

Pride in Portbury

Portbury Parish Newsletter – December 2024

Welcome to the December edition of our Parish Newsletter. Hopefully, we can capture some of the wonderful events and celebrations that will be taking place in and around Portbury around Christmas and New Year.

Village Events in December:

All through December	Mini Christmas Tree Festival	St Mary's Church
Friday 13 th December	Clubroom Bar open from 7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 14 th December	Happy Hearts Community Café – 10-1pm	St Mary's Church
	Children's Christmas Movie 4.30pm	Village Hall
	Pill Owls Performance (children welcome – bar open) 6.30pm	Village Hall
Sunday 15 th December	Candlelight Carol Service – 4pm	St Mary's Church
	Clubroom Bar open – from 7.30pm	Village Hall
Thursday 19 th December	Bold Brass Concert (£10) – 7.30pm	St Mary's Church
Friday 20 th December	Clubroom Bar open from 7.30pm	Village Hall
Monday 23 rd December	Fire Brigade Father Christmas from 5.45pm	Around the village
Tuesday 24 th December	Santa on the Green from 6pm	Village Green
	Village Hall Bar open – from 6.30pm	Village Hall
	Christmas Communion – 10pm	St Mary's Church
	Pill Owls Christmas Eve Concert 10.30pm	Village Hall
Christmas Day	Village Hall Bar Open 12-2pm	Village Hall
New Year's Eve	New Year's Eve Party (£5 contribution to buffet) 7.30pm onwards – tickets from bar	Village Hall

Parish News

Portbury Parish Council has been busy this year, with meetings taking place concerning flooding, traffic, planning and other issues affecting the village. News on all of these issues will be out in the New Year. Come along to our first meeting of 2025 on Tuesday, 7th January at 8pm. We would especially welcome anyone interested in seeing how the council works as new members are needed!

Drains and footpaths – at this time of year, it is really important to take time to check the drains and footpaths around your home, if you are able, and those of your neighbours if they need a little help. The help of some fantastic local heroes ensured that recent rains didn't result in flooding but we all need to keep an eye out for future issues, including clearing leaves and overhanging branches from our trees.

Parish Council meetings and vacancies: Everyone is welcome to attend meetings (1st Tuesday of the month in the Village Hall). Agendas are published one week before meetings and **only agenda items** can be discussed. Any member of the community may add items to the agenda prior to publication. Full details are on the Parish Council website, together with information about joining the council.

Santa on the Green 2024

Father Christmas has agreed to come to the Village Green on Christmas Eve this year. This is a time for sharing community spirit with friends and neighbours, with all children living or spending their Christmas in Portbury to get their first Christmas present from Santa himself! In the spirit of togetherness and sing-song, we'd like to remind families that presents are supposed to be small, token gifts, keeping in mind others' financial situations.

Please can all be wrapped, clearly marked presents with a FULL NAME on, and dropped to either: 10 Priory Road, BS20 7TH, or 2 Forge End, BS20 7TY. The drop off box will be out from the 20th, with all presents needing to be in by midday on Christmas Eve.

We look forward to seeing you from 6pm on the Green for carols. If we sing loudly enough, Father Christmas should be there around 20 past! We will have virtual and paper carol sheets – keep a look out for them (or scan the QR code below to download your own



Download the carols here using the camera on your phone (above)

Santa on the Green, 2023 (right)



Christmas Tree-Cycling

North Somerset 'Tree-Cycling' will be taking place again this year. Each year, thousands of Christmas trees are re-purposed, raising £120,000 for local charities; recycling and repurposing 15,000 trees and saving over 200 tonnes of carbon emissions.

In January, you can choose to recycle your tree at:

Noah's Ark Zoo Farm – accepting trees between Thursday 2nd and Sunday 26th January – leave your tree at the collection point in the main car park between 10.30am and 4.00pm.

St Peter's Hospice – collecting trees from selected postcodes – tree collection must be prebooked online at www.stpetershospice.org/treecollection .

All trees must have decorations and the pot removed, as some will be used for animal enrichment and the rest will be chipped for land regeneration. Christmas trees can also be taken to the household waste and recycling centres where they can be recycled with garden waste. If you have signed up for garden waste collection, you can put your tree out for collection from Monday 13th January 2025.



Portbury Village Hall and Social Club

December at the Village Hall – join us for a magical month of village events in the run-up to Christmas and New Year at the heart of the community. The Village Hall and Social Club is a resource for every member of the village and all are welcome to come along. We welcome children and dogs for most events and are always happy to meet new faces.

Saturday 14th December

Children's Film on the Big Screen in the Clubroom from 4.30pm followed by a carol concert from the Pill Owls (a true family favourite). If you have never seen the Pill Owls, they are a traditional Dickensian Choir, together with Victorian dress, who perform to crowds all over the region throughout December. They will be performing for the children (and adults!) from around 6.30pm and the bar will be open too!

Christmas Eve – Tuesday 24th December

Santa will be visiting the Village Green on Christmas Eve. The bar at the Village Hall will be open afterwards (from 6.30pm) to continue the festivities. Children are welcome until 8.30pm. The Pill Owls will be arriving around 10.30pm for a special, fireside village evening which is always one not to be missed.

Christmas Day

The bar is open from 12-2pm – all welcome!



The Pill Owls performing in the Village Hall Clubroom

New Year's Party – limited space available to join us to celebrate the start of the New Year - £5 per ticket, to include a buffet and events all night.

Coming to the Village Hall in 2025

Live 6-Nations Rugby on the Big Screen

Cheese and Wine Tasting Night

Live Music Nights

Quizzes

Rock n Roll Bingo

Summer Skittles Tournament

Follow us on Facebook for a regular update of events which are coming up.

The hall and clubroom are run by volunteers and we are always looking for people to join the team (full training can be given!)

Membership: the Social Club is funded through membership – although anyone is welcome to come and visit (£1 day fee): prices have remained the same as in previous years: £10 individual, £20 family, £5 Senior. Forms can be collected (and payment taken) at the bar or you can renew by BACS or Direct Debit to Portbury Village Hall - sort code 54 30 06 account number 34334408. **Renew or join now for the whole of 2025 – look out for the forms coming through your letterbox!**

Hire the Hall, Club room or whole facility for your next event: www.portburyvh.org.uk or email bookingssec@portburyvh.org.uk

Friends of Portbury Wharf Nature Reserve

New nature trail at Portbury Wharf Nature Reserve



The Friends of Portbury Wharf have created a unique **Wetlands Trail** to help visitors identify the wildlife that visits the Nature Reserve and Salt Marsh.

It isn't easy to know what wildlife to look out for. It is especially tricky as many of our creatures migrate and are not around all year. So we have designed this trail with swappable panels to bring you the right information at the right time.

The winter panels are on display now. They tell you what is going on in each of the 12 habitats across the reserve, such as the Wet Meadow, the North and South Pools and the Estuary. Then it's all change in April, when wildlife starts nesting and different birds arrive from Africa. So the summer panels will tell you all about these seasonal changes.

Look out for the What am I? squares too. Coming soon, these will have clues to help you name the wildlife. They will be fixed to the square sections on the habitat panels and be changed every month or so. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram if you want to know when the displays are changed.



So come and try out the Wetlands Trail at Portbury Wharf Nature Reserve. See if you can identify any of our wonderful wetland wildlife, you never know what might turn up. The well-camouflaged birds can be hard to spot so, if you have binoculars, bring them along. But even without, there are bigger and more conspicuous creatures to look for, such as the white Little Egret, Grey Heron and Roe Deer. Then there are the things that don't fly or run away. Look out for teasels covered in winter frosts, spiders' webs sparkling with dewdrops and glossy, red winter rosehips. There is always something of wonder.

We hope this nature trail will be enjoyed by visitors of all ages and serve as an educational resource for schools, youth clubs and other visiting groups.

Thanks to the National Grid Community Fund for awarding us a grant to create this Wetlands Trail. Thanks also to the owners of the reserve, North Somerset Council, for their support throughout the project.

St Mary's Primary School

St Mary's pupils display outstanding behaviour and attitudes

Following an inspection in October 2024 Ofsted has graded St Mary's CofE Primary School in Portbury as Outstanding for Behaviour and Attitudes and Good in the other four inspection areas.

The inspection was conducted under the new Ofsted framework in which single word judgements for overall effectiveness are no longer awarded. Inspectors commented that "pupils love coming to school. Teachers expect pupils to achieve well in their lessons and relationships between staff and pupils are strong".

They also noted the children "display exceptional manners around school and ensure that everyone is listened to" and enjoy an "ambitious curriculum".



Headteacher Miss Townsend with proud pupils from St Mary's Primary School

Headteacher, Miss Amy Townsend, was overjoyed with the report's findings "I am so proud of our school and the high aspirations that we have as a team for the children. It is wonderful to see that the inspectors recognised what a happy place St Mary's is and have celebrated the strong relationships that we have built as a school community and beyond."

Following the publication of Ofsted's report, Dr Gary Lewis, Chief Executive of Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) said, "This report reflects the hard work and dedication of all the staff at the school to ensure a safe, friendly and inspiring learning environment for the children. The inspection highlights the school's strengths and I am pleased that the partnership between the school and trust is recognised to be working well to ensure support and development for both our pupils and our staff."

St Mary's CofE Primary School is accepting applications for pupils to join Reception in September 2025. Please visit the school's website to find out more.

Christmas at St Mary's Primary Portbury

We were pleased to be invited to take part in St Mary's Church step into Christmas event and to enter 3 trees from different parts of our school community. Children, FOSMs and School Chaplains.

The school has lots of exciting Christmas fun taking place over the next few weeks. Including their annual bakeoff competition, guess the name of the elf/reindeer and Christmas parties.

The excitement is really building in school.

We wish the Portbury Community a Merry Christmas a very Happy New Year.

St Mary's Church Events

As you would expect, St Mary's Church is at the heart of Christmas celebrations throughout December. Come along and see our mini-tree festival: small Christmas trees decorated by the community on display throughout December in the church.

The church is also open as a place for quiet contemplation and reflection throughout December.

Our Happy Hearts Christmas Café will be on between 10am and 1pm on Saturday 14th December and on Sunday 15th December, please come and join us for a wonderful Candlelight Carol service from 4pm.

Bold Brass are performing at the Church on Thursday 19th December from 7.30pm – tickets are just £10 for a fantastic night of music and entertainment.

On Christmas Eve, we will be holding Communion from 10pm and would love to see as many members of the village community as possible come to join us celebrating the start of Christmas together.

St Mary's
PORTBURY

*Christmas at
St Mary's*

30th November 11am - 5pm
Step into Christmas

Whole of December
Mini Tree Festival

14th December 10am - 1pm
Happy HeARTs Christmas Café

15th December 4pm
Candlelight Carol Service

19th December 7.30pm
Bold Brass (tickets £10)

24th December 10pm
Christmas Eve Communion

*Wishing you Peace, Love
& Joy at Christmas*

St Mary's Church, Portbury BS20 7TR
Follow us on facebook Hearts at Portbury



St Mary's Church at dusk – Paul Hennigan

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. Please let us know what you would like to see in our next issue – due out in July. If you would like to contribute an article or feature, please contact crisc@portburypc.org.uk