heightens tensions and anxiety in your house and ‘you better watch out’, or else. Maybe Christmas is spent ‘in the drunk tank’ as it’s the only way to get through it. Mariah Carey sang: “I don’t want a lot for Christmas, there’s just one thing I need...” For those enduring the terrible pain of Christmas this year without a loved one, or the anguish of a Christmas without a child they never got to share Christmas with, the just one thing maybe never be a reality, which can just make each Christmas worse.

I was in New York City recently to run the marathon for Weldmar Hospicecare, mindful of those I visited in the last year in Weldmar and all those grieving loved ones who I imagine are dreading having to get through Christmas this year. I was staying on Upper Westside not far from the Dakota Building where John Lennon was assassinated. His song ‘Imagine’ is one of the greatest hymns to humanity ever written. But also, the opening line of his and Yoko Ono’s Christmas classic ‘Happy Xmas (War is Over)’ is so pertinent: “So this is Christmas and what have you done?” Somehow, you and I, we must be Christ, the ‘X’; we must be the hope, and the love, and the light this Christmas to our families and to our neighbours. We can reflect on John and Yoko’s question, and embody and make real Band Aid’s classic opening line: “It’s Christmas time and there’s no need to be afraid...”

With my prayers for the Christmas gift of some joy and some peace and some kindness for you,

Andrew

Community Church

Community Church (and Community Cake) will return on January 4th, 4.00pm at Portesham Village Hall and Jan 25th at LATCH. If you haven't been along yet, why not try it out in the New Year? It's an informal service with singing, prayers and times of reflection. There are activities for children - and it always ends with a cuppa and cake!

Church Floodlighting

If you would like to have a church floodlit for a baptism or wedding, or in memory of someone, please speak to the following: Burton Bradstock: Ian Ibbotson 898484, Shipton Gorge: Phyl Webster 898657, Litton Cheney: Freddie Spicer 482617.

Pilgrimage of Hope

On Sunday 28th December, join Rev'd Andrew for a Pilgrimage of Hope for New Year. Leaving Burton Bradstock church at 10.30am, this is a walk for all the family (and 4 legged friends on leads) through the village and countryside, returning to church at about 11.30am-12.00noon. Whatever 2025 has been for you, this pilgrimage provides an opportunity to reset in nature with prayers and reflections to help set you up for the New Year. Everyone is welcome.

From the Registers

Baptism:

Frank (Francis) Nesbitt 23rd November, Burton Bradstock

Funerals:

Geoffrey Spencer Smith 27th October, Burton Bradstock

Juniper Greener 5th November, Weymouth Crematorium. (Juniper was formerly a resident of Long Bredy)

BRIDE VALLEY CAR SERVICE

The BVCS is a volunteer scheme offering residents of the Bride Valley transport to and from medical appointments when they are unable to drive themselves or be driven by relatives or friends. Clients are charged a mileage fee (currently 50p per mile) plus a standard charge (currently £2.00 per journey). Because the service depends on the availability of volunteer drivers, clients are asked to give as much notice as possible – we are unlikely to be able to respond to requests within 48 hours of an appointment.

To book a journey please call our voluntary co-ordinator on
07393 607025

We always welcome new drivers.



Bride Valley and Chesil Churches
invite you to



Plough Sunday 11th January at 3pm
Puncknowle Manor Farm Grain Store, DT2 9BX
by kind permission of Sarah Wild

**Please come along to think about those who
work on the land and produce food in this and
other communities.**

There's parking at Puncknowle Manor Farm and there will be refreshments
too.

Everyone is welcome! Please bring your friends and family.

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Thorners CE VA School

Merry Christmas!

The end of term promises to be amazing and hopefully just what Christmas at primary school should feel like!

In the last few weeks we have planned a Candlelit Carol Service in church, 2 School Plays, a Nativity, Christmas Lunch, a Christmas Fair, Christmas Jumper Day and a visit from Father Christmas himself to round off the term!

Bravo to all staff who are helping to put together our productions this year - Peter Pan, The 12 Days of Christmas and of course the little ones' wonderful Nativity. It will be great to see all the children take to their roles with their usual confidence and polish - a special mention must also go to some spectacular singing heard in rehearsals (both solos and whole class/school contributions) which should really lift the performances - Thorners take a bow!

Thank you as always to our dinner staff for putting together our Christmas lunch (for 130!). It always runs so smoothly and also to the teaching staff for

making the school look so festive in the last few weeks. It has been wonderful that Mrs Russell has also been offering so many cooking lessons to the children in Chesil and Bredy - not only so that they get to cook a new recipe each term but so that we are all treated to the delicious aromas of meatballs, mince pies and cookies drifting down the corridors when she is in working with the children - Junior Bake Off here we come! Similarly, huge thanks to parents and the TSA Committee for getting the fair in LATCH ready - I'm sure it will be a huge success again this year!

Obviously, the children are incredibly excited about the big day as we finish term and, as they head home, we hope they do so well-minded of the message at the centre of this incredible time of year and the hope it can bring to all. I think as adults who work day in day out with little ones - we are very fortunate each year to see the simple but deep magic that Christmas retains - an instinctive delight which even the most relentless commercialisation of this time of year fails to warp. It is wonderful to see pupils practically fizz and pop with excitement and anticipation during all of the events of the last few weeks - I hope they (and all parents!) have enough energy to get them to through to the big day.

May all have a happy, peaceful and joyful Christmas.

Mike Sitch, Headmaster



Burton Bradstock CE Primary School

**'Do justice; love kindness; and walk humbly with God'
(Micah 6:8)**

We are inspired by this verse from the bible and how it shapes all we do. We all believe that fairness, kindness and being humble are the key to flourishing for all. The links between this and our school values of Happiness, Friendship, Hope, Love, Courage and Respect are clear.

Just before our half term break, we held our Harvest Festival. The service was a great success, and all the kind donations were given to Bridport's Cupboard Love Foodbank. The Harvest displays created by each class were wonderful, reflecting a key value around a type of harvest:



- Owls: 'humility' and 'patience' - Harvests of the flock and garden
- Kingfishers: 'joy' - Harvest of the Earth
- Robins: 'Peace' - Harvest of the ocean
- The Nest: 'generosity' - Harvest of the grain

Thank you to our Chaplaincy Group and Reverend Andrew for their support in putting together our service.

In the Nest, children explored the theme of harvest by baking delicious hedgehog-shaped bread and practised their fine motor skills by printing with apples and carving pumpkins. To kick off their unit on celebrations, they also made and enjoyed sparkly chocolate bread stick 'sparklers' whilst watching a fireworks display. In Robin class, the children have been playing with Victorian toys borrowed from Bridport Museum, they have created their fabulous Harvest Festival display and in their science topic, Senses, they drew around each other to label their bodies.



In Science, Kingfishers have been investigating how the digestive system works and being able to name all the important organs. Their school value this half term is 'Respect'. The children became 'Respect Rangers' and created their own ranger while thinking about how they would want their school to look when being respectful. They also gave a boot-strappingly fabulous performance to parents at BLC!

Owls have had a busy few weeks! They visited the Bridlit festival to see author Justyn Edwards , and the Year 6 students joined other schools in Salisbury this week to explore and learn new hymns. All the children loved their first Carnival Drumming session delivered by Dorset Rural Music School. They will be back soon for more (loud!) fun!



We also have spaces available in our Pre-School for children who are due to turn 4 before August 31st 2026. If you would like to visit our happy and friendly village school, please contact the school office to arrange a tour: 01308 897369 or office@burtonbradstockprimary.org.

To stay up-to-date with all our news and events please follow our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BurtonBradstockPrimarySchool> or the hashtags #LoveWhereWeLearn #TeamBurton! We have lots of exciting things planned in the run up to Christmas and I look forward to sharing them with you in next month's edition. From all at Burton Bradstock School, we wish you a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Adam Gough, Headteacher

Our Night Sky in December 2025

Mars will be lost in the glare of the setting Sun, while Saturn will be rising in the South East, followed by Jupiter in the East. He will be prominent throughout the night, following the constellation of Orion. As you face him, look for Betelgeux, the reddish star in his top right shoulder, which has been a subject of interest in the past months.



At roughly 10 million years old, Betelgeux is much younger than our nearly 5-billion-year-old Sun. But while it is much younger, it is also much more massive and will burn through its materials faster, and will therefore have a shorter lifespan than a star like our Sun. In 1836, astronomer and mathematician Sir John Herschel documented Betelgeux's changing brightness, but he was probably not the first to note it. Betelgeux has since been classified as a "semiregular variable star," which is a type of variable star that periodically waxes and wanes in brightness and occasionally

undergoes irregular light changes. In the Autumn of 2019, Betelgeux started to drastically dip in brightness. Within months, the star had dimmed by about 60% in an event now known as the Great Dimming. Scientists found that Betelgeux "blew its top": a piece of its surface material out into space (a type of event known as a surface mass ejection). Once in space, this material cooled into a dust cloud that temporarily blocked the light from the star. Betelgeux will, *eventually*, go supernova. However, scientists expect this isn't likely to happen for about another 100,000 years, at which point Betelgeux will become either a neutron star or black hole. The star's final fate depends on how much material is left after the supernova event. My thanks to Chelsea Gohd, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Bill Turnill

Bride Valley WI

The September Bride Valley WI monthly meeting returned us to the summer months and specifically The Chelsea Flower show. Ben Garner who started his family business 'Water Artisans' six years ago, gave an extremely interesting talk on how from a sunken bath in his parents' garden at a very young age, he went on to start his business which specialises in bespoke landscaping.

Ben's drive for environmental improvement in every project his company takes on, has led them to become expert in their field, so much so that they are called upon by Architects and Garden Designers to add their expertise and innovation to projects which include water features such as fresh water and chemical free swimming pools and ponds. Their innovative and technical knowledge has led Ben and his team to being involved in helping build at least 28 medal winning gardens at the RHS Chelsea. We were treated to lots of photographs showing how much hidden work is required to produce the beautiful water features in the show gardens including the Rewilding Garden which won the Gold medal and best show garden in 2022.

Our walks will continue through the winter, weather permitting, but on Sunday mornings. The Skittles team have already played two league games and secured wins in both. Practice will continue, aiming for the Championship title again this season.

Should you wish to join the Bride Valley WI we meet on the third Thursday of the month in Puncknowle Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Please contact us at
bridevalleywi@gmail.com

The Bride Valley Book Club Review

Bride Valley Book Group Review - "The Lesser Bohemians" by Eimear McBride

In case anyone wondered - we choose our books (as democratically as we can) from Dorset Library's stock of Book Group sets x10 - a catalogue which is added to each year. More often than not these books are new to all of us and often meet with a mixed response. Prize winners and critically acclaimed titles are often chosen. "The Lesser Bohemians" by Eimear McBride was my choice and it was not well received! The story follows a young girl from Ireland who auditions to win a place at one of London's prestigious Drama Schools where she meets and falls into a problematic relationship with an older actor. One determined member of our group persevered and finished the novel but the rest of us really struggled with the impressionistic and staccato style of the prose. The use of jumbled syntax proved annoying for some but it did allow for some inventive wordplay. We had an interesting discussion as to why we found the prose so impenetrable. Some of us lost patience, some of us were reading other books and found the swapping from one to another too challenging. We agreed that this style of prose requires from the reader a degree of concentration and attention. I felt she had written within the Irish tradition, echoing writers like James Joyce. This novel has been much praised by the critics but few of us managed to engage with it. We always share recommendations of titles (and often the books themselves) we have actually read and enjoyed. These discussions are sometimes the most rewarding part of our meetings.

Liz Pinfield

Farming update

At present we are lambing our small flock of Dorset ewes. The main flock will lamb in February. Our Cows have now all calved for this year and doing well on the late winter grass. We are busy cutting hedges to tidy up before winter sets in. We are also rearing a few extra young stock for next year.

Gill & Pete



A Story by Quentin Blacke

Shedding the Years - Part 2

(Part 1 can be found in November's BVN)

That Christmas, Rachel bought Frank a 'Who on Earth Are You?', Ancestry subscription including a DNA test kit.

'Be good to know our family history before we pop our clogs,' she laughed, 'we might even have royal blood!'

At first, he received notifications of distant cousins around the UK, America and Europe, then one day, out of the blue, came an email that would change his life forever.

'Dear Frank,' it read, 'you have a 40% match to Adam Wallace. He is 56 and lives in Brighton, Sussex, with his Wife, Petra. He is definitely your son.'

Frank was stunned. Rachel was ecstatic. They sent a message through the app.

'Hi Adam, the only way this can be true is if your mother is Eva Wallace.'

'Yes, that's my Mum', came the reply, 'you were at the same school apparently.'

Next came a flurry of photos on WhatsApp, then they arranged to meet.

Adam looked uncannily like his father at that age. He had a pretty wife, Petra, and a teenage son, Patrick.

Wally had died and because Adam was so unlike the man he'd always called 'Dad', Petra had, perhaps out of curiosity, bought him the same test kit as Frank had received.

'Do you think Eva knew?' asked Rachel.

'If she did, she never let on,' replied Adam, 'or ever admitted it to herself.'

'So much time wasted,' said Frank sadly.

'No, so much time to make up,' said Petra enthusiastically, 'we've gained a new family and you guys now have us, a grandson and a great grandson on the way - well done, Frank.'

'0 to 60 in 12 seconds,' smiled Frank, 'that's what your Mum once said.'

There was a stunned silence.

'That's a dad joke,' explained his son, enfolding his father in his embrace.

'Happy Christmas!'

Elf Day 2025

On Wednesday 3 December

we will be taking part in the Alzheimer's Society Elf Day, to raise money for this excellent cause. One in three people born in the UK today will develop dementia in their lifetime. Alzheimer's Society use funds to support to those who need it and fund research. We will have fund-raising buckets in surgery all week or you can scan the QR code below.



Scan to donate

Help us reach our £150 target!

Make a donation with *JustGiving*

Food Bank: Portesham Surgery is the new home of the village Food Bank box. It will be located outside the front of the surgery for now. Please follow instructions on the box to leave your donations.

Spring Bulbs: We are at that time of the year when we are starting to plant up the patient garden and surgery borders with bulbs. If you have any spare spring/summer bulbs you would like to donate, please bring them into the surgery and pop them into our bulb box. In addition, should you wish to help out with the patient garden let us know or contact our Patient Participation Group via our website or by emailing enquiries@porteshampatients.org.uk

Staff training: Please note the Surgery and Dispensary will be closed on Wednesday 10th December from 1.00pm for mandatory staff training. Our urgent phone line will still be available for urgent queries only. For medical emergencies please call 111. In life threatening emergencies please call 999.

On behalf of the entire practice, I would like to take this opportunity to wish our wonderful patients a very happy Christmas and all the very best for 2026.

Best wishes, Ros Fuller - Site Operations Manager, Portesham.

Surgery website → www.princeofwalessurgery.co.uk

On Facebook → Prince of Wales surgery and → Portesham Patient News.

Puncknowle, Swyre & West Bexington

Village Correspondents:

Elizabeth Slater (Puncknowle)

liz@ruddle.org.uk Tel: 01308 897751

Jill Neill (Swyre & West Bexington)

Jill.neill@live.co.uk Tel 01308 897479

Village website:

<https://puncknowle-swyre-pc.gov.uk>



Christmas at Puncknowle

An invitation to Christmas Tea and Carol Service

You are invited to the Village Hall Christmas Tea in the Hall on **Sunday 7th December** at 2.30pm. This is a community event at which refreshments will be provided, free of charge, making a chance to catch up with friends and neighbours. The Hall will be decorated for Christmas and the fire lit to welcome you in. There will also be artisan stalls and a chance to win a home baked Christmas cake.

At 4.30pm all are welcome to join the candle-lit walk to St Mary's for **Carols by Candlelight** and the reading of the Christmas story, where the children help to create the nativity scene. This will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Puncknowle Church and the Crown Inn invite you to **"Carols at the Crown"** on Thursday 18th December at 7.00pm. Come and join us for an enjoyable hour of singing carols together in the warmth of the pub.

On **Christmas Day** there will be a service of Christmas Praise at 11.00am in Puncknowle Church. Come and join us in this informal service to celebrate Christmas, followed by coffee in The Crown afterwards.

Date For Your Diary

"Plough Sunday", 11th January at 3.00pm. More details on page 9.

Puncknowle and Swyre Parish Council

Invitation To Make Grant Applications

The Council operates a S137 grant aid policy, under which certain groups may apply every year to be considered for a grant payment. The deadline for this year is 31st December 2025. For more information, please read the Council's Grant Award Policy which can be found on the Puncknowle.net website, <https://puncknowle-swyre-pc.gov.uk/grants/> or email the clerk for a copy clerk@puncknowle-swyre-pc.gov.uk.

Puncknowle Swyre & West Bexington Lunch Club

Incorporates Chilcombe, Long Bredy and Little Bredy

Puncknowle Village Hall 12.30pm for 1.00pm, Lunches cost £6

9th December: Turkey Wellington with Trimmings & Roast Potatoes, Dessert to follow

Future dates 2025

20th January: Chicken Casserole

17th February: Lancashire Hotpot with Dumplings

All meals include fruit juice to start and cheese and biscuits with tea or coffee. Vegetarian option can be provided.

Enquiries – please contact **David Buckland**
01308 898492 for more details

Long Bredy

Village Correspondent: Helen Horsley

Email: bvn@longbredy.org.uk

Tel: 01308 482585

Village website: <http://www.longbredy.com>



Long Bredy 100 Club October Results

£30 no. 146	C Trethewey
£15 no. 124	R Maltby
£5 no. 156	J Busby

Drawn on 26th October, at 11 The Gardens, by Jackie Cain, Ruth and Dave Cullingford.

Village News and Updates

It is with sadness to inform you of two former residents of Long Bredy who have passed away during October.

Kathy Clark

When Kathy and her late husband, Ron, first came to Long Bredy they lived in 10, Bedford Terrace. They then took over the tenancy at Lower Farm and lived there until Ron passed away. Kathy then moved to Litton Cheney and later to Bridport. Kathy and Ron had five children who went to the local schools.

Juniper Greener

Juniper lived for many years at Langebride House and was a staunch supporter of the church and the community. She moved with her family to Broadoak and passed peacefully away in her new home with her son James and daughter Juliet by her side.

Thank you

A huge thank you to everyone who helped or supported in anyway the Cafe Breakfast and Table Top sale held at LATCH on the 1st November. It was a very successful morning with many people attending enjoying the delicious bacon and sausage baps. It was clear that the wide variety of stalls helped many people start their Christmas shopping. £730 was raised for St Peter's Church.

Fundraising Update and Thank You

Dear Wonderful Long Bredy residents (and beyond), I would say to a huge heartfelt thank you for all of your messages of support and sponsorship for the Bournemouth Half Marathon that I completed on the 12th October. My family and I have been overwhelmed with the support and generosity of everyone that sponsored me in memory of Rick. Your messages of support and donations helped motivate me in my training runs and also spurred me on during race day. Altogether we raised an incredible amount of money for The British Heart Foundation and nearly exceeded my original target of £150 by £1000! The final amount of donations was an amazing £1,130 (plus £267.51 Gift aid) so the British Heart Foundation will be receiving £1397.51 in total.

Thank you so much everyone. Dan and family x

Coffee Break

As has been tradition for the last few years the Long Bredy Coffee Break in November is dedicated to Remembrance Day. It is a day that we remember those of the village, and the wider Bride Valley, who gave their lives during the two World Wars and in subsequent wars since. The generosity of those who give towards the Poppy Collection is always humbling and I thank all those who contributed in aid of the Royal British Legion (RBL). The RBL is a National Charity and continues to help ex-service personnel from all the services across the country.

I would also like to thank those organisations that have provided the prizes for the Raffle, namely: Modbury Farm Shop, Ford Cheese Factory, the Seaside Boarding House, the Chesil Smokery, Groves Nursery and two private benefactors. Your contributions are hugely appreciated and allowed us to raise almost £800 for the RBL.

Nick Orr

Come Along Inn

“Full to Bustin” is the only way to describe the Village Hall at the October opening of the Come Along Inn. Thank you to all who attended making it a marvellous evening.

Special thanks to all the hard-working volunteers who make it all happen.

Future Events

Christmas Coffee Break and Grand Draw

The Grand Draw will take place at the Christmas Coffee Break on Saturday 13th December (10.30am - 12.00noon). Prizes include £100 cash, Cheese Hamper, Vouchers for meal at a local pub and a Ham amongst others.

Please return all tickets to Jackie Cain or Ruth Cullingford before the 13th December. There will also be a stall selling various seasonal items.

Come Along Inn

Come along and start your Christmas celebrations on Friday 19th December, 5.30pm – 9.00pm. There will be a warm welcome and although no meal will be on offer the now traditional finger buffet will be served.

St Peter's Church

Live Nativity: Our Live Nativity will be held on Sunday 21st December. This will be the only Christmas service held at St Peter's, Long Bredy.

Come along at 9.30am to view the animals and the Holy Family who will be in the Churchyard at the front of the church. The service starts at 10.00am and will be followed with refreshments being served.

The theme for this year is a 'Festival of Animals'.

Help us celebrate the animals that attended the Nativity by making a small animal to decorate the Church, for example a Donkey, Cow, Sheep, Owl. The craft table in the Church will have simple designs to make or you are welcome to design your own. You can also read the story of the Grumpy Owl and the joy of Christmas.

Burton Bradstock

Village Correspondent: Pat Grafton

patgraston43@gmail.com Tel: 01308 898264

Village web-site: www.burtonbradstockvillage.org.



Tots' Time

Tots' Time had a break for half term last week but it kicked off again on Friday 7th November with the children making chocolate breadsticks sparklers! With the run up to Christmas there will be many festive crafts to make so please come along if you have little ones, new borns to preschoolers and their grown up, all welcome! Every Friday during term time from 2.00pm until 3.15pm at St Mary's Church.

Burton Bradstock Village Hall

Village Hall Bookings

Should you wish to use the Hall at any time, the booking officer can be contacted via email at bbvht.bookings@gmail.com or by phone on 01308 897648.

Coffee Mornings

The popular monthly coffee mornings where you can get a sensibly priced coffee/tea and cake plus a chat with friends will be held on the dates below. They run from 10.00am to 12.00noon and all are welcome.

Wed 10th December, St Mary's Church

Wed 14th January, Village Hall Trust (Bacon Rolls)

Burton Bradstock Films

There is no film in December due to the Christmas break. Details of the 26th January film will be in the January BVN.

Christmas Market

The Village Hall Trust Christmas Market and Coffee Morning will be on Saturday 6th December from 10.00am to 12.00noon. There will be a range of stalls selling Christmas craft items including Snowmen, Reindeers and Christmas Trees, decorations, Craft items from the Village Society team and many more that make great Christmas presents, plus the normal coffee/tea and cake service.

Christmas Quiz

The hugely popular Christmas Quiz will be held on Saturday 13th December, with the Quiz prepared and run by Sue Moores & David Edwards. Doors will open at 6.45pm for a 7.30pm start. The ticket price of £13 per head includes a light supper, plus all the normal crackers, party poppers and balloons that add to the festive fun. There will be a sensibly priced bar, raffle and prizes for winners, 2nd and last place. There will be teams of 8 (max) per table and the central aisle will be kept free.

Tickets went on sale at the Post Office on Wednesday 19th November on a first come first served basis. Please purchase all 8 of your team's tickets at the same time. Once you have your team tickets contact Richard Ferre (details below) to confirm your table and any dietary requirements.

Individuals or pairs wishing to join in should purchase tickets from the Post Office then contact Richard requesting a team place.

There are normally some last-minute places that become available, so if you want to join in and there are no tickets at the Post Office contact Richard at rwferre99@gmail.com or 897648.

Thank You

This has been the busiest year for use of the Hall ever. Inevitably the odd confusion arises as we running it are all unpaid volunteers trying our best to provide a professional service to all hall users.

I would like to thank both the Village Hall Trust committee who work tirelessly during the year to fund raise, maintain, repair and improve the Hall and all our regular users who make the Hall a vibrant place at the heart of the Village.

Richard Ferre. Chairman, Village Hall Trust

Burton Bradstock Village Hall “200 Club” November 2025 Draw

Congratulations to the winners:

1 st	£33.00	No 146:	Mrs Jennifer Conway
2 nd	£16.50	No 66:	Mrs Pauline Mackie
3 rd	£8.25	No 142:	Mr Dave Venn

Anyone wanting to become a member in time for the December 2025 draw should telephone Keith Britton on 01308 898008 and let him have £1 – one pound for each monthly draw in the year. There are double prizes in the December draw.

WDDC Licence no: SL0080

Burton Bradstock Village Society

As many of us will receive our December BVN in the last week of November, it seemed sensible to remind Villagers of the lighting of the Christmas tree on Saturday 29th November 5.15pm-6.00pm. *This timing is 15 minutes later than previously advertised.* There will be a glass of mulled wine, soft drinks, stollen cake, a present for the children, music and carols with the lights being turned on by the Rector. Lighting of the tree and some carols backed up by the Burton Bradstock Male Voice Choir at 5.45pm. This is the perfect way for us to meet our friends and neighbours and then perhaps make an evening of it enjoying our two hostelrys or whatever floats your boat.

October Post Office Coffee Morning Fundraiser

This is our first opportunity to thank all the villagers who came to support the coffee morning run by the Society in support of the Post Office. The event

raised £675 which will be invested in the Post Office facilities. More importantly though, the event's purpose was to highlight the Post Office's importance to the village and the need for the villagers to use it.

Friday 5th December, Village Hall, Christmas Bingo

Instead of our monthly talk the Society will be running a light-hearted Bingo session. There will be prizes for the first line and full house for each game purchased out of the speaker's fee. Doors open at 7.00pm and play starts at 7.30pm. Tickets on the door are £1.50 for members and £5 for non-members. Mulled wine and Stollen cake will be served in the break and there will be a raffle and wine available for purchase. You are welcome to bring your friends.

Saturday 6th December, 10am- Noon, Village Hall Christmas Market:

While this is a Village Hall event several of the Society's members will run a table selling bespoke handmade items ideal as Christmas presents or personal use. The money raised will be donated to the Society.

A special talk to look forward to in January:

Friday, 9th January 7.30 pm, "Climate change and us". Speaker Bob Ward. What does climate change mean for Burton Bradstock?

Climate change is having growing direct and indirect impacts on Burton Bradstock and the rest of Dorset, increasing the risks of flooding, heat waves and coastal erosion. Bob will explain in this talk how we can become more resilient against the growing impacts of climate change, which will continue to worsen for the next 25 years at least. He will also outline how we can tackle the underlying causes to protect lives and livelihoods in the village against even worse consequences. Come and ask your burning questions. Bob has served as policy and communications director to the Grantham Research Institute at the LSE and advisor to the Government at the COP summits.

We wish all in the village a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

The Friends of Burton Bradstock Library

Many thanks to all who have paid their subscriptions to the Friends and if you haven't got round to paying yet, it's not too late! Just leave your form and payment in the Library.

Christmas cards and notelets are available in the Library and the Post Office so please support the Friends by buying some. The Library will be dressed

with Christmas decorations so do call in to have a look, and remember that Christmas books and jigsaws will be available to borrow. If you want help from a Digital Champion, please leave your details at the desk and we will arrange dates and times.

Normal opening hours are:

Monday 2.00-4.00pm

Wednesday 10.00am-12noon

Thursday & Saturday 2.00-4.00pm

We will be closed on 24th & 25th December and 1st January.

We wish everyone a very enjoyable Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

burtonbradstocklibrary@gmail.com

www.burtonbradstockvillage.org/library

01308 897563

Sue Brown, Chairman

Dorset Historic Churches Trust - Ride & Stride Fundraising Event

Congratulations to those people from Burton Bradstock who took part in this worthy event in September and very many thanks to their large number of generous sponsors.

The Rev'd Andrew Rawding ran 40 miles from Lyme Regis to Langton Herring and visited 22 churches in between. Andrew Bailey cycled around all the Bride Valley and Chesil churches covering 30 miles. Jane Stubbs and Liz Orza walked to the different churches in Bridport and surrounding area. Together they raised almost £1300 for the Dorset Historic Churches Trust which gives grants for the repair of historic churches throughout Dorset. Half of the monies raised is returned to the local parishes.



To all who like to knit

The maternity unit in Kyiv hospital, Ukraine, is requesting knitted blankets. I have a relative who is part of a group of local and Ukrainian knitters. They are knitting strips (not squares) of all colours, and would appreciate any extra help that we could give.

Use D.K. wool, cast on 30 stitches. with 4mm (old size 8) needles in garter stitch (all knit, no purl). Cast off at 30 inches / 75cm. If you enjoy knitting, why not use up your different coloured odd balls of wool to help this project?

For further details contact Heather on 01308 897780.

In Memorium

Recently we lost one of the oldest residents in the village, Elva, 104 years plus. She was a very endearing, patient and generous lady, all the qualities needed for a head teacher, which she had been, retiring here from London. Her knitting was exquisite and was enjoyed by her friends and the village, together with her finger puppets. She loved her cats.

Everyone who met her will be saddened that she is no longer with us. Her death was peaceful, in her sleep, and she was not alone. Goodbye and God bless.

Burton Bradstock WI

It's hard to believe that Christmas has come around again already, but Burton Bradstock WI are well and truly in the mood for celebrating! First up on 3rd December is our Christmas lunch to which husbands are also invited to help us get the Christmas Season off to a good start. This year we are trying something a little different. Instead of going out for a meal, we decided to have a Christmas buffet style lunch in our very own hall, using outside caterers so that nobody has to worry about any cooking or baking for once! We thought that by doing this it would be a more relaxed occasion, in which it would be easier to mingle and also that we are not restricted to numbers or any time limits. Hopefully everyone will enjoy this change of format especially as we can be free to make as much noise with our chattering, crackers and party poppers as we wish!

At our meeting on Tuesday, 9th December we shall be partying again. There will be music, fun and games and appropriate refreshments. Let's hope everyone gets into the spirit by wearing their Christmas jumpers or suitable

Christmassy colours, jewellery etc. Also, at this meeting we will be making a collection of food and other items of comfort which will be donated to the “Cupboard Love” food bank in Bridport. By doing this we hope to bring a little bit of joy to those who are less fortunate than ourselves at this time of the year.

With all these festivities taking place, we haven’t forgotten about the true meaning of Christmas. On 11th December we shall be holding a Carol Service in the church, to which other local WIs have been invited. This used to be an annual event in the WI calendar with local WIs taking it in turns to organise, but has sadly this has not happened again since Covid. However, our President, Carol Higho, has managed to re-instate this tradition so we are looking forward to meeting up again with some of our fellow WI friends in the area. So, lots to look forward to in December and it just remains for me to wish everyone a very enjoyable Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Janet Pearson

Burton Bradstock Parish Council

You are warmly invited to the December Parish Council Meeting. There will be a brief meeting followed by refreshments, we look forward to seeing you there.

- 🕒 6.30pm
- 📅 Wednesday 3rd December
- 📍 St Mary’s Church, Burton Bradstock

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who work so hard to keep our village clean and tidy. Your time, effort, and dedication is very much appreciated. Thank you for your continued hard work and community spirit!

Now that the dark evenings are upon us, we’d like to remind everyone to stay safe and be visible. Please wear high-visibility clothing or carry a torch when out and about. Thank you for helping to keep yourself and others safe!

🌲 Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 🌲

Burton Bradstock Bridge Club

We are a very friendly group who meet in every Tuesday afternoon from 1.45pm until 4.30pm to play duplicate bridge. If you have played bridge

before but feel you are a bit rusty this would be ideal! We could find you a partner if necessary and you would be assured of an enjoyable afternoon with a break for tea and biscuits. Please come and make some new friends.

For more information, please contact Kathy on 01308 485626.

Burton Coffee Mates

Coffee! Cakes! Chat! Come and join us in the Church from 10.30am -12.00 noon on Thursday December 11th for Coffee Mates with carols and Christmas nibbles.

Transport and wheelchair facilities are available.

For more information contact Pauline 898327.

Father Christmas in Burton Bradstock

Santa Claus and his friends from Brit Valley Rotary Club are visiting Burton Bradstock on Thursday 18th December starting in Beach Road at 5.30pm until 8.00pm collecting for local good causes.

You can see all of Santa's journeys in Bridport and surrounding villages on Brit Valley's Facebook pages. Santa will return on Christmas Eve but only to those who are asleep.

Ian Ibbotson. Web: www.britvalleyrotary.com

Thanks from The Post Office

Thank you to everyone who came or donated to the coffee morning - it was very much appreciated.

Also a reminder that our order book for Christmas is open for hampers/gammons, etc.

So please keep shopping to keep us open.

Gill and Pete

BURTON BRADSTOCK PLAYERS

PRESENT

CINDERELLA

BY KIND PERMISSION OF ALAN FRAYN STAGE RIGHT CREATIVE LTD

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

THURSDAY 19th FEBRUARY – 7.30pm

FRIDAY 20th FEBRUARY – 7.30pm

SATURDAY 21st FEBRUARY – 2.30pm

SATURDAY 21st FEBRUARY – 7.30pm

BURTON BRADSTOCK VILLAGE HALL

BAR – EVENING PERFORMANCES ONLY

ICE CREAM, RAFFLE

ADULTS £10 UNDER 16'S £5

TICKETS ON SALE FROM 5th JANUARY 2026

FROM BRIDPORT TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE ON 01308 424901 OR ONLINE

www.bridportandwestbay.co.uk/TICKETS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

CAROLE HOUGHTON ON 01308 898521 OR 07764523182

Littlebredy

Village Correspondent: Tim Laycock

Email: t.laycock70@gmail.com

Tel: 01308 482443

Village website: <http://www.littlebredy.com>



Our service of Remembrance took place on 9th November. The seven names on the War Memorial in the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels were recited again, and their stories retold in the church. Two of the seven were members of the Williams family; Lt Colonel Henry Madocks, who was a professional soldier; and Nat Williams, son of Robert and Rosa Williams of Bridehead, who had emigrated to New Zealand, joined the New Zealand Force in October 1914, and was killed at Gallipoli six months later. The rest were village boys. Four of them had attended the village school, and, most

movingly, three of them were confirmed together in the church at Easter 1913. We felt very close to them.

Thanks to everyone from the village and from Long Bredy who helped to make our shared service such a memorable occasion. Thanks also for your generosity in contributing to the collection, which will allow us to make a substantial donation to a suitable charity.

Our traditional 'Carols by Candlelight' Christmas service will be on Sunday 21st December at 4.30pm. We look forward to celebrating the season and meeting friends and families for a wonderful hour of carols, readings and festive cheer!

Finally, we welcome Sarah and Richard Burt to Bridehead, and hope that they will enjoy being part of such a friendly and neighbourly community in Littlebredy.

Shipton Gorge

Village Correspondent: Richard Hewlett

Greenways, Shipton Gorge

01308 787278 richardhewlett419@gmail.com

Village web-site: www.shiptongorge.org.uk



Welcome to our village diary. Just search for Shipton Gorge Diary or go directly to <https://shiptongorgediary.co.uk/>. You will be able to find out all that's going on in the village from the Village Society, the New Inn/New Inn Support, the Village Hall, Shipton Gorge Heritage, the Parish Council, the Parochial Church Council and other event organisers.

St Martin's Church

Floodlight sponsors for December:

Lily & Harry Myers in loving memory of their daughter Beverley.

Vicky & Joanne, thinking of their parents, Jan and Brian Shaw

Jo Warren wishing Happy Christmas to all

A big thank you to everyone for your sponsorship throughout the year and for all our generous, anonymous, donors too. If you would like to light up the church in January, please contact Phyl Webster on 01308 898657 or push a

note through Cuckoo Cottage post-box, on Chapel Street This can be for any occasion and will be published in the Bride Valley News and on the church notice boards. A suggested donation of £5 is greatly appreciated and helps to maintain our beautiful church building.

December dates for your diary

Sunday 14th Breakfast Church at 9.30am in Village Hall
Thursday 11th Mummers play in St Martin's at 5.00pm
Thursday 18th Community Choir Concert in Church 3.00pm
Sunday 21st Carol Service in Church at 5.00pm
Christmas Day Communion at 9.30am

By popular demand the Symondsburys Mummers will be performing at St Martins on Thursday 11th December at 5.00pm.

No need to book, just turn up and enjoy the show.

Parish Council

We held a CPR and defibrillator training session run by Chesil First Aid Training. All those who attended agreed that it was extremely useful, and we will aim to make this an annual event.

By the time you read this we will have had our November PC meeting, with updates on our resilience plan, mobile signal in the village and a meeting with highways among other things. For further information please see the minutes in the Parish Council section on the village website or contact any one of us. Our next meeting is on Thursday 11th January at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Village Hall

October 2025 100 Club Draw results

1 st	74	£25 Weston Colbourne
2 nd	65	£10 Pam Jenkins
3 rd	73	£5 Steve Forrest

November 2025 100 Club Draw results

1 st	103	£25 Pat Cox
2 nd	48	£10 Emma Welman
3 rd	94	£5 Sally Parker

Congratulations to all winners.

Village Get-Together on Sunday 30th Nov from 12.00noon at the Village Hall

We are sure you all have this date reserved in your diary. The Hall Committee would like to invite you to the pre- Xmas get together. Bring along your favourite tippie and a sweet/savoury plate to share. This is always a great opportunity to meet up with fellow villagers, have some fun and make new friends. Please join us, everyone is welcome.

Village Society

Sweet Treat

Santa will be sending along one of his elves with a Christmas goodie bag for all the village children under fourteen.

Please come along with your parents, they are also welcome, to the New Inn on Friday 28th November from 6.00pm. The tree will also be lit up this evening.

We look forward to seeing you all.

Happy Christmas from the Village Society

Shipton Gorge Heritage

Heritage Gin Club – The winners in the November draw were Sue and Simon Melvin – congratulations both of you.



Saunders Richardson Wood

If you walk along Smacombe Lane, you will notice that work has been done along the hedge line. Unfortunately, a few more of the trees have succumbed to Ash Die back and some of the branches have had to be cut back. You will also notice that a section of hedge has been laid by hand – which is a valuable practice for maintaining a healthy and functional hedgerow, contributing to the overall health of the ecosystem and beauty of the countryside. The wood will be open on Wednesday 10th December – 11.00am to midday. This is a members' only event but we can sign you up on the day and there is no charge to join.

Shipton Gorge Orchard

The hedge on the west side has had trim and whatever apples are left on the trees are there for the benefit of the wildlife. We have planned a session in the Orchard on Monday 15th December – 11.00am to midday. There are a few things to be checked over, however, we will not be tidying up too much – insects and small mammals appreciate if things are kept a little unkempt, and ivy flowers are a great food source during the winter months. We also need to make sure that we don't trample over the areas recently sown with wildflower seed!



Thanks to everyone who came along to our **Apple Day** event or who helped in any way to put this event on and make it a success. The Apple display and tasting was amazing. Prizes for our raffle were gratefully received from The New Inn, Groves, Aleksandra's Chocolatier Café and Dorset Nectar Cider. The Dorset Apple cake competition was won by Julie Bartrum-Lang. The Weaving demonstration by Sue Melvin also attracted some keen interest! We raised around £500 for Shipton Gorge Heritage – which is a great help towards our fixed running costs. If you did not get the opportunity to buy some of our jams and preserves, you will have another chance as we will be at the Christmas Market in the Village Hall on 13th December.

Can we take this opportunity to wish our members and all the readers of BVN a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

If you would like to become a member, or are interested in supporting the charity in any way, please contact Anne Crowe on 07393 214635 or email annecrowe2016@hotmail.com

Details as usual on our website:

http://www.shiptongorge.org.uk/Shipton_Gorge_Heritage__16417.aspx
and in the Shipton Gorge Diary <https://www.shiptongorgediary.co.uk>

Shipton Gorge Christmas Market



Saturday 13th December 12.00 - 4.00pm
In the Village Hall. Free entry

Makers market stalls, mulled wine, mince pies and activities for children.
Come & join in the festive spirit.

There are still a few stalls available and there is no charge
however, we ask that these are not food-related as we will be running a
refreshments stall.

Please contact Kim 07754 245691/01308 346007
bloomfieldkim5@gmail.com

Donations of cakes and mince pies on the day will be gratefully received.



Shipton Gorge Community Choir Concert



Thursday 18th December at **3.30pm** in St. Martin's Church.

Followed by refreshments.

(Please note the amendment of start time).

All are warmly welcome.



Carol Singing in The Village

5.00pm on Sunday 23rd December,
starting at Home Farm Way and finishing at The New Inn.
Everyone is welcome to come and join in with Carol Singing around the
village. Words will be provided.

Litton Cheney

Village Correspondent: John Firrell
jfirrell20@gmail.com Tel: 01308 482313
Village web-site www.littoncheney.org.uk



St Mary's Church

Thorner's School will be holding their Carol Service at St. Mary's on Tuesday 16th at 4.00 pm. Everyone is welcome! The School will also hold their end of term service in the church the following morning (17th) at 9.30am.

Carol Singing: Paul Cheater and members of the choir will be singing carols round the village on **Friday 19th** weather permitting. All ages are very welcome to join in. Meet at 6.00pm, dressed warmly and with a torch. Carol sheets will be provided. Meet at the Snicket/ bottom of Paddocks.

We hope many of you will join us for our other Christmas Services. The traditional candlelit Carol Service is on Sunday 21st at 6.00pm followed by mulled wine and mince pies – always a special occasion. On Christmas Eve, the Crib Service is at 4.00pm and a service of Holy Communion at 11.30pm that night. All the collections over the Christmas period will be divided between Weldmar and Christian Aid.

Light up the Church this Christmas - For a donation of £5 you can floodlight the Church for an evening over the Christmas and New Year period, either to remember a loved one or to celebrate an anniversary or event. Please contact Freddie Spicer to arrange a date on 482617 or email fandspicer@gmail.com

Litton Cheney Parish Council – Next Meeting Tuesday 13th January – 7.00pm – LATCH

As we enter the new year, it will be a time for reflection and perception. The Parish Precept needs to be confirmed for 2026/27, and with all the changes being made at national and local government level, greater emphasis will fall upon town and parish councils. Should you feel the urge to assist in the administration of the village we would be delighted to hear from you. Please

contact our Clerk, Debbie Hollings, whose contact details can be found on the village website and village notice boards.

Are you a Riparian Land Owner? - During a recent meeting with a member of the Highways Department of Dorset Council, it was pointed out that the unhindered flow of water through the village is important to avoid water on the road surface, Main Street does tend to experience this regularly during the Winter months. Thanks to those who have carried out their riparian responsibilities, as many sections of the streams have now been cleared of the foliage. Please note that it is also important to remove the build-up of debris that is washed down, as the flow of water is relatively low at the moment, now would be an ideal time to remove this debris. Should you have any queries regarding riparian responsibilities please email me: rob.matthews@littoncheney.org.uk

Over the Christmas & New Year period our bin days will change. Check the Dorset Council and village website – littoncheney.org.uk for more details.

The Parish Council is indebted to Russell and Chris Randall for providing a further seven oak crosses representing the seven people from Litton Cheney who lost their lives serving their country in the Second World War. They join the nine crosses Russell and Chris provided in 2018 representing the nine lives lost in the First World War. Each cross has a brass plaque recording the name and the date they died, followed by the epitaph “Always Remembered”.

We wish all our village residents, their family and friends, our neighbouring Bride Valley and nearby villages, a very Happy Christmas and a joyful New Year!

LATCH

Village Cafés: The hall is available for hire free of charge on Saturday mornings for a Café to raise funds for any group. It's a good social event for the community and always popular.

Hall Bookings/viewings: Wendy Firrell 01308 482532 wtlitton@gmail.com

Christmas Bingo - On Friday December 12th there will be Christmas Bingo at LATCH, School Lane, Litton Cheney, to raise money for the Weldmar Hospice. Come and join us for a game of bingo, great prizes, raffle, bucket draw and refreshments. Doors open 6.30pm, eyes down 7.30pm. All welcome.

What's on at Litton and Thorner's Community Hall (LATCH) in December

REGULAR EVENTS

Tuesdays	4.45pm – 5.45	Short Mat Bowls (Ron Davidson 482661)
Wednesdays	4.45pm – 5.45 7.00pm	Table Tennis (Paul Kingston 482162) (Not 17 th) Yoga with Jane (Jane Hutchins 07882 527697) (not 17 th , rescheduled to Thursday 18 th) Restarts on 7 th January 2026.
Thursdays	9.15am – 11.15	First Steps Toddlers (fortnightly, term time only)
Fridays	10.00am – 12.00	Art class in Meeting Room (12 th only)

OTHER EVENTS

Thursday 4 th	7.00pm	Film Night "The Penguin Lesson" starts 7.30pm
Saturday 6 th	10.00am	Village Café run by "Stepping Out"
Sunday 7 th	10.00am	Yoga with Nadiya Wynn
Thursday 11 th	3.30pm	TSA Christmas Fair
Friday 12 th	From 6.30pm	Bingo Night
Saturday 13 th	10.00am	Lino Cut Workshop with Lusea in Meeting Room
Wednesday 17 th		School Christmas production

Village Cafe: Please come along to a Christmas Village Cafe at LATCH on 6th December, 10.00am till 2.00pm. There will be art and craft stalls, hot drinks and breakfast rolls, plus a raffle. It is in support of Stepping Out Cancer Rehabilitation Group. The group meets at Bridport Leisure Centre twice a week to support members with their recovery, during and after their cancer diagnosis.

Lastly – Thank You – Throughout 2025 various individuals and groups have contrived to make our lives in Litton a little less traumatic, often bringing a smile to our faces, but most of all helping us get on with our lives and those of others. Let's start with those who every month contribute to the contents of the BVN, informing us of events and providing information that we might otherwise have missed. David Hearn who continues to administer the village website, and deserves an award for long service. Sara Catahan and Steve Kourik who moderate the village Facebook pages. The Premier Crew who help keep us tidy and orderly, organise the village Christmas tree, plus stand by for any needs over and above the norm. To ever alert Flood Warden Dave Ingram, and to Patricia and David Charlton and their helpers for bringing us the talents and entertainment contained within the Artsreach productions. To Beverly and Pete Dennis who maintain the wonderful village exchange kiosk at the foot of Whiteway, and help in so many other ways.

Liz and Andy at “The Horse” who provide beverage, sustenance and bonhomie for all, and in the approaching colder months, the cosy warmth of a log fire to warm the cockles of your heart. Sam and Ralph Daubeney who in concert with Liz and Andy organise the Easter Duck Race that produces much needed funds for Julia’s House. To those who maintain the churchyard through which you can trace the history and life of the village over the centuries, and those good people who administer St Mary’s, making it available to all whenever there is a need. To St Mary’s church choir, under the direction of Paul Cheater, who sing in wonderful harmony, plus bring carols to our front doors in the lead up to Christmas.

To Headmaster Mike Sitch and the staff of Thorner’s Primary School, held in high regard for its achievements, and as an effective springboard for our youngsters as they set off on life’s journey. The Trustees of LATCH, our community hall, a much-prized shared asset of the village and school, and the Parish Council who strive for the common good and often battle against petty bureaucracy to achieve what to sensible minds is plain common sense. Lastly, to those stalwart individuals in our village who go about their business on a day-to-day basis, assisting those in need, being a good neighbour, and generally ensuring the world goes round for others, rather than themselves. Thank you one and all for being.

BRIDE VALLEY FILMS at Litton Cheney Village Hall.

Reminder - THURSDAY 4th DECEMBER “THE PENGUIN LESSONS” ‘a witty and moving film based on a true story’

Set in Argentina during the mid-1970s, the film follows an English teacher who encounters both political unrest in the country and an unexpected aquatic companion. Starring **Steve Coogan** and **Jonathan Pryce**.
1 hr. 40” Cert.12

After due consideration we have decided that this film based on Raynor Wynn’s bestseller would be a topical one to show, particularly because of its setting...

THURSDAY 5th FEBRUARY (2026) “THE SALT PATH” ‘thought-provoking and emotional’

The Salt Path tells the emotional and life-affirming story of a couple whose connection with the natural world helps them overcome challenges and ultimately reconnect with one another. Capturing the beautiful scenery of parts of the South West Coast Path. Starring **Gillian Anderson** and **Jason Isaacs**.
2hrs. Cert.12

Doors Open: 7.00pm, films start 7.30pm. TICKETS: £6.00 (to include a glass of wine) Tickets in advance from: Sally Dyke 482752, Elizabeth Kingston 482162, Bella Spurrier 482367 or on the door. (All nos. 01308)

The White Horse – Check website and Facebook for more details.

Not much to say this month as we gave a lot of details for the rest of the year in November's BVN. Just a reminder that it's Quiz night on 2nd, 16th and 30th December; always a fun night so do come along and join in - you don't have to be Einstein. We have the Mummers at 7.00pm on 6th, Live Music on 13th (the charity event we mentioned previously will happen in the new year) and carol singing on 20th with mulled wine and cider. Meat draws continue as normal every Friday, including Boxing Day, at the earlier time of 4.30pm. There's a grand Christmas Meat Draw on 19th and the main Christmas Draw on 21st at 5.00pm. We will be serving Christmas lunches every Sunday in December (best to book) and will be open over the festive season as advertised. Think we peaked early in November and already said Merry Christmas, but no harm in saying it again, and a Happy New Year!

Andy & Liz

25th December: The history of Christmas

The Bible does not give a date for the birth of Jesus. In the third century it was suggested that Jesus was conceived at the Spring equinox, 25th March, popularising the belief that He was born nine months later on 25th December. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, encouraged Christians worldwide to make Christmas a holy day in about 400.

In the early Middle Ages, Christians celebrated a series of midwinter holy days. Epiphany (which recalls the visit to the infant Jesus of the wise men bearing gifts) was the climax of 12 days of Christmas, beginning on 25th December. The Emperor Charlemagne chose 25th December for his coronation in 800, and the prominence of Christmas Day rose. In England, William the Conqueror also chose 25th December for his coronation in 1066, and the date became a fixture both for religious observance and feasting.

Cooking a boar was a common feature of mediaeval Christmas feasts, and singing carols accompanied it. Writers of the time lament the fact that the true significance of Christmas was being lost because of partying. They condemn the rise of 'misrule' – drunken dancing and promiscuity. The day was a public holiday, and traditions of bringing evergreen foliage into the house and the exchange of gifts (usually on Epiphany) date from this time.

In the 17th century the rise of new Protestant denominations led to a rejection of many celebrations that were associated with Catholic Christianity. Christmas was one of them. After the execution of Charles I, England's Puritan rulers made the celebration of Christmas illegal for 14 years. The restoration of Charles II ended the ban, but religious leaders continued to discourage excess, especially in Scotland. In Western Europe (but not worldwide) the day for exchanging gifts changed from Epiphany (6th January) to Christmas Day.

By the 1820s, there was a sense that the significance of Christmas was declining. Charles Dickens was one of several writers who sought to restore it. His novel *A Christmas Carol* was significant in reviving merriment during the festival. He emphasised charity and family reunions, alongside religious observance. Christmas trees, paper chains, cards and many well-known carols date from this time. So did the tradition of Boxing Day, on 26th December, when tradesmen who had given reliable service during the year would collect 'boxes' of money or gifts from their customers.

In Europe Santa Claus is the figure associated with the bringing of gifts. Santa Claus is a shortening of the name of Saint Nicholas, who was a Christian bishop in the fourth century in present-day Turkey. He was particularly noted for his care for children and for his generosity to the poor. By the Middle Ages his appearance, in red bishop's robes and a mitre, was adored in the Netherlands and familiar across Europe.

Father Christmas dates from 17th century England, where he was a secular figure of good cheer (more associated with drunkenness than gifts). The transformation of Santa Claus into today's Father Christmas started in New York in the 1880s, where his red robes and white beard became potent advertising symbols. In some countries (such as Latin America and Eastern Europe) the tradition attempts to combine the secular and religious elements by holding that Santa Claus makes children's presents and then gives them to the baby Jesus to distribute.

Extract from "The Parish Pump" December 2025 edition.

**The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues
his tongue-in-cheek letters from
Uncle Eustace**

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My dear Nephew Darren



And so, the old year draws to a close, and you are packing to move to your own first parish in January. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1st January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, shovel snow, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill - preferably the day before.

In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons - in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while

being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. *You* will be their new disappointment. Be assured that *whatever* you do, you will *always* disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go turn and it off? You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent. Expect that each Sunday morning, as you prepare for the service, there will be a straggling queue of people who want to tell you an astonishing variety of things: there is a large cobweb 30 feet up over the pulpit, they don't like the second hymn on the board, the flowers look rough this week, there may be a bat in the vestry, some child has left a shoe in the back porch, and the car park has broken glass in it.

You may find this a distraction as you prepare for a worship service. But remember that at least they have bothered to come to church at all. In my experience, congregations are always irritating, but at least they do take up a lot of space, and that looks good in the pews. The church would look empty without them.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

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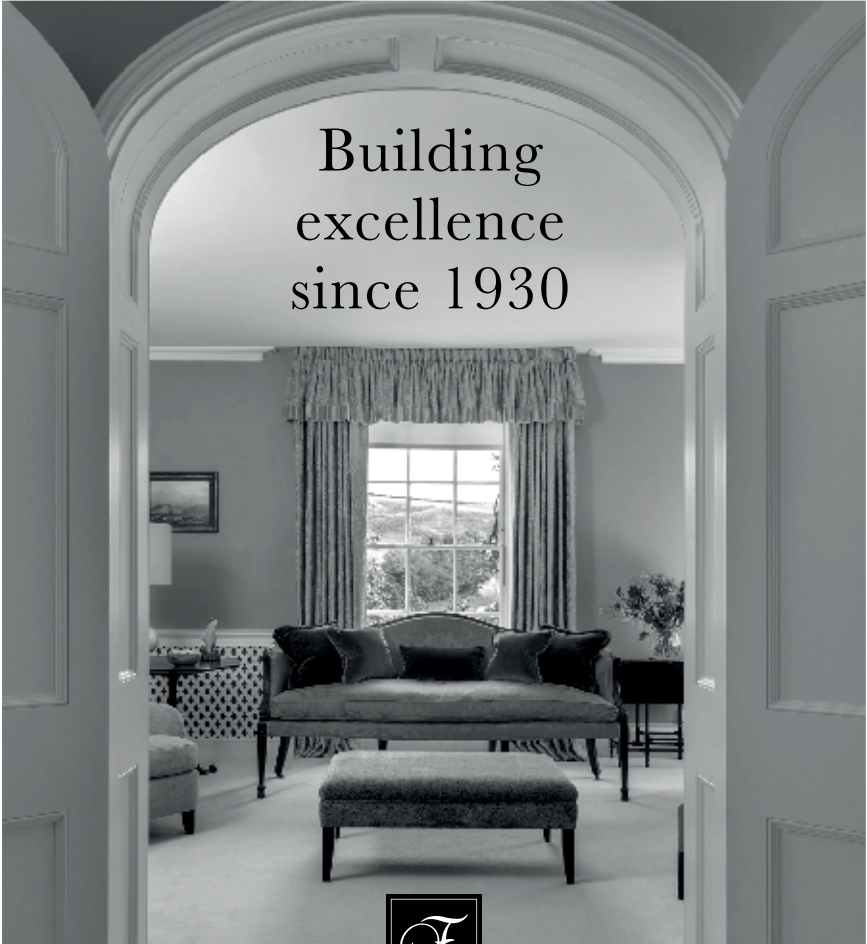
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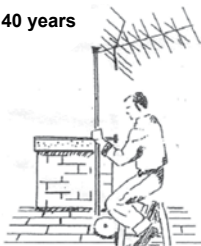
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Litton Cheney	9.30am Holy Communion		Morning Worship 9.30am		6.00pm Carol Service	4.00pm Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Communion		
Puncknowle	5.00pm Carol Service		9.30am Holy Communion	7.00pm Crown Inn Carols			11.00am Christmas Praise	
Swyre	3.00pm Evening Prayer					9.30pm Early Christmas Communion		11.00am Holy Communion

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Shipton Gorge			9.30am Breakfast Church		5.00m Carol service		9.30am Christmas Day Communion	
Long Bredy	11.00am Holy Communion				9.30am Live Nativity and Carols			
Littlebredy					4.30pm Carol Service			
Portesham			10.00am Family Praise	5.30pm Carol Service	11.00am Holy Communion	4.30pm Grib Service	11.00am Christmas Day Communion	
Abbotsbury	11.00am Holy Communion		4.00pm Carol Service		10.00am Morning Praise			
Langton Herring	9am BCP	6.30pm Carol Service	11am Holy Communion			11.30pm Midnight Service		
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