



# ISLE OF WEDMORE NEWS

December 2023  
No. 525



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# Editorial

Welcome to the December edition of the Isle of Wedmore News.

You will notice a few subtle changes in this month's edition with the creation of new sections for our 'Regular Features' and 'Health and Wellbeing'.

For the last few years we have been re-printing a series of excellent articles giving hints and tips for your month in the garden penned by the late Adrian Hutchinson and we have been indebted to Mrs Yvonne Hutchinson for her kind permission to re-use these articles. From this issue you will notice that we have a new columnist, Tony Connell, who moved to Wedmore in May 2023, after 23 years living in mid Devon developing a 4.5 acre woodland garden from an empty field! Tony is an ex-lecturer at Cannington College, Bridgwater and worked in amenity and commercial horticulture for almost 60 years in Manchester, Kew, Somerset, Scotland and for the Royal Horticultural Society. Welcome to the team Tony, and I hope you all enjoy his article.

As we approach Christmas in the village, please could you all spare a thought for neighbours who may find themselves alone over the festive season. There are several organisations in the village that can provide help: Wedmore Good Neighbours, Warm in Wedmore, and Men's Shed, to name a few and there is an excellent article in the Health and Wellbeing section of this magazine with links to various organisations. However, please could you all look out for your neighbours as we head into the colder months, small acts of kindness are what make the Isle of Wedmore such an amazing community to live in!

As always, any thoughts and feedback on your monthly magazine is always welcome. Please contact Ian Anstey, [editorwedmorenews@gmail.com](mailto:editorwedmorenews@gmail.com)

*Cheers, Ian.*

## Deadline for January Edition: 1 December 2023

### Contact the Wedmore News

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<b>Photos and Features</b>	Liz Sweeney, Cheddar Road Farm House, Cheddar Rd, Cocklake (01934 244435) Email <a href="mailto:photoswedmorenews@gmail.com">photoswedmorenews@gmail.com</a>
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*The Isle of Wedmore News welcomes all contributions and letters. It should be noted however that the views expressed are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, or represent any particular standpoint on the part of the publication.*

**Wedmore News is digital! Each edition will be published on The Isle of Wedmore Website, [www.theisleofwedmore.net](http://www.theisleofwedmore.net). If you are a contributor who for copyright reasons does not want your entry included, please make this clear when sending it to the editor.**

*The editors also reserve the right to edit or amend any contribution for reasons of space, conformity, legibility or legality.*

## Front Cover

Those of you who remember the last significant snow will recognise our front cover image this month. It is a section of the 'Winter in Wedmore' image created by Sheena Russell for this year's Friends of St Mary's Christmas card, on sale at the Cottage Gallery to raise funds to help maintain and enhance our lovely church.

*Liz Sweeney*  
*photoswedmorenews@gmail.com*

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# Key Events for December

## Wedmore by Lamplight – Wednesday 13 December

The countdown is on! Wedmore by Lamplight is on Wednesday 13 December. The event kicks off with the Crib service at 5.15 pm at St. Mary's Church, Carols around the tree at 5.35 pm and then a carol procession down to The Borough, ready for an evening of festive fun and tasty treats.

As well as the shops opening late, The Borough, Wedmore, will be packed with stalls galore, where you can pick up those last few gifts, warm up with a glass of mulled cider and a tasty treat. We're delighted to once again be welcoming numerous local groups who will be fundraising during the evening.

Father Christmas will be popping by, and we've got a few other surprise guests coming along in addition to festive live music and choirs.

We look forward to seeing everyone for a fun and festive evening.

## Wedmore Living Advent Calendar

Christmas is here and once again this year we will be lighting up the village as a Living Advent Calendar. From the switching on of the Wedmore Christmas lights on 1 December, through to the Vicarage Window on 24 December, a different home will be unveiling a special decorated and lit advent window. The windows will then continue to delight us all each night throughout the Christmas period until Twelfth Night.

You can pop along and visit each window in turn or do the whole trail after Christmas. This year there will be a 'Spot the Nativity Character' trail, with a nativity figure to look out for in each window. Look out for the Star of Bethlehem, sheep, shepherds, the Three Kings, cows, camels, donkeys, the Innkeeper, Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus. When you spot a character, take a photo and post it on Facebook and Instagram using the hashtag #wedmorewindows2023. Let's see if you can collect the set!!

Maps are available from The Cottage Gallery, the Village Store and on our Facebook page. Come and join us each evening at 6.30 pm as a new window is revealed – meet new friends and old friends and enjoy the magic of Christmas! Follow us on Facebook: Wedmore Living Advent Calendar, or follow us on 'X' (Twitter) at @wedmoreliveadv1, or via our new Instagram hashtag: #wedmorewindows2023.



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## **St Mary's Christmas Coffee Shop – Saturday 2 December**

Join us on Saturday 2 December between 10 am and 12.00 noon at St. Mary's Church, Wedmore. There will be a number of stalls to make seasonal purchases and the Coffee Shop will be open throughout, offering some tantalising Yuletide treats.

## **Wedmore Village Hall AGM – Thursday 7 December**

The Annual General Meeting of the Wedmore Village Hall Management Committee will take place on 7 December 2023 at 4.00 pm in the Village Hall.

There is a Village Hall Progress Report in the October edition of the Wedmore News, including the photo of the newly refurbished Snug, along with other improvements and accomplishments to make the Hall an even more attractive environment to users.

The Management Committee are constantly looking for additional members to join the committee and help to give something back to the community and I would urge you to contact me on [chair@wedmorehall.org.uk](mailto:chair@wedmorehall.org.uk) or come along to the AGM if you feel able to help. All representatives of user groups along with any residents of Wedmore parish are more than welcome to attend.

*Simon C Tomes,  
Chair, Wedmore Village Hall Management Committee*

## **Wedmore First School Christmas Fair – Friday 8 December**

Wedmore First School are hosting their Christmas Fair Fundraiser on Friday 8 December. We welcome you to come along between 5 pm and 7 pm to peruse and purchase crafts made by our friends, families, local community, and the children themselves. There will be mulled wine and food on offer from our school kitchen, so do come along and have a festive tippie and bite to eat. There will be a small charge on the door for entry - the PTA raise funds to enrich the environments in which our children learn and play.

## **Christmas Night Production – Friday 15 December**

A production from our local Ukrainian guests in St Mary's Wedmore in the evening of 15 December. Following on from the powerful 'Don't Close Your Eyes' that marked the anniversary of the war in Ukraine on 24 February, 'Christmas Night' will share some of the Ukrainian Christmas traditions, spread some Christmas joy and celebrate the common Christmas carols both our countries share. Look out for details on posters and on social media. All funds raised will go to winter clothing for the menfolk of our local refugees on the frontline.

## **Wedmore Carollers – Tuesday 19 December**

In addition to the annual church Carol Services, details of which can be found later in this magazine, the Wedmore Carollers will once again be on tour around the village raising money for our local hospices. This year they will be joined by members of St Mary's Church Choir. They will be appearing at several venues around the village on Tuesday 19 December to help you capture the spirit of Christmas. Keep an eye out on Facebook for details. To donate just go to [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/WedmoreCarollers](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/WedmoreCarollers). For more information call John Williams on 712765.

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# News

## Parish Council Update

Season's greetings you lovely lot! I hope you're all well?

We're here again with the anticipation of all things festive resting heavily on all our hearts and minds I'm sure. If you need someone to talk to, there are people here for you! I will do my best to update the website (see below) with numbers for you to access help on a whole host of subjects. If you can't find what you're looking for, please let me know, I will try to find it for you.

If you'd like a friendly face to talk to, the 'Warm in Wedmore' initiative opens its door again from the 6 December at the Masonic Hall between 10am and 2pm. There's always a really lovely atmosphere there!

OK, so Parish Council update, that's what you're here for right? Well, firstly - and you'll never believe it - when I say I've got another new Councillor! A huge Wedmore welcome to Phillip Weale, (I knew my constant badgering would eventually pay off!). We're up to 12 now, but Blackford would benefit from a couple more representatives, so don't worry if you live there and thought you had missed the boat, you haven't... Get your application in quickly though, I don't want you to miss out.

Secondly, the budget will be formally agreed this month, ready to submit to Somerset Council in January. The members have ensured that we continue to provide you with the desired service, whilst balancing the environmental and financial pressures right now.

Thirdly, Jacky and I attended the second LCN (Local Community Network) meeting at the end of October. There was lots of talk about priorities, and this is where I need your help. Somerset Council are expecting us to work collaboratively within our LCN to deliver schemes that benefit our community directly. In order to do this, we need to identify a common concern across the towns, villages and hamlets, and work out how we can successfully design, implement and sustain a resolution to whatever this concern is. Whether its Transport, Planning, Environmental Issues etc, over the coming weeks I will be gathering information to share with you all about how this is supposed to work and what we can do on an individual and wider level to get the best results. I'd really appreciate if you would take some time to engage with me about it, however you feel most comfortable, via letter, email, telephone, or the website. We are actually really lucky to have a strong and supportive group of neighbours that form our LCN, we have the chance to effect real change to our communities, we just need to hear your voices!

Also, a quick reminder, the minutes for all of the Parish Council meetings, as well as various committee meetings, are all available on the website [www.wedmore-pc.gov.uk](http://www.wedmore-pc.gov.uk)

There's definitely more to tell you about but, unfortunately, I've already dramatically upped the word count for the publication this time round (Sorry Ian). However, I will just squeeze in, on behalf of all of the members of the Parish Council and myself, let me wish you a very Merry Christmas! I'll see you in the New Year.

*Lindsey Baker,  
Clerk, Wedmore Parish Council, [clerk@wedmore-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wedmore-pc.gov.uk)*



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(221)

## Wedmore Street Fair

The Street Fair needs a dedicated team to keep this fantastic tradition alive and running in our village, or it will not be able to continue and the last couple of years have shown how great the day can be.

The organisation had been taken on by some great individuals and the Harvest Home committee but, due to family and other commitments, they are not able to continue to organise the event, but will offer support where they can.

*If anyone is up for the challenge, please contact Andy Reeson on 01934710226.*

## Wedmore Christmas Cards

A reminder that the ever-popular Wedmore Christmas Cards are still on sale now at The Cottage Gallery.

## Future of the Theale Show

Theale show get together Monday 4 December in Theale village hall at 7.00pm, followed by short AGM.

Please join us for a glass of wine and some nibbles to help us decide the future of Theale show and hopefully see some memorabilia from past shows! We would particularly welcome your ideas and suggestions on how to improve the show and keep it relevant to the 21st century! Sadly, without more local support, the show might have to come to an end and in the 80th year of the show we're sure everyone would agree that would be a great loss to the community! So, if you would like to see the show survive for the future, please come along!

## Wedmore Harvest Home Christmas Tree Collections

Have a real Christmas tree?

Wedmore Harvest Home will, once again, be offering a Christmas Tree collection and recycling service. To find out how to book your collection and make a donation to help raise funds for this village event please email: [wedmoreharvesthome@outlook.com](mailto:wedmoreharvesthome@outlook.com)

Book now to reserve a slot and let us take away the hassle of removing your tree at the end of the festive season! Collections are from Wedmore (BS28 4\*\* postcodes) plus Mark/Blackford on Sunday 7 January. For a donation, we will collect your tree from your front door and recycle it.

No more needles in your car! Book your slot today!

Many thanks to Rousell Plant Hire, Stanley C Baker & Sons and DW Tucker for their help and support.



## The Ethel Pople Trust

The late Ethel Pople, formerly of The Old Smithy, Cocklake, Wedmore, who died in 1978, left a trust under her Will for the assistance of the elderly and/or infirm of Cocklake, Clewer and Wedmore to be called 'The Ethel Pople Trust' in honour of 'Our Blessed Lady of Wedmore'. Every year invitations are invited by the Trustees from those who consider they may qualify with a view to distribution of trust income.

The Trustees of the charity meet each year with a view to deciding how the distributions can be applied for the greater benefit of those entitled each year.

The Trustees of the Ethel Pople Trust Deceased Charity therefore invite written applications from those who qualify under the terms of these trusts. Letters should state briefly the basis on which the applicants qualify, i.e. whether by a reason of age or infirmity and with any other relevant information as to the applicants' circumstances that they feel able to give. All applications will be treated in confidence.

Please note that if you have applied successfully before and wish to apply again this year then the Trustees would like you to provide written confirmation that your circumstances have not changed.

The Trustees of the Charity will consider applications in or around January 2024 with a view to distribution of trust income in or around February 2024.

Applications should be addressed to the Ethel Pople Charity Trustees, John Hodge Solicitors, Cheddar Road, Wedmore BS28 4EH for the attention of Sara Anthony.

## Wedmore Real Ale Festival Donations

Wedmore Real Ale Festival (WRAF) celebrated another successful year of ale drinking and fundraising, with the organisers pouring out £18,000 in donations to local worthy causes. Some 19 organisations were handed cheques at the annual Presentation Evening in the function room of The Post & Wicket on 21 October 2023. The cheques were presented to a room full of successful beneficiaries, Ale Festival Committee members and volunteers, who gathered to celebrate a very successful 22nd festival, which took place in the village over the weekend of 15-17 September.

This year's £18,000 of donations brings the overall total amount of money they have raised for local worthy causes over the festival's 22-year history to a whopping £264,820.

'As with all previous years, we're delighted that this year's festival was a great success. We're very proud to be able to give away £18,000 this year, considering the significant increase in costs associated with putting on the festival', said James Turbitt, WRAF's Chairperson.

James added: 'It's never easy deciding on where and how much to donate with so many worthy causes in need of funds, but we try to spread what we have to give across as many beneficiaries as we can. It is always a highlight for the committee to be giving out the cheques and it makes all the hard work in putting on and running the festival more than worthwhile. As always, none of this would not be possible without the huge commitment from our committee, the team of volunteers, our sponsors and everyone else who supports the festival in one way or another. So, they should also take the credit for what we have all achieved again this year'.





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The complete list of 2023 beneficiaries is:

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IOW Football Club.....	£500.00
Musgrove Park Hospital .....	£500.00
Wedmore In Bloom .....	£500.00
Wedmore Tuesday Club.....	£500.00
Raffle Donation to Brownies.....	£500.00
Women’s Football.....	£700.00
Wedmore Playing Fields Management Committee ....	£750.00
Wedmore Scout Group .....	£750.00
Blackford Village Hall .....	£1,000.00
Wedmore Cricket Club .....	£1,000.00
Wedmore Tennis Club .....	£1,000.00
Weston Hospicecare.....	£1,000.00
Weston Super Mare Samaritans .....	£1,000.00
Children’s Hospice Southwest.....	£1,500.00
Somewhere House .....	£1,500.00
Wedmore Men’s Shed .....	£1,500.00
Wedmore Village Farm .....	£1,500.00
Somerset Prostate Support Association.....	£2,000.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>£18,000.00</b>



The £500 raffle donation to Wedmore Guides was a share of the takings from the festival raffle, which they ran throughout the weekend, and which generated £1,862.00 worth of our takings.

*The dates for next year’s festival are 13 – 15 September 2024.*

*Photos courtesy of Dae Sasitorn*



## Sing2Breathe

Starting new! Sing2breathe is a sociable group activity for those suffering with breathlessness. (It's a Singing for Lung health group.) The sessions focus on teaching techniques for breathing control and improved posture through singing. You do not need to be a great singer – the aim is to help you breathe better, not sing better.

The sessions are run by Kate Lynch, who has been a community singing leader in the area for the past 17 years and recently completed her Singing for Lung Health training. The group meets at Cheddar Catholic Community Hall 1.45 pm - 3.00 pm on Wednesdays and is supported by Wedmore and Axbridge Community Health Fund.

*Interested in finding out more? Please email Kate – [vocalkate@gmail.com](mailto:vocalkate@gmail.com) 07595 745884*

## Simply Sing at St Mary's Wedmore

Thank you to everyone who came in October to support the Simply Sing event by Music in Mind and Music Matters, sponsored by the Wedmore and Axbridge Community Health Fund. A great afternoon of singing was enjoyed by everyone and thank you to Maureen Campbell and Stella Moore for organising the event and to both music group choirs and to St Mary's Church for the use of their premises.

Refreshments were enjoyed after the event, supplied by the Health Fund, and a total of £345 was donated to the Wedmore and Axbridge Community Health Fund who sponsor both singing groups. Also supported by the Fund are the Art Class run by Sally McLean, and the Clay class run by Tina Salvidge, who both had displays of the work their groups do to help those in need of mental or physical help.

*If you would like more information about what the Health Fund does in the Axbridge/Wedmore Medical Practice area then please contact Alan Benson (Chairman) 01934 713112 or Shirley Wederell (Secretary) 01934 7120898*

## Green Wedmore Solar Challenge 1000

Green Wedmore launched the Solar Challenge 1000 campaign at the start of 2021. The ambition is for Wedmore to have 1000 solar roofs by 2030, about 60% of the parish.

Since that time the scheme has installed 80 roofs which, combined with pre-2021 installations, brings our village total to 260, or 16% of homes enjoying far lower electricity bills. As best we can tell this total is more than the combined installations of all other similar 'solar street' type schemes in the whole of Somerset which is a phenomenal success.

But we still have a long way to go.

This campaign is a perfect example of the benefits of leading a lower carbon lifestyle. As a customer you see lower bills and a payback on the installation costs of about 7 years.

Green Wedmore has teamed with Sunlit Solar and Lendology to support this campaign. Sunlit Solar are a thriving local company employing highly skilled people. They provide a 10% discount on standard prices to Parish of Wedmore installations as well as providing a donation to Green Wedmore for every array. They are happy to provide free site surveys to anyone in the village and can be contacted via [sunlit-solar.co.uk](http://sunlit-solar.co.uk), calling 01458 834936 or emailing [sunlitsolar@rogerselectricians.co.uk](mailto:sunlitsolar@rogerselectricians.co.uk)



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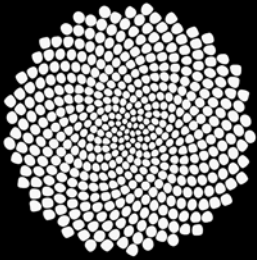
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## Wedmore Opera – Review of The Marriage of Figaro



Wedmore Opera presented sell-out performances of the ever popular The Marriage of Figaro at the Village Hall on 11, 13, and 14 October. The new contemporary setting of this well-loved opera in a hotel suited the environment of Wedmore's village hall and the evening got off to a fine start with a hotel doorman in liveried uniform greeting the arriving 'guests'. The set was cleverly devised so several different scenes in and around the hotel could be portrayed with a bare minimum of time wasting and furniture moving.

Purists might have been disappointed to hear the original libretto translated from the Italian, but the English translation provided many opportunities for amused tittering from the audience and on occasion some outright guffawing! It was cleverly done by Kenneth Jakobs and Douglas Nairne and, considering the Figaro arias are so well-known in Italian, the translation did not sound awkward or lose musical line as a consequence.

The cast of ten soloists was simply superb, the vocal quality of all the soloists was truly first class. The young leads were outstanding with Matthew Tilley's velvety baritone and assured, confident performance as Figaro, and Ellen Steward, at just twenty years old, was delightfully convincing as ingénue Susanna.

Mention must be made of the redoubtable Megan Strachan who saved the day by stepping in at short notice to play the Countess Almaviva in two of the three performances. Although it was a role with which she was familiar, she had never sung this translation. No-one in the audience could ever have guessed she only joined the cast for their dress rehearsal – what a star!

The role of Count Almaviva was in the safe hands of Dominic Bowe, demonstrating his obvious experience and command of the operatic genre. Merryn Gamba as Marcellina, and young Alex Pinkstone as Don Basilio, entertained with their accomplished comedic acting, raising laughter from the audience every time they appeared on stage. Megan Strachan, Noémie Johns as Cherubino, and Anthony Stuart Lloyd as Dr. Bartolo impressed and thrilled us with their vocal agility and sumptuous sound.

The modern setting and the young soloists gave the performance a freshness that, together with the English translation, managed to unravel what is a manically implausible and convoluted plot!

The small orchestra of just eleven musicians was in effect an orchestra of soloists. Nevertheless, the tone produced was extraordinary in quality and volume. A much larger ensemble could not have done better. From the opening bars of the Overture the success of the reduced orchestration, written by Jonathan Lyness of Opera Orchestrations, was wholly apparent to a grateful audience, appreciative of the respect shown to the original writing. The ensemble playing was tight with economical direction from Carolyn Doorbar.

How extraordinary that we can enjoy an operatic production like this to a professional standard in a village hall! The whole cast, the production team, the orchestra and director deserve our heartfelt congratulations and thanks for giving us a memorable and magical evening. We are indeed very lucky to have Wedmore Opera!

## **Avalon Camps**

Did you know that in 2023 Avalon Camps ran its first weekly camp since 2019? The cost of running the camp for 32 disadvantaged children from Bristol was over £300 per child. Avalon Camps is a charity run entirely by volunteers. Visit [www.avaloncamps.org.uk](http://www.avaloncamps.org.uk) to see what we do.

Avalon Camps needs, as always, volunteers with all skills or no skills. If you could volunteer even a couple of hours next July and August, any time from 24 July to 4 August, then please email [contact@avaloncamps.org.uk](mailto:contact@avaloncamps.org.uk)

Donations are also needed. Could you help by sponsoring a child? Would your businesses be interesting in a 'Sponsorship Package'? If you would like more information or to donate directly then call George on 01278 641551 or email [contact@avaloncamps.org.uk](mailto:contact@avaloncamps.org.uk) in the first instance.

If you wish to donate (anonymously), then use the Just Giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/avaloncamps> and note that Gift Aid is a simple way to increase the value of a donation to a charity. If you are a UK taxpayer, the charity could claim 25p on every £1 donated from the Government at no extra cost to you.

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# **Regular Features**

## **This Month in the Garden by Tony Connell**

Gardens mostly snooze in December but there are some plants that contribute both colour and scent. *Viburnum x bodnantense*, *Chimonanthus*, *Daphne bholua*, *Lonicera fragrantissima*, *Camellia praecox*, and *Mahonia* to name but a few. Had you noticed that most winter flowering plants are beautifully scented and long in flower? This is nature's way of giving them the best chance of being pollinated or to feed the scarcer birds, insects and bees.

Some of our uncut hedgerows also colour the lanes to reward our winter walks. There may still be scarlet rose hips, black privet berries, sycamore seeds, gold and tan hazel leaves, glowing holly leaves and flowering ivy and, if you're lucky, a glowing scarlet bramble leaf.

On a fine day, it is not too late to plant tulip bulbs and many bargains can be found in nursery or garden centres at this end of season. For the forward thinkers, do check on any pots of forced hyacinths and daffodils and water them as needed. About 6 weeks of darkness suit bulbs best as they need to grow strong roots before the shoots are forced up out of their winter rest. But if you didn't get round to this earlier, don't panic, your local nursery will have lots of potted bulbs all ready to burst into flower inside.

Back in the garden, a bit of pruning can be done, cutting back by half the shoots of bush roses and buddleias to help avoid wind rocking. *Pyracanthas* have been wonderful



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this autumn, laden with orange berries, but don't forget that there are also red and yellow varieties available. Trim back any lavender bushes you missed last autumn but don't cut back into the old wood as they will not regrow from that. Garden shredders can be wonderful for converting all manner of prunings into carbon rich mulch to add to the compost heap, but they can be a noise nuisance to neighbours, so be considerate. As you know the best compost is made from a mixture of (roughly) two thirds green waste to one of woody waste but for small gardens the council's green bins are probably best for disposing of garden waste.

Down on the allotment or vegetable area (and raised beds are an excellent way to grow vegetables) winter digging is becoming outdated. However, on new plots or those on heavy ground I like to single dig the soil. The secret is to open up a trench and then dig forward to create a new trench and then continue. Raised beds rarely need this as the soil should be of good structure. The trouble with digging is that it gives all the natural organisms a headache as they have to fight their way back to their appropriate place in the soil profile. Digging is not generally in fashion, and I do like the 'no digging' system, but it comes down to a matter of choice - remember the Victorians and the war time growers who obtained excellent vegetable crops by digging. The best digging spade I ever had was made by Wolf. All you had to do was push the blade down into the soil and lean back. The blade was sprung and it flicked the lump of soil forward into the open trench. So, both dig and no-dig systems have their supporters with appropriate exercise also being a factor.

This is a good time to buy your 'seed' potatoes and stand them, eyes uppermost, in trays or egg boxes. Keep them in the light but frost free until the shoots are growing and the potatoes are ready for planting from March onwards. This really gets them off to a good start and productive harvest. In mild weather, shallots and onion sets can be planted from now on or started off in pots and trays under cover for planting out later in spring. A very happy Christmas to you and all your plants!

## Poets Corner

**December,**

**by Vera Banwell**

Everybody sings at Christmas  
Christmas is for happy music  
Music sung by choirs  
Choirs accompanied by organs  
Organs played in many churches  
Churches filled with singing children  
Children in nativity plays  
Plays with children's hymns  
Hymns played by bands  
Bands playing carols  
Carols sung by everybody  
Everybody sings at Christmas.

## Country Lane Walker

Ok, it is the month of the shortest days of the year and the longest nights, so we are less inclined to go out in the cold, rain and wind. Yet, the winter months are the best time for us to catch the natural light and what sunshine there is, to absorb Vitamin D3 and feel nature's presence and presents!

The leaves have gone, yet trees still give their blessings and love to us, and so we give to them. Speak kindly to them and praise their beauty - really do that and you might hear their silent voice resonate within you. Speak with your inner 'mouth', listening with your inner 'ear'.



*Melvyn Firmager*  
*melvyn@gmx.co.uk*

## Thought for the Month

Dear Friends,

The terrible scenes that have been unfolding in Gaza and Southern Israel have shocked and moved us all – so many innocent lives lost or ruined on each side, caught between Hamas and the State of Israel, both of whom are committed to the annihilation of the other.

The angels who appeared to the shepherds in Bethlehem that first Christmas night sang 'Peace on earth and goodwill to all' and yet there doesn't seem to be much of either at the moment. Humanity in general, never mind the people of those lands, don't appear to have learned much in the intervening two thousand years.

As the advent lights are switched on around Wedmore again for the annual Living Advent Calendar, as the season of office parties gets underway, as we gather to sing Christmas carols once more, there will be quite rightly joy and celebration. But it will be important also to keep in mind those who may have little to celebrate, those who desperately need that peace promised by the angels, whether in Gaza, Israel or Ukraine. And you may feel that undercurrent of anxiety – where is the good news, what do the events of Christmas have to say to what is happening in the world?

For me, the events of the first Christmas whisper to those who want to hear that God has not left the future of the world in the hands of the corrupt and the grasping and the powerful. Light has come into the world in the person of Jesus. The birth of Jesus, God taking flesh, entering into our world reminds us that we live in a world created and sustained by God who has not left us alone even at the worst of times. God is there in the good times and the bad, the ups and downs of life, in the various seasons of life – God's message is one of constancy, faithfulness. He is with us. Emmanuel. Emmanuel for the children of Gaza, for the fearful in Bakhmut, for the refugees facing difficult and dangerous journeys; Emmanuel for you and for me.

Merry Christmas to you all and may there indeed be 'Peace on earth and goodwill to all.'

*The Revd Richard Neill*  
*Vicar of The Benefice of The Isle of Wedmore*

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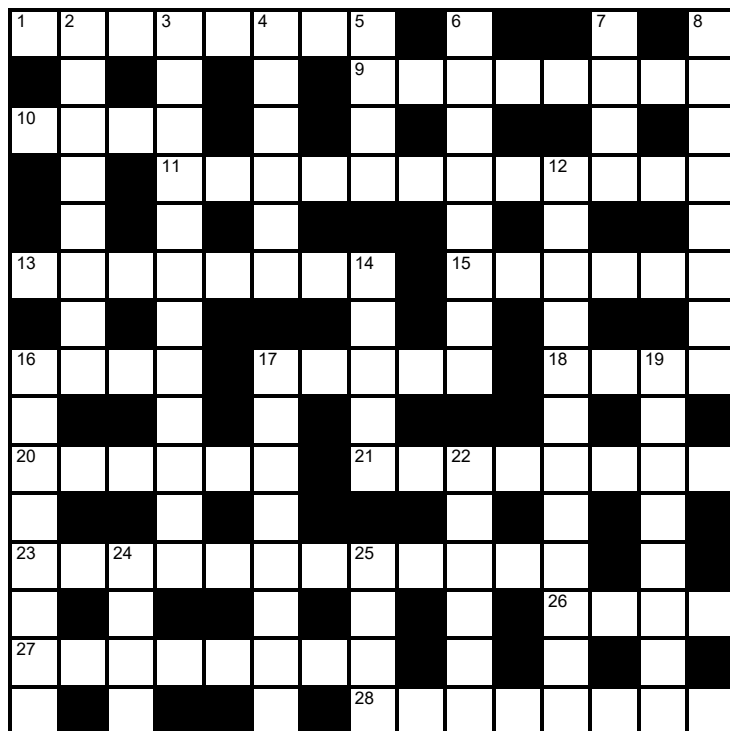
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# The Crossword:

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By greendandelion



## ACROSS

- 1 Complete from beginning to end concealing nothing (8)
- 9 Cruel and stupid to conceal busy noise (8)
- 10 Uncle's wife is against by the sound of it (4)
- 11 Not on the radio that you would cover in an hour (8,4)
- 13 Having doubts about acting so strangely (8)
- 15 He and the lass made a nuisance of themselves (6)
- 16 The editor says he doesn't want it changed(4)
- 17 Made Epsilon return the rate (5)
- 18 Unsure and unknown found in the silage (4)
- 20 A cigar with same name as the smoke ring that can be blown using it (6)
- 21 Ten parts used to build a wing on the church (8)
- 23 Grave problem with green plastic (7-5)
- 26 Anger about guarding it in Paris (4)
- 27 Order nothing for a man with a mission (8)
- 28 It helps when putting on a brave face (3,5)

## DOWN

- 2 When knight goes topless let the ladies party (3,5)
- 3 Fish of many colours (7,5)
- 4 A French project involves Sweden. That's not fair (6)
- 5 Sound system centres in this office (2-2)
- 6 The Shard design was heavily defeated (8)
- 7 Commissariat has an Indian women's uniform (4)
- 8 Where to find 23across (8)
- 12 Male lawyer of ill repute in east producing general panic (4,8)
- 14 Teach to be dishonest (5)
- 16 Sports day event - in the bag! (4,4)
- 17 Wet and unmoving (8)
- 19 Centre of eczema with nipple tweaked became an old gasbag (8)
- 22 Gardner, sailor or an incarnation (6)
- 24 Uniform made with help from gossamer (4)
- 25 Power line at the front of a ship (4)

Answers at the rear of the magazine

## Letters to the Editor

No letters this month! Please submit any letters by email to [editorwedmorenews@gmail.com](mailto:editorwedmorenews@gmail.com)

## Tasty Morsels – Recipes for You

### Hoisin Glazed Pork Belly

#### Ingredients

800g pork belly slices (about 8-10 slices)

Salt

60ml hoisin sauce ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup)

2 tbsp soy sauce

2 tbsp runny honey

1 garlic clove minced (or 1 tbsp garlic paste)

25ml water

#### Method

Pre-heat your oven to 230°C. Place the pork belly slices on a lined baking tray, skin-side up and at least a finger's width apart. Salt the skin side of the pork and place in the oven for 20 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 180C and roast for another 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the hoisin glaze by mixing the remaining ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes stirring occasionally.

When the pork belly has 20 minutes left to roast, spoon the glaze over the pork belly slices making sure the sides get some glaze as well. Serve 2-3 slices per person with rice and some vegetables.

Enjoy!

Jennifer



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# Health and Wellbeing

## Our Health & Wellbeing

### Feeling warm on the *inside* as well as on the *outside*!

It's that time of year when it's feeling cold, and we expect it to become colder, so we need strategies to feel warmer! Feeling cold is not only unpleasant, but it can be particularly hazardous to health for some groups of people, for example:- older people (aged 65 years and over), people with long-term health conditions such as cardiovascular or respiratory disease, or a mental health condition, pregnant women, young children (particularly those aged 5 and under), people with learning disabilities, people at risk of falls, people who live alone and may have difficulty in caring for themselves, people who stay at home or have



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low mobility and people living in deprived circumstances. But for all of us there are some strategies which the Government recommends, for example, try to heat rooms you spend a lot of time in (living room or bedroom) to at least 18°C, try to reduce draughts, keep your bedroom windows closed at night, wear several layers of thinner clothing (rather than one thicker layer). For more information go to the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for keeping warm and well.

The British Heart foundation also has some additional ideas, for example about warming food and drinks and money-saving ideas about how to cook food more economically. And, of course, we need to keep moving as this can generate heat from the inside out and will boost our circulation. When you do sit down, put your feet up as it's coldest nearest the ground. Go to [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk) and search for keeping warm. Finances are always a consideration when it comes to turning up the heat. The Citizens Advice Bureau may be able to advise on this. Go to [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk), and locally, our Village Agent, Lina Curiale-Hopkinson, may be able to advise on this. She can be contacted by phone, 01823 331222 or 07375 371549, email [lina@somersettrcc.org.uk](mailto:lina@somersettrcc.org.uk)

And what about our 'inner warmth'? This is the time of year when families and friends meet together and celebrate our festive season. This can give us a warm glow! However, this source of 'inner warmth' doesn't work for all of us for various reasons, so we need to find other ways to make connections with people and to feel part of the community. Fortunately, we do have many groups and societies who would welcome your input – just use your Directory to choose which ones. Also, the calendar of events in this issue will give you some more ideas. And don't forget our very own Warm in Wedmore series of 'gatherings' (see later article on this!). Those of us who went last year really appreciated the warm atmosphere in the Masonic Hall over the winter months. On a personal note, I met many people I had not met before and had conversations and discussions which were different and sometimes unexpected! In combination with the tasty homemade warm soup, I certainly left with a warm glow each time. So, don't be shy, give it a try! These sessions are open to everyone! And if you need transport, ask Good Neighbours as they may be able to help. (01934 806299) I look forward to seeing you there and meeting many more new friends!

If you think you will be spending Christmas alone, but would rather not, there is a group who will be providing Christmas lunch in West Huntspill on 23 December for people in our area. Just call or email to find out more [christmaslunch2022@yahoo.com](mailto:christmaslunch2022@yahoo.com) or phone 07387 292546.

In conclusion, I wish you warmth both inside and outside during December and the festive season. For easy links to all the websites referenced please go to [www.whawb.co.uk](http://www.whawb.co.uk) and go to the Wedmore News item (online at [www.theisleofwedmore.net](http://www.theisleofwedmore.net)) for December 2023.

*Cathy Butterworth,  
Wedmore Health & Wellbeing Project,  
01934 806266, [cb@theconsultant.org](mailto:cb@theconsultant.org)*



## Warm in Wedmore

Warm in Wedmore will be running again this year at the Masonic Hall, every Wednesday and Thursday (with a Christmas break) from 6 December.

Building on last winter's success we are looking forward to another season of friendly company and home-made soup to lift our spirits during the winter gloom. Please all join in and actively encourage and inspire everyone you know to come down. We all have friends and neighbours who tuck themselves away in winter - invite them, and better still, offer them a lift.

Each 'week' will be hosted by a different village club or group (Men's Shed, Green Wedmore, Wedmore Good Neighbours, and others) so you may find yourselves actively involved. The event is organised by a cheery conglomerate including Wedmore Health & Wellbeing, St Mary's Church, The Parish Council, The Isle of Wedmore Good Neighbours and Wedmore Community Power Co-op. (A particular big shout out to the Power Co-op who are again paying for the rental of the Masonic Hall)

If you'd like to spend a few hours warming yourself, inside and out, but need transport, then contact Wedmore Good Neighbours on 01934 806299.

*Contact David Hopkins for more information  
07984 924432*

## Wedmore Good Neighbours – Helping Through the Winter

The Wedmore Good Neighbours Group continues to support a steady stream of people in the local community with a wide variety of 'neighbourly' requests.

Most calls we receive are from people needing transport for a medical appointment - taxis are expensive and impersonal! We also provide lifts to local club and society meetings. However, transport is not the only kind of support provided by our volunteers. Maybe you need some light work doing in the garden? Or someone to walk your dog if you are unwell? Got some rubbish that you'd like taking to the local recycling centre – we can probably manage that too. Perhaps you are unable to get out of the house but need something from the local shops or chemist?

Volunteers can also help with writing letters and filling forms, including assisting with simple tasks that need completing online. Last, but not least, you might just want some company over a cuppa? The group can handle a wide variety of requests – but occasionally must decline simply because the insurance policy does not cover every circumstance.

Last year we teamed up with the Warm in Wedmore scheme – and we're doing the same this winter by hosting the sessions on Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 December – so if you have any questions about how Wedmore Good Neighbours can support you, or someone else you know, come and talk to us on those days. We can also arrange transport if you need it - please see the 'Warm in Wedmore' article in this magazine for further information.

Wedmore Good Neighbours is operated by volunteers and has received some start-up funding from Sedgemoor District Council and the Somerset Community



(667)

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(519)

Foundation. It's free to use but the group does have running costs – insurance, petrol expenses, as well as vetting and training of volunteers. So, if you do use the service and want to make a donation, this is always very welcome! On the other hand, if you'd like to become a volunteer that would be very welcome also – call the number above and we'll be in touch.

Whatever your request please call 01934 806299 and leave a message - a volunteer will reply within 24 hours. Please note that we're not part of social services, or an emergency service...we're just good neighbours!

If you'd like more detailed information about the group and how it operates visit the Wedmore Health and Wellbeing website – [www.whawb.co.uk/gns/](http://www.whawb.co.uk/gns/)

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## Club Reports and Society Updates

### Women of Wedmore WI

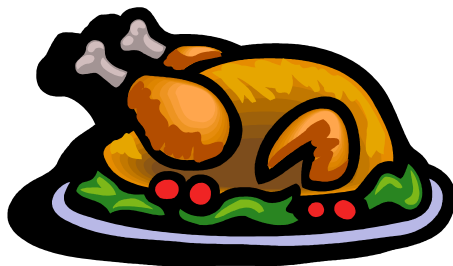
September's Women of Wedmore meeting was a colourful and fun evening with talented quilter Wendy Booth-Boyd. Wendy told us that the earliest quilts in museums date from the early 1700s and many quilts that survive today were little used. The quilts would have been made by women who had the means to afford fabric, had some education in mathematics and geometry, and the leisure time for needlework. Wendy displayed several of her quilts made over the last 40 years. The quilts showed how her design skills had evolved in using tessellating shapes and combining fabrics. Wendy's work is truly inspirational!



After her talk, Wendy led a hands-on quilting session for members to make their own hexagon flower. There was much laughter as everyone had a go ... and a few cries of 'ouch' when fingers were pricked!

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(029)

# What's On in the Parish

1	Fri	<b>Wedmore Christ Lights Switch On</b>	6.30 pm	Church Street, Wedmore
		<b>Wedmore Winter Ball</b>	7.00 pm-11.00 pm	Wedmore Village Hall
2	Sat	<b>Theale Players Christmas revue</b>	7.30 pm	Theale Village Hall
3	Sun	<b>Terry's Community Orchard Working Party</b>	10.30 am	Terry's Community Orchard
4	Mon	<b>Theale Show Get together &amp; AGM</b>	7.00 pm	Theale Village Hall
5	Tue	<b>Wedmore Gardening Club Members Christmas Party</b>	7.00 pm	Masonic Hall
7	Thur	<b>Wedmore Village Hall AGM</b>	4.00 pm	Wedmore Village Hall
8	Fri	<b>Wedmore First School Christmas Fair</b>	5.00 pm-7.00 pm	Wedmore First School
		<b>Mr Punch's Folk Club Christmas Open Mic Night</b>	8.00 pm	Theale Village Hall
9	Sat	<b>Wedmore In Bloom Working Party</b>	9.30 am	Outside The George
13	Wed	<b>Blackford Café</b> - Musicians from Hugh Sexey Middle School entertaining with Christmas music and song	2.00 pm-4.00 pm	Blackford Village Hall
		<b>Wedmore By Lamplight</b>	5.15 pm	Wedmore
15	Fri	<b>Christmas Night Production</b> - Sharing some Ukrainian Christmas traditions and Christmas joy with Carols		St Mary's Church
		<b>Theale Film Club</b>	7.00 pm	Theale Village Hall
19	Tue	<b>Wedmore Carollers 'On Tour'</b>		
20	Wed	<b>Club 50 Members Christmas Lunch</b>	12.30 pm	Wedmore Golf Club
29	Fri	<b>Pub Quiz</b>	8.00 pm	The New Inn, Wedmore

# December 2023

## REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY				
<b>Beavers</b>	5.45-6.45 pm	+ Scout Hut	Bill Belshaw	01934 712438
<b>Pilates with Anna MacGregor</b>	6.00 pm	Blackford VH	Anna MacGregor	07587 703883
<b>Yoga with Anna MacGregor</b>	7.00 pm	Blackford VH	Anna MacGregor	07587 703883
<b>Bridge Club</b>	7.00 pm	Masonic Hall	Steve Pedrick	01934 712852
<b>Scouts</b>	7.15-8.45 pm	+ Scout Hut	Bill Belshaw	01934 712438

TUESDAY				
<b>Little Lambs</b>	9.15 am-11.15 am	+ Little Lambs	Heather Hector	01934 712216
<b>Wedmore Men's Shed</b>	9.30 am-12:00			
<b>Chair Yoga</b>	9.45 am	Masonic Hall	Jo Willis	07552 711101
<b>Yoga for the body, breath and mind</b>	10.00 am-11.15 am	Scout Hut	Kay Wensley	07584 374515
<b>50+ Dance Class</b>	10.00 am	Wedmore VH	Rhian Weston	07854 594268
<b>Tuesday Club</b>	10.30 am	Wedmore VH	Lesley Nichols	01934 712045
<b>Music Matters</b>	2.30 pm	via Zoom	mhc.dance4change@hotmail.co.uk	
<b>Cubs</b>	6.30-7.45 pm	+ Scout Hut	Bill Belshaw	01934 712438
<b>Pilates with Anna MacGregor- beginner / general class</b>	6.10 pm	Wedmore VH	Anna MacGregor	07587 703883
<b>Yoga with Anna MacGregor</b>	7.20 pm	Wedmore VH	Anna MacGregor	07587 703883

WEDNESDAY				
<b>Pilates</b>	9.15-10.15 am	Blackford VH	Lucy	07813 913309
<b>Piloga Fit</b>	9.30-10.30 am	Wedmore VH	John Beasley	01749 672482
<b>Warm in Wedmore</b>	10.00 am-2.00 pm	Masonic Hall	Various	01934 806299
<b>Pilates</b>	10.30-11.30 am	Blackford VH	Lucy	07813 913309
<b>Rainbows</b>	4.30 pm	+ Wedmore VH	Gail Millard	01934 713922
<b>Brownies</b>	6.15 pm	+ Wedmore VH	Sue Moreman	01934 710278
<b>Guides</b>	7.00 pm	+ Wedmore VH	Elaine Tilling	01934 713650
<b>Health Tai Chi</b>	11.00-12.00	Wedmore VH	John Beasley	01749 672482

THURSDAY				
<b>Warm in Wedmore</b>	10.00 am-2.00 pm	Masonic Hall	Various	01934 806299
<b>Wedmore Dance Group</b>	10.30 am	Wedmore VH	Nikki Pryn	07519 630365
<b>Cubs</b>	6.30 pm	+ Scout Hut	Bill Belshaw	01934 712438

FRIDAY				
<b>Tots and Tinies</b>	9.15 am	+ Wedmore First School	Penny Wallace	07833 105418
<b>Wedmore Art Group</b>	2.00 pm	+ Masonic Hall	Jim Collett	01934 712663



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The next Women of Wedmore WI meeting is on Thursday 14 December (a change of date due to Wedmore by Lamplight) when we will enjoy a belly dancing master class and a Christmas party. The meeting at the Post and Wicket, Wedmore Recreational Ground, starts at 7pm. For more details, please email WoW on [wedmorewi@outlook.com](mailto:wedmorewi@outlook.com)



## Wedmore Men's Shed

### What's been happening?

Wedmore Men's Shed have been busy this autumn. Members have helped to get an original cider mill working again in Washbrook. Two separate groups each spent a day, gathering, mulching and pressing some of this year's apple harvest.



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Members have also visited Whatley Quarry in Frome.

We are delighted that Wedmore Real Ale Festival have given us a donation from their Festival this year; it helps massively to support what we can do in 2024. Many thanks WRAF.

### **What's coming up?**

On 13 December Men's Shed members will be present at Wedmore by Lamplight. Why not come along and talk to us and see what we do.

### **Interested in getting involved?**

Wedmore Men's Shed is a friendly, welcoming place where men can get involved in a number of activities, including projects that help the local community, such as repairing benches and notice boards, or making bird boxes. We also enjoy interesting talks and day visits. If you are interested in joining please email [wedmoremensshed@outlook.com](mailto:wedmoremensshed@outlook.com) or we will see you at Wedmore by Lamplight.

*Merry Christmas from Wedmore Men's Shed!*

## **Wedmore in Bloom**

Many thanks to everyone who gave their time to help with the replanting of the tubs, troughs, and beds. We certainly had to dodge the showers!

Due to continuing kind donations, 2660 bulbs have been purchased and planted around the village and we especially look forward to seeing the tulips. The stars of the show next spring are Purple Doll, Dolls Minuet, National Velvet, Playgirl, Shirley Double, and Temple of Beauty. There are also some blends of orange, white, pink and purple.

A big thank you and 'Well Done' goes to three students, Monty Britner, Elis Davies and Ffion Lockley, who have been busy in the village working towards their Duke of Edinburgh bronze awards. They have focused on the environment for their voluntary activity at that level. Every week, wearing their yellow safety jackets, they collected litter and rubbish around Wedmore, which they then sorted and recycled.

## **Wedmore Gardening Club**

Here we are in December reflecting on a successful year, which included a really great series of talks, a coffee morning and plant sale, a members' cream tea and a visit to Rocking Horse Cafe and Garden, Stogumber. All that remains for 2023 is the Christmas Party for members on Tuesday 5 December at 7pm. An evening of fun, good food and entertainment. As numbers are limited, please let Andrea or Carol know if you would like to come.



Jan has put together an exciting programme for 2024 and we kick off our 2024 programme on Tuesday 23 January with a talk by Tony Connell (see his new monthly gardening column in this magazine! – Ed) entitled 'Making a Garden' - some good ideas to take back to our own gardens. The talk is preceded by a short AGM. A gentle reminder that subs are due in January.

Meetings are held in the Masonic Hall and begin at 7.30pm (with the exception of the Christmas Party which begins at 7pm).



The committee would like to wish members and friends a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy 2024. [www.wedmoregc.co.uk](http://www.wedmoregc.co.uk).

## Green Wedmore

Please keep in touch. We need your help to achieve positive, local, achievable, green focused village projects. Visit [www.greenwedmore.co.uk](http://www.greenwedmore.co.uk) and sign up to receive regular information. Please see, like and follow our Facebook page. Call 07984 924432 or email [hello@greenwedmore.co.uk](mailto:hello@greenwedmore.co.uk) to contact us



## Green Wedmore Meetings – In our NEW VENUE

On the last Thursday of every month at 7.30pm at The Bluebird Café. Come along to the next meeting on Thursday 25 January.

We have been busy, busy .....

## Wedmore Village Farm

In collaboration with The Men's Shed; look out for ways that you can become involved as this exciting project develops. More news soon!

## Worthington Woods & Terry's Community Orchard

Join the group that cares for the woods and help us keep them an oasis of nature and calm in our busy village.

## Somerset Eel Release Project (SERP)

There has been lots of momentum and national press coverage. The charter is now live on the website <https://sometseteelrecoveryproject.co.uk/> There will be three main focus workstreams:

Community engagement and education – including a plan to have 50 glass eel tanks in schools around the area next spring.

Story capture project – focusing on the history and social importance of eels in Somerset.

Overcoming physical barriers – the recent straw rope workshop and work with the Drainage Board and landowners

## Events

A big thank you to everyone who took part in The Big Tidy Up and at The Repair Café!

Terry's Community Orchard Work Party  
Sunday 3 December at 10.30am. Come and help with pruning and replacing some tree stakes. We also plan to plant trees in memory of our friends Rob, Liz and Rosie.



## Wedmore by Lamplight

Wednesday 13 December. Visit our stall, shared this year with the Wedmore Community Farm

## Warm in Wedmore

Wednesday 10 and Thursday 11 January. Green Wedmore have agreed to host a 'week' during the season. Can you lend a hand? – or just come for a chat and a bowl of soup.



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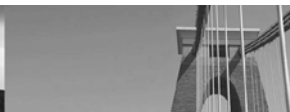
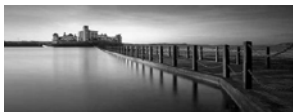
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## Wedmore Opera Goers

Our future programme is below. All prices include the coach and the theatre. Note that the visit to *Così fan tutte* in March has now sold out.

Thursday 21 March 2024 – Ballet at Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff, Edward Scissorhands by Matthew Bourne, mid stalls £61, raised stalls £53.

Please contact Suzanne Metters for further information [suzannemetters@hotmail.com](mailto:suzannemetters@hotmail.com)

## Wedmore Theatre Group

You are invited to 'a delicious sexy romp'!

How about getting together to see an entertaining and classic film, with free tea and biccies thrown in? Wedmore Theatre is inviting a small group of people to come and see a stunning movie – starring Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson – on Sunday 7 January. The film also stars Richard Briers, Keanu Reeves, Denzel Washington, Michael Keaton and Kate Beckinsale, and the Daily Mail reviewed it as 'A delicious sexy romp', whilst the Daily Telegraph billed it as 'Enormous Fun'. What could it possibly be?

It's 'Much Ado About Nothing', Shakespeare's beloved romantic romp that has never been more fun than in Academy Award Winner Kenneth Branagh's electrifying adaptation featuring an all-star cast. We are offering this opportunity to see this amazing film, completely free of charge, because we plan to stage the play next June in Wedmore Village Hall, and we thought we'd invite all those who think they might be interested in getting involved in the production – either taking a role onstage, or helping behind the scenes with costumes, make-up, stage management etc – to come along and watch the film on Sunday 7 January at 4.30pm, to see what they think.

If you would like to come along please email [productions@wedmoretheatre.com](mailto:productions@wedmoretheatre.com) and we will arrange a personal invitation for you.

## The Friends of St. Mary's

We 'non-churchgoer' villagers are in fact ... churchgoers! We are there for weddings, christenings, Remembrance Sunday, Harvest Festival, carol services, funerals, Messy Church, Little Lambs, the Arts Festival, Wilder Wedmore, concerts, the Coffee Shop, the May and Christmas Fairs ... and so on.

Without The Friends of St. Mary's, the cost of maintaining this beautiful, community building at the heart of our village falls upon just the shoulders of the regular congregation. Please join 'The Friends' and lend us a hand raising funds to maintain and enhance our lovely church. Call 07984 924432 or email [dahopkins@aol.com](mailto:dahopkins@aol.com) to lend a hand.

## Isle of Wedmore Society

The Membership heard a most interesting talk by Helen Emmings at the meeting on 26 October, entitled '*Women at the Margins - working with women facing adversity and trauma.*' She gave an overview and reflections that included her own experiences.

Having developed an academic interest in social policy and criminal justice during her degree and Masters at Swansea University, Helen qualified as a Probation Officer



in Avon and Somerset 16 years ago. This began a career that has woven its way through the criminal justice system, into the voluntary sector and which sparked a passionate interest in the challenges faced specifically by women. With roles on the front line in women's services and moving into campaigning and strategic work, she has seen and heard the stories of women who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. She has also witnessed where women have been failed but then celebrated their triumphs. The case histories of two women illustrated those she had aimed to help.

Helen gave us some rather startling, if not depressing statistics. Perhaps surprisingly though only 4% of those in prison are women and the main reason for their prison sentences are non-payment of TV licences. We also learnt that it costs £52,000 per year to maintain a woman in prison, a figure considerably higher than that for men. However, 58% of women re-offend within a year of leaving prison.

We also heard about the Somerset Women's Centre, opened in 2019, that exists to help women in prison and that now employs 22 people – all women. The Somerset Women's Centre provides help, support, guidance and advice. Further information is available at [www.nelsontrust.com/what-we-do/our-services/](http://www.nelsontrust.com/what-we-do/our-services/)

### **Next Meeting – Thursday 25 January 2024**

We do not meet in December and our next Meeting will be on Thursday 25 January and that will include the Society's Annual General Meeting.

*Ian Tomes,  
Secretary Isle of Wedmore Society. Tel: 01934 710390*

## **Wedmore Probus Club**

### **Air France Disasters in 1950 by Kevin Patience**

This time his talk concerned the crashes of two Air France DC-4 aircraft coincidentally within two days of each other. Both were bound for Paris from Saigon in Indo China. The first DC-4 aircraft Delta Echo crashed into the sea on 12 June 1950 on the approach to Bahrain airport and lay in twenty feet of water. Forty-six passengers were killed but five survived including the pilot Jan Sladek. The Air Accident Investigation Board and French authorities carried out a detailed analysis of the circumstances and concluded pilot error.

The second Air France DC-4 Delta Mike crashed two days later on the same approach to Bahrain airport in virtually identical circumstances, but this time in deeper water. In total eighty-six died in the two crashes. Kevin, a man of many parts, is also a commercial diver and explained how difficult it was to recover the bodies at the time. The number of casualties further complicated the situation as there were insufficient coffins available in Bahrain so help was provided by manufacturers in Karachi, Pakistan. The casualties were buried in the English cemetery in Bahrain before being exhumed three years later and returned to France.

Some forty years later Kevin, rediscovered the wreckage of Delta Mike's wing and engines and having had the cemetery cleaned and tidied organised the recovery of a propeller, which was erected to commemorate the victims that died in the two crashes. A dedication service was held attended by the French Ambassador to Bahrain

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who later presented Kevin with the French National Order of Merit, as a token of thanks from France.

It transpired some time later, after some excellent detective work by Kevin and his brother, that the most likely cause of the two tragic crashes was wind shear, a massive down draft and a phenomenon unknown at the time. A desert sand storm can produce powerful cross winds and a severe downdraft and an aircraft approaching the runway to land would have little chance of recovery in these circumstances. So Jan Sladek and the other pilot were not to blame after all.

Kevin ended his talk with some salutary advice: if you are flying ALWAYS wear your seat belt. A sudden downdraft known as clear air turbulence could find you hitting the roof of the aircraft and incurring severe injuries.

### **Becoming a Local Author by Damien Boyd**

On Wednesday 25 October Wedmore Probus was visited by Damien Boyd, who gave a talk entitled 'Becoming a Local Author'. Damien opened an entertaining session with a short reading from his second novel - Head in the Sand - which features Wedmore. He went on to tell of his journey from solicitor to crime author and how he started out self-publishing his novels.

Damien's family were bombed out of Bristol during the Second World War, moving to Burnham-on-Sea. Educated at St Dunstan's School, and King's College, Taunton, it seemed the obvious choice for Damien to set his crime series in his home county, with his fictional detective, Nick Dixon, living in Brent Knoll and working at the Bridgwater Police Centre. Damien's debut novel, As the Crow Flies, was released in April 2013 becoming an international Kindle #1 bestseller. Translated into several languages, the series has since gone on to sell nearly four million copies. Showcasing the best of Somerset, the novels follow Nick Dixon as he races around the county; Cheddar Gorge, Berrow Beach, Taunton Racecourse, the Quantocks, Exmoor, the flooded Somerset Levels, Mendip caves and the abandoned Somerset Coal Canal are just some of the geographical locations featured.

Damien spoke about where the inspiration for each of his novels came from and the often tiny events that can provide the spark for an entire plot. He also touched on the publishing process and, during a question and answer session, the minefield that is television. Much enjoyed and possibly inspired some of us to start writing.

*David Ewens (Past Chairman)*

### **St Mary's Church, Wedmore, 100 Club**

As another year draws to a close, the last draw has been made. The winners for November were Alan and Jean Windridge as well as Gordon and Marion MacArthur. In December the lucky winners are Paul and Sally Martin and Sheila Duckett.

Huge thanks to everyone who has supported this fund-raising initiative in 2023!

### **Club 50**

Our Members' Christmas Lunch this year is at Wedmore Golf Club on 20 December (not 13 as shown in your Programme), meeting at 12.30pm for lunch at 1pm. The cost is £22, to include a two-course lunch plus coffee and mince pies. If you would like to come please ring Heather on 01934 712216.

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# News and Events from Outside the Parish

## Save the Children Christmas Lunches in Shipham

Shipham village hall will serve lunches for the Save the Children charity on 1 December at 12.30pm when the usual fare will be on offer at £5.00 pp. Our special Christmas lunch on 15 December will have homemade soup and mince pies at £6.00pp. Hopefully, we will have the local schoolchildren come to sing us their carols!

## St John's, Axbridge, Christmas Fair – Saturday 2 December

St John's Church Axbridge invites you to get into the Christmas spirit at their Christmas Fair in the Town Hall, starting at 10am. There will be jewellery, children's toys, cakes, puzzles and more. Make a start on your Christmas shopping and relax with coffee and cake.

## Mendip Rotary Club Santa and Elf Fun Run – Saturday 16 December

The Santa and Elf Fun Run will take place at Winchester Farm, Draycott Road, Cheddar on 16 December at 11am – Santa suits will be supplied to all aged 14 and over, with those under 14 being encouraged to wear Elf or Mini-Santa fancy dress.

**Please register as soon as possible as we need to order your Santa suit!!** Full details and registration can be found at [www.Mendipsantarun.com](http://www.Mendipsantarun.com)



In addition to the suit, all participants will receive a medal, mince pie and a drink on completion of their chosen course which can be between 1km and 10kms. You can run or walk, bring a pushchair and/or a well-behaved dog on a lead.

Mendip Rotary Club, who are organising the event, are keeping the entry costs lower than nearly every other similar event in the UK at £10 for those over 18; £6 for those aged 14-18 inclusive; and for a family £15 for one adult and up to four children under 14 (they can be your own children plus friends).

The Fire Brigade 'sleigh' with music and Santa compere will be there and the café will be open, plus other activities to make this a fun event intended to enable runners to raise sponsorship for the Weston Hospice.

Prizes for the individuals and families who raise the most through sponsorship and for the elves with the best fancy dress!!

## Carol and Christingle Services at St John the Baptist, Axbridge

A Carol Service with the Benefice Choir and Bristol Brass Consort will be held on Sunday 17 December starting at 6pm.

The popular Christingle service will be held at Axbridge Church, Christmas Eve, Sunday 24 December 4pm. Come early to avoid disappointment!

## Cheddar Country Market

10 - 11.30am at Cheddar Village Hall, every Tuesday.

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## Cheddar Valley u3a

Our December programme takes a slightly different format to the other months of the year, as there is no Speaker Meeting. Instead we have a Fun Quiz at 2pm in the Village Hall on Thursday 14 December. This is always a great afternoon, filled with friendly rivalry, laughter and amazing 'things you never knew'! Something not to be missed, contact [janethillman@gmail.com](mailto:janethillman@gmail.com) to check if there are any spaces left. Jan can always be relied upon to do her best to accommodate you and if you don't have a full team of six, will even place you in an 'individuals' team if possible. The following Thursday is our Coffee (with carols) Morning guaranteed to put you in the mood for Christmas festivities. Plenty to enjoy to round off the year.

Details of everything we do and who to contact can be found on our Facebook page [@cheddarvalleyu3a](https://www.facebook.com/cheddarvalleyu3a) or our website [u3asites.org.uk/cheddar-valley/home](http://u3asites.org.uk/cheddar-valley/home)

## Cheddar Vale Lions Club News

Cheddar Vale Lions have a busy month ahead with the return of the Tree of Light, where, for a small donation, your loved ones can be remembered as a light on the Christmas tree and as a star with their name on hung on a wooden tree to be displayed in the village. The Dedication service takes place on Monday 11 December at 6.30pm outside the Bath Arms in the centre of the Cheddar. To request a form to order your memory light please contact Cheddar Vale Lions using the contact details below.

We will also be selling Christmas Raffle tickets at various events, including Cheddar and Wedmore Festive Nights, with prizes ranging from food hampers, wine, handbag, Cobbs voucher to a basket of fruit kindly donated by Warren's Fruit Farm. Tickets are only £1 and will also be available online. More details of the above events are available on our website [www.cheddarvalelions.org.uk](http://www.cheddarvalelions.org.uk), Facebook [@cheddarvalelions](https://www.facebook.com/cheddarvalelions), email at [information@cheddarvalelions.org.uk](mailto:information@cheddarvalelions.org.uk) or phone 0345 833 7402.



## Royal Air Forces Association Mid-Somerset Branch

On Monday 6 November the Branch held a Branch Meeting in in the Bell Inn, Evercreech. Members met for coffee followed by an excellent and interesting presentation on 'The Hungarian Army Air Corps' by Captain Erdesz, who spoke with authority from his experience. Members then enjoyed a lunch and drink chosen from the Bell Inn menu and bar.



The next event will be the Branch Christmas Lunch on Saturday 16 December assembling at 12.15 pm in Wells Golf Club, Blackheath Lane, Wells, BA5 3DS. There will be Buck's Fizz or Fruit Cup on arrival, followed by either a 3-course lunch £30 (3 choices each course) or a 2-course lunch £25 (main & dessert, 3 choices for each), coffee and port for the 'Loyal Toast; wines and drinks may be purchased from the bar.

Advance notice that the first 2024 Meeting will be on Monday 8 January at 11 am in Wells Golf Club, Blackheath Lane, Wells, BA5 3DS. This will be a Branch Meeting including a presentation by Dave Willmott 'The Tudor & the Atom Bomb'.

The meeting will conclude with an option for a pub lunch and drinks from the Golf Club menu and bar.

The Branch covers BS25, BS26, BS27, BS28, BA4, BA5, BA16, TA10 & TA11 postal areas. This event is open to Members from any RAFA Branch, Current and Ex-RAF Personnel and Reserves, Current and Ex-Commonwealth Air Forces Personnel, Members of the RAF Family and Members of the public that support the aims and purpose of RAFA. Please contact the Branch via e-mail [rafa.midsomerset@gmail.com](mailto:rafa.midsomerset@gmail.com) or the Secretary on 01458 224057 for further information.'

## **RNLI Winscombe and District Branch**

### **Results Update**

The Bristol Sea Shanty Festival on Saturday 23 September has presented RNLI Winscombe with a cheque for £1,150, this being the RNLI one third share of the total profit, a great result! In addition, £50 was received for the sale of a shredder while £800 was received from the Queen Victoria Inn at Priddy as reported below.



### **Queen Victoria Inn, Priddy, RNLI Fish Supper**

Once again, Mark and Debs Walton and their team at the Queen Victoria Inn, Priddy had the Inn decked out in RNLI colours with flags and bunting in preparation for this year's RNLI Fish Supper on Thursday 19 October; a great welcome. Around 50 patrons attended the Supper and the fish and chips arrived promptly and were voted superb by all who attended. The staff team worked very hard all evening and provided a brilliant, enjoyable evening. As a result of their efforts, the fantastic sum of £800 was donated to the RNLI Winscombe & District Branch! The Branch Committee sends its thanks to Mark & Debs and the team at the Queen Vic for putting on another very successful event and, of course, to their patrons who supported the Supper.

### **Collection at Tesco, Nailsea**

A sterling band of RNLI Winscombe Members, complete with 'Rescue Buckets', stood between the doors at the 'mouth' of Tesco Supermarket in Nailsea on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October and received a favourable response from the shoppers. Unfortunately, the Branch Treasurer is away so financial results are not yet available.

### **RNLI Winscombe and District Branch Pre-Christmas Pop-Up Sale**

The Branch held a Pre-Christmas Pop-Up Sale inside Winscombe Community Centre, Sandford Road, Winscombe, BS25 1HP from 10am – 12 noon on Saturday 11 November. The Sale included flags & banners, jigsaws, children's Christmas stocking fillers, spring bulbs, Christmas puddings & food, Chris's tools and domestic items, RNLI cards & calendars, and refreshments (beverages, cakes & biscuits). The Committee turned out in force and footfall was good; results will be reported in a future issue.

### **RNLI Winscombe and District Branch Reindeer Run**

This is a final reminder that our second Reindeer Run will be at 2pm on Sunday 3 December at Winscombe Cricket Club, 31 The Lynch, Winscombe BS25 1AP. Runners of all standards are welcome; there will be a 2.5 km Santa Santa Trail (open to all) and a 5 km Reindeer Trail (minimum age 11). Both Trails are off-road and fancy dress will be welcome.



Details are - 2.5km Santa Santa - Adults £12 - Juniors £6 (under 18) - Family £32 (2 Adults and 2 Juniors) – 5km Reindeer Run - Adults £16 - Juniors £8 (under 18) - Family £42 (2 Adults and 2 Juniors).

Runners are encouraged to get sponsorship and bring supporters as drinks and refreshments will be available. More information may be found at [RNLI.org/WinscombeReindeer](http://RNLI.org/WinscombeReindeer), or on RNLI Winscombe facebook site [bit.ly/WinscombeRNLI](http://bit.ly/WinscombeRNLI), or Contact Tim Moran [Tim@moransonline.com](mailto:Tim@moransonline.com) or tel 07801 678432.

### **2024 is the RNLI Bi-Centennial Year**

2024 is the Bicentennial of the formation of the RNLI and the Branch will hold a Bicentennial Super Quiz at 7pm on Saturday 27 January 2024 in Shipham Village Hall, New Road, Winscombe BS25 1SG. The Quiz will be for teams of six and will include Tina's Mega Ploughman's Supper, a bar and a raffle.

### **October Shouts**

In October there were 15 'Shouts' between our four Lifeboat Stations (Burnham-on-Sea – 4, Minehead – 3, Portishead – 3, Weston-super-Mare – 5).

At 17.40 on Monday 30 October, the Coastguard paged a request to launch both Weston lifeboats to assist Burnham Lifeboat team (that had already launched both their lifeboats) in a search for a missing male adult near Burnham Pier. Both lifeboats joined Burnham's two lifeboats as well as two rescue helicopters. The Atlantic crew were at sea for a staggering 7 hours and on the smaller D-class the crews were swapped at Burnham-on-Sea mid-way through the operation.

An extensive search was undertaken of the shoreline, estuaries of the River Brue and Parret and surrounding riverbanks, but nothing was found. This was a great example of a multi-agency operation involving two of our lifeboat stations, four of our lifeboats, several crews, the Maritime & Coastguard Agency Shore Team and two of their helicopters.

After mooring the Atlantic B class, the Weston crew returned to station at 00.30 with the D class rehoused and readied again for service by 01.45.

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## **Sports Reports**

### **Isle of Wedmore Bowls Club**

Although the Outdoor Bowls season finished at the end of September, the Indoor season effectively began straightaway at the beginning of October. At the IOWBC we are fortunate to have two full-size rinks in the clubhouse which are in use throughout the year but principally during the winter months when the outdoor green is closed. Our indoor membership has increased to its highest since the pandemic, so all our internal leagues are proving very popular and, inevitably, very keenly contested. Two months into the season our programme of friendly fixtures against other clubs now gets underway, the first of which was a thriller against North Petherton which IOW narrowly lost 29-34.



Our Men's section played their first round Denny Cup match against a hugely talented Clarrie Dunbar (Standerwick) team and were beaten on all four rinks (two home, two away). However, it was splendid to see some new bowlers from our summer recruitment campaign take part and perform really well. Our Ladies team played their first round Yetton Trophy match against a strong St Andrews side and lost on all four rinks.

The Somerset County Indoor Bowls league (North) begins soon, and our Men's team will be involved in playing against six other sides, home and away, over the next four months.

The Indoor Club Competitions are always greatly anticipated, keenly contested and get underway in November. This year a new Family Pairs format has been added to the list of trophies. Finals Weekend will be 16-17 March....one for your diaries!

Meanwhile the Social team at the Club has been working very hard to ensure our members keep out of mischief away from the bowls rinks. About forty members boarded a coach and headed to Bishops Lydeard station for a brilliant ride on the West Somerset Steam railway to Minehead with an accompanying Fish 'n' Chip lunch. Then, in October, a midweek Race Night was held at the clubhouse with a superb supper which, despite some awful weather courtesy of Storm Agnes, everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The next event is a Sausage and Mash Rollup, shortly to be followed by the Annual Awards Presentation Lunch to be held at Batch Country House, which is always a season highlight. Details will follow.

If you would like to have a go at Bowls and join this fantastic community club, we have a number of qualified coaches able to give training and provide advice. For more details please contact Indoor Secretary Steve Young on 01749 870987 or email him at [steveyoung1987@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveyoung1987@hotmail.co.uk) or simply visit our website [www.isleofwedmorebowlsclub.org](http://www.isleofwedmorebowlsclub.org).



*Dave Callow asks why Ann Hughes has brought so much luggage on a day trip to Minehead*

## Wedmore Golf Club

October is the final month of the summer season at the Golf Club and traditionally kicks off with Finals Day when the knockout competitions, which started back in April, reach their conclusion, mostly on the same day. There was an early start for some of the players on Saturday as two who had made it through to two finals played both in the course of the day. This clearly did not suit Steve Major who struggled against Martin



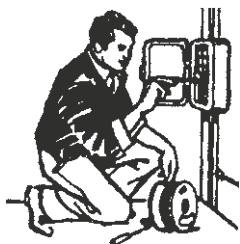
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Peakman in the Seniors Plate losing 4&2. The other player involved in two finals was Shirley Gooding, partnering Nicola Stevenson in the Ladies Pairs for the Crandon Cup. In a close game they eventually lost to Gina Falcon and Diane Miller.

The afternoon started with the Seniors Singles between Kevin Vaux and Ian Robson, who has been in excellent form recently. On this occasion though the resulting reduction in handicap proved too much with Vaux winning 3&2 in a high quality game. The Bill Lander Trophy for men with handicaps higher than 15.4 was a very close match with players going down the nineteenth hole before John Steele got the better of Rob Major. The Ladies low handicap MacArthur singles was won by Cathy Olive, overcoming Lyn Bird on the fifteenth hole. The higher handicap version of the Ladies Singles was a very hard fought affair with Fran Mcmillan winning on the eighteenth hole against June Smith.

Steve Major made his second appearance of the day partnering Clive-Warren Smith in the Seniors Summer Pairs against John Russell and Chris Donald. After taking an early lead Major and Warren-Smith were pegged back before coming through to win on the seventeenth. Shirley Gooding had no such compensation and actually had to play two extra holes before she and partner Paul Stevenson lost to Ruth Rogers and Ian Sentance in the Mixed Greensomes. That left one more final to complete. A dogged battle for the Peter Hathaway Trophy for Men's Fourballs with Trevor Marshall and Moly Mcmillan eventually running out winners against Alex Chetwode and Kevin Harris. As Kevin Harris had also made the final of the Singles competition, played over 36 holes, this had to be held on a different day. Unfortunately for Kevin, the result was the same, with him losing out to Richard Vowles in this final.



*Winners from the Yonex Trophy with their prizes*

The next week there were at least three trophies up for grabs, starting with the Senior Captain's Day on Monday. There was plenty of competition for prizes as well, with the best score of the day coming in division 1 from David Crew whose score of 42 was 2 better than runner-up Kevin Vaux with Martin Olive another shot further

behind. The best score in division 2 was 41 but there were two players on this score with Kevin Ogden edging out Charles Woodard on countback. Philip Horn was third with 38 points. Chris Donald was the clear winner in division 3, his score of 39 was 2 better than Philip Springfield with Ray Dodkin another shot back in third place. A good day for Captain Steve Sage, despite not appearing in the prizes.

The Ladies were playing for the Olive Bowl and there was really only one contender for this with Wendy Lucas scoring 40 points, 4 shots better than any other player and winning division 2 ahead of Nicola Stevenson with Linda Roberts taking third place. Liz Hill took first place in division 1 but only on countback from Ali Mantell after both scored 36. Eunice Bond was third on 35. Players in division 3 struggled in soft conditions. Janet Cornish won with 29 points ahead of Jill Cornish and Janet Robson.

The final Open of the year, the Yonex, took place on Sunday with a good number of visitors taking part. Familiarity with the home course proved decisive as it often does. Jeff Bulcock won the Yonex Trophy with 39 points. Kevin Harris had the same score, losing out on countback but still winning division 1. Nick Parker beat Rich Vowles for second place after both scored 38. Paul Russell took the honours in division 2, again on countback this time from Rob Major. Ian Williams was third with 36. Lee Saxon was clear winner in division 3, his 35 putting him 4 ahead of Charlie Rich with Eddie Charlton third. Alex Fry took the best visitor prize. Good scores in the Ladies Division 1 saw Lesley Moore win on 38, 2 better than Shirley Gooding. Countback was needed in division 2 to put Janet Robson in first place ahead of Carol Horsley. Lesley Wills took the best visitor prize.



*Club Captain Jay James receiving the Barron-Midgley Trophy from Vice Captain Dave Bedford*



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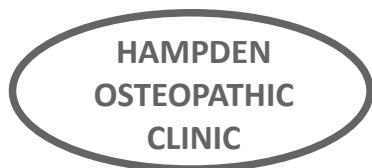
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By the end of the month the sunshine and warmth of the early weeks had given way to rain. Despite this the course was in remarkably good condition for the annual match between teams representing the Captain, Jay James, and Vice-Captain Dave Bedford. Despite having a team weighed down by former Captains it was the Captain's team who took the honours winning by 7.5 matches to 5.5. Judging by the mood over food and drink in the club House afterwards, nobody was too upset. Next month change really sets in as we start the process of changing captains.

---

# Church News

## Christmas Carol and Christingle Services

Here is a summary of the main Carol and Christingle services across the churches in and around the Isle of Wedmore:

### **St. Mary's Church, Wedmore – Advent Carol Service – Sunday 3 December, 6 pm**

The first weekend in December sees the beginning of Advent, the time in the church's year for preparing ourselves to receive our Lord Jesus when he comes, both at Christmas in human form and at the end of time in glory. Advent Sunday, 3 December, will be marked in the evening when St Mary's will move from darkness to light during the Advent Carol Service at 6 pm. This is a particularly moving service in which the theme of the coming of the light of Christ is invoked with hymns, music and readings appropriate to the Advent season.

### **Allerton Church – Christingle Service – Sunday 3 December, 4 pm**

### **Blackford Church – Christingle Service – Sunday 10 December, 9 am**

### **Christ Church, Theale – Carol Service – Sunday 17 December, 11 am**

### **Allerton Church – Carol Service – Sunday 17 December, 6.30 pm**

### **Crickham Baptist Chapel – Carol Service – Sunday 17 December, 6.30 pm**

A carol service will be held at Crickham Baptist church on Sunday 17 December at 6.30 pm. It is an all-age carol service and everyone's sure of a warm welcome.

### **Blackford Church – Carol Service – Monday 18 December, 6.30 pm**

Bring your family and friends to join in singing community carols at Blackford Church on Monday 18 December at 6.30 pm with the Blackford Singers. This has become one of the traditions of Christmas for local families and is an hour of carol singing in the warmth and safety of the village church rather than the cold streets. Refreshments available.

### **Bagley Baptist Church – Mince Pies and Carols – Wednesday 20 December 10.30 am**

Join us from 10.30 to 12.00 noon for mince pies and Carols

### **St. Mary's Church, Wedmore – Christingle – Sunday 24 December, 5 pm**

## Parish Registers

### **Baptisms**

*Welcome to the following baptised into God's church recently:*

Joshua and Charlie Teakle, sons of Piers and Stefanie from Munich, who were baptised on 15 October 2023 at St Mary's Church.

## **Funerals**

*Our condolences go to the family and friends of:*

Jane Sellars of Longfield Drive, Wedmore, who died on 29 September aged 67, and whose funeral took place at St Mary's Church on 16 October 2023.

Kenneth Chick of Latcham, who died on 21 September aged 91, and whose funeral took place at St Mary's on 9 October 2023.

Doreen Duckett, who died on 7 October aged 89, and whose funeral took place at St Mary's Church on 31 October 2023.

## **'On a Wheel and a Prayer'**

On Tuesday 19 December the vicar will be conducting the next 'cycle prayer pilgrimage', cycling around the different villages and hamlets that make up the Benefice of the Isle of Wedmore that our churches serve, stopping at various points and praying for the particular communities. Details of timings can be found in the churches, and you are welcome to join Richard at any of the stops.

## **Charity at Christmas**

It will be important to remember those who are struggling this Christmas. There will be opportunities to give to the Children's Society at Christingle services and to the Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service by bringing unwrapped toys and toiletries to one of our gift services and additionally to a charity at the Christmas Morning Services.

## **Travelling Crib**

During December figures of Mary and Joseph plus their donkey will be seeking for homes to stay for a night during that symbolic Advent urney towards. The Travelling Crib is a tradition from, where it is called POSADA and is all about offering Mary and Joseph hospitality on their urney, and in so doing, opening one's home and heart to the stranger and to God.

If you want to host Mary and Joseph for a night, please contact Laura at [stmarywedmore@gmail.com](mailto:stmarywedmore@gmail.com) for the one travelling around Wedmore or Yvonne Hutchison for the one making its way around Theale, or have a look at the list in St Mary's or Christchurch.

## **Christmas Night Production**

A production from our local Ukrainian guests in St Mary's Wedmore in the evening of 15 December. Following on from the powerful 'Don't Close Your Eyes' that marked the anniversary of the war in Ukraine on 24 February, 'Christmas Night' will share some of the Ukrainian Christmas traditions, spread some Christmas joy and celebrate the common Christmas carols both our countries share. Look out for details on posters and on social media. All funds raised will go to winter clothing for the menfolk of our local refugees on the frontline.

# Church Services in December

Our worship will also continue to be available online. At least one of our Sunday services each week is recorded, and you can join in via the St Mary's YouTube channel. Links for all the above and details of services both online and in churches can be found [achurchnearyou.com/church/10871/](http://achurchnearyou.com/church/10871/).

Everyday excluding Sunday there is Morning Prayer online at 9 am on our Facebook page [facebook.com/St-Marys-Wedmore-384215139101196](https://facebook.com/St-Marys-Wedmore-384215139101196).

## St Mary's Church, Wedmore

Holy Communion is celebrated most weeks on Wednesday morning at

Sunday	3	Advent Sunday	10.30 am	Café Church & Gift Service
Wednesday	7	---	6.00 pm	Advent Carols
			5.15 pm	Crib Service (Wedmore Lamplight)
Sunday	10	Advent 2	10.30 am	Parish Communion
			6.00 pm	Start the Week
Sunday	17	Advent 3	10.30 am	Morning Praise
Sunday	24	Christmas Eve / Advent 4	6.00 pm	Candlelit Carol Service
			8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion
			5.00 pm	Christingle Service
			11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
Monday	25	Christmas Day	10.30 am	Christmas Morning Communion
Sunday	31	Christmas 1	10.30 am	Benefice Communion

## Holy Trinity Church, Blackford

Sunday	3	Advent Sunday		Parish Communion
Sunday	10	Advent 2	9.00 am	Sunday Breakfast, Christingle & Gift Service
Sunday	17	Advent 3	6.30 pm	Parish Communion
Monday	18	---		Community Carols in Church
Monday	25	Christmas Day	9.00 am	Family Communion
Sunday	31	Christmas 1		No Service – See St Mary's

## Christ Church, Theale

Sunday	3	Advent Sunday	11.00 am	Parish Communion & Gift Service
Sunday	10	Advent 2	4.30 pm	Morning Praise
Saturday	16			*Village Hall: The Road to Bethlehem
Sunday	17	Advent 3	6.00 pm	Carol Service

Thursday 21	---		*Bodley Orchard: Village Carols
Monday 25	Christmas Day	11.00 am	Christmas Morning Communion
Sunday 31	Christmas 1		No Service – See St Mary's

*\*for more details contact Elizabeth at [elizabethcoulter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:elizabethcoulter@hotmail.co.uk)*

## Allerton Church

Sunday 3	Advent Sunday	4.00 pm	Christingle Service
Sunday 10	Advent 2		Parish Communion
Sunday 17	Advent 3	6.30 pm	Family Service & Nativity Carol Service
Sunday 24	Christmas Eve	6.30 pm	Carols around the Cross
Monday 25	Christmas Day	9.00 am	Christmas Morning Communion
Sunday 31	Christmas 1		No Service – See St Mary's

## Bagley Baptist Church

Sunday service at 10.30 am. Come in person or view live via our Bagley Baptist YouTube channel. Teaching groups for children & young people starting around 11 am. Every Wednesday 10.30 am – 12 noon is our popular 'Coffee with a View.' Come for coffee/tea, home-made cakes, our wonderful view, and a warm welcome. All free of charge. Bring a friend or come and make some new ones here. We have good parking and wheelchair access.

Every Wednesday (term time) at 7.30 pm we have youth groups for ages 10-17 years. Other fellowship groups are available: Young Adults Group 17-25 years, Home Groups, monthly Prayer Meetings, and more. For further details Tel: 01934 710779, Email: [contactus@bagleybaptist.co.uk](mailto:contactus@bagleybaptist.co.uk), website: [www.bagleybaptist.co.uk](http://www.bagleybaptist.co.uk)

Mince Pies & Carols, Wed 20 Dec 10.30 - 12 noon.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on 24 Dec at 7 pm.

Christmas Day service at 10.15 am

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# Axbridge and Wedmore GP Practice

## Surgery Opening Times

*Please note that the Wedmore Surgery opening times were incorrect in previous issues of the Wedmore News. The surgery is only open until 1.00 pm on Fridays. Our apologies for any inconvenience caused – Ed.*

## Wedmore Surgery

Monday .....	8.30 am to 6.00 pm
Tuesday to Friday .....	8.30 am to 1.00 pm

Telephone 01934 712774

### **Axbridge Surgery**

Monday to Fridays . . . . . 8.30 am to 6.00 pm

Telephone 01934 732464 - Please note the surgeries are closed on Bank Holidays.

### **Contact our Clinical Team through our Website**

We can also be contacted, in your own time, through our website, with a member of our clinical team replying to you by the end of the next working day. You will be asked to complete an online form. This is useful for non-urgent conditions. We will then contact you and let you know the best action to take.

[www.axbridgeandwedmoremedicalpractice.nhs.uk](http://www.axbridgeandwedmoremedicalpractice.nhs.uk)

### **Improved Access Appointments**

Axbridge Surgery, Tuesdays . . . . . 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm

During these a Nurse/HCA/Phlebotomist will be available for routine appointments outside normal surgery times. These appointments are provided, but not exclusively, for those patients who find it difficult to attend during normal surgery hours. Please note, these hours may be subject to change depending on the availability of clinical staff.

Please visit our website or visit/ telephone the practice 732464 or 712774 for changes to opening hours. You can also obtain 24-hour general medical advice by telephoning NHS 111, or visit the NHS 111 website.

*During improved access appointments the front door will be locked. Please ring the video doorbell for access. Access will only be granted to patients with pre-booked appointments. Surgery telephones are not manned during extended hours.*

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## **Wedmore Community Bus**

### **Cribbs Causeway**

These trips usually take place on the third Monday of each month and are proving very popular.

Departure is from the Lerburne Car Park, Wedmore, at 9.30 am, with pick-ups for those who need them from 9.30 am in Wedmore, Sand, Heath House, Mudgley, Latcham, Cocklake, Blackford and Mark.

The bus arrives in Cribbs Causeway around 11.00 am and departs again at 2.00 pm, arriving back in the Lerburne Car Park, Wedmore around 3.30 pm, following drop-offs on the way.

Fares for the round trip: Concessions - £2, other adults - £5, under 17 - £2.50, under 5 – free.





# WEDMORE BY LAMPLIGHT

**Wednesday 13th December**  
**6:00pm – 9:00pm**

 **The Borough, Wedmore**

**5:15pm** Crib service at St. Marys Church  
**5.35pm** Carols around the tree  
**5.50pm** Carol procession to the village

Late Night Shopping - Stalls - Food and Drink   
Live Music - Festive Entertainment - Father Christmas



**Follow us!**



# WARM IN WEDMORE THIS WINTER

**Let's all get together for a few hours  
of friendly company (and soup!)**



**Every Wednesday  
and Thursday  
from 6th December  
at the Masonic Hall,  
Church Street  
10am-2pm**

**Info: 01934 806299**

**Wedmore Community Power Co-op, Wedmore Parish Council, Wedmore Health & Wellbeing, St Mary's Church & The Isle of Wedmore Good Neighbours**

**For bookings and further information, please call Angeline Duckett on 01934 712631 to agree a convenient pick-up location and time. Call as soon as you can to avoid disappointment.**

### **Scheduled Services**

There are four Scheduled Services a week. These are:

Taunton - Tuesday  
Bridgwater - Wednesday  
Weston-s-Mare - Thursday  
Street & Glastonbury - Friday

The bus departs from Wedmore Car Park at The Lerburne at around 9.30 am to start picking up passengers. It returns to Wedmore between 1.30 pm and 2.45 pm depending on the destination. See below for more details.

The bus is a friendly place where there is normally a happy buzz of conversation. Our passengers often meet for a coffee whilst at the destination.

Anyone is welcome to come on the bus and a place can easily be booked by telephone.

We try to pick up and drop off at the homes of all users who need this. For other passengers this will be at a location that is convenient for them. We are also flexible about drop offs on route.

We are happy to provide help in getting on and off the bus for those who need it.

Drivers are all volunteers who want to help passengers to enjoy their time on the bus as much as possible.

The service is free for everyone with a Concessionary Bus Pass and for children under 5 years old. For other passengers, fares are low as the bus is financed by Somerset CC and drivers are volunteers.

## **Timetable and Booking Details**

### **All services**

Depart Wedmore Car Park at The Lerburne at around 9.30am to start picking up passengers.

#### **Tuesday - Taunton**

Departs Taunton 2.00 pm. Back around 2.45 pm.

#### **Wednesday - Bridgwater**

Departs Bridgwater 1.00 pm. Back around 2.00 pm.

#### **Thursday - Weston-super-Mare**

Departs Weston 1.45 pm. Back around 2.45 pm.

#### **Friday - Street and Glastonbury**

Departs Street 1.00 pm. Back around 1.30 pm.

Passenger pickups/drop-offs for all four services are normally available in Wedmore, Sand, Heath House, Mudgley, Latcham and Cocklake.

Additional pickups/drop-offs are normally available in other villages on route to each destination

## **Taunton & Bridgwater**

these are at Blackford, Mark, Bason Bridge and East Huntspill

## **Weston-super-Mare**

these are at Stoughton, Allerton, Blackford and Mark

## **Street**

these are at Theale and Godney

To be sure of a seat, just call the number indicated below against the relevant destination at the time shown and we'll agree a convenient pick-up location and time.

Alternatively, just come to the Lerburne car park before 9.30 am. We will normally be able to fit you in, although this isn't guaranteed.

## **Tuesday to Taunton**

Angeline Duckett on 01934 712631 between 6 pm & 6.30 pm on the previous evening.

## **Wednesday to Bridgwater**

Helen Flooks on 01934 611006 between 6 pm & 6.30 pm on the previous evening.

## **Thursday to Weston-super-Mare**

Carol Ayliffe on 01934 713471 between 6 pm & 6.30 pm on the previous evening.

## **Friday to Street & Glastonbury**

Ann Hughes on 01934 712832 between 6 pm & 6.30 pm on the previous evening.

## **Relief Booking Controller**

Lesley 01934 900571

## **Private Hire**

On weekends the bus is available for private hire throughout the day and in the evening. It is also available by arrangement on most Mondays.

On Tuesdays to Fridays it is available for private hire after 3.30 pm and in the evening.

Each private hire comes with a list of volunteer drivers for the hirer to approach.

The bus has seats for a maximum of 16 passengers. It is often booked for weddings, club outings etc.

To make a booking please contact us by email at [iowrtabookings@gmail.com](mailto:iowrtabookings@gmail.com)

*Further details at the Wedmore website [theisleofwedmore.net/Local Directory/Wedmore Community Bus](http://theisleofwedmore.net/Local%20Directory/Wedmore%20Community%20Bus) or email us at [wedmorebus@gmail.com](mailto:wedmorebus@gmail.com)*

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## **Crossword Number 78 – Answers**

**Across:** 1. Thorough 9. Inhumane 10. Anti 11. Nautical mile 13. Agnostic 15. Hassle 16. Stet 17. Speed 18. Hazy 20. Corona 21. Transcept 23. Resting place 26. Rile 27. Commando 28. War paint  
**Down:** 2. Hen night 3. Rainbow trout 4. Unjust 5. Hi-fi 6. Thrashed 7. Sari 8. Cemetery 12. Mass hysteria 14. Cheat 16. Sack race 17. Stagnant 19. Zeppelin 22. Avatar 24. Same 25. Prow

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*Roderick Thomas*







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**HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS**



THE LONDON  
OFFICE



With all our best wishes for a bright  
healthy and prosperous  
**2024**

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Carol Tratt, Branch Manager, Wedmore 01934 713296 [wedmore@cooperandtanner.co.uk](mailto:wedmore@cooperandtanner.co.uk)

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TANNER**



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FARMS  
AND LAND

