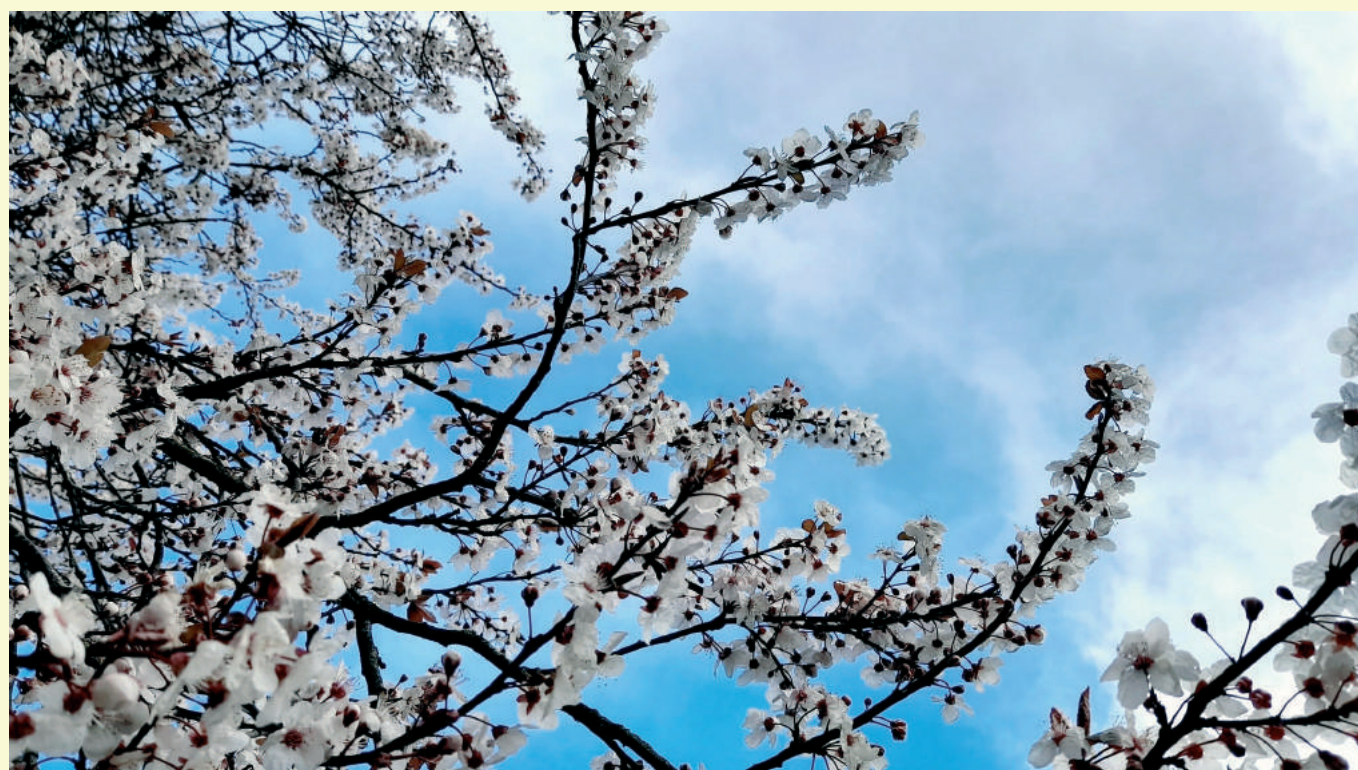


# Village News

**Issue No. 141**  
**May - June 2023**

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**Blossom Time**  
Photo: Esther Watts-Nielsen



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Publication in the Village News does not imply an endorsement. The Editors cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions.  
The information contained within this publication is published in good faith.  
Volunteers deliver this publication to homes in West Monkton, Monkton Heathfield, Bathpool, Gotton and Goosenford.

## Useful Names and Telephone Numbers

### Rector:

**Associate Vicar half-time:** Rev Jim Cox - 07967817337

**Churchwardens:** Pearl Jeanes - 01823 412804

pearljeanespcc@gmail.com

Sally Hillman - 01823 410814

sallyhillman@hotmail.co.uk

staugustines.churchwarden@gmail.com

**P.C.C Secretary:** Sue Cleave - 07468608921

**P.C.C Treasurer:** David Cooke

**Captain of Bell ringers:** Pearl Jeanes - 412804

**Church Flower Organiser:** Angela Dill - 412395

**Mothers' Union:** Hazel Adams - 01823 443027

**Benefice Office:** Michele Hardiman - 01823 451257

**Benefice Facebook Page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/South-Quantock-Benefice-West-Monkton-Cheddon-Kingston-Broomfield-churches-242102696183594/>

**Benefice website:** [www.southquantockbenefice.org.uk](http://www.southquantockbenefice.org.uk)

**Parish Council Clerk:** Amy Shepherd 01823 412922

[clerk@westmonkton.net](mailto:clerk@westmonkton.net)

**PC Community Clerk:** Kate Welsh 07505984006

[community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net)

**PC Chairman:** Stuart Haskins 07824410997

[stuarthaskins@westmonkton.net](mailto:stuarthaskins@westmonkton.net)

**Community Website:** [www.somersetccc.org.uk](http://www.somersetccc.org.uk)

**Parish Council Website:** [www.westmonkton.net](http://www.westmonkton.net)

**Litter Hotline:** 03003048000

**West Monkton Primary School Head:**

Daniel Seviour - 01823 412582

**Heathfield Community School Head:**

Hannah Jones - 01823 412396

**Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre:** 01823 414141

**Taunton Deane Community Transport:**

01823 331266 Mon-Fri. 9 am to 4 pm (Slinky Bus 24hrs notice).

**Village Hall:**

Telephone, incoming calls only - 01823 412068

**Booking Officer:** Ian Pitchfork Tel: 01823 412176

[ianpitchfork623@gmail.com](mailto:ianpitchfork623@gmail.com)

**Chairman:** Ray Tulley Tel: 01823 4252368

**Vice Chairman:** Colin Bentley Tel: 01823 413193

**BACH (Brittons Ash Community Hall)**

**Chairman:** Barry Gage 07752723311

[barrygage125@btinternet.com](mailto:barrygage125@btinternet.com)

**Booking Officer:** Maggie Little 01823 323662

[bachbookings@westmonkton.net](mailto:bachbookings@westmonkton.net)

**CCS Village Agent:** please call this main number, they will then connect you to the correct Village Agent at the time of calling - 01823 331222.



**HPS**  
HARDY PLANT SOCIETY  
Gardening with hardy perennials

**HPS Somerset Group**  
Summer

# PLANT FAIR

**Sunday, 11 June 2023**  
10:00 am – 3:00 pm  
at Lower Severalls  
Crewkerne, Somerset  
TA18 7NX

Many of the South West's top nurseries, plus other stalls, will be attending.  
Homemade cakes and tea available.  
Admission charge will be £4. (£3.50 for RHS & HPS members.) Pay at the gate.  
[visit somersetgps.com](http://visit.somersetgps.com)

**LOWER SEVERALLS**  
FARMHOUSE BED & BREAKFAST

## Singles Club

A place to meet new people and old friends.  
Contact Dianne Besley on the number below for more information.

Next meetings:

9th May - Tea at The Maunsel Lock Cafe (by the Taunton and Bridgwater canal). Meet there at 2:30pm

13th June - Lunch at The Maypole 12:30pm.

Everyone very welcome .

Please phone me if you are joining us, so that I have the right numbers to book the meals.

Dianne 01823 412857 .

## Police Contact numbers:

**Non emergency telephone 101**

**Emergency 999**

To keep up to date on what's been happening in our area, you can follow police social media pages:

Twitter: @ASPWestSom @ASPolice

Facebook

If you have any queries, the team can be contacted at:

[SomWestNPTTaunton@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:SomWestNPTTaunton@avonandsomerset.police.uk)



By popular request  
**West Monkton Church  
 Open Tower Day**

**Saturday 10th June 10am - 3pm  
 Guided Tours**

to the Ringing Room, watch ringing and take the  
 opportunity to chime a bell  
 See the 18th century clock and its workings  
 Opportunity to look at the bells from above  
 Climb to the top of the tower to enjoy the views.

**Refreshments All Day**



**WEST MONKTON  
 OPEN GARDENS**

**Sunday 25th June**

**2:00 – 5:00 pm**

**Tickets £10 to include Teas**  
 (Children under 10 Free)

Tickets/Maps and parking at the church  
 (Toilet facilities available)

All gardens are within walking distance  
 of the church



**Saturday 20th May 2.30pm - 4pm**



leisurely walk around the farm fields taking in the views, spot wildlife, hear about farming, crops and animals and get the chance to explore/ ride the tractor and trailer.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/614959720077/>

Please make sure you are wearing sturdy shoes/ wellies, and though the walk is footpath based, there are some steady inclines to walk. The terrain isn't pushchair friendly, so please be prepared to carry any infants - a baby carrier would be ideal.

Please book a ticket for each adult and child (3 years and over) attending. Under 3s don't need to have a ticket. All under 17s must be accompanied by an adult.

**FREE Community Farm Walk:  
 Saturday 20th May 2:30pm - 4pm**

Our Community Farm Walks are back for 2023! Join us on 20th May as part of National Walking Month for a walk around Prockters Farm, courtesy of the Besley family. We are also delighted to be joined by local wildlife and ecology experts Quantock Ecology Ltd who will share information on interesting and vulnerable native animal species as we walk.

Suitable for all the family and generations, come along and have a

## Did you know there is a beautiful Grade 1 listed building dating from Saxon times in West Monkton?

**Of course you did – it's the church at West Monkton – St Augustines.**

**Did you also know that serious works need to be undertaken to preserve the structure of the building and keep it open?**

**Our overall plan is to restore and future proof the building and re-order the interior to allow more use of the building by more members of the community.**

**Our Parish is large and scattered and we hope the residents of Bathpool, Monkton Heathfield, West Monkton and the smaller settlements of Goosenford, Coome and Burlinch will come to see the building as a vibrant centre of activities of benefit to all the community.**

**To keep the building open and thriving we need to make it available for everyone not just for Church Services, although of course they will continue.**

**The big picture is daunting – so we are going to try and achieve our goals by delivering a number of (slightly) smaller projects, as explained below.**

**For each project a Faculty is required (permission to do the work from the Diocese), and will be supported by grant applications to relevant and appropriate bodies.**

### **The Lady Chapel**

The Lady Chapel was added to St Augustine's in the major refurbishments that took place in 1883. Known as The Chapel of St Mary and St Margaret, the eastern end of the South Aisle was built in 1883 when a lot of other alterations also took place in the church. The work was done so beautifully that the old and new match almost perfectly. As recently as 1966, this space was turned into a side chapel and on May 26th 1966 it was dedicated to St Mary and St Margaret of Antioch. These saints were chosen to commemorate two little Chantry Chapels in the parish that had been destroyed between 1547 and 1553.

Periodically, during heavy rain, visitors to the Church will see there are a number of strategically placed buckets in the Lady Chapel to catch the water leaking from the roof. A temporary repair has been effected by volunteers who have given generously of their time and knowledge, but the roof of the Lady Chapel needs to be replaced. Three quotes have been obtained for the necessary work, all in the region of £20-30 thousand pounds (excluding VAT). A grant application is being prepared.

In order to help make this beautiful Grade 1 listed building as accessible to as many residents of the Parish as possible, it is anticipated that when the roof is watertight once more, further development of the Lady Chapel into a multi-use space would be useful. It would enable it to be screened off or otherwise separated from the rest of the Church's interior to

continue to provide a place for quiet reflection, and additionally, to provide a place where small groups could meet. This could be heated separately without needing to heat the entire interior of the church, which is very expensive.

The spread-out nature of the Parish of West Monkton means that meeting venues are also widely spread and a meeting venue in West Monkton Village would make meetings easier for those living in the northern part of the Parish.

### **The Gray Window Panels**

The four painted window panels produced by Thomas Gray & Sons in 1821 were originally installed in the sanctuary East Window in 1827 but moved to the West Window during the Victorian restorations of 1883. The painted windows are unique using a technique developed to fuse enamel paints onto large glass panels. There is no lead work. Sadly they were damaged in the storms of 1987 and much of the glass fell to the ground. The remaining window panels were believed to be beyond repair and the glass was sold.

In 2020 the Church was contacted with an offer to return two of the previous 4 panels of glass, which had been restored and were held in private collection. The gift was made on the understanding that these unique windows would be displayed again in St Augustine's. We now need to restore this church history and display these unique panels in light boxes as near as possible to their original placement near the West Window. The two returned panels show Our Lord's Ascension and Our Lord wearing his Crown of Thorns with bound hands and holding a white wand.

### **Further projects which need attention**

#### **Church heating:**

There is also a need for several other parts of the building to be upgraded, namely the church heating system which is over 30 years old, and is now both unreliable and expensive to run. It has already cost us £1000 in repair bills this winter just to get it functioning. A modified zoned heating system would enable more economical heating of the occupied areas of the church.

#### **Making space more accessible:**

It is proposed that one or two pews at the front of the church might be removed. This would enable better use of the front of the church for members of the community to host more events. There is a similar case to be made for removing some of the pews at the rear of the Church. The pews were probably installed as part of the refurbishment of 1883.

#### **Church Organ:**

We also know that in the next few years the church organ pipes will need to be cleaned, and also some minor restorative work on the organ is required.

#### **Cycle racks:**

This project is under discussion, and funding is being sought.



### What can you do?

- Please send us emails of support for our grant applications, or sign support petitions when they are circulated.
- Please let us know if you want to join the volunteer teams.
- Please send us your thoughts and comments on these proposals, and any other ideas you may have.
- Please feel free to donate in support of the 'Big Picture' or a specified project.

[sawmchurchwardens@gmail.com](mailto:sawmchurchwardens@gmail.com)

07541835069

*Pearl Jeanes March 2023*



*Interior of re-ordered church at Wiveliscombe to show what can be done*



*West Monkton Church, St Augustines, from the drive*

**The church is open every day – do please come and visit to see the proposed projects for yourself.**  
**We would be very grateful for your comments and support.**



*The interior of the Lady Chapel from the South Aisle*



*The organ from the choir stalls*



*The two Thomas Gray panels (held elsewhere)*

## Letter from Rev. Jim

### South Quantock Benefice

office@southquantockbenefice.org.uk

(The parishes of West Monkton,  
 Kingston St Mary, Broomfield &  
 Cheddon Fitzpaine)



"Can we make up our own vows?" The church doesn't have so much contact with wedding couples these days, but this used to be a relatively common question. I once had a pretty church close to a Christian fellowship that met in a school and we'd often get their weddings. One of their very earnest young men once asked if he could have the vows where the wife had to obey. I said, "We're the Church of England, not the Taliban". He decided to get married somewhere else.

But it is a real question as to whether prayers written by someone else and 'simply recited' in church are as meaningful as prayers from the heart. And in some ways, clearly not. But what the Church of England – and other 'liturgical' traditions offer is a form of words that might provide insight and dignity to important occasions.

In the wedding service, for example, couples say to each other

***All that I am I give to you***

***And all that I have I share with you***

Short and full of power: the whole of the one to the whole of the other. Perhaps putting into a poetic form concepts we struggle to articulate for ourselves.

Funerals, state occasions, times of national coming together require more than what a local vicar might scribble on the back of an envelope. And while there is the danger of unthinking recitation, the liturgical forms remind us – in our highly personalized culture - that we are part of something bigger than ourselves, not only across space but through time.

All worship runs the risk of becoming mechanical. 'Free' worship often acquires a remarkable uniformity and blandness over time. So if, as a non-regular, people poke their nose into a parish church, they may not understand *what* is going on, but they should have the impression that *something* is going on. And maybe that is enough.

**Jim**

## ADVANCE NOTICE:

The Benefice Office will be closed Mon 12th June for 2 weeks and will re-open on Monday 26th June.

Please contact Rev Jim or a Churchwarden in an emergency.

## From West Monkton Registers:

### Funerals:

10.01.23 Janet C  
 Funeral & burial in churchyard  
 25.03.23 Phyllis C  
 Graveside funeral and burial in churchyard

### Baptisms:

26.02.23 Eryn J

## Men's Group Meetings:

Anyone welcome to come along to the group – contact Jim for more information:  
[jimcox11@gmail.com](mailto:jimcox11@gmail.com) 07967 817337

### May Tuesday 2nd

Pub Walk from Basilico WM 11am and lunch at 1pm

### June Sunday 4th

Barbecue at David Langford's 5-8pm

## St Augustine's Church 100 Club Prizewinners

### March

The draw was held on Monday 1st March

**First Prize:** £100.00 won by Anna Strehle

**Second Prize:** £50.00 won by Godfrey Carey

The sum of £350.00 will go towards the church.

The number of £5.00 shares entered in the draw was 100.

### April

The draw was held on Monday 3rd April

**First Prize:** £98.00 was won by Jamie Coram

**Second Prize:** £49.00 was won by Rosemary Pugh-Thomas

The sum of £343.00 will go towards the church.

The number of £5.00 shares entered in the draw was 98.

**Congratulations** to the winners! Your turn next month? If you would like to join or hear more about the 100 Club, please contact:  
 Kate Ayres 01823 413873



**7th May – Coronation weekend** may have special services – see our website for up to date information  
[www.southquantockbenefice.org.uk](http://www.southquantockbenefice.org.uk)

May & June 2023	Broomfield	Cheddon	Kingston	West Monkton
7 <sup>th</sup> May 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	6.00pm Rogation	10.00am Special short service for the Coronation	10.00am Holy Communion	8.30am BCP Communion 10.00am Morning Worship
14 <sup>th</sup> May 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter	10.30am All Age Service followed by APCM		8.30am BCP Communion	10.00am Holy Communion
THURSDAY 18 <sup>th</sup> May	7.00pm Ascension Day Service In Kingston church			
21 <sup>st</sup> May 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter		10.00am Holy Communion	10.00am Holy Communion	8.30am BCP Communion  10.00am Morning Worship
28 <sup>th</sup> May Pentecost	10.30am Holy Communion		8.30am BCP Communion 6.00pm Choral Evensong	10.00am Holy Communion
4 <sup>th</sup> June Trinity Sunday	6.00pm Evening Prayer		10.00am Holy Communion	8.30am BCP Communion 10.00am Morning Worship
11 <sup>th</sup> June 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity	10.30am All Age Service		8.30am BCP Communion	10.00am Holy Communion
18 <sup>th</sup> June 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Trinity		10.00am Holy Communion	10.00am Holy Communion	8.30am BCP Communion  10.00am Morning Worship
25 <sup>th</sup> June 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Trinity	10.30am Holy Communion		8.30am BCP Communion 6.00pm Choral Evensong	10.00am Holy Communion



## Gardening Corner

### Failing Upwards

Watching a plant die can be heartbreaking, particularly a much loved favourite that has expired after many years of stalwart service. But also, if it is a much desired specimen that you have lusted after for ages and finally tracked down or a treasure grown from seed, joyfully potted on up the sizes until finally it is ready to plant out. And so in the ground it goes, and it sits and seems to consider its options before starting to decline. Foliage may start to look drab or damaged, molluscs and aphids may scent weakness and attack and before you know it you have a few brown stems left.

You may try this several times with the same results and decide to stop throwing good money after bad and try something else instead. This maybe the right option in the end, but consider first experimenting with smaller plants. With many herbaceous plants, the cheaper cost of small plants allows you to try different positions in the garden to see where it prefers life. If you can then get that plant to self seed, the real magic happens, with volunteer seedlings always healthier and happier than transplants.

I find this especially true in adverse conditions such as gravel gardens or dry soil baked by the sun. Small plants popped in in the autumn generally do better than larger plants planted in the spring. Sometimes of course this rule doesn't apply. You may find that the same small plants are just mollusc bait unless and until they are mature enough to grow through the damage. It can also be true of borderline hardy trees and shrubs where the stems or trunk need to be seasoned enough to withstand a cold winter. I've had this issue with Hoherias, which are tough when mature but can be defoliated or even killed by hard frosts when young.

In conclusion. It's complicated! But experimentation is part of the process of gardening and the failures are what makes it so exciting and rewarding when a plant that you have planted really reaches its potential.



Hoherias

**Tom Nielsen** Biocentric Planting Design & Nursery  
 Website: [www.biocentric.org.uk](http://www.biocentric.org.uk)  
 Instagram: @tombiocentricplants

## Cheddon & West Monkton Film Club



### 19th May: Empire of Light (15) Drama/Romance

Margate, England, 1980. As widespread unemployment and a rising wave of extremism plunge the seaside town and Margaret Thatcher's Britain into recession, depressed Hilary (Colman) sticks to her daily routine as the dutiful front-of-house manager at the Empire: a dying, golden-era movie palace. But movies can't keep lonely Hilary's inner demons at bay. And then, bright-eyed new employee Stephen (Ward) suddenly enters the picture, shaking Hilary's troubled existence. If the celluloid-scented power of cinema can pave the way for meaningful human connection, is there still hope for the once majestic movie theatre?



**This is the last screening of the 2022/2023 season.  
 The next season will commence on 20th October 2023.**

**Cheddon Fitzpaine Memorial Hall**

**Refreshments: 6:30pm;**

**short film: 7pm**

**Feature: 7:20pm.**

**Admission is £6 per person at the door.**

**Card payment accepted.**

[cwmfilmclub@cfmh.co.uk](mailto:cwmfilmclub@cfmh.co.uk)

07586 413290



## Somerset Birds

The Robin, a regular winner of the RSPB Britain's favourite bird is, perhaps, our most familiar species. Many of us will have our 'own Robin.' As gardeners well know, Robins are great opportunists, following the digging spade and snatching disturbed worms and insects. They can easily be persuaded to take food from the hand, a habit that only increases their popularity. It comes, therefore, as a surprise to learn that the life of the average Robin is tough, short and often brutal.



Adult Robin

The Robin hardly needs description, although most Christmas card artists could do with studying its plumage more closely. Simply put, Robins are warm brown above with an orange-red under parts extending above the beak and on to the sides of the neck. The 'red breast' has a subtle margin of light blue-grey and the rest of the undersides are dull white. Male and female are alike. Continental birds are greyer above, although this is difficult to see in the field. Newly

fledged birds are warm speckled brown and don't acquire the red breast until late summer. The eye is large and dark, and Robins have a distinctive habit of bobbing and cocking their tail on landing.

Robins are one of the few birds doing well here and can be found throughout Britain and Ireland in suitable habitat. The manner in which they have adapted and exploited us has undoubtedly helped. Although confiding here, continental Robins are shy, wary woodland birds often difficult to find. Some of these arrive here in autumn and their different behaviour is often a clue to their origin.

They are good songsters and, unlike most birds, sing throughout the year although the melody changes subtly with season. They also sing at night, particularly under street lighting, and so are often



Adult feeding fledgling

confused with Nightingales, although the song of the latter is in a different league. When alarmed or annoyed they emit loud 'tick' calls, and also have a quiet squeaky note, usually given from within cover. Song has an important purpose and, unusually, both males and females, sing to establish territories in autumn and to attract mates in spring. Should singing fail to deter an interloper then birds adopt an aggressive attitude, prominently displaying the red breast. If neither backs down a fight is inevitable. As hinted at, these skirmishes are often brutal and can even end in death for the loser and injury for the victor. Fortunately such escalation is rare. Should you see two Robins together in late winter they are invariably a pair, although days earlier they may have been bitter rivals.

Like most small birds the majority of Robins rarely live longer than two years, although one individual managed an incredible nineteen. Severe winter weather and prolonged frost kills many Robins but the majority fall to predation. The domestic cat is by far the greatest threat, particularly as Robins forage mostly on the ground. Fortunately for the species, Robins are prolific breeders, and a pair can raise fifteen young in a season. Even if only one or two survive their first year this is enough to maintain the population.

Although generally conspicuous, Robins are secretive breeders. Woodland nests are almost impossible to find and are difficult enough to locate in gardens.

Gardeners are often unaware of a nest in a potting shed or hidden



Robin nest in a plant pot

away in some garden recess, and incubating females will sit very tight. Four to six eggs are laid in a neat little nest of moss and other vegetation often lined with hair. The eggs hatch in

around thirteen days and the chicks are fed by both parents for another fortnight before fledging. The male continues feeding for a while as the female lays another clutch. On fledging the youngsters disperse, but remain within the territory until late July when the parents themselves moult.

After that it is every Robin for itself. The pressure is on for seasoned adults and yearlings to locate and defend a suitable territory and a successful outcome is literally a matter of life or death. Should an established territory holder die the patch will be speedily occupied by another, sometimes within hours. It follows naturally from all this that your garden Robin will be a series of different birds during the course of a year. This hardly matters though. I for one am delighted to have them in my garden despite their pugilistic habits.

Brian Hill  
**Somerset Ornithological Society** welcomes people whatever their level of interest in birds. Please contact me on 01823 442918 for further details.

## Bathpool Chapel

01823 710453  
 07882764153  
 naomigull75@gmail.com  
 bathpoolchapel@outlook.com



Greetings dear friends!

I found the text in 2 Kings 4:1-7 very comforting and encouraging.

A Drop of Oil in God's Hands is much evidence on several levels that there are at least two major tasks in our life. The first task is to build a strong "container" or identity; the second is to find the contents "faith and trust in God" that the container was meant to hold.

"Elisha said, 'Go around and ask all your neighbours for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few' (2 Kings 4:3).

When a situation seems impossible, we must remember that nothing is impossible for God. In trying times, we have an opportunity to flex our faith and lean into His supernatural power. God will provide. We just need to trust Him.

Second Kings 4 tells us about a widow who was all out of options. The woman's deceased husband had left behind a debt, and his creditor was on his way to collect. She was facing shame and degradation and the loss of her sons—and then she remembered the promises of God.

The widow's husband had been faithful to God, and as the head of his household, he had led his family to trust and obey the Lord. This poor woman knew God had promised to care for the righteous and provide for their needs. So, when she approached Elisha, seeking God's help, she knew her situation mattered to God. She placed her faith not in her good works or in the faithfulness of her husband, but squarely in the God who keeps His promises. She also displayed confidence in God's provision. When Elisha asked her what she had in her house as a starting point, she replied, "Your servant has nothing here at all," but then she thought for a moment more and remembered she did have something—"a small jar of olive oil" (2 Kings 4:2). The little bit of oil at the bottom of a tiny jar really was nothing in comparison to the size of her debt, yet she offered it to the Lord, knowing that in His hands it could be enough.

Finally, this widow maximized her capacity for blessing. Elisha told her to borrow jars and containers from her neighbours—and not just a few. So, she asked for as many as her neighbours could spare, and God blessed her accordingly. The oil in that small jar of hers filled all the containers, stopping only when the last was topped off. She

prepared for a large blessing, and that's exactly what she received.

As the world around you grows dark, God is still faithful. Now is the time to expand your capacity to receive. Don't be content with just a few jars—expect great things from the Lord. He is your loving Father who is supernaturally at work in your life for your good and for the blessing of those around you. It is very important to know what is coming and being offered to all of us. Prayer: Lord, you are so faithful. Your blessings are overwhelming. You fill my cup to overflowing. Help me to see how You are at work in my life. May I have eyes to see Your goodness and confidence that You are able and willing to bless me as Your child. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**Warm Welcome to you, your friends, and families at the Service:**  
**Every Sunday Morning at 10:30am, with Holy Communion.**

**Tea and coffee afterwards.**

### **A creative approach to learning: Bible Studies and Seminars you don't want to miss out!**

We are beginning an exciting new Bible study with a seminar using a creative approach to learning, suitable for all ages and abilities. If you are struggling to read and understand the Bible or have questions that you have never found an answer for, then this is the study for you. We also offer a Discipleship Course and bespoke Group Discussions which are always informative and helpful for our continuing journey with the Lord. Please contact us and make time to join us – it may be the most important decision you will ever make!

**Let Us Pray** for your friends, families and for yourself on Every Tuesday 7 to 8pm at Bathpool Chapel.

Let's stand in unity for your love ones!

**Musical Fellowship:** Are you at a loose end on the last Friday of every month? Why not join us for worship and music practice from 7 to 8.30 pm. Bring your own instrument or use the keyboard and percussion we have available.

Whatever you decide you will be made very welcome and will be a blessing to others! Remember! Jesus wore a crown of thorns for you and me to share His heavenly crown of everlasting life with us.

May the Lord Bless you and keep you, may He makes His face to shine upon you and be Gracious to you and give you, His Shalom.

Rev T. Naomi Gull and friends  
 at Bathpool Chapel





## Parish Council News

### Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council continues to meet twice a month; on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the BACH. The agenda for the meetings will be posted on the website and noticeboards.

If you aren't sure of the calendar of meetings, please check with the Clerk

[clerk@westmonkton.net](mailto:clerk@westmonkton.net)

or Assistant Clerk – Community

[community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net)

### Annual Parish Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st March when the work and support of our volunteers was recognised and celebrated. More than 60 people attended the meeting which was great to see.

### 2022/23 Annual Report

A shortened version of the 2022/23 Annual Report has been printed and included in this Village News edition but if you would like to read the full version, a copy can be found on the PC website at <https://westmonkton.net/annual-parish-report-from-wmpc/>

### Community Matters

The **Community Café** has continued to be popular and we have started our 'Repair Café' which will run once a month alongside the café on the 17th May and 21st June. We are still looking for someone to join our team of repairers who is able to mend clothing so please get in touch if you have a spare few hours once a month and would like to help out.

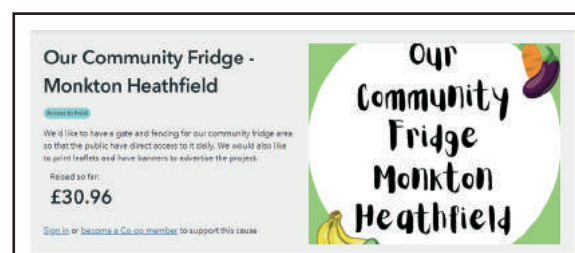
Our **Stay and Play** sessions are popular with families and we have a lovely group of regulars who attend and would welcome any new parents to our group who are looking to meet up with other families in the community. The Stay and Play Group runs every Wednesday afternoon at the BACH from 12:30pm until 2pm and also on a Thursday morning from 10:30am to 12 noon. There is no charge for the group, however some families have kindly offered donations of biscuits or tea/coffee which of course help and are gratefully received.

Our **Community Quiz** nights at the Tacchi Morris are extremely popular and always fully booked. Andy Derry our quizmaster prepares the monthly quiz with a range of rounds from Geography,

Music to food and drink and TV. The quiz is free but you will need to book through the Tacchi Morris box office but will need to get in early to get a table. We do ask for a small donation on the night for the second team's cash prize. The team who take 1st prize get tickets to see one of the latest shows at the Tacchi Morris. Next dates for the quiz are 24th May, 21st June and 19th July, quiz starts at 7:30pm.

### Community Fridge

Our volunteers have been continuing to collect, clean and replenish Our Community Fridge on a daily basis. Thank you to all our fridge volunteers for your dedication and commitment. We recently met with Coop's Pioneer for Local Causes who was thrilled to see 'Our Community Fridge' in action. They are keen to promote Coop Membership and of course if you chose us as your local cause on your Coop app you will be helping to fund 'Our Community Fridge'! Easiest way to do it is to go online and nominate us as your local cause. We will receive funds in April and again in October this year which will enable us to expand, refurbish or just keep the project running. So please, if you haven't already, become a member of Coop and choose us as your local cause to fund. Each time you shop at the Coop we will get a contribution towards our fund, family and friends can also choose us but if they live out of the area they will need to go online to link us as the cause they want to support. Please spread the word!



We continue to collect from the 3 local Coops, and have now expanded to pick up from other locations so if know of a local business who may want to donate close to use by date items that would otherwise go to waste the please ask them to get in touch with Kate on 07505 984006 or email [community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net).

### Community Garden

The Community Garden at the BACH continues to donate fresh produce to Our Community Fridge and has been awarded funding of £2,000 to expand the area! On 24th February over 35 turned up for the 'BIG DIG' and we have now increased the number of beds at the garden which will allow us to grow more produce. Thank

you to all who turned up to help, it was a cold but really productive day!

Cllr Paul Elliston has been working with the children at West Monkton Primary School to help them grow seeds and learn about growing seeds and plants. They have been actively involved in planting their seedling and are an integral part of garden community.

We are always looking for more volunteers with the garden going forward so please contact [community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net) if you would like to help out.

### Community Events

We have a number of upcoming event dates:

Saturday 6th May – 11am to 6pm

**King Coronation Event**  
at Maidenbrook Country Park

Sunday 18th June – 10am to 4pm

**Dog Show** – run by St Giles Animal Rescue and West Monkton Parish Council at Maidenbrook Country Park

Please get in touch with

[community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net) if you would like to help with any of these events or if you would like to run a stall or food van at the events in the Country Park and we can reserve a spot. You will be charged £10 for a pitch for each event, money will be taken on the day.

### Volunteering Opportunities

If you have some spare time on your hands and want to meet new people and get involved in our thriving community there are a number of volunteer opportunities open to you. Whether it be helping at

the café or stay and play group, cleaning or collecting for the Community Fridge, becoming part of the Community Garden Group or do you fancy becoming a Companion Volunteer, supporting those that are struggling in our community?

We also have water watchers, litter pickers and have a group of emergency volunteers who helped with watering in the summer and will be looking to expand these roles to ensure we are able to come together in an emergency to support each other in an emergency.

Perhaps you have some tech skills or are handy with repairing things? If you have some spare time and can volunteer once a month on a Wednesday afternoon then please get in touch.

If any of these roles appeal to you and you have a bit of time to give then please get in touch, volunteering is good for not only our community but also for personal well-being.

Contact Kate Welsh, Assistant Clerk for Community at [community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net) or call on 07505984006 for more information.





## Monkton Matters

The new community website; Monkton Matters is



growing in popularity [www.monktonmatters.co.uk](http://www.monktonmatters.co.uk). Monkton Matters is an online space giving news, information and details of events in the Parish of West Monkton (incorporating Monkton Heathfield, West Monkton and Bathpool). Monkton Matters is for the community and its contents are developed and posted by the community. All local residents are encouraged to contribute relevant articles or submit details of local events. The website is as good as we make it and the vision for the site is that it is a one-stop shop; the go-to place for all community matters.

Various local institutions, from schools to the police, from churches to the council, are represented on the site, posting updates. It is possible to find local businesses and services as well as hear about community groups, clubs and sports teams running in the local area. It has helpful information to aid exploration of the parish and its history as well and plenty more besides. If you would like to submit an article or an event for inclusion on the website, please visit the website and complete the form.

Alongside news and events, businesses that are based or operate in the Parish can also add their details to the directory. If you would like to add your business details, please visit the website and complete the form.

If you have any queries or would prefer to submit items for inclusion on the website via email please contact [editor@monktonmatters.co.uk](mailto:editor@monktonmatters.co.uk)

## Brittons Ash Community Hall (BACH)

The BACH is open for bookings aside from these times. The BACH has facilities to host virtual meetings, hybrid meetings, as well as meetings in person and we have also recently installed a hearing loop in the committee room.

Further information is available on the website. If you are interested in booking the BACH please contact our Bookings Officer, Maggie ([bachbooking@westmonkton.net](mailto:bachbooking@westmonkton.net)).

## Emergency Planning

The Parish Council is developing an Emergency Plan designed to support the community in the event of an emergency affecting some or all of our parish, for example, flooding of properties or heavy snow fall.

Over the coming months, the Parish Council will be putting a call out to the community to identify resources that can be used, for example four wheel drive vehicles and volunteers to act as wardens for their local area. The Parish Council will also be providing you with the information you need should an emergency occur.

In the meantime, Brittons Ash Community Hall is registered as a place of safety should it be needed.



## TAUNTON DEANE CROQUET CLUB

at Taunton Vale Sports Club  
 Gipsy Lane off Greenway Road Taunton TA2 6LL

**Invite YOU**  
**to come and meet us at our**  
**OPEN DAYS**

**we are**  
**SEEKING NEW MEMBERS**

**Any Gender, Any Ability**  
 (Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult)

**SAT. 13th & SUN. 14th MAY 2023**

**10.00am to 4.00pm**

(refreshments provided)

**FREE COACHING FOR BEGINNERS**

**Just TURN UP on the day**  
 (please bring FLAT SOLED SHOES)  
**or contact the Club Secretary**  
**Beverley Tapper 01823 971262**

**\*\*\* ALL TVSC parking is now Pay & Display \*\*\***  
**£2 all day - CARD ONLY - no cash**





## Annual Parish Report

### Who we are

West Monkton Parish Council (WMPC) is made up of nine Parish Councillors and a team of two Clerks who are all passionate about our local area.



Stuart Haskins

### West Monkton Parish Councillors:

Cllr Stuart Haskins  
Chairman

[stuart.haskins@westmonkton.net](mailto:stuart.haskins@westmonkton.net)



Alan Hall

Cllr Alan Hall  
Vice Chairman  
Member responsible for  
Water

Resilience and Maidenbrook Country Park  
[alan.hall@westmonkton.net](mailto:alan.hall@westmonkton.net)



Barry Gage

Cllr Barry Gage  
Chairman of Brittons Ash  
Community Hall (BACH)  
Committee and member  
responsible for footpaths  
[barrygage@westmonkton.net](mailto:barrygage@westmonkton.net)

Cllr Hazel Ellis  
Spital Trust representative and member of the  
BACH Committee  
[hazel.ellis@westmonkton.net](mailto:hazel.ellis@westmonkton.net)

Cllr Mark Besley  
Member responsible of Highways  
[mark.besley@westmonkton.net](mailto:mark.besley@westmonkton.net)

Cllr Geoff Hope  
Member responsible for Public Open Space,  
Recreation and Children's Play Areas and  
member of the BACH Committee  
[geoff.hope@westmonkton.net](mailto:geoff.hope@westmonkton.net)

Cllr Paul Elliston  
Member responsible Community Liaison and  
Transportation and member of the BACH  
Committee  
[paul.elliston@westmonkton.net](mailto:paul.elliston@westmonkton.net)

Cllr Ray Tully

Member responsible for Safe Routes to School  
and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR),  
member of the BACH Committee and WM Village  
Hall representative.

[Ray.tully@westmonkton.net](mailto:Ray.tully@westmonkton.net)

### West Monkton Parish and Somerset Council Councillor:

Cllr Norman Cavill

Member responsible for Water Resilience and  
LGR and member of the BACH Committee and  
Somerset Council Councillor

[normancavill@westmonkton.net](mailto:normancavill@westmonkton.net)

### Somerset Council Councillor:

David Fothergill – Somerset County Council (SCC)  
Councillor for Monkton and North Curry Division.  
Leader of the Council

[djafothergill@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:djafothergill@somerset.gov.uk)

### Parish Council Clerks:

Amy Shepherd - Clerk  
[clerk@westmonkton.net](mailto:clerk@westmonkton.net)



Amy Shephard



Kate Walsh

Kate Welsh – Assistant Clerk  
(Community)  
[community@westmonkton.net](mailto:community@westmonkton.net)

### What WMPC does

WMPC works collaboratively with members of the  
community and partners to deliver our vision and  
objectives for the Parish, going over and above  
what is expected from a Parish Council.

### Our Vision for West Monkton

Our vision is for WMPC and the local community to  
work together to protect and improve the social,  
recreational and environmental well-being of West  
Monkton and the lives of all who live, visit and  
work here.

### Our Priorities and Objectives

WMPC has agreed priorities and objectives,  
available here: <https://westmonkton.net/wp-content/uploads/parish-council/West-Monkton-Parish-Council-Vision-and-Objectives-Final.pdf>



focused on Our Environment, Community and the Parish Council.

### **What WMPC has achieved in 2022/23**

#### **Our Environment**

Worked towards making the parish of West Monkton more carbon neutral by 2030 by:

- Enabling the planting of trees in the parish. 100 trees, 25 specimen trees and 700 shrubs (in the Forest School area) have been planted in Maidenbrook Country Park (MCP) during 2022/23. Nearly 4000 trees have been planted so far at the MCP. 190 trees were also planted in the Monkton Heathfield phase 1 development and 80 Cherry Trees were planted to create the Queen's Jubilee Platinum Walk along Dyers Brook.
- In partnership with Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council, delivered a wildlife pond and Forest School at MCP.
- Continued to deliver a hi-vis initiative to encourage children to cycle and walk to school safely. More than 100 hi-vis jackets have been given to school children so far.
- Explored locations for the provision of electric vehicle charging points in the Parish.
- Promoted public transport that is available in the Parish.
- Delivered seed swap events in the Parish in October 2022 and March 2023.
- Continued enquiries and conducted a survey about delivering a community transport scheme for the Parish.
- Commenced enquiries about providing electric bikes to loan to members of our Community.
- Provided grant funding for individuals and organisations for Climate Change projects based in the parish.
- Promoted recycling and reusing in the Parish by producing and sharing a 'Reduce, reuse, recycle - what is available to me locally' document.
- Delivered a clothing collection for charity event.
- Delivered toy swap event.
- Delivered a Sunflower Growing Competition.
- Delivered two Farm Walks.

#### **Our Community**

- Delivered the Community Fridge
- Recruited in excess of 65 volunteers in the community to support community projects.
- Delivered a community picnic.
- Provided a weekly community café on Wednesdays from 2.30pm until 4pm at the BACH
- Provided weekly Stay and Play Groups on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning at the BACH.
- Carried out regular litter picks with volunteers in the community

- Delivered successful community events to celebrate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee
- Delivered a monthly community quiz at Tacchi Morris.
- Delivered a Community Live Music Night at Tacchi Morris.
- Continued to provide a Community Website – [www.monktonmatters.co.uk](http://www.monktonmatters.co.uk)
- Improved existing footpaths through the installation of new gates and stiles on Public Rights of Way across the Parish
- Provided grant funding to charitable, small and local groups to deliver goods or services for the benefit of members of the community in the Parish.
- Provided a Warm Hub at the BACH during the colder winter months.
- With the help of a volunteer provided cooked meals over the Christmas period for those who needed them.

#### **Our Parish Council**

- Been an open, transparent and proactive Parish Council, taking new projects forward and sharing information on the WMPC website [www.westmonkton.net](http://www.westmonkton.net), Monkton Matters website [www.monktonmatters.co.uk](http://www.monktonmatters.co.uk) and the WMPC Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/westmonktonparishcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/westmonktonparishcouncil)
- Continued to deliver the WMPC Vision and Objectives to focus WMPCs activities on important matters in our Parish.
- Taken an active role in the LGR discussion to form the Somerset Unitary Council.
- Jointly with Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council, secured a lease for MCP.
- Used Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support the delivery of parish priorities and objectives including:
  - Community Fridge
  - Purchase of a storage container to store items for community events.
  - New equipment for the Scout Group
  - Delivering the vision for MCP
  - Improvements at BACH including the Installation of a Hearing Loop and Air Conditioning.
  - Tree Planting
  - Provision of new, additional litter bins in the Parish.
  - Footpath restoration
  - Delivery of leaky dams at MCP.
- Applied for and secured grant funding to support our community work to deliver the Community Fridge, Platinum Jubilee Events, Warm Hubs and the Community Garden.
- Encouraged members of the community to give ideas of what WMPC should do and how money should be spent through regular posting on

Monkton Matters, the Facebook Page and the Village News.

- Ensured value for money in respect of all of the Councils spend through obtaining quotes for all work.
- Publicised information about income and spend in a more understandable format (available below).

### What income does WMPC receive and how money was spent in 2022/23?

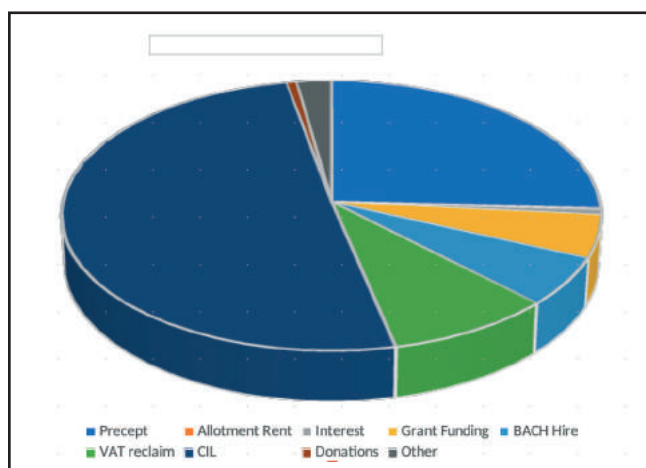
The information from the financial spreadsheet for this year has been presented as a series of pie charts below. If you are interested in further details, please do not hesitate to contact [clerk@westmonkton.net](mailto:clerk@westmonkton.net)

#### Income:

##### Type of income

##### Income received

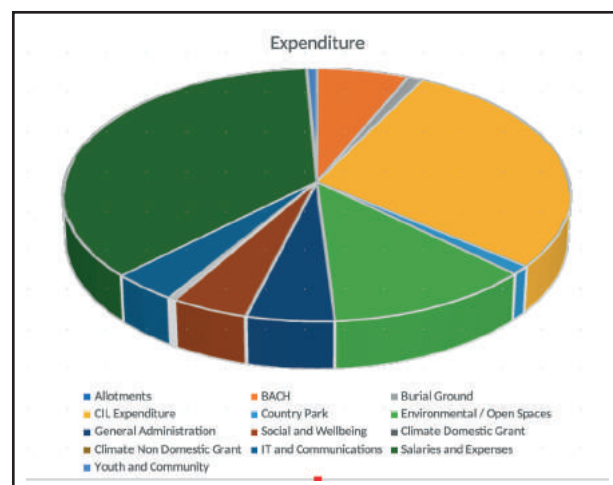
Precept £64517.00  
 Interest £1503.90  
 Allotments £300.00  
 Grant Funding £12765.20  
 BACH Hire £14629.13  
 VAT reclaimed £22629.27  
 Donations £1707.71  
 Community Infrastructure Levy £126166.12  
 Other £5701.75  
**Total income £249920.10**



#### Expenditure:

##### Type of Expenditure

Allotments £53.17  
 Brittons Ash Community Hall £11194.24  
 Burial Ground £1840.00  
 CIL Expenditure £49056.21  
 Country Park £1937.54  
 Environmental / Open Spaces £20787.76  
 General Administration £8820.44  
 Social and Wellbeing Projects £7788.02  
 Climate Domestic Grant £350.00  
 Climate Non Domestic Grant £350.00  
 IT and Communications £6565.09  
 Salaries and Expenses £63284.16  
 Youth and Community £1227.47



If you have any comments to make on any of the pie charts presented above, please contact [clerk@westmonkton.net](mailto:clerk@westmonkton.net)

### Cllr Stuart Haskins – Chairman's Report

It doesn't seem very long ago I was sat down writing the 2022 report and could not have ever imagined how the world could be changed by so many significant events that have affected us all in so many ways. You will see below that your individual Councillors and Clerks have all reported on the numerous events and activities they have been involved with but please forgive me if in my report I also comment on some of these same issues. 2022 will go down as a year of many changes and challenges for us all, of that I am sure. I feel it would be remiss of me to not firstly comment on the loss of Queen Elizabeth II. Whilst it may not have been a surprise to many, it still came as a shock the Nation and the World especially after it was only in June when we all came to gathered to celebrate Platinum Jubilee of Her Royal Highness. Closer to home the Parish Council (PC) saw our long-standing Clerk Mrs Patricia Cavill (Tricia) finally hang up her Parish Council high viz jacket to take a very well earned retirement. On behalf of all the Councillors, Clerks and myself I would once again like to thank Tricia for almost 18 years of devoted service to our Parish Community. Tricia's departure has seen Amy Shepherd take over many of Tricia's responsibilities and Kate Welsh increasing her hours and role as Assistant Clerk Community. Both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their roles and our community. Alongside our Clerks, Bethan Turner is also a vital member of the team providing back up for our many community schemes and functions such as the seed and plant swaps, toy swaps, planting competitions and the Parish Council Facebook page.



As I'm sure you know by now, the past year has seen the election of our new unitary "Somerset Council" Councillors and the setting up of a shadow council for the transition period until April this year when the Unitary Authority goes fully live. In connection with this and the establishment of a Taunton Town Council (TTC), an attempt was made to include our Parish into the new TTC. However, armed and supported by your response to our survey earlier in the year, the PC successfully fought off the attempt and in recent weeks it has been announced that our Parish will be in the Hestercombe Local Community Network (LCN) with North Petherton, Creech St Michael and a number of other neighbouring Parishes who all share common interests. These LCN will each have at least one dedicated Somerset Councillor giving us a direct say on matters that involve and concern us.

The securing of a lease on the Country Park (CP) was of great relief to both West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils and now gives us confidence and a firm footing for the future of the Park and hopefully the further extension of the World War 1 Wood. Councillor Alan Hall has reported extensively of the progress achieved in the CP this year but I feel I need to add a word of thanks and appreciation to Alan for all his time and hard work this year. Working with his endless list of contacts and official bodies, plus an excellent team of volunteers organised by Joe Pearson, the Park continues to mature and develop into an asset and wildlife haven that will be there for generations to come. With the completion of the grant funded pond, planning is now in progress for stone walling at the rear of the pond and a small car park for the disabled visitors.

Working with our neighbouring PC Cheddon Fitzpaine, the CP became the centre point of our Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Funded by a Lottery Grant the manufacture of a beacon basket was commissioned from a local metal craftsman Mr Kevin Chedzoy. Foundations and the erection of the beacon was undertaken by a team of Councillors and a local farmer with his equipment on the highest point in the CP where it is now a permanent fixture for future occasions.

The lighting of the beacon on June 2nd was watched and supported by over 600 of our communities and was visible from many parts of Somerset. This was then followed on the Saturday by a Party in the Park where children played games and ate hotdogs and burgers whilst the parents had a drink and listened to the Military Wives choir sing. This was the first event of this nature to be organised by the PC's in the CP and was a steep learning curve for those involved. I think it's fair to say many useful lessons were learnt for future events. A big thankyou goes to all the Volunteers that helped make these events a success both before and on the days.

On a not so happy note, the Forest School building unfortunately continues to be vandalised by mindless individuals and is once again now in need of further work and repairs.

As we all know, the War in Ukraine has affected our lives in ways unimagined at this time last year and has added to the cost-of-living crisis. Coincidentally it was around this time last year that the PC started to investigate the Community Fridge idea as part of our Climate Change Action Plan to reduce waste. As most people now know, food that is before its use before date and after best before dates or is surplus from local food outlets is offered to the fridge where anyone wanting it can collect is at no cost and thus reducing food waste and stopping food going to landfill. Taking up the challenge, our Assistant Clerk Community Kate Welsh investigated the idea and following a visit to Frome to see their Community Fridge put together a grant application to fund ours. Soon we had a shed, a fridge and heaps of good will and enthusiasm to not only erect the shed but more importantly, volunteers from the community to clean, re stock and generally help run the initiative. So, a huge thank you must go our Assistant Clerk Community Kate Welsh and all the Volunteers that helped get this project off the ground and who now keep it running so well.

Housing Development in our Parish has continued this year with the completion of Stage 2 of the Hartnells Farm development. Whilst this development is not yet complete, i.e. stage 3, the works this year in connection with the development have caused a significant disruption to our residents, particularly in Richards Crescent whilst sewer works were undertaken. Hopefully there will be no further works required when the 3rd and final stage is constructed at some point in the future. A major issue for the community last year was the continued closure of the Creech Castle Junction for improvements. This finally came to an end in September but unfortunately we have not seen the decrease in traffic levels through Monkton Heathfield that we had hoped for. PC discussions with SCC Highways are ongoing about future options to reduce through traffic on the former A3259 but I can confirm that the 7.5 tonne weight restriction and the 20mph speed restriction are being made permanent from the spring of this year. The PC purchased our own SID ( Speed Indication Device ) which is has been deployed around our Parish at sites agreed with SCC Highways. This device is giving us real data about traffic flows and speeds which we hope will be of use in the future.

Activities at Britton Ash Community Hall (BACH) have continued with ever increasing support and participation from the community. Seed and plant swaps, stay and play group, community café, Warm Hub are just a few of the many things

regularly taking place. Councillor Paul Ellison with Kate, our Assistant Clerk Community continue to develop ideas that are really making positive steps towards building a single community that benefits from interaction and inclusivity.

Facilities at the BACH have been further developed and improved this year with the installation of air conditioning in the Activity Hall and a hearing loop to the Committee room. These are unique selling points and make the facility the first choice for many groups arranging meetings and activities. In addition to this a storage container has been bought and positioned in the car park thus releasing valuable storage space inside the building.

Outside, the BACH Councillor Paul Ellison has made great progress with the Community Garden Project. Whilst not a big garden at present, it is proving to be worthwhile and enjoyable to those participating and we are hopeful that this coming year will see further expansion of this project as the PC continues its search for land for Allotments.

As I have already said the PC is committed to developing the community and bringing people together. Working with the Tacchi Morris Centre Quiz Nights and Music night have been arranged and been very well supported and give us confidence that other functions will be supported. Having declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in December 2019, the PC continues to look for ways and opportunities to improve the environment and our community against the effects of global warming. To reduce rainwater run-off speed from the lower Quantock Hills and working with SCC, the Local Lead Flood Authority and FWAG, a series of leaky dams have been installed on Allens Brook and during a recent heavy rainfall period proved to be very successful in slowing the flow to parts of our Parish that are vulnerable to flooding i.e. Bathpool area. Planting of trees continues to be high on our list of actions. Over the past year the PC has planted over 200 trees plus the cherry trees in our Platinum

Walk avenue. Keeping them alive last year was quite a challenge with the very dry period we had but working with volunteers it looks as if our efforts to keep the new trees alive was successful. Thank you to all those who helped in the weekly watering party.

The updated Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was adopted following the referendum. The updated plan will continue to be important for all future building developments in our Parish and looking ahead to this year it's clear it will once again be a busy one for your Councillors. Our ongoing engagement with the Developers of MH2, the Planning Authority and Creech St Michel PC amongst others will we hope, contribute to flagship "Garden Town" development. Plans are already being drawn up for the Coronation celebrations in the CP and we hope to see you all there for a really fun day.

Other projects which are in the planning stage are a community transport scheme and an emergency contingency plan. Working with the EA we also hope to have our own permanent water pump installed at Bathpool on the Old River Tone. Finally I would like to give a big vote of thanks to one and all of the Councillors Clerks and Volunteers give up their time and who turn up when the call goes out. Without this support it would not be possible to deliver all the initiatives, projects and functions in our Parish that go to make it such a busy community.



*Parish Council Activities:*

*Above - the Easter Bunny visits the Country Park*

*Left and Right - Community Gardening at the BACH with loads of volunteers of all ages working hard.*





## Taunton Rugby Football Club



By the time this edition of the Village News drops through your letterbox Taunton Rugby Football Club will know whether or not the first XV, Taunton Titans, have won their battle against relegation from National League 1, the third tier of English rugby, the highest level at which Taunton have played in their 148 year history.

There are 14 teams in the league and with 3 facing relegation each season it is a real struggle for several of the teams to stay clear of the drop. Hull have already been relegated and Leeds look favourites to be relegated with them. It looks almost certain that the third spot will be taken by either Esher or Taunton. At the time of writing Taunton have slipped into the bottom 3 after losing away to the league leaders in late March while Esher picked up a late win away to relegated Hull.

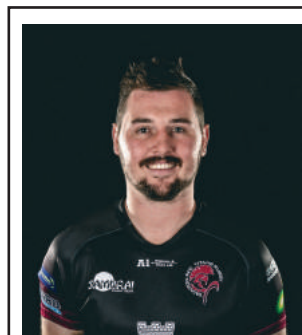
Away from on field activities with summer approaching, work continues at the stadium. I would like to mention one person who is always busy at the club. Meet Nick Mason. Nick has played for Premiership side Exeter Chiefs and is not only a vital

member of Taunton's playing staff with approaching 200 first team appearances but is the club's Commercial Coordinator with responsibility for corporate hire and entertainment as well as Venue hire. He works tirelessly to attract sponsorship and will be doing his best over the summer to boost sponsorship income.

If you have a local business and wish to attract clients or customers sponsoring Taunton Rugby Club is one of the most powerful ways to promote your business in Somerset. From an advertising hoarding at the Veritas Park Stadium, Player sponsorship or corporate lunches to host existing clients and turn new connections into clients or your business name on the kit of the Taunton Titans, there is a myriad of sponsorship options at Taunton Rugby Club. Moreover, you will be able to feel a part of your local club which means so much to so many local people.

Nick will be happy to talk to anyone thinking about how sponsoring Taunton Rugby Club can benefit their business and he can be contacted at the club during normal working hours on 01823 336363. Alternatively head over to the website [www.tauntonrhc.co.uk](http://www.tauntonrhc.co.uk) or follow them across social media @Tauntonrhc

Finally don't forget the great day in store on Saturday 17 June when the TEST FEST23 music festival takes place at the stadium with lots of local bands and other activities.



Nick Mason



## The Maypole

A story for our younger readers.

*Not so very many years ago, most villages, towns and city parks had a maypole. This was not displayed year round but assembled in the days and weeks leading up to the first day of May- May Day, when traditionally, from at least as far back as the time of the Celts, the first day of Summer was marked with a day off work, festivities, eating and drinking, music- and dancing. Young men and women, or children would dance around a "pole" decorated with summer leaves and flowers. This stems from our ancestors worshipping trees as spirits. Henry VIII and Oliver Cromwell both banned the festival but it returned in 1660 when Charles II reinstated it in style, erecting a large maypole in the centre of London, which stood for over 50 years. Many maypoles still stand year-round across the U.K. and May Day has been a Bank Holiday since 1978. Nearby Thurloxton's pub is called "The Maypole".*

The village school children had all been practising their maypole dancing. Bright coloured ribbons were tied to the top of the pole-one per child, sixteen in all- and, used in certain dances, created colourful patterns on the tree. The Barber's Pole, Knots, Spider's Web, Plaits were the four dances the local village school had chosen. The maypole dancing was set to take place on the last day of the Spring term before the school broke up for the two-week Easter holidays. That final afternoon, it was hoped that many parents would come and watch, and refreshments would be provided.

It was to be little Sofie's first maypole dance and she was very excited. During her PE lessons leading up to the big day, her and her classmates practised hard at the various maypole dances, so as to be perfect on the final Friday.

The final Friday arrived – sunny and warm to start with. However by mid-morning, grey clouds

As the children returned to their classroom for a "wet lunch hour" a promising sight met their eyes. Blue skies were - slowly, weakly but steadily-emerging through the grey. The rain eased into a light shower as the sun grew in strength. started rolling in and soon heavy rain started falling. Looking out of their classroom window, Sofie's class watched gloomily through the rain-dashed windows, as the maypole ribbons started to get wetter and soggy- soon they started to droop into the mud. This was

upsetting but complaining about the rain would not make it stop, the teacher reminded her class as they trooped off for lunch. Secretly though, the teacher was just as disappointed as the children - all that practice and organisation for nothing! "Look! Up there!" shouted one of Sofie's classmates, James. A bright rainbow arched across the sky- a sure sign the rain was easing off. Sure enough it did. Within half an hour the world was bathed in sunshine once more, and the rainbow faded. The maypole's ribbons dried in the warm sun and the maypole dancing took place after all - parents were relieved, the refreshments most welcome on this warm May day and the staff and pupils delighted all was going to plan. As they went home after a lovely afternoon, Sofie's mum remarked it was a "typical English spring day" of sunshine and rain. Sofie thought for a moment and said - "You know what? When James showed us the rainbow I saw it as a sign that the maypole dancing would take place after all."

"Maybe the rainbow represented the maypole's colourful ribbons!" laughed Sofie's mum.

"Yes", thought Sophie, "the rainbow is Nature's own maypole."

By Craig P Manning





## Taunton Film Society @ The SPACE



19th May

**Martin Eden** Italy/France 2021  
**Drama/Romance** Cert: 15 2 hours 9 minutes

After saving Arturo, a young scion of the industrial middle class, from a beating, the sailor Martin Eden is invited to the boy's family home. Here he meets Elena, Arturo's beautiful sister, and falls in love with her at first sight. The cultured and refined young woman becomes not only the object of Martin's affections but also a symbol of the social status he aspires to achieve. At the cost of enormous efforts and overcoming the obstacles represented by his humble origin, Martin pursues the dream of becoming a writer. Under the influence of the elderly intellectual Russ Brissenden, he gets involved in socialist circles, bringing him into conflict with Elena and her bourgeois world.



The film traces Martin's love affair with the pursuit of individual advancement. Like capitalism, it's seductive. If writing is a democratic art and social leveller, Marcello indicts the celebrity author as a sellout, steamrolling their way to success. By the time Martin gets there, in the film's third act, he's lost everything else.

The terrible loneliness of success is the subject of this absorbing movie, equal in some strange way to the loneliness of failure; it's also about the secret and shameful feeling that failure is the one truthful state of being, which the successful person has had to renounce. Martin Eden is also about capitalism and enterprise and the great 20th-century promise that hard work and an audacious gamble on a certain career path at the start of one's life can carry anyone, however lowly born, on to riches. And more importantly, it is about the dizzying promise that the mass communication made possible by commerce will make art itself lucrative: that actually writing novels, capturing the imagination of millions, could exalt you to heroic celebrity.

23rd June

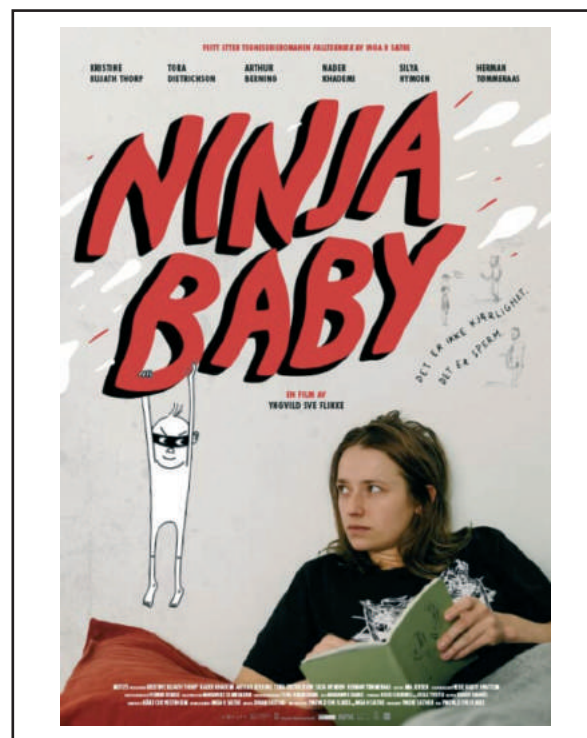
**Ninjababy** Norway 2021 **Comedy/Drama** 1 hour 43 minutes

Astronaut, beer-taster, comic artist – these are just some of the things Rakel aspires to be. Mother is not on the list, so it's a shock when the 23-year-old graphic design dropout (Kristine Kujath Thorp) discovers she is

six-and-a-half months pregnant. According to her doctor, not everyone gets the belly. Rakel doodles her unborn baby wearing a Zorro mask, nicknaming it Ninjababy after its stealthy arrival. Directed by the Norwegian film-maker Yngvild Sve Flikke and based on Inga Sætre's graphic novel *Fallteknikk*, this witty comedy is interspersed with Sætre's rude, funny, David Shrigley-esque animations. Any tweeness is tempered by the film's raunchy sense of humour and frank attitude towards poo, piss and periods.

The film is less a romcom than it is a coming-of-age movie about slacker Rakel finally being forced to grow up. What's subversive is her ambivalence about motherhood, unchanged even after she gives birth.

This hilarious and sneakily brilliant comedy from Norway begins like half a dozen unwanted-pregnancy movies you might already have seen. Rakel is a 23-year-old graphic design dropout who has not remotely got her life together yet. On paper, some of this sounds irritatingly quirky, but it's a film that really offers an honest look at a woman's life, from clumsy sex to Rakel's joggers that 57 washes ago might have held some shape. There's real insight and clarity in Thorp's performance too – likable and warm, without trying desperately hard.



The SPACE is on School Road, Monkton Heathfield

To find out more about Taunton Film Society and to see the times of films we show and how to become a member visit:

[www.tauntonfilmsociety.co.uk](http://www.tauntonfilmsociety.co.uk)

or email: [tauntonfilmsociety@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tauntonfilmsociety@hotmail.co.uk)



## Tacchi-Morris Theatre

**The theatre at the heart of the community in Monkton Heathfield.**

*Just a few of the events during May and June, check the website for more information:*  
[www.tacchi-morris.com](http://www.tacchi-morris.com)

### Absent Friends

@2K Theatre  
 Thu 18 – Sat 20  
 May, 7:30 pm +  
 Sat 2pm Matinee

Recently bereaved Colin is invited to a tea party by old friends to comfort him after the death of his fiancée.

They are on edge wondering what to say to him but there is much more to their unease. A mix of business and cross marital emotional ties means that when Colin arrives the air of tension contrasts dramatically with his cheerful, relaxed demeanour. His apparent happiness and insensitive analysis of their issues leads each to face some difficult home truths in a play which is at times poignant, cringeworthy and extremely funny.

Evening Tickets £15 | Matinee Tickets £10



### Taunton Concert Band

Sat 27 May, 7:30pm

Taunton Concert Band return for a night of music celebrating stage and screen. A night for anyone who loves the soaring delights of wind band music. Taunton Concert Band perform just one special concert each year at Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre so don't miss 2023. Taunton Concert Band is a symphonic wind band that was started back in 1892 when it was known as the Taunton Town Band. The band aspires to attain the highest standards of musicianship within a social and friendly environment and attracts players from all over Somerset, while retaining a core of long-standing members. The band pride themselves on their eclectic, challenging and rewarding repertoire.

Standard £12 | Concession £10.50



### Mother Goose – Pantomime

Hot Rock Productions

Tue 30 May, 2pm

Liam Mellor & Hot Rock Productions are delighted to present Mother Goose... The #Cracking Panto for all the family. It's full of all your favourite traditions – a fabulous fairy, a brute of a baddie and of course, a fella in a frock! Everyone loves Mother Goose but she's not happy as she wants to be beautiful! It just so happens that the evil, self-obsessed Demon Vanity can offer her everything her heart desires but there's a price... she must give up the thing she loves the most: her prized goose!

Adult £16 | Child (Under 16) £14 | Family Ticket for 4 £52



### Grease: The Musical

The SPACE Company

Wed 14 – Sat 17 Jun,  
 7:30pm + Thu 2pm

Matinee

The SPACE Company is proud to present GREASE

THE MUSICAL! Be wowed by this modern rendition of one of the world's most popular and iconic musicals. Follow Sandy as she navigates her senior year at Rydell High School, being unexpectedly reunited with her summer love, Danny Zuko. Come enjoy the songs you know & love in this dazzling production, bursting with hits including Summer Nights, Greased Lightnin', Hopelessly Devoted to You and You're the One That I Want. Dance it out at the high school hop, and be a part of this love letter to being at high school. These teens really do go together like rama lama lama ka dinga da dinga dong!

Wed 14, 7:30pm & Thu 15, 2pm: Standard £14 | Concession £10 | Student £8

Thu 15 – Sat 17, 7:30pm: Standard £15 | Concession £12 | Student £10

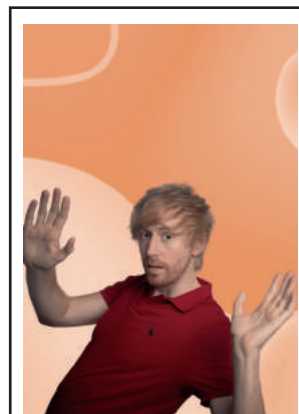


### Mark Simmons: Quip Off The Mark

Fri 23 Jun, 7:30pm

As Seen on Mock The Week, BT Sport and ITV, 'Master of one-liners' Mark Simmons brings his brand-new show on the road. This isn't your average one-liner show as there is the running theme throughout. This year Mark's parents have sold the house he grew up in and has to collect his box of stuff from the loft. Come discover what's in the box in this top-level one-liner show structured in a way you've never seen before.

All Tickets £17

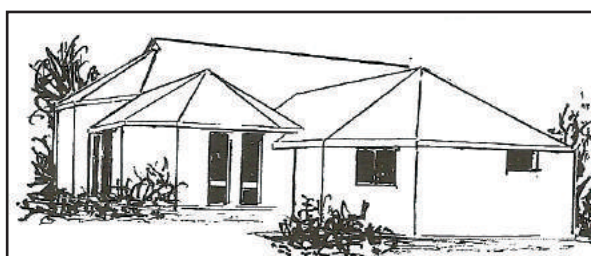


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**West Monkton Village Hall**  
**Monkton Heathfield**  
**Charity No. 304670**

On 9 December we said good bye to Joyce Keyte, who has left the parish to be nearer to her family in Gloucestershire. Joyce, who was Chairperson of the Village Hall was first involved with the hall's activities when she organised the Flower Show which was held for many years after the new hall was built in the late 1970s. As the most recent Chairperson, she spent much time and effort in not only promoting and advertising the Hall but ensuring that we have become one of the most successful local Village Halls in Somerset, winning several awards

and gaining the top-ranking annual Hallmark certification. She was invaluable in maintaining our link with the Somerset Community Council and seeking out ways of obtaining grants from any available sources towards the upkeep and maintenance of our fine premises. Tribute should also be given to Joyce's late husband Keith who also gave many years valuable financial advice in the preparation of our accounts. A tree in his memory was duly planted at the Hall last year. At the most recent meeting of the Hall Management Committee Joyce was duly thanked for her many years of service and as a token of our appreciation was presented with a gift token on behalf of the Committee.



Joyce Keyte

Ray Tully,  
 Chairperson,  
 West Monkton Village

**Microsoft's Free Storage Debacle...**

It's not often I'm flummoxed by utter stupidity in the IT world. Especially when it is from one of the leading companies like Microsoft (MS).

Do you have a free **Hotmail**, **Outlook** or **Live.com** email address? You are impacted by this.

Starting 1st Feb 2023, MS introduced a new policy over storage. Here we go. For as long as I can recall you were given 15Gb free space for your free email address. Then, if you use it (not everyone does) you also had a separate free 5Gb OneDrive allowance. Many people use free email and, like Gmail, Yahoo & Apple iCloud, Microsoft have offered a free service called Hotmail, then renamed to Outlook (with side dalliance into Live.com) email addresses for years. *It was all so easy. Not now.*

So, the policy change is you now have, errr, 15Gb free space for email! **Except** when that email has attachments, like photos & documents.

Your attachments are stored in the 15Gb allowance, as before, but **ALSO** the attachments (only) now also fill up your 5Gb OneDrive space. The above graph, taken from a real Microsoft account with free email, shows the stupidity in full force. The email of this account owner has only used 30% or so of the 15Gb email space - bottom graph. Great! **Except**, the attachments embedded on those emails have filled up the 5Gb free OneDrive allowance, top graph, because the user is also using a bit of space for OneDrive.

So, MS email users are now suddenly getting storage warning messages on their Hotmail/Outlook screens. MS are warning that unless the issue is "fixed" by the user then email may stop working. Guess what? They have a solution to this "problem" you now have. **Buy more storage!** In other words, sign up to something like Microsoft 365 Personal, for £60/year. The problem will go away! Your 5Gb limited OneDrive space magically grows 200x, to 1Tb (or 1000Gb).

So, to be clear. You still have 15Gb free email space. Except for any emails that have attachments. Those attachments fill up the other 5Gb space you probably didn't even know you had, and if you keep all your emails, you almost certainly now have an issue. This is *so clearly* a drive by MS to stop people using free email. They can claim you have 15Gb for free, but in practical terms it is now 5Gb, seeing as just about every single email has attachments - even if it is no more than a logo of a company who has sent you an email. But the confusion over two disparate 'storage allowances' is just *utter stupidity*. At least Gmail & Apple have one storage allowance for their combined free service offerings. Why have MS confused it by overlapping two?



## The £2 Bus Fare Extended Until The End Of June

The Somerset Bus Partnership has welcomed the Government's decision to provide an additional £75 million. This will enable bus operators to continue to cap their single adult bus fares at £2. The £2 flat fare introduced in January is now set to continue through to the end of June. Bus users in Somerset will be able to continue to travel on most bus routes in the county and beyond for just £2.

The previous average price of a single fare for a 3-mile journey was around £2.80, meaning that the new fare will mean a saving of about a third on the price every time you travel. It's worth remembering that this initiative applies to cross-boundary services, which means you can travel for example from Taunton to



Minehead or Taunton to Dulverton for just £2.

It's hoped this will persuade even more people to travel by bus, whether that's for work, education, shopping or medical treatments. Millions of people across England will be saving money just at a time when many households are suffering from the rising cost of living.

### The 13 operators involved in the scheme are:

ATWEST, Bakers Dolphin, Community Transport (South West) Ltd, Dartline, Faresaver Buses, First South West (Buses of Somerset), First West of England, Hatch Green Coaches, FromeBus, Libra Travel, Mendip Community Transport, Somerset County Council and South West Coaches. For more information on this scheme:

<https://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/busit>.

In addition, Somerset County Council has introduced within Taunton a special £1 single/ £2 return bus fare. Plus, there are new night time bus services with the last bus services leaving the towns and villages covered by the scheme will run between 10pm and 11.15pm.

### The bus routes that will have a night service are:

- 1: Taunton to Priorswood/Musgrove Park/Silk Mills Park and Ride
- 21: Bridgwater to Taunton (Bridgwater Bus Station to Musgrove Park)
- 22: Wellington to Taunton

- 28: Minehead to Taunton (including Cotford St Luke and Norton Fitzwarren)
- 30: Chard to Taunton

This is funded by Somerset's successful bid for Government money through its Bus Service Improvement Plan. Somerset Bus Partnership welcomes this further initiative and is encouraging Somerset to bid for further funding so this urban flat fare can be extended to other Somerset towns. Somerset County Council and the Somerset Bus Partnership have launched the 'BUS IT' campaign to promote bus travel.

Somerset Bus Partnership's Co-Chair, Peter Travis, said, "Bus usage had declined in Somerset during the previous decade, and even more so during the pandemic. So initiatives like the £2 flat fare are needed to boost passenger levels. Encouraging people to choose buses over cars is really important because it also helps reduce our carbon emissions. Transport accounts for nearly half of our carbon emissions in Somerset. Somerset Bus Partnership will therefore be continuing to work with Somerset County Council to encourage greater bus usage."

### Help Needed

Somerset Bus Partnership is a voluntary organisation formed some 2 years ago. It now has 150 bus champions and works with 125 Parish Councils across Somerset. It ensures the views of bus users are heard on what they need from bus services in our County ... which means people can get to where they want to ... when they want to ... and the journey is reliable, comfortable and affordable. Key to the journey experience is easy access to bus information, improved bus stops and bus stations, and bus services that integrate with rail.

We are looking to expand the work of Somerset Bus Partnership over the next 12 months. However, we need more resource to help us do this.

Can you spare an hour a month to help? We could do with some assistance with our membership and administration.

Or do you have a background in Planning, Traffic Management/Highways or Public Transport? Or have fundraising experience and could help with submitting fundraising plans?

If you can help please get in contact:

[somersetbuspartnership@gmail.com](mailto:somersetbuspartnership@gmail.com)

<http://www.somersetbuspartnership.co.uk/>

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Peter Travis  
 Co-Chair Somerset bus Partnership





## Sedgemoor Inner Wheel

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*The school came together for a special collective worship to celebrate Mrs Bater and her time at West Monkton. Mrs Bater has worked at the school for an incredible 35 years and has been a fantastic asset to the school. She was thanked for her dedication and commitment to the school. It was a sad day for the school saying farewell, but Mrs Bater was wished a very happy and healthy retirement!*

## National Blood Donor Service

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- To promote true friendships
- to encourage the ideals of personal service
- to foster international understanding.

Members of Inner Wheel achieve these goals by various ways which combine fund-raising and personal service – all with fun and friendship.

[www.innerwheel.co.uk](http://www.innerwheel.co.uk)



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General fitness class including warm up, stretching, toning, optional floor work, easy dances and a cooldown.

Please bring a mat

(I bring spares if you don't have one).  
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**Call/text Charlotte  
 on 07764 301304  
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**Fridays** 7.30am & 9.30am  
 St James Church Hall  
 Dawn 07779 404038

**Wednesday**  
 Lisieux Way Methodist Church  
 4pm, 5.30pm & 7.15pm  
 Anya 07950 297240

**Saturdays**  
 Silver St Baptist Church  
 8.30am  
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## NIGEL K. FORD

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## Brittons Ash Community Hall (BACH)

### Regular Bookings at the BACH

#### Mondays

9:45am to 11am Yoga  
 1:30pm to 3:30pm Art Group  
 7:30pm to 9:30pm Table Tennis

#### Tuesdays

10:15am to 1pm Age UK Group  
 5:15pm to 6:45pm Yoga

#### Wednesdays

9:15am to 11:45 Yoga/Pilates  
 12:30pm to 2pm Stay and Play Group  
 2pm to 4pm Community Café  
 5:15pm to 6:30pm Youth Group  
 (not the 2nd week of month)  
 8pm to 10pm Bathpool Buskers  
 (only 2nd week of month)

#### Thursdays

10am to 12noon Sewing Group  
 10:30am to 12 noon Stay and Play Group  
 6:55pm to 8:15pm Table Tennis

#### Fridays

9:45am to 11am Yoga  
 11:15am to 12:15pm Healthy Hearts

#### Saturdays

8:45am to 11:45am Mini Dribblers

### Booking Officer:

Maggie Little

Tlfn: 01823 323662

Email:

bachbookings@westmonkton.net

## West Monkton Village Hall Monkton Heathfield, TA2 8NE

Regular Bookings

### Jittabugs

Mondays 13:45 – 14:45; 16:00 – 16:30;  
 16:30 – 17:30; and 17:45 – 18:45

### Phoenix Camera Club

Mondays 19:00 - 21:00

### Badminton

Tuesdays (Ladies) 14:00 - 15:00

### Brownies

Tuesdays (except school holidays) 18:00 - 19:30

### Pilates

Tuesdays 19:00 - 20:00

### Monkton Players

Tuesdays (check 'What's On' for dates) 20:00 - 22:00

### Sweaty Mama

Wednesday 9:30 - 10:45

### Yoga

Wednesday 9:30 - 10:45

### FunFit

Wednesday 18:00 - 19:00

### Badminton

Wednesday (Mixed) 20:00 - 21:00

### Flexercise

Thursday 9:30 - 10:30

### Coffee Morning (Ladies & Gents)

Thursday 10:00 - 11:30

### MNDA

Once a month on a Thursday 13:30 - 16:30

### Afternoon Tea

Third Thursday of month 14:30 - 16:30

### Bounce & Burn

Thursday 18:00 - 19:00

### Monkton Evening WI

Fourth Thursday of month 19:15 - 21:25

### Trams & Light Railways

Once a month on a Saturday 13:30 - 16:30

### Hardy Plant Society

Once a month on a Saturday 9:30 - 13:00

### Orchid Society

Once a month on a Sunday 14:00 - 17:00

### 'O' Gauge Model Railways

Quarterly on a Sunday 9:00 - 17:00

For more information please contact:

Ian Pitchfork Tel: 01823 412196

Email: ianpitchfork623@gmail.com

### Village News:

Please forward information for the next edition to the **Editor:** Dawn Watts,  
 Tel. 01823 412201  
 dawnwattsdk@yahoo.co.uk

**Village News Treasurer** Ken Jones

**Distribution of the Village News** is organised by: Barry Gage, Maggie & Gordon Little.

Submissions to Village News may be made by e-mail or by hard copy. Please ask for a receipt to your e-mail to ensure that it arrives. Items submitted will be subjected to editing if necessary.

The deadline for submissions for the July/August 2023 Village News is 1st June 2023

To get a pdf copy of the Village News emailed to you,  
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**And Finally ...**

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*