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WILLITON WINDOW

December 2020

Volume 21 Number 6

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ADVERTISING: TUESDAY 8th DECEMBER

EDITORIAL: FRIDAY 11th DECEMBER

The magazine can be collected for delivery from the
PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE 9.30am to 12.30pm weekdays

Commencing **FRIDAY 18TH DECEMBER**

Please send articles, news and diary dates to:

Mr Derek Smith, 34 Dovetons Drive, Williton TA4 4ST ☎ 01984 631595

All advertising enquiries to:

Mrs Janet Cook, 14 Dovetons Drive, Williton TA4 4ST ☎ 01984 639359

Magazine distribution:

Mr Neill Ambridge: ☎ 01984 639320

All enquiries by email: willitonwindow@yahoo.co.uk

LOCAL CHURCHES CONTACT NUMBERS

Church of England (St Peter's)

Vicar	Rev Clive Gilbert	631005
Associate Vicar	Rev Kathryn Flenley	633568
Readers:	Mrs Bev Machin	568201
	Mrs Donna Marsden	633707
	Mrs Julie Pelling	07973 961083
Churchwardens:	Mr G Fenech	633577
	Mrs S Withycombe	632596

Methodist Church

Team Ministry:	Rev Nick Lakin	01643 705175
Stewards:	Mr P Gliddon	632327
	Mrs R Troman	633199
	Mrs J Sefton	656652

Roman Catholic Deacon

Baptist Church	Rev Vincent Woods	634681
	Rev Mike Sherburn	633755
	Mrs M Collinson	632537
	Mr J Bowcock	248169

Salvation Army

Miss Sam Searle	07979 575453
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Sad News

I am sad to report that Tony Gibson died on the evening of Friday 20th of November.

Tony was with his wife Jenny former editor of this magazine when he died.
We give our condolences to Jenny at this very sad loss of Tony.

Editor

Cover Picture: St Peter's Altar, Crib & Chancel Decorated for Christmas.



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Associate Vicar: Rev Kathryn Flenley 633568



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CONNECTIONS

Services in December at St. Peter's Church.

If we are out of lockdown by Christmas we will be
worshipping at St. Peter's as follows:

- Sunday 6th December** 9.15 am. All Age Worship.
11.00 am. Agape Service via Zoom.*
- Sunday 13th December** 8.00 am. BCP Communion.
11.00 am. Agape Service via Zoom.
- Sunday 20th December** 9.15 am. Parish Communion.
11.00 am. Agape Service via Zoom.
4.00 pm. Carols outside the church.
- Christmas Eve.** 4.00 pm. Crib Service outside church.
9.00 pm. Earlier Midnight Communion.
(reservations necessary)
11.00 pm. Early Midnight Communion.
(reservations necessary)
- Christmas Morning** 10.00 am. Christmas Worship.
11.00 am. Agape Service via Zoom.
- Sunday 27th December** 9.15 am. Parish Communion.
11.00 am. Agape Service via Zoom.

*If you would like to join our Agape Service please contact
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Editors End of Year Reflection



As I write this we have just passed nine months since we moved to Williton. It has been a strange time in many respects and not one of us could have foreseen the year that we will shortly say goodbye to.

It has presented us with changes and challenges and for some the premature departure of loved ones. I can only imagine what it must be like for those left behind after a loss to this cruel virus. We hope that they will be able to remember the happy times and try and reflect on those as we get to celebrate Christmas in what will likely in many ways be very different this year.

It is also time to say thanks to all those who advertise in this magazine and help make it possible, plus all those who work on it, deliver it through all the doors of Williton to all our readers **Thank you All!**

It is also an opportunity to say thanks to all our local shops who serve us well in our community, please remember to carry on using these valuable businesses in our community and help keep them here to serve us all.

All of us have stories or experiences that have happened during this last year some amusing some very annoying or restrictive. However we should all count our blessings. I often say when people have had life changing illness or events happen to them "at least you're here to tell the tale."

Do what the British are good at, make the best of what life serves up.



We wish all our Readers a Happy Christmas and a brighter New Year

A Seasonal Hello from Watchet Baptist Church!

It seems impossible to know what Christmas will be like this year. We'd love to get together, but we're preparing for staying at home with things happening online.

Blue Christmas, Saturday 12 December at 3pm – For many of us, at Christmas time, the joy comes with a shadow. Tough childhood memories, the loss of loved ones or other challenges can make Christmas tough. If you need to take time out from the noise of Christmas, please join us. For about 45 minutes, we have some quiet space where we don't have to pretend. Visit our YouTube channel to join us for that (youtube.com/watchetbaptist).

Carols by Candlelight, Sunday 20 December at 6pm – We love getting together for our traditional service at Knights Templar. But this year, we'll be presenting carols and readings in an online service. Join in to hear the story and sing with us. We'll be online from 5.45pm on the night and we hope you'll join us (youtube.com/watchetbaptist).

You can also find an Advent activity sheet on our Facebook page (Watchet Baptist Church and Friends) and if you want to join us on Christmas morning, we'll be on Zoom. Get in touch for the link – mike@watchetbaptist.org.uk. Happy Christmas, everyone!

Mike Sherburn

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 **Last Minute Christmas Puddings** 

150g (5oz) Self Raising Flour	454g(1lb) Jar Mincemeat
75g (3oz) Bramley Cooking Apple	175g (6oz) Currants
25g (1oz) Chopped Roasted Hazelnuts	50g (2oz) Softened Butter
2 Medium Sized Eggs	75ml (3fl oz) Black Treacle
110ml (4fl oz) Irish Stout	2 tbs Dark Rum
1 level tsp Baking Powder	1 rounded tsp Ground Mixed Spice
Grated zest of 1 Orange & 1 Lemon	8 Individual metal or foil pudding basins
8 Greaseproof Paper Circles	8 Squares of Baking Foil

 **Preheat the oven 180C (350F Gas Mark 4)** 

1. Peel, core & chop up the apples.
2. Sift the flour, baking powder & mixed spice into a large bowl, then add the butter, eggs, treacle, Rum & Stout then mix with an electric whisk.
3. When fully mixed add the mincemeat, apple, currants, nuts, together with the grated lemon & orange zest.
4. Mix together using a wooden spoon, then divide the mixture evenly between the 8 well buttered pudding basins.
5. Cover each basin with a well buttered greaseproof circle, followed by a square of foil, which you fold under the rim of the basin using a pleating motion to seal.
6. Place the basins into a shallow roasting tin. Pour in about ½ inch of boiling water into the roasting tin and cook in a pre heated oven for 45-50 mins.
7. Allow to cool for 10mins before running a knife around the edges and turning out onto serving plates.

- This recipe can be made using a 2 pint pudding basin and steamed for 2 hours on the top of a hob.
- Mixture can be made 24 hours in advance and stored in the fridge.
- Suitable for freezing after cooking. Allow the pudding to completely defrost before reheating in the oven for 25 mins.

Janet Cook

FUNDRAISING QUIZ FOR ST PETER'S CHURCH

Thank you to everyone who has donated for a copy of the Fundraising quiz. It's not too late to pick up your copy from the post office or contact me on **07427969892** if you are unable to go out.

For those who already have a copy or are thinking of getting a copy can I remind you that all entries should be returned by **14 December, 2020**. Copies will now be available up to **07 December 2020**. Again thank you for your support. *Sara Hemphall Fundraising Committee Member, St Peter's Church Williton*



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As you may be aware, the government has now invited Somerset County Council to submit its business case for local government reform in Somerset. There are currently two proposals - one from Somerset County Council (One Somerset) and one from the four district councils - on the table for submissions. **One Somerset** would see the county council and four district councils replaced by a single, new council. The article below sets out the case for **One Somerset**.

One Somerset: Together we can work as a united team

Somerset: It's a county of contrasts but it works as a whole - not two halves. If asked where you are from, you may say your town or village, your county. It's your identity.

That's just one of the reasons why One Somerset, a single new council for the county, works. It makes sense. It unites Somerset as a single team with a strong and clear voice and sense of place and belonging.

All are agreed that the current, three-tier system (county, district and town or parish) is past its sell-by date, that reform is needed and that unitary is the way forward. It makes sense that it's a single unitary under one Somerset flag.

The plans have been developed with the people who know Somerset – like the County Council teams who provide three quarters of local government services and city, town and parish councils who are right at the heart of communities.

Together we can: work as one in a crisis. Since March, Somerset like the rest of the country, has been rising to the challenge of the pandemic. But it shouldn't take a crisis to bring Somerset together – such as flooding or coronavirus. When these happen, it takes time to bring every council, agency or organisation on board at a time when we can least afford to delay.

As a single council Somerset would have one strong response from Day One, harnessing the strength of our long-established partnerships with health, care, education and blue-light services.

Together we can: realise ambitions. One Somerset is aiming high – it's about making life better for people in Somerset with people in Somerset. It's giving people in their city, town or village the power to do more at the grass roots. Local Community Networks would bring parish/town/city councils together with the unitary council as well as voluntary and community groups. Together we can get things done.

Together we can: keep supporting the mums-to-be, the vulnerable children, adults and families and deliver quality services that ensure ALL people, whether young, old or somewhere in between get the respect and care they need.

Together we can: invest in Somerset with a unitary bonus of £18.5m each year. This is cash that can be spent on issues that really matter from addressing climate change to caring for the most vulnerable. One Somerset's sums add up: the savings are realistic.

Together we can: stay as Somerset. One Somerset doesn't want to split up the county, build a new bureaucracy or create more confusion. One council equals one strong Somerset voice, one point of contact for customers and one, Somerset united team to serve the residents, communities and businesses. Together, we can.

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Every Monday 6.00 - 7.00pm & Every Friday 9.30 - 10.30am

Christmas Festival

The Pavilion will be hosting the Carol Singing on Saturday 12 December, please see **page 30** for more details.

Please may we ask that bread and other food stuff are not scattered at the Memorial Ground as it attracts rodents.

Events scheduled at time of going to print

Down at the Station



Christmas already! Who would have thought it? At the close of this very strange year we are sorry that we have not had service trains running since the first couple of days in January. At that time we were looking forward to an exciting new timetable with galas and special events, but it was not to be. However life goes on and despite the current lockdown (mid November) we have been able to continue working parties every Tuesday morning since July. This is something which is not possible to do from home!! Early in November the Quantock Belle carriage set, which had been sitting in platform two all the summer, was removed back to it's home at Bishops Lydeard, and this left a large patch of weeds which have had to be removed and by the time this is read in December that should be complete. I am pleased to say that the new roof on the Lamp Room has now been successfully fitted and it looks very smart. The walls of the hut will now be repaired and repainted ready for the New Year.

The West Somerset Railway has been planning for some time to run Christmas Santa trains, as I mentioned last month and, subject to government permissions, I am showing the revised running days and times of departures. All will be from Bishops Lydeard and the trains will run to Williton and back. All seats must be pre-booked either on line at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk or by telephoning on **01643 704996**. Seats can be booked in blocks of four or a compartment for six and while Santa himself might not be able to come round with presents, these will be provided for every child. A reminder that the station itself will be closed during this time.

Santa Trains Programme:

Departures, each day from Bishops Lydeard at 11.00, 13.45, 16.30 other than the last day, 24th December when they will be at 10.00, 12.25 and 14.50

Weekends 12th & 13th and 19th & 20th December

Weekdays 22nd 23rd & 24th December

May I wish all our supporters and friends a very happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year

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UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR TALKING NEWSPAPER

The future of the West Somerset Talking Newspaper, a local charity which has provided regular news broadcasts to blind and partially sighted persons since 1980, looks uncertain unless a group of new persons come forward before the end of the year to take over the administration of the non profit making charity. The newspaper has been unable to operate since March

2020 due to stringent Covid 19 restrictions, particularly because tapes and discs cannot be sent to vulnerable persons.

Chairman Roger Hurst stated that the current group of unpaid trustees will retire from the charity in 2021 when the lease for the rented studio in Williton expires. He added, "This group, myself included, have administered the newspaper for many years and we feel the time has come to retire and seek a new committed team to either take on the existing operation or to form a completely new local Talking Newspaper". Mr Hurst added that the existing newspaper currently has 40 blind and partially sighted clients who would normally receive fortnightly local news broadcasts by arrangement with the Free Press. "With the continued uncertainty of this dreadful pandemic it has given us the opportunity to assess the situation and we feel now is the time to seek out a group of 6 or more persons with fresh ideas and fund-raising initiatives to take over the helm if the newspaper is to survive. It currently costs approximately £3,000 per year to run the charity, which includes studio hire and equipment purchases, and any new group would need to bear this in mind before considering taking on the challenge" he added. "The bottom line is, however, that unless a new team of trustees is found before the end of this year, we shall regrettably look to close the newspaper in 2021"

Mr Hurst concluded "Whilst the time has come for me to also stand down from a commitment I have enjoyed I would, of course, be more than happy to give advice on finance, equipment etc to any persons who feel they would like to consider taking on this challenging but worthwhile cause whether it be by way of taking over the existing charity or by starting a completely new Talking Newspaper in the area." **Roger Hurst can be contacted on 01984 640060**

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The surgery has changed its opening times to enable staff to plan for the day ahead. They are telephoning all patients ahead of any face-to-face appointments to avoid non-essential contact.

West Somerset Advice Bureau Advice line: **03444 88 9623**

Christians Against Poverty - Free debt help. Freephone: 0800 3280006 www.capuk.org

Church Clergy contact details are on **page 4** of this magazine.

Mindline Somerset Emotional support helpline 01823 276892

Quantock Foodbank 07483 815122 email: quantockfoodbank@gmail.com

Williton Police: In an emergency call 999. Otherwise call 101.

Williton Parish Council telephone the Clerk (Michelle Francis) or her assistant (Jo Holmes) on 01984 633979 or email clerk@willitonpc.org.uk

Williton Coronavirus Community Help Group - ring 01984 573673 or email willitonhelp@yahoo.com

Williton Registration Office - 01823 282251 Pre-booked appointments only

Village Agent - Izzy Silvester email izzy@somersetccc.org.uk or tel: 07931 018045. Leave a message with your contact details.

WASPS - **WILLITON AND SURROUNDING AREA PARKINSON'S SUPPORT**
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WILLITON LIBRARY



We don't have any activities sadly, but we are now open and the public can browse again (**No Browsing till Dec 3rd**) as well as make and collect reservations.

Our Opening Hours are: Monday: 10am - 1pm & 2pm - 5pm.

Tuesday Closed (as usual)

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 10am- 5pm. Saturday 10am -1pm.

Social distancing measures and a maximum of 6 people at any one time is in place. It is recommended if possible that you book the use of a computer, as only two are available due to space - this can be done in person at the Library, by calling us on 0300 123 2224, or email willib@somerset.gov.uk Books and other materials can also be reserved online at <https://www.librarieswest.org.uk>

To use the order and collect service, please use the online form here: https://secure.somerset.gov.uk/forms/Portal_Show_Form.asp?fm_formalias=SLRRS on www.somersetlibraries.co.uk Williton Library appears in the drop-down menu. If you cannot access an online form or you require a paper form, they will also be available from the library during the opening times. Face coverings are required for those using a pre-booked computer (exemptions apply - please check with library staff). Visit the Somerset Libraries website for more information. <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/libraries-are-back/> With all the changes please check:-

Somerset Libraries Williton page is kept up to date see link above.

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Williton Hospital League of Friends

Here is a lovely stocking filler for Christmas.

Shirley Dee has produced a second little book of Wit and Wisdom.

"More things my Mother used to say..."

This little book is to raise funds for the hospital and is only **£2.50p a copy**.

These can be obtained by calling Barbara Heywood on: - **01984 634725** and you will be helping support our local hospital.



LIFE'S LITTLE PLEASURES

Knowing your family is safe and well even if you can't see them. *Shirley Dee*



Williton Window

Spare copies of this free magazine are available at Williton Post Office.
Subject to demand.



View this magazine online at www.willitonwindow.org.uk



WILLITON WEATHER



NOVEMBER

So the expected **FROSTS** were seen on the mornings of the 4th and 5th, yet the first half of November we had days warmer than the average and very high pressure of 30.6 inches on the 19th (More next time).

OCTOBER

The maximum temperature on the 20th was 22C.

The minimum temperature on the 24th /25th was +5C.

The maximum pressure was 33.6 inches on the 19th.

The minimum pressure was 29.6 inches on the 1st and 16th

Rainfall in Williton was 140mm. Oh and the gales, the worst on 29th winds of 50/60mph.

Nature Notes

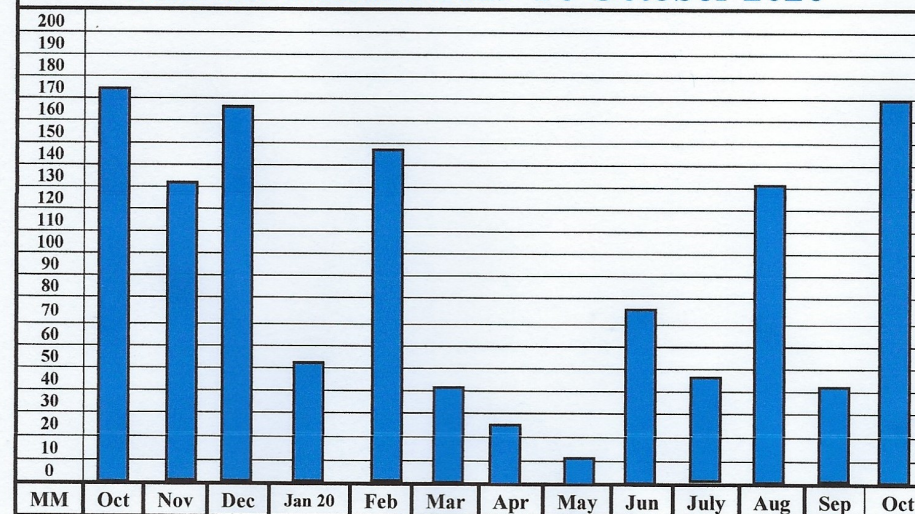
Please check your bonfire wood for hedgehogs better to recycle it as they have been seen looking for hibernating places.

Astronomical Data

You can see Jupiter and Mars in the moon light.

Keep safe, Pj

Rainfall October 2019 To October 2020



View this magazine online at www.willitonwindow.org.uk



So long, farewell!

When my husband Ben and I came to Somerset, following his retirement from full time Ministry and my retirement from teaching, neither of us dreamt what God had in store for us! Who could have imagined that Ben would be asked to be Area Dean (the 'go-to' Priest for the Church of England churches in the Quantocks) and I would be encouraged to take up the position of Associate Vicar for Watchet and Williton.

And what a roller-coaster of a journey it's been. Getting to know so many people, celebrating happy family occasions, having the opportunity to walk alongside those experiencing the loss of a loved one, leading worship in its wonderful variety and gradually becoming embedded into Village life. These are but a few of the experiences that Ministry brings.

Now here we are, five years later and ready to retire again, that I thought I would share with you some treasured memories. Amongst so many would be the willingness of people to get involved in spreading Christ's love. My mantra has always been that St Peter's should be a church without walls. Some might think that this is happening physically thanks to Dry Rot! However, I see St Peter's as a collection of people for whom the walls of the church are open doors into the community. How do I know this is happening? Just look at how Williton responds to the Foodbank which has its roots in St Peter's. Our church is a place where there's no room for prejudice – all are welcome whatever their circumstances or background. We know this because of all the comments left in our Visitors' Book, the letters we receive and the joy that is CAMEO (Come And Meet Every One). Then there are those who come regularly to worship who are active in local activities; prayers on a Sunday impact the rest of the week! Never more so than with our Toddler Group. Set up just three years ago, our team of volunteers ensures children and parents have time to play and build up meaningful relationships which mean so much to them and to us. We need a bigger Meeting Room!

Having a committed Churches Together in Watchet and Williton is a source of strength. I have valued the way we work together to encourage and develop each other's ministries; Williton Window has developed through churches working together and I wish to take this opportunity of thanking Jenny and Derek for steering it forward.

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

The picture was taken during a Pilgrimage Ben and I led to the Holy Land as part of our link with the other churches (you can just see a Williton resident in the background.) It's also been a great source of joy to connect with the Parish Council. There are some great Welly Wangers out there thanks to the superb Fete and as for Williton Christmas, now there's a sight to behold!

Part of my role has been joining in with school Assemblies (now called Collective Worship). Having been a Primary School teacher, I love this interaction with the children and young people. You have two wonderful schools here in Williton. Both have extremely dedicated staff members, a sound Christian ethos and a genuine loving care for those in their charge.

Oh, there's so much more and I haven't even mentioned the 'C' word. Yes, the past year has been a real challenge for all of us as we have had to get used to new ways of interacting with each other. Worship and Collective Worship have gone online and most of those activities mentioned above have had to go on hold. Apart, of course, for the Foodbank which has seen a huge increase in demand. Again, your generosity has paid dividends. My arms have grown longer from collecting donated food from the Co-op and the money keeps coming in. Our Little Saints Group has started up again – wet welly walks being the order of the day.

Praying and working with Clive, our Readers, Bev, Donna and Julie, together with our Church Wardens and PCC members, has proved to be a true team effort, particularly in these strange times, and one that I feel very privileged to have experienced. That and the encouragement I have received from so many people have gladdened my heart.

What do I hope and pray for as I bid you farewell? That your community continues to flourish and that the church finds more ways of developing God's mission amongst you as you all move forward into an uncertain future. I say uncertain, but I firmly believe that with Christ as your guide there are wonderful opportunities ahead for growth in relationships and possibilities for 'Finding out what God is doing and joining in'!

Kathryn Flenley

Editors Note



We wish Kathryn and husband Ben all the very best for their future and say a grateful thanks to them both for all they have contributed to Williton, Watchet and surrounding areas. May God's love always watch over you both.

D.R.S.

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**FROM OUR VILLAGE AGENT,
IZZY SILVESTER**

December 2020 Village Agent News:



Rehome a Phone!

Do you have an unused smartphone lying around?

By donating an unused phone to us, YOU can help reduce loneliness and isolation for a person in Somerset. We will be facing a very different Christmas this year with a reduction in the usual festive activities, and the possibility of family gathering restrictions, so we are focusing on re-homing as many of these phones into the community as possible to keep families and friends in touch with each other over the festive period.

We had a brilliant response to our last 'Rehome-a-phone' campaign - so many people in need in Somerset have benefitted from a donated device.

One person who received a handset said "You have made my day. This will help me feel not so lonely and I will even be able to do my food shopping online now as I'm house bound and can't get out".

We will :

refurbish the phone.

remove any personal data.

provide the new owner with a SIM card.

support them to use the phone with video tutorials and install apps that will help them to keep in touch with their loved ones.



To donate, please contact our Village Agent Ellie Bishop on email: ellieb@somersetccc.org.uk or call her on **07985 748910**

You can find out more about the impact of our last rehome a phone campaign here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT4wffIRZHU>

Talking Cafes Online

We are still unable to bring Talking Cafes back to physical venues and we miss all our clients so much! However we are still live streaming every day at 11am on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/talkingcafesomerset/> and have recently celebrated our 100th broadcast!


If you are not on Facebook you can now watch previous Talking Cafes on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5goIPHD91Ie4VDI5NMJdrO>


Recent Talking Cafes covered Art Therapy, Coping with Grief and changes to our Somerset Waste recycling schemes!


You can comment on the YouTube videos if you have any questions and someone will get in touch with an answer. We hope you enjoy them, let us know what you think!


Contact me Izzy Silvester on 07931 014045 izzy@somersetccc.org.uk for confidential advice and support.


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POST OFFICE **News from Williton Post Office**



Overseas Last Posting Dates for Christmas

- 9th December.** Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Central and South America, Middle East, Far East.
- 10th December.** Cyprus, Malta.
- 11th December.** Australia, Greece, Eastern Europe (except Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia) New Zealand, Turkey.
- 12th December.** Western Europe, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Poland, Sweden, U.S.A..
- 16th December.** Austria, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Slovakia, Norway, Portugal, Iceland, Netherlands.
- 18th December.** France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland.

Inland Last Posting Dates for Christmas

- 18th December.** 2nd Class.
- 21st December.** 1st Class.
- 22nd December.** Parcelforce Worldwide 48.
- 23rd December.** Special Delivery, Parcelforce Worldwide Express 24, 9,10,AM.



Our latest news is our **Automatic Door!** No longer is it necessary for you to touch the door to either enter or leave the Post Office. All you need to do is place your hand near the sensor and the door will open and close automatically! We also have a freestanding hand sanitizer!

A large number of scarves have recently arrived, just in time for the cold weather! We also have a variety of gifts and stocking fillers. Do come in and browse.

Sadly, due to the current Covid situation we will obviously not be having our customary celebration with sherry and mince pies. However, we do want to express our most grateful thanks to you our valued customers for your patronage during the past 12 months, especially during this worldwide crisis. As Key Workers it has been our privilege to stay open and be here for you all.

All of us at the Post Office send Season's Greetings and look forward to continuing our service to you in 2021!

Brian and Caroline Tyner



**CORONAVIRUS UPDATE
SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL**

All our help and information is now available in a single place on the Somerset County Council website:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-latest-advice/>

This page is refreshed through the day so please check in regularly to keep across developments and news.

View this magazine online at www.willitonwindow.org.uk



INN FOCUS

One particular aspect of life that I particularly miss in these difficult times is a visit to the local pub. Whether it be for an occasional meal, Sunday roast, quiz night, skittles or just putting the world to rights over a couple of drinks with friends, or whoever is present at the time. For centuries pubs have been a fundamental part of social life. Back street boozers, gastro pubs, village locals have all characterised our country and are world renown. Each has an individual character and appeal. In Williton we are fortunate to still have three excellent pubs, each with their own individuality, between them catering for all tastes. But across the country pubs have been closing at an alarming rate for the last thirty years, with over 13000 closures since the year 2000 – a quarter of all pubs at that time. The BBPA (British Beer and Pub Association) estimated pub closures at 37 per week between 2016 and 2017.

Contributory factors in this decline have been the ban on smoking since 2007, the recession of 2008 and changes in drinking habits, especially in the younger generation. But high taxation is a major factor. Pubs have to pay VAT on all the food and drink they sell whereas other outlets including supermarkets don't, giving them an unfair advantage. In addition the duty on beer according to its strength puts on average another 52P on each pint. The other big factor and possibly the biggest have been the exorbitant rents charged by the big pub chain companies (Pubcos) on their tenants. Also the "Beer Tie" with these companies forces tenants to buy particular beers at a much higher price with penalties if they purchase elsewhere. This has led to pubs being sold for housing or supermarkets as they become unviable for the tenant, the pubco apparently more interested in selling to developers than in the pub trade or the community affected by the closure. Losing pubs is particularly felt in rural areas. Over the last decades villages have lost their local industries, schools, shops, libraries and even churches, leaving the pub as the only social outlet. Many villages now have no pub or bus service so become isolated dormitories. Property values can also be adversely affected. Potential buyers like to know that there is a pub nearby – whether they use it or not.

The Covid pandemic now threatens to become an even bigger cause of pub demise. Many pubcos have continued to charge rent while the pubs were shut during lockdown and even after reopening in July pubs suffered from vastly reduced customer numbers in order to comply with social distancing and associated regulations. Some, including a few in villages close to us here have already closed with their future uncertain. The advent of the second lockdown brings more anxiety. Yet throughout the land pubs have met this challenge head on and adapted to benefit their local communities during this emergency. Take-away meals and even free delivery was a godsend to some of us endangered species (vulnerable). All manner of support has been reported, acting as food banks, shops and providing help and support for the 'at risk' in their communities.

Continued on next page

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Whilst the future remains uncertain, there was a glimmer of hope until paused by Covid. For the first time in many years the number of pubs and bars in the UK actually increased in 2019 by 315, mainly small bars or 'micropubs'. Being small in size means lower rents and no 'beer tie' means beer can be bought from any brewer at a competitive price. Generally consisting of one room the emphasis is on conversation, with no electronic music or similar distractions. There has been a steady increase in micropub numbers since their conception in 2005. In recent times more and more pubs have become independent and pubco owned pubs have halved in number since 2003. Pubs have adapted themselves to suit local needs, some adding the role of village shop to their portfolio. Others host part time Post Office facilities or have converted outbuildings into cafes or tearooms. These and other socially motivated innovations have confirmed their status as community 'hubs'.

Organisations such as the Campaign for Pubs, the British Beer and Pub Association and CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) all help in supporting pubs. They have many initiatives backed by large membership, lobbying MPs with petitions such as opposing unfair tax rises and the 'beer tie'. One such issue about to be debated in parliament is changes to the Small Brewers Relief (tax) which could be disastrous for independent brewers at an already difficult time for small enterprises. The knock on effect would also increase prices to pubs and their customers. To follow progress on this and other licenced trade issues or developments see the web sites for the above organisations.

So, what can we look forward to? At the time of writing we cannot be certain of current restrictions being lifted after four weeks. Pubs depend on the Christmas period as a major part of their annual income. So much depends on how events unfurl in the coming weeks. The community needs pubs and pubs need the community. Research from the University of Oxford suggests moderate alcohol consumption may improve wellbeing, due to the social interaction involved in having a drink with friends at the pub. I could have told them that! The effects of lockdown on mental health are becoming more apparent so social outlets are actually more of an essential than not.

Hopefully as and if the situation improves I hope to report on how our much loved social venues progress out of this predicament. Other related topics can include local pub origins and history as well as news on individual pubs (sports, games events etc.). Then there is also the local cider industry, breweries and distilleries – all part of the Inn scene. Meanwhile let us raise a glass at home to those who have just succeeded in developing a potential vaccine against Covid. A very big thank you and Cheers! Stay safe everyone. *Mick White CAMRA Member*



BAPTIST CHURCH (WATCHET)

The Baptist Church normally meets at Knights Templar School every Sunday. The Baptist Church is currently meeting online at [youtube.com/watchetbaptist](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baptistchurch) on Sunday at 6pm. For more information visit the **website**: www.watchetbaptist.org.uk or email mike@watchetbaptist.org.uk or telephone **01984 633755**.

METHODIST CHURCH

Worshipping at Danesborough View Common Room TA4 4SH

All our church services are cancelled until further notice in line with all other denominations. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all, keep safe and we look forward to worshipping together in the future.

Services Via Zoom

Members of the Methodist Churches in West Somerset, including Williton Methodist Church regularly meet for Sunday worship. If you would like to join any of our zoom events you can get in touch with the circuit administrator of the local Methodist Church, simply email wsmc2425@gmail.com and someone will be in touch. It would be helpful if you could provide your name and a telephone number.

THE SALVATION ARMY WATCHET CORPS

All enquiries to the Corps leader, Miss Sam Searle on **07979 575 453**.

All are welcome.

(Part of Churches Together in Williton and Watchet)

Salvation Army Hall, 1 Brendon Road, Watchet. 01984 633133

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass is normally celebrated at the Methodist Church, Watchet. In these troubled times, please contact Deacon Vincent Woods on **01984 634681** for information.

THE FORGET ME NOT CAFE

For more information contact Margaret on **07973638030** or

Georgie Lewis on **01984 631738**

watchetdementia@gmail.com



Margaret Tatham

Good Neighbours Club

To all our members., I am mindful of the current situation regarding the Corona Virus pandemic. If you have any news of our members you would like to share please give me a call on **01984 632616**.

We hope to welcome you all back as soon as this virus is under control.

Stay safe until we meet again.

All best wishes from the committee and chairwoman.

Jenny Berry

View this magazine online at www.willitonwindow.org.uk



Williton Parish Council

To contact the Parish Council telephone **01984 633979**

Talk to Michelle or email : clerk@willitonpc.org.uk

or admin@willitonpc.org.uk

Christmas Festival



At the time of writing this, we are planning for a Christmas Parade & Carol Singing on Saturday 12 December, subject to restrictions in force at the time.

If all goes to plan, Father Christmas' sleigh will be in for repair so he has borrowed a carriage which will be drawn by two horses as the reindeers are in isolation to keep them safe for the big night.

He'll start off from St Peters Church at 4pm and end up at the Pavilion around 7pm. Father Christmas is still planning his route to ensure he sees as many people as possible so we'll put it up in the Parish Office window when it's been finalised.

When he arrives at the Pavilion there will be open air Carol singing led by Churches Together. This is a free event, but to help ensure everyone's safety we will be checking your temperature with a hand-held non-contact Infrared Thermometer at the three entrances (Long Street, Robert Street and Catwell); please be patient if there are queues this is for your safety. If your temperature registers outside the normal zone, please respect the stewards request that you not attend the event.

Somerset Farmhouse will be in attendance selling their famous Hog Roast baps.



Bellamy's Corner

Please may we ask that bread and other food stuff is not scattered at Bellamy's Corner as it attracts rodents.

New Councillors

We are incredibly pleased to welcome Cllr Guy Denton, Cllr Andrea Johnson and Cllr Jean Stanford onto the Parish Council. For the first time in many years, we are thrilled to have a full complement of Councillors. Please do contact the Parish Office or any Parish Councillor with any concerns or suggestions that you may have.

Census 2021

Households across Williton will be asked to take part in Census 2021.

This is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Census day will be on March 21, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March. Please do complete yours when it arrives.

Cllr Dawn-Lesley Howes

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FORUM 21 HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS AND HEATING

As winter approaches, we can advise on ways to reduce your heating costs.

The surviving winter grants will be available again for people over 50 on low incomes who find it hard to pay winter bills. We can also help with the Warm Home Discount from your energy supplier, for eligible people, and low cost logs from our community woodland. If you are thinking of switching, we can let you know which companies are not in the warm home discount scheme.

A number of home improvement grants are now available offering a variety of measures to make houses more energy efficient, and we can let you know how they work and how to apply for them. The Eco and Eco flexible grant schemes offer various types of insulation and improvements to heating systems for people on low incomes. Some things are free and others may need a contribution from another source of money, and they must be installed by an accredited installer in order to get the funding. Home owners get more help but tenants can also apply. The new Government Warm Homes grants, up to £5000 or £10000, have introduced funding for measures that was not previously available, for example old homes that could not use the loft and cavity wall grants, and for people who want to install renewable heating systems such as heat pumps. Secondary measures such as glazing and doors may also be included. However, care must be taken to ensure that the company used is part of the scheme and that the work done will not lead to higher bills because it was not suitable for that property. These grants are not means tested. For information contact Hester **01643 821768** or E-mail hestertavens@yahoo.co.uk



West Somerset Mineral Line Association

December Walk Wednesday 9th December 9.45am

This Walk has been Cancelled due to Covid 19

For further information www.wsmr.org.uk

WELCOME TO WILLITON - WELCOME PACK



Have you recently moved to Williton or do you know someone who has? If so, you may like a free Welcome Pack, which gives a map of Williton, details of services, clubs and organisations, and other useful information. Please ring Janet Cook on 639359, or email: willitonwindow@yahoo.co.uk or go to our website: www.willitonwindow.org.uk/welcome-pack

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News from The Quantock Foodbank



The Quantock Foodbank, in partnership with the Churches Together in Watchet and Williton, have given Advent Calendars to Knight's Templar and St Peter's First Schools and the nurseries attached to the schools.

Pictured here are the 26 boxes of Advent Calendars from the Real Chocolate Company. The Foodbank was able to buy the calendars thanks to the generous donations from local churches. Members of each church were asked to contribute towards the calendars instead of providing their usual harvest donations.



When they are distributed to the children ready for December 1st, each child will also receive a nativity booklet to go with the calendar. Marlene Mason who helps run the foodbank said:

"Donations from our churches have been so generous, we just can't believe the kindness of local people, we are so grateful. It has meant we've been able to help lots of families. With Christmas coming many families won't be able to buy the usual treats they may have in the past. So, in order to bring a little joy and light into the children's lives we have purchased the Advent Calendars.

"It also means we are helping others too. The proceeds from the Advent Calendars go to fund clinics in Africa. The calendars will all go out in time for the start of Advent."

During half term the Quantock Foodbank delivered 164 parcels of food and supplies to families across their area. They continue to support children and families in need in the area thanks to the help and support of local people.



Williton and Surrounds Parkinson's Support

We would like to wish everyone a Safe, Happy and Healthy Christmas and all the very best in the year to come. Let's hope that the new year finds us looking forward to resuming our normal activities.

Reflecting on the past year it has been a year of uncertainty, we could not plan anything. There was no degree of confidence that your plans could go ahead. Vacations were cancelled and we had to make the best of it. We formed a whole new vocabulary, and the word bubble did not refer to soap bubbles! Masked people roamed the streets and no one looked suspiciously at them. It was the people without masks that were steered away from. A single cough or reaching for a tissue could cause people to give you a wide berth. All joking aside, by following the guidelines we have been lucky so far, let's hope that we can stay that way.

All the WASPS have tried to keep in touch either by phone or email and it is good to hear from them. We have proven that our support system works. We are united by a common bond, fighting the effects of Parkinson's both physically and mentally. We might want to take a holiday but Parkinson's never does so a support group or access to support is vital. We are there for all people whose life is directly affected by Parkinson's. We will resume our meetings as soon as we can safely do so. If you have any questions or concerns you can contact me. My number is **01984 631472**.

Once again, have a lovely time over the holidays and all the best in 2021 We look forward to the day that we can resume our meetings.



Take care and all the best from your WASPS Committee
Linda Bishop, Ginny Yandle, Jane Cooper, Jean Hodge,
and David & Rosemary Freemantle.



Williton Coronavirus Community Help Group

If you are still isolated and need help with grocery shopping, prescriptions, dog walking, errands or just need a friendly chat, we can put you in touch with someone who can help you.

Helpline Number

01984 573673

willitonhelp@yahoo.com

www.facebook.com/willitonhelp

If you need help, call or message us now

Phone lines are operational every day from 8:00 am until 10:00 pm. You can leave a message at other times and we will get back to you.

There's a list of traders and their opening times on our website as the situation changes frequently. **www.willitonhelp.co.uk**

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Our Somerset Stories comes to St. Peter's School.

Over the course of this term students in year 4 at St. Peter's First School have been working with writer Alice Maddicott and artist Nina Gronw Lewis as part of the Our Somerset Stories project, run by Halsway Manor National Centre for Folk Arts and funded by the Hinkley Community Fund. The project is themed around community past, present and future and the children have creatively explored local folktales, history, their lives today and imaginary future Williton, through stories, poetry, non-fiction, art and film! They also went on a trip to Great Wood in the Quantocks, exploring and expanding their creative ideas. The project will lead to an exciting exhibition at the school and a publication of the children's writing to be distributed locally.

The project was originally scheduled for the summer term, having been successfully run in Stogursey and Spaxton in the preceding terms, but was postponed due to Covid. It was also intended to broaden out into the wider community more than it has been able, with a tea party at the school for elderly residents to share local stories and adult art and writing workshops, as well as the exhibition being open to the village. Sadly, much of that has had to be adapted, but we still hope to involve adults. Once lockdown is over, we would like to run adult workshops and we are open to ideas of how you can be involved in a safe way in these strange times. Any budding writers or artists or those with interesting local stories do feel free to **e-mail:-**

creative@halswaymanor.org.uk with any ideas, ways to link up, especially with elderly members of the community, or just let us know if you'd like to be involved! We are keen to listen and include, and to link up the generations across the village.

Also watch out for the next edition of Williton Window, where we hope to update you with continuing ways to get involved with the project and keep its creative community legacy going.

Alice Maddicott



Subject to the lifting of lockdown restrictions on December 2, the Regal plans to reopen with a matinee screening of *A Christmas Carol* (Cert PG), at **2.30pm on Saturday December 5**, hot on the heels of its UK cinema release.

The show will be open to the public and marks the beginning of a programme of Christmas screenings to run through the following weeks.

Tickets will go on sale nearer the screening date costing £7.50 (£5.50 - Regal Film Society members, Friends of the Regal, full-time students and unemployed) and booking details will be available from the Regal Theatre website www.regaltheatre.co.uk and published in the local press.

Everyone is also asked to use the hand sanitiser provided and wear a face mask on entering the theatre.

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WORDSEARCH FOR DECEMBER

by Phyllis Chidgey



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO YOU ALL

S	E	T	A	L	O	C	O	H	C
D	A	Y	A	D	I	L	O	H	H
R	A	E	Y	W	E	N	R	O	E
A	Y	K	T	I	D	I	N	G	S
C	P	R	A	T	S	N	P	M	T
A	P	U	S	T	U	N	I	A	N
R	A	T	M	F	U	N	E	N	U
O	H	A	D	U	C	K	S	A	T
L	S	S	E	E	R	T	O	Y	S
S	E	N	I	R	E	G	N	A	T

FUN	DUCKS	HOGMANAY	CHRISTMAS
RUM	CARDS	CHESTNUTS	DAY
STAR	CAROLS	CHOCOLATES	HAPPY
TOYS	TURKEY	TANGERINES	NEW
NUTS	HOLIDAY	MINCE	YEAR
TREES	TIDINGS	PIES	



WILLITON WALKS BOOK



A book of 9 circular walks around Williton by Jenny Gibson is on sale at Williton Post Office for £2.50. All proceeds from this edition go to the Quantock Foodbank. We are very grateful to the Post Office for stocking this book..

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Christmas may not be what we were hoping for but there are others who would think it better than theirs.

Shirley Dee

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Fortnightly: Wednesdays, The Greyhound Inn, Lime Street, Stogursey, 9.30am-12pm Tel: 01278 733 615

Every Thursday: The Sanctuary, Watchet 9.30am-12.30pm, Tel: 01984 248169

First Thursday of the month: Dulverton Library, Dulverton, 10.00am – 12:00pm Tel: 0300 123 2224

Every Friday: @ The Hub, Hopcott Rd, Alcombe, Minehead 9.30am-12pm Tel: 01643 707598

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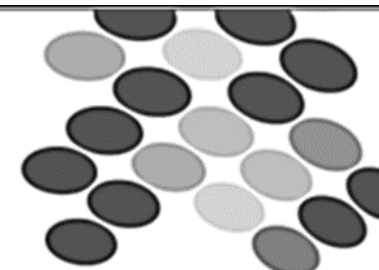
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