

Pride in Portbury

Portbury Parish Newsletter - July 2024



Wildflowers thriving on St George's Flower Bank – alongside the Martcombe Road

Welcome to the summer edition of the Portbury Parish newsletter. We hope you are finding these useful and interesting. Anyone who would like to add news, stories or anything else that you feel would be of interest to the residents of Portbury, please let me know. We regularly approach local organisations and businesses to contribute. If you would like to add to the next edition, please email crisc@portburyPC.org.uk.

On the subject of summer, please remember that summer in the village means there is lots of long grass (please check dogs for ticks!) and dry planters. The planted tubs around the village are filled by volunteers each year. If there is one near you, please water it to keep it looking great!

Keeping with volunteers, we would love to say a massive thank you to the people who keep the village looking beautiful: Kevin Weekes – the Parish Lengthsman; Nick Cheek – who mows the green (among hundreds of other, thankless tasks!); Lee and Sharon Worthy who repainted the fence along the motorway and mow the churchyard; Wenda and Michael Cowlard who regularly clear the gutters and footpaths along the High Street... the list goes on! Above is an image of St George's Flowerbank, which goes from strength to strength each year, thanks to the volunteers who help keep it tidy and maintained. Finally, a massive thank you to Caryll Brand who helps to ensure that the Sheepway and A369 layby are kept litter free.

Please remember that many of the jobs that keep the village looking beautiful are done by people like us just doing a little extra: if the drain outside your house is clogged with leaves, please clear it. If there are branches or bushes overgrowing a footpath, don't be afraid to clip them back. If you see litter, pick it up. And... if you feel like doing more, that is what helps to keep the village and the community a wonderful place to live!

Parish Council Annual Residents' Meeting (ARM)

This was held on 15th May 2024 at the Village Hall. The Annual Residents' Meeting (ARM) is a statutory meeting for a Parish Council and provides an opportunity for residents to engage with the Council members and discuss concerns and aspects of village life. This year it would be an understatement to say turnout was disappointing! Hopefully, that indicates that people are happy with life in the village.

The information from the leaflet handed out is at the end of this newsletter for those who missed the meeting, this enabled the discussion to focus on key issues and avoided lengthy reporting back.

Next year's meeting will be at **7.30pm on Wednesday, 14th May 2025 at Portbury Village Hall**. Put it in your diaries now!

News

Councillor Vacancies

The Parish Council are always on the look-out for volunteers to join the council. We currently have five councillors and are looking to appoint at least two more to ensure that we can continue to represent the views of the village and take full advantage of the range of expertise in the community.

The Parish Council exists to provide a layer of governance between the community and North Somerset Council. Simply put, without enough councillors, the Parish Council ceases to exist and all decisions about the village would be taken solely at a county level – without the views of the village being represented at all.

If you are interested in seeing how the council works, or have any questions, please come along to a meeting at the Village Hall on the first Tuesday of each month – look out for the agenda on Facebook and email the week before the meeting.

Vandalism

Sadly, earlier this year, some vandals caused damage to the playpark near the school. Thanks to the actions of members of the village, the people responsible were identified and spoken to by the police. Deciding not to criminalise the young people concerned, the Parish Council asked for a token sum of money from each family to help cover the costs of the repairs. All but one family have paid the sum due and the repairs have been made. Sadly, more and more reports of anti-social behaviour are coming in. Please remember to report any concerns by phone to 101 (999 if a crime is being committed or you believe there is a risk to people) or through Avon and Somerset Police's website.

Traffic

Residents will have noticed the installation of 20 mph "repeater" signs on main roads in the village. 20 mph stickers for wheelie bins are also available to help to reinforce the speed limit through the village. This is part of wider work from the Parish Council members – see further details in the ARM notes at the end of the newsletter.

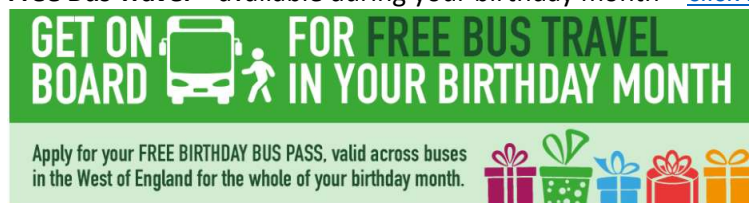
Portbury Village Photography Submissions

Each edition, we try to include photographs to showcase the beauty of Portbury. Please send your best photos to crisc@portburypc.org.uk for inclusion in future newsletters – the best pictures will be published and will help to make the rest of the village smile!

Flooding Update

As suggested during the recent Flooding meeting, and discussed at the ARM, the Parish Council are in the process of engaging a drainage survey of the village to help to identify future measures to help avoid the risks of flooding. One action that all villagers can do to help is to ensure that drains, rhines, ditches, etc which are on or near their property are clear of leaves and other debris. The summer is a perfect time to check on these.

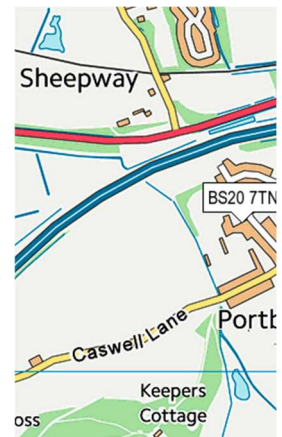
Free Bus Travel – available during your birthday month – [click here for details](#)



GET ON BOARD FOR FREE BUS TRAVEL IN YOUR BIRTHDAY MONTH

Apply for your FREE BIRTHDAY BUS PASS, valid across buses in the West of England for the whole of your birthday month.

The banner features a green background with a white bus icon and a person walking. Below the main text are five colorful gift icons in purple, green, blue, red, and orange.



New 20mph repeater signs in the village.

Portbury Village Hall and Social Club

Sophie Holliday on stage in the Main Hall:



(below left, the Clubroom for England's semi-final wasn't big enough for the final so we moved to the Hall – on the right)



We have had a busy few months at the Village Hall, with a wide range of activities for the village:

- **Club Nights** – the Village Hall clubroom bar is open every Friday and Sunday night from 7.30pm – all are welcome.
- **Summer Skittles** – six village teams are approaching the halfway point in the season, playing matches every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday night from 8pm.
- **Live Sport** – we have had some fantastic days and evenings during Euro 2024 as the village got behind the England team
- **Live Music** – we continue to build a reputation for great music and welcomed three bands to the hall this month: The Thermions, Sophie Holliday and 90 Seconds showcased some of the great talent available in the area. We are looking forward to welcoming back the fantastic **Rhiannon Paige** with her band on **Friday 18th October** – tickets are available from the bar now (£5 for members and £8 for non-members)
- Our **Quiz nights** have continued, with Connect 6 Bingo and our very own 50/50 format (more of that soon!) – next Quiz night is on Saturday 28th September from 7.30pm.
- **Rock n Roll Bingo** drew a good crowd as ever – watch out for the next dates (coming soon!)
- **The Pill Owls** will be singing in December, including Christmas Eve – more details of Portbury Christmas coming soon!



Portbury Village Hall and Lounge Bar is here for the community and run by a great group of volunteers. We are looking for more people to get involved as volunteers (bar staff and other roles available), committee members (meeting once every 2 months to help organise events and the running of the hall) and also we are looking for someone to join us as Company Secretary: overseeing the limited company and providing a level of monitoring of key dates and activities – not as large a job as it may sound! Full training is given for all roles.

However, this is very much a community resource and one which could really do with a few more members of the community getting involved – to bring fresh ideas and ensure that we keep building on what we have!

We have some great wines, beers, ciders and soft drinks at very reasonable prices. As you will see above, there is so much on. There is no better time to come along to and take a look at your village club. All events are advertised on our Facebook page: [PortburyVillageHall&SocialClub](https://www.facebook.com/PortburyVillageHall&SocialClub)

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

Avon Wildlife Trust wildlife gardening competition – deadline July 31st



Avon Wildlife Trust have a wildlife gardening competition running, which ends on 31st July! Enter your garden, balcony or community space and share what you do for nature. The aims of the competition is to normalise wildlife gardening and show the real beauty of working with nature. It really shows the heart and soul of being in green spaces and the absolute joy of attracting wildlife. Plus it shares advice and knowledge to help scale up actions for nature. Enter today!

Actions for nature include planting a variety of plants for pollinators, having a wild patch or log pile, a pond of any size, native bushes or birdboxes. It doesn't matter about the size of the garden, it's how the space is used.

All qualifying entries receive a digital certificate. Three finalists will be selected from each category to go to public vote. The main prize is awarded by Avon Wildlife Trust for outstanding achievement. To enter, visit their website and select the category that best describes you and your garden. You'll be asked a few questions and have the opportunity to upload a photos or video to show off your space. Let's highlight Portbury's green spaces!

<https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/team-wilder-wildlife-gardening-competition-2024>

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

We would love to wish all of the staff, parents and pupils a lovely summer break. Best wishes to the Year 6 pupils heading on to secondary school in September. Have a lovely summer!



Portbury Service Station

25 High Street, Portbury - 01275 372163

We are proud to be part of the local Portbury community, offering expert maintenance and servicing of all makes of vehicle.

Call us or drop in for a quote. We are next door to the Village Hall.

The Priory Public House

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy the Priory's fantastic menu and lovely garden and outside spaces. Call in, use our app or visit our website to book a table. 01275 376307



Portbury Women's Institute (WI)

Portbury WI celebrated its 90th Birthday in June with a Magician, our new bunting and of course, cake!

In August we don't have a monthly meeting, but still meet socially for a special afternoon tea and have our annual committee lunch. There will also be one of the monthly walks which end with a sociable lunch open to walkers and non-walkers alike.

In September we will be back at our usual meeting time – 7.30pm on third Tuesday on the month, meeting in the Village Hall (side entrance). Our speaker will be Joanna Lampley who will be talking about her art and ceramics and how she finds inspiration in nature .



Cutting the cake at our 90th Anniversary



Portbury WI's new bunting on display

In October we will have our Annual Meeting where we will be looking back on another enjoyable year and in November we will be making Christmas decorations for our entry in Portbury Church's Christmas Tree parade – and maybe some extras to put up at home too.

If you would like to come and try us out, you are welcome to attend a meeting or two before you join. Being a Portbury WI member means you are also a member of the Avon Federation of WIs and National Federation of WIs which opens up opportunities for more activities, talks, outings, education courses and even holidays.

The Women's Institute (WI) is the largest women's organisation in the UK, with over 200,000 members. It offers friendship, educational and campaigning opportunities to women aged 18 and over. It is a welcoming, non-discriminatory environment. For more information please see the National and Avon Federation WI websites at: www.thewi.org.uk and www.avon.thewi.org.uk or find us on Facebook @PortburyWI.

To find out more before you come along, please contact Helen Francis on 07503 134817.

Gordano Rugby Football Club

Gordano RFC, located on Caswell Lane, has started a new season of rugby. And is always looking for new players. Adult males play on Saturdays and train on Tuesdays and Thursdays, please contact our Club Captain, Andre Bailey on captain@gordanofc.co.uk.

Pre-season friendlies coming up:

Home - Old Bristolians RFC – Thursday 8th August – Kick Off 7pm

Away – Combe Down RFC – Sat 17th Aug – Kick Off 3pm -- Burnham-on-Sea RFC – Thurs 29th Aug – 7.15pm

Children, both boys and girls aged 4 or over on 1 September 2024 play and train on Sunday mornings. Come down and meet us – everyone is welcome.

Portbury Parish Council Annual Resident's Meeting notes

Updates - a Year of Activity

Traffic & Transport – Cllr Penn

Traffic issues have been an agenda item at every meeting, PPC (assisted by residents) have been working to keep this item at the top of NSC's agenda. Since the last residents' meeting, PPC have:

- Constantly contacted NSC to discuss and rectify Portbury traffic issues
- Worked with Dr Liam Fox to escalate Portbury's traffic concerns.
- Rectified Portbury signage to allow Police speed testing
- Established costing, locations, and NSC approval for mobile speed camera in the village.
- Increased 20 mph signage within village
- Tried to improve roundabout traffic scheme.
- Tried to get the traffic lights yellow box junction repainted.
- Monitored and challenged NSC bus route proposals

Planning – Cllr Chilcott

Since the last residents' meeting, there have been planning items on every PPC agenda, whether new applications or updates on existing plans. Over the past year the PPC have looked at 23 separate applications.

2023							2024			
Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
0	10	3	1	1	1	1	3	0	2	2

Of these applications, PPC maintains a neutral position on most applications unless there are significant issues with the application (e.g. Green Belt, detrimental impact on local infrastructure etc.) where we will make a comment on the application. These comments will then inform NSC's position on accepting or refusing the application. During the year, 10 separate applications have been approved, with 5 being turned down. The others are still pending a decision or have been withdrawn by the applicant. 3 enforcement notices have also been issued.

Environment – Cllr Chilcott

Flooding has been high on the agenda this year with the village impacted heavily by the floods. PPC has sought to find out resident's views and seek out possible mitigations. To this end, PPC have:

- Hosted a flood meeting to discuss community views
- Undertaken an Informal assessment of drainage issues around the village.
- Started the process of organising a professional audit of the drainage in the village with a plan for suggested affordable mitigations

Prior's Wood has also been on the agenda, with the PPC liaising with Avon Wildlife Trust over their future plans for managing Prior's Wood. The PPC have:

- Responded to AWT's draft woodland plan
- Held a site walkaround with a representative of AWT
- Maintained communications with AWT.
- Advocated for village engagement by AWT as, when and if the plan is acted upon

Village Hall Liaison – Cllr Campbell

Since the last resident's meeting, the PPC Newsletter has been established. A quarterly newsletter with notices and news from organisations in the village. Close links are always maintained with the Village Hall and Social Club.

Other PPC roles

Village Lengthsman

Kevin Weekes is currently our Village Lengthsman. Kevin took over from his father Brian, who had held the position for many years. As a result, Kevin is an individual who knows our village well. Under the auspices of the PPC, the past year has seen Kevin:

- Undertake playground inspections on a weekly and monthly basis
- Undertake repairs to playparks equipment
- Cutting the grass at playparks
- Emptying and disposing the contents from the dog poo bins
- Undertake some litter/flytipping collection
- Cut back any overgrowth (not including residential properties)
- Keeping walkways clear including the path to St. Mary's school
- Ensure that all signage is visible

Kevin will continue to fulfil these duties and any other maintenance issues he can deal with.