

# THE LINK



THE UNITED PARISH OF  
HOLY TRINITY, ABBOTS LEIGH  
WITH  
ST. MARY-THE-VIRGIN, LEIGH WOODS  
Website:  
[www.theparishchurch.com](http://www.theparishchurch.com)

FEBRUARY 2026 £1.00

# Dates for the Diary

## FEBRUARY

Sun 8	10am-noon Abbots Pool Working Party
Mon 9	Abbots Leigh Parish Council, 7pm
Tues 10	Abbots Leigh WI
Thurs 12	Mobile Library visit
Sat 14	Parish Council surgery, Bike Shed
Sat 14	St Mary's Church gardening/clearing up
Mon 16	Tea Time Special
Wed 18	Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group
Tues 24	Herb Group, Abbots Leigh Village Hall
Wed 25	Community Cinema: Truly Madly Deeply
Thurs 26	Mobile Library visit



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## Weekly village hall events

**Mondays** 10-11am: Exercise Class for the older adult. [www.exercisewithlailibrooks.com](http://www.exercisewithlailibrooks.com)

**Wednesdays** 12.10-12.55: Exercise Class

**Thursdays** 10am-12.30: Art Group  
6.30-8.30pm: Yoga

## Monthly events

**1st Tuesday:** Men's Social Group,  
The George 5-7pm

**2nd Tuesday:** WI 7.30-9.30pm, Village Hall

## Caring At Christmas

A very big 'thank you' to everyone who supported Caring at Christmas coffee and mince pies morning in St Mary's Church Vestry. The speaker from the charity took away a car full of warm clothes and food and a total of £620 has been raised. An absolutely wonderful result!

Lesley Nash

## YOUR LINK

*The Link is commissioned by the United Parish Parochial Church Council to be a blessing to the whole parish. We hope to provide a platform for a variety of advertisements and opinions, but these don't all represent the PCC's views.*

### Subscriptions – suggested donation minimum £10.

Thanks to all who pay by BACS - to UPALandLW Sort code **40-52-40**.

Account No. **00010334**. Please include LINK in your reference (these details are correct and do work despite messages you may get on your screen. Some banks don't recognise our account name but payments do reach us!)

If paying by cash (or cheque to UPALandLW) please put in an envelope and give it to your deliverer or Siân Narracott, Trinity House, Harris Lane, Abbots Leigh, BS8 3QX.

**Editor:** Mick Scanlan Email: [Linkeditor2024@gmail.com](mailto:Linkeditor2024@gmail.com) tel 01275 372788

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**Advertisements:** Robert Narracott, Trinity House, Harris Lane Abbots Leigh BS8 3QX  
07773 368311 [robert.narracott@gmail.com](mailto:robert.narracott@gmail.com)

**Distribution:** Abbots Leigh: Mary or Richard Oliver 07769 341875 [maryinnottingham@gmail.com](mailto:maryinnottingham@gmail.com)  
Leigh Woods: Mark Rayson 0117 973 1842 [mark@mrconsulting.biz](mailto:mark@mrconsulting.biz)

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From our new vicar, the Reverend Rosemary Radcliffe

## New starts

Having just been appointed as Vicar of Abbots Leigh with Leigh Woods it feels significant to talk about new starts. January is usually a time for making New Year's resolutions, and frequently a time to physically detox after the excesses of Christmas. We aim to commit to a healthier lifestyle, I wonder how many of us have been able to do so - congratulations if you have made it to the end of January with your resolution still in place.

February sees another opportunity to change; the start of Lent, an important time in the Christian year, when people often give up something or take up a new activity.

Lent is also a time of personal reflection and an opportunity to put down some of those things that get in the way of our relationship with God. Perhaps this year you might like to take the opportunity to use it as a time to reflect on your relationships, with God or with others or a time to be honest with yourself. You might like to create a space at home, perhaps declutter an area and find a candle to light, a picture to contemplate, a poem to read, to prompt your thoughts, reflections and prayers. Holy Trinity Church is frequently open during the day if you need a separate space to go to and reflect.

During my licensing service in January, Bishop Neil made three suggestions as part of his sermon:

**1** Go into the woods: spend time in nature.

Listen to the world of creation that exists all around us.

Look for signs of new life in spring. See God's abundance.

Allow God's peace and beauty to fill your soul.

**2** "When making a decision, use Ignatius, go to the light"

Make the decision with hope, not fear, and be freed from anxiety.

**3** Make more risotto.

You can't hurry it, the rice takes time to absorb the liquid, so you have to take it one tiny step at a time.

Live life in the now: be present in the moment, present to each other.

As Lent approaches I invite you to think about what difference it would make in your life, if you took on one of those suggestions.

I'd like to offer you the words of a prayer:

*God of New Beginnings. We are walking into mystery. We face the future, not knowing what the days and months will bring us or how we will respond.*

*Be love in us as we journey. May we welcome all who come our way.*

*Deepen our faith, to see all life through your eyes.*

*Fill us with hope and an abiding trust that You dwell in us amidst all our joys and sorrows.*

*Thank you for the treasure of our faith life.*

*Thank you for the gift of being able to rise each day with the assurance of Your walking through the day with us.*

*God of our past and future, we praise you. Amen*



## New Village Agent For Abbots Leigh & Leigh Woods

My name is Sian Taylor, and I am the Village Agent for Abbots Leigh & Leigh Woods.

### What is a Village Agent?

My role is to connect people living in rural areas with advice and support services that help them maintain independent living. I provide a friendly, free and confidential service for anyone aged 50 and over.

I can provide information and advice on many different matters and concerns, such as: Help to stay living in your own home; information about care and support services; details of local social groups and activities, and what support is available.

Please call me on 0798 5017655 or email [sian@wern.org.uk](mailto:sian@wern.org.uk). I'm always happy to help.



## ST MARY'S CHURCH GARDENING

Join us on Saturday, February 14 and Saturday, March 14, from 10am to noon. All ages welcome. Bring gloves (and tools if you wish). Meet neighbours and help to keep the church gardens looking cared for.

## CHURCH CONTACTS

**PARISH ADMIN:** Contact Wendy Mortimer (Area Dean's secretary) for enquiries about weddings, funerals or baptisms

Email: [office@allsaintsclifton.org](mailto:office@allsaintsclifton.org) Tel: 0117 9741355

For enquiries about either Holy Trinity or St Mary's please contact Michael Bothamley (Churchwarden)

Email: [michaelbothamley@hotmail.com](mailto:michaelbothamley@hotmail.com) Tel: 07747101752

If you have information about those who are ill, at home or in hospital, who would like to be visited, please contact our Pastoral Team co-ordinator Alan Shellard, tel: 0117 974 1494 [alanshellard@gmail.com](mailto:alanshellard@gmail.com)

**Websites:** Leigh Woods [leighwoods.org](http://leighwoods.org) - St Mary's, BS8 3PG  
Abbots Leigh [www.abbotsleigh.org.uk](http://www.abbotsleigh.org.uk) - Holy Trinity, BS8 3QU  
United Parish website: [www.theparishchurch.com](http://www.theparishchurch.com)

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL WEBSITE:** [www.theparishchurch.com](http://www.theparishchurch.com)  
Keep up-to-date on the events and highlights of our united parish.

**Abbots Leigh churchwardens**

**Leigh Woods churchwardens:**

Michael Bothamley 07747 101752

**Deputies:**

Alan Shellard 0117 974 1494

Ginny Owen 07477 581337 (Sacristan)

**Treasurers:** Carole Nicholls 01275 373888      Michael Bothamley 07747 101752

**United Parish Treasurer:** Siân Narracott [sian.narracott@googlemail.com](mailto:sian.narracott@googlemail.com) 01275 375619

**Organist:** John Talbot 0117 942 8344

**Websites:** United Parish: [www.theparishchurch.com](http://www.theparishchurch.com)

Abbots Leigh: [www.abbotsleigh.org.uk](http://www.abbotsleigh.org.uk)

Leigh Woods: [www.leighwoods.org](http://www.leighwoods.org)      Holy Trinity, BS8 3QU

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## New Mobile Library hits the road

A new electric Mobile Library vehicle has been delivered and is now stocked with books and already out on the road.

The service team said: "We would like to say a massive heartfelt thank you for bearing with us and continuing to use the interim service.

"We know that it hasn't been the same as being able to climb onboard and browse the shelves for yourself, so we really do appreciate your continuing support by using our temporary vehicle.

"Your patience and understanding has meant a lot whilst we waited for the new electric vehicle to be built from scratch and delivered.

"By switching to an electric vehicle, we will be dramatically reducing the Mobile Library's emissions and fuel costs, helping us in our mission to protect the environment and build a green North Somerset.

"We'd love to welcome you onboard and see what you think!"

### February visits:

The Mobile Library visits every two weeks.

February 12 & 26 (Thursdays): Church Road, Leigh Woods, 1.30-2pm;  
Church Road, Abbots Leigh, 2.10-3.10pm

Please note that stops and timings may be subject to change. For more information call 01275 888 864 or email [mobile.library@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:mobile.library@n-somerset.gov.uk). Visit [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk) or the LibrariesWest App.



## ABBOTS LEIGH CIVIC SOCIETY

The Committee of the Civic Society were deeply saddened to learn of Murray Stewart's passing just prior to Christmas. Murray had been a committee member of the Civic Society for many years. His endless enthusiasm for fellow villagers having a wonderful place to live was only matched by his historical knowledge of where we live. His sense of humour and wise words were always a joy. Murray will be missed by us all on the committee and by numerous villagers he encountered. **See also page 13**



During 2026 the Civic Society will organise the Festival in the Field and Bonfire Night Fireworks party, as well as supporting a number of other village events. The committee will shortly be uploading its end of year report to the Abbots Leigh Website on the achievements of last year, and roles and responsibilities for the coming year.

**Please get involved** We are so lucky to have such wonderful volunteers who help make our events successful. As well as being fun, volunteering is a great way to meet new people. So, if you like working with a team, enjoying a laugh and being part of our lovely village community then we would love to hear from you. We always welcome suggestions and ideas so please do get in touch at [alcivicsociety@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:alcivicsociety@abbotsleigh.org.uk)

## News from Abbots Leigh Parish Council

### Changes at Portishead Recycling Centre

North Somerset Council is introducing a booking system for the Portishead Recycling Centre from Monday, March 2 - visits from then will need to be booked online in advance. There will also be a phone option. Slots will be available to book as little as 10 minutes before, assuming there is one available. The system aims to make visits faster, safer and more efficient. But it will inevitably lead to more fly tipping in lanes around our village, especially Weir Lane, which seems to be a favoured spot. The booking system will be available via a link on the Council website or on the North Somerset Council App.

### Garden Waste

Later this month, customers will be able to sign up or renew their annual subscription for 2026-27. Existing customers will be contacted about their renewal. The introduction of a booking system at Portishead Recycling Centre will also apply to garden waste.

### Traffic Matters

Speedwatch volunteers are back this month following a well-deserved break. New members are welcome to become part of the team, so please contact [ros@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:ros@abbotsleigh.org.uk) if you feel you could help for an hour a month.

### Community Payback Scheme

In December and January the team cleared the footpath behind St Katherine's School car park, removed graffiti on the substations by Poundbatch Farm, reclaimed the footway between Poundbatch and Leigh Court drive, and also cleared Church Road outside the Village Hall. We now share the team with Pill, so they will now only be here every 8 weeks.

### Planning applications

Application	Site	Proposal	PC Comment	NSC Outcome
25/P/2595/FUL	Bristol & Clifton Golf Club Land West of Weir Lane, Falland	Proposed academy golf facility and creation of irrigation ponds	<b>Object:</b> The importation of 326,135 tonnes of fill resulting in an average of one 8 wheeler lorry movement every six minutes on Weir Lane, which is a single track road with a 4-tonne weight limit, would make the road unusable for two years for all of the pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders who use the road. The environmental impact on the local water courses which drain into the Abbots Pool Local Nature Reserve would have a disastrous effect on the local wildlife including the thousands of toads which breed in the ponds.	Registered
25/P/2447/FUH	11 Church Rd Abbots Leigh BS8 3QP	Demolition of existing single storey side extension pitched roof and erection of first floor side extension above with pitched roof and rear dormer. Replacement of existing rear loft dormer and demolition of existing rear first floor terrace and erection of new single storey rear extension. Alterations to front driveway, and improvements to front and rear landscaping.	No Comment	Registered
25/P/2307/EA1	Land West of Pill Road Abbots Leigh (Opposite St Katherine's School)	Formal Screening Opinion request to determine as to whether proposed development is EIA development. Works proposed: Residential development of up to 100 dwellings and 72-bed care home with access, landscaping and other works. NOT A PLANNING APPLICATION	<b>Object:</b> The site immediately abuts Leigh Wood/Markham Bottom, a DEFRA designated Ancient and Semi Natural Ancient Woodland through which Markham Brook flows therefore a full environmental impact assessment should be carried out.	TBC
25/P/2375/CRA	Kingcott Farm Beggar Bush Lane BS8 3TF	Application to determine if prior approval is required for change of use of 3 existing barns into office accommodation (Use Class E).	No Comment	TBC
25/P/2280/LDE	Grangewood House Manor Road BS8 3RP	Certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of land as residential curtilage associated with Grangewood house.	<b>Object:</b> The history described in the applicant's planning statement is factually incorrect. This area behind the house renamed Grangewood House should continue to be considered a field or paddock and should not be permitted to become part of the curtilage of the adjacent property. This is in the Green Belt and not part of the proposed Abbots Leigh settlement boundary in the Local Plan	Approve (Lawful)
25/P/2007/FUL	Denny House Pill Road BS8 3QY	Convert and extend an existing house in a poor state of repair into 3 self-contained dwelling units including associated works	No Objection	TBC

### Golf club expansion plan

Bristol and Clifton Golf has put in a planning application reference **25/P/2595/FUL** (see page 6) to create an additional 9-hole golf course and irrigation ponds in the field adjacent to where Weir Lane meets Manor Road.

This proposal involves the importing of around 210,000 cubic metres (326,135



tonnes) of excavated fill. This will result in an average of one 8-wheeler lorry movement (weighing 35 tonnes when loaded) every six minutes on Weir Lane, which is a single track rural lane with a current 4-tonne weight limit, for at least two years.

The Parish Council and the Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group are extremely concerned on two fronts:

- The potential environmental impact on the local water courses which drain into the Abbots Pool Local Nature Reserve which would have a disastrous effect on the local wildlife including the thousands of toads which breed in the ponds, together with the wider environmental impact on the local ecological system.
- The dramatic impact over a long period of time on the local traffic and other users of the lane including all the walkers, cyclists and horse riders who use Weir Lane.

### Parish Council meetings

Residents are very welcome to attend Parish Council meetings, usually held on the second Monday of each month. If you would like to discuss a parish matter at the beginning of the meeting, contact Nic Rice, Clerk to the Parish Council, in advance.

Our next meeting is on Monday, February 9 at 7pm in the John Butler Room in the village hall. The agenda and minutes are available on the village website.

### Meet the Parish Councillors

Surgeries are held on the second Saturday of the month, 9.30-10.30am, in the Bike Shed Café, when at least two parish councillors are available to chat with residents about village matters. The next surgery is scheduled for Saturday, February 14.

### Parish Councillors

**Simon Talbot-Ponsonby** (Chair) Planning, Village Hall, Old School Field, Skittle Alley  
**Kamala Das** (Vice-chair) Highways, Cycle Network, Verges

**Ros Delany** Community Groups, Civic Society Liaison, Link Contributions, Village Green, Abbots Leigh Charities

**Jenna Ho Marris** (also North Somerset Councillor) Liaison with District Council, Recycling and Rubbish (including litter pick), Community Innovation

**Martin Walker** Finance, Abbots Pool, Public Footpaths, Website

**Nic Rice** Clerk to the Council who works out of the Resource Centre in Pill. Secretariat, Insurance, Police Coordination, Village Orderly

If you have a concern or query, contact the relevant councillor via email:

[simon@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:simon@abbotsleigh.org.uk) [kamala@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:kamala@abbotsleigh.org.uk) [ros@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:ros@abbotsleigh.org.uk)

[jenna@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:jenna@abbotsleigh.org.uk) [martin@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:martin@abbotsleigh.org.uk)

Contact the Parish Clerk on [parishclerk@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:parishclerk@abbotsleigh.org.uk) or phone 01275 374442



Message from Pill Ward Councillor Jenna Ho Marrs

## It's Budget time, and I will cry if I want to

The Government has concluded its Fair Funding Review (or should that be 'un-Fair Funding Review') and North Somerset Council has been told its 'provisional settlement' is expected to be £18.6m less over the next three years.

The review was supposed to even out low council tax bases and take into account multiple deprivation and rurality, all of which NSC has, but unfortunately this didn't work out for us. Our settlement was also calculated as if we charge a higher amount of council tax than we actually do - £2,061 for a Band D instead of £1,794. Council leader Mike Bell has written to the Prime Minister, but will he listen?

This leaves NSC with no choice but to apply for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS). Last year 30 councils were granted EFS, this year it is predicted [by the Local Government Chronicle - a non-political paper] that 1 in 5, or 50 to 100, councils will seek EFS. EFS would give NSC the ability to increase council tax beyond the statutory limit of 4.99%. As we are not the first in the queue, NSC will not hear back until the end of February. In the meantime, NSC finance teams are modelling like crazy to try to plan for the different budget scenarios, while councillors are reviewing the spectrum of cuts and changes which might be needed.

### Where is the spend going?

Over 2026-27, we expect that 62% of NSC's net budget will be spent on social care for children and adults, up from 52% last year. It's easy to guess why - we have an ageing population that needs more care, while care costs are rising due to national policy changes such as restricting foreign care workers and increasing minimum wage and National Insurance. But there's more to this.

I had a chat with my colleague Cllr Roger Whitfield, who is the Cabinet lead for Adult Social Care. He told me there are two things people get wrong:

First, Adult Social Care is not just for elderly residents. The council provides care for anyone aged over 18 who cannot look after themselves, such as through severe special educational needs and disabilities. There may be working-age adults who need 24/7 care, some with up to five carers. In a previous age, many would not survive in good health even to middle age. NSC looks after around 250 residents with supported living needs (up 25% from 2023) and the care costs range from £100,000 to £1m per person per year.

Second, how NSC gets repaid by Government for care costs. In short - they only get some back. Under the Care Act 2014, the local council must assess if a resident needs care, and then provide it. There is no provision for costs. NSC has to claim back costs however it can - this is another difficult area. But what is most confounding is that the Government funding formula (updated by the (un)Fair Funding Review) does not take into account a council's actual care costs or any changes to the population or its actual needs. NSC cares for around 8,000 adults in total. Last year NSC came within a hair's breadth of achieving Good in its CQC review, and passed an audit by CIPFA for financial resilience.

Reforming Adult Social Care is politically tricky. This Government recognises it is necessary, with the Casey Commission due to publish its final report in ... 2028. In the meantime, as Cllr Whitfield tells me, the adult social care system is broken. It's a marvel that residents are living longer and better lives, but this costs money and no one wants to pay for care, including the Government. We need something different.

**Welcome** A warm hello to Revd Rosemary Radcliffe, our new Vicar. Thanks to the parish church leadership team for inviting me to Rosemary's joyful induction. I wish you all the best in your new home here and look forward to meeting properly - I think we have a lot in common! **Get in touch** Email [jenna.homarris@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jenna.homarris@n-somerset.gov.uk) or [jenna@abbotsleigh.org.uk](mailto:jenna@abbotsleigh.org.uk) or call 07385 010 137 (leave a message). Sorry, I can't make Saturday mornings anymore due to family commitments. I am often available Friday mornings at the Bike Shed, get in touch.



## Truly Madly Deeply

**When:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026

**Where:** St Mary's Church, Leigh Woods

**Time:** Doors open 6.45pm. Film starts 7.30pm. Complimentary glass of wine or soft drink included in ticket price.

**Tickets:** Season Tickets available: £35 or £6 each showing, payable on the door. Please have correct change if possible.

*A memorable and touching love story. Jamie returns from the hereafter, as a ghost, to comfort his grieving girlfriend. He also brings his ghostly friends. A romantic and funny fable about loss and grief whilst also being a celebration of life.*

Stars: Alan Rickman, Juliet Stevenson, Bill Paterson Director: Anthony Minghella BBFC rating PG UK 1990 107 mins All films shown with sub-titles.

For information: contact [angelaprobyn@gmail.com](mailto:angelaprobyn@gmail.com). You are welcome to invite friends and neighbours.



Juliet Stevenson and Alan Rickman



## Abbots Pool working party

January's working party was a particular productive session. There was stack of logs in the cave that we successfully removed. We cleared a lot of mud from the side of the bridle path by the life preserver. The pool was frozen, and it was a delight to watch the ducks skate around.

Next working party is Sunday, February 8. Meet at 10am at the car park. Join us to help keep our great nature reserve looking cared for and valued, and help us to keep the green flag that we are regularly awarded. We have a WhatsApp group where we discuss the plan for the day and what equipment to bring, if you want to be added contact Jo on 07989 514048. John is making brownies for after with coffee. Next month's working party will be on March 8, 10am-noon, meet at car park.

## Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group presents

### The Mendip Hills through the Time Tunnel

The story of an ever-changing landscape that began over 416million years ago, and how humans came to dominate the environment, and shape its wildlife.

The speaker will be Les Davies MBE. Wednesday, February 18, 7.30pm, Abbots Leigh Village Hall. £8 on the door (cash or card), including a welcome drink. Children free.



## West of England Herb Group

Tuesday, February 24, 7.30pm at Abbots Leigh Village Hall - Bronze Age Plant Medicine - talk presented by Jenny Carden-Porritt. Visitors welcome.

# News from Leigh Woods Residents Group



## Leigh Woods Christmas Party

What a great Christmas Party, joined this year by our very own Father Christmas who, even at such a busy time of year, was able to pop in to say hello to the children. It was



lovely to see them wide-eyed, taking in the Christmas lights, the tree, the reindeer and, of course, Father Christmas, who brought some gorgeous wrapped and named presents!

Mums, dads and grandparents enjoyed canapes with their drinks, while chatting to neighbours. It was a great way to start the Christmas season. Thanks, as always, must go to the Leigh Woods Residents Group, but especially Alex Burgh and Tricia Bedford and all the volunteers who helped make this a smashing event. Father Christmas has been asked to visit Christmas 2026 too, so we've got in early!

## Safari Supper – Save The Date!

The hugely popular Safari Supper is planned for Thursday, August 20, so save the date! If you haven't been in touch with Lynne ([lynne.bothamley@btinternet.com](mailto:lynne.bothamley@btinternet.com)) now is the time, as it's filling up nicely.

It's a great evening for all Leigh Woods residents, everyone is welcome, you just need to be able to seat 6 people for one course in your home or garden. It's a real mystery tour and a great way to meet new neighbours and find new corners of Leigh Woods. You are allocated a starter, main or pudding course to prepare (including any dietary issues). You don't know who is coming or where you are going for your next course! While there is room and if you haven't already, get in touch with Lynne.

## Salsa Classes in St Mary's Vestry

Happy New Year from Salsa is Life Cuban Dance School. We had a fantastic Christmas party at St Mary's in December to see out 2025.

Abelardo is Leigh Woods' very own professional salsa teacher. What better way to start the new year than with a new hobby which is good for your brain, body and soul!

Come along to one of his beginners classes at the Church vestry starting at 18:30 every Tuesday. There is no need to bring a partner, just some comfy clothes and enthusiasm! To anyone telling themselves that they are too uncoordinated - if you can walk then you can dance. All are welcome.

## Real Tennis

At Clifton College Sports Ground, just a short walk from Leigh Woods, is Padel's 'older brother' - Real Tennis. Always open for you to drop in and find out what the game is all about - all equipment is provided (except tennis shoes!)

Don't hesitate to check them out when you are on a walk (well-behaved dogs welcome) or call and make a date to give the game a try with the pros - Zak and Ben. It's fun, interesting, welcoming and within walking distance.

Contact 0117 973 3444 [www.bristolrealtennisclub.com](http://www.bristolrealtennisclub.com)

## PARISH COUNCIL

### Replacement of 'no left turn sign'

North Somerset Council recently replaced the missing 'no left turn' road sign near the entrance to St Mary's Road. Like the restricted left hand turn into North Road, it applies from 7.30am-9am daily to drivers heading towards the Ashton Court traffic lights from the Abbots Leigh/Beggar Bush direction. Thanks to North Somerset and our parish council.

## Speedwatch

Leigh Woods speedwatch scheme is now up and running on Bridge Road, with a great group of keen volunteers – huge thanks to them. Cars travelling at excess speed will be reported to the police and the police will then issue a letter to the registered keeper of the vehicle. Our aim is to change the behaviour of drivers who may have forgotten that the limit is 30mph. If you would like to know more, or would be interested in joining us, please email [jennystoodley3@gmail.com](mailto:jennystoodley3@gmail.com)

## Leigh Woods history

Leigh Woods churchwarden Michael Bothamley remembers the woodmen's community from his childhood, when he lived in what was then the Vicarage, in particular his parents hosting 'Woodman Jack', who slept in their garden shed during the winter of 1962/63 and came to the back door for tea and porridge each morning.

See this BBC Archive from 1964 (kindly sent in by Ashley Coates)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYnAoPQh15k&t=92s>

Sadly Michael doesn't recognise any of these interviewees but he was only little!

## Leigh Woods National Trust

Most Leigh Woods' residents enjoy the woods. The parts closest to North Road are looked after by the National Trust and the areas further west by Forestry England. Several folk from Leigh Woods volunteer with the NT and winter is their busiest time. Work includes looking after the hill-fort that needs growth to be managed so that the ramparts of the ancient monument do not deteriorate.



National  
Trust

Recent works on Nightingale Valley have involved contractors dealing with three large dying ash trees that are potentially dangerous. The NT has also thinned out growth around veteran oaks to ensure their longevity. It is a privilege to help extend the lifespan of these amazing trees that are already hundreds of years old. This is in addition to general maintenance and tidying.

In the Forestry England area, work has been in progress on extension and improvement of the Yer Tiz cycle trail, to make it accessible for more people, for instance those using hand cycles. The work is being funded by a special grant. But it's a big project and completion is not expected before better weather. The work complements the commercial activities of Forestry England and their aim to reintroduce more native species.

## Leigh Woods Residents Group

We are always looking for new members. If you are willing to get involved and help Leigh Woods' social cohesion, have ideas, enjoy and want to give back to your community, get in touch with Alex Burgh ([alex@alexburgh.co.uk](mailto:alex@alexburgh.co.uk)), Lynne Bothamley ([lynne.bothamley@btinternet.com](mailto:lynne.bothamley@btinternet.com)) or any of the LWRG. We only meet occasionally, especially when an event is coming up. It's fun and good for our community.

## Church full for Celebration of Ministry

St Mary's Church was full for the service of Induction and Installation of the Rev Rosemary Radcliffe as Vicar of the Benefice of Abbots Leigh with Leigh Woods.

The service was presided over by the Acting Bishop of Bristol, the Rt Rev Neil Warwick; the Archdeacon of Bristol, the Rev Becky Waring; and the Area Dean of the North Bristol Deanery, the Rev Charles Sutton.

There was a congregation of more than 100, plus another 15 clergy, many of whom robed and processed.

Attendees who welcomed Rosemary in their official capacities included: Peaches Golding, Lord-Lieutenant of the County and City of Bristol; Jenny Stoodley representing Long Ashton Parish Council; Jenna Ho Marris representing North Somerset Council; Simon Talbot-Ponsonby, Chair of Abbots Leigh Parish Council; Neil Hopkinson, representing Abbots Leigh Civic Society; and Lynne Bothamley, representing the Leigh Woods Residents Group.



### Church services

	CHURCH	SERVICE	READERS	READINGS
<b>1 Feb</b>	Candlemas	White		
9.30am	Holy Trinity	Family Worship	Talbot family	Luke 2: 22-40
10.30am	Holy Trinity	Parish Communion	Nikki Ball	Hebrews 2: 14-end
			Nick Ball	Luke 2: 22-40
<b>8 Feb</b>	<b>2 before Lent</b>	<b>Green</b>		
10.30am	St Mary's	Parish Communion	Phillippa Scriven	Romans 8: 18-25
			Peter Innocent	Matt. 6: 25-end
<b>15 Feb</b>	<b>Sunday before Lent</b>	<b>Green</b>		
10.30am	Holy Trinity	Parish Communion	Heather Wraith	2 Peter 1: 16-end
			David Wraith	Matt. 17: 1-9
<b>22 Feb</b>	<b>Lent 1</b>	<b>Green</b>		
10.30am	St Mary's	Family Communion	Talbot family	Matt. 4: 1-11
6.30pm	St Mary's	Taizé	TBA	TBA
<b>1 Mar</b>	<b>Lent 2</b>	<b>Green</b>		
9.30am	Holy Trinity	Family Worship	Talbot family	John 3: 1-17
10.30am	Holy Trinity	Parish Communion	Nikki Ball	Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17
			Nick Ball	John 3: 1-17

## In memory of Murray Stewart

We are all so sad that Murray Stewart died just before Christmas, aged 86. He will be sorely missed and our thoughts are very much with Di and all of their family.

Murray was an outstanding giant of a man, teasingly improving the lives of others and he threw his energy into so many aspects of life in the village and much more.

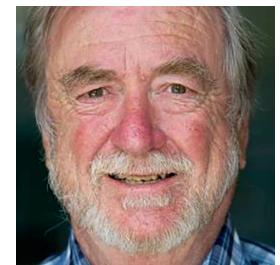
So where can one start? Murray and Di moved to Abbots Leigh in September 1995 and immersed themselves in everything in the village. A proud Scotsman, he set up a Scottish country dancing group. He was involved in preparing the village Millennium Record; he created the village archive; he was passionate about the history of the village, writing books on the subject and ran the local history society; he led the Archive Group of the Civic Society, over four years he mapped all the graves in the churchyard and made display boards as guides and also prepared the story behind all the names on the war memorial; he obtained a Heritage Lottery grant for the Parish Council to help restore Abbots Pool; he was on the Parish Council for 8 years; he was an active member of the Pill and District Community Land Trust trying to get some more affordable housing in Pill; he led the preparation of the Pill, Easton in Gordano and Abbots Leigh Neighbourhood Plan; he was involved with the Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group from the very beginning, being the treasurer; he was an active member of the Abbots Leigh Civic Society; he organised Burns Night suppers; and was a stalwart participant in the annual village litter pick, always going for the worst section down Weir Lane and back to the village.

Murray was a professor at Bristol University from 1974 to 1995, where he was Director of the School for Advanced Urban Studies and later Dean of the faculty of Social Sciences. In the mid-1990s he, with several colleagues, moved to the University of the West of England and established the Cities Research Unit. He took a particularly collaborative approach to his work, was known as a fantastic boss and was particularly supportive of younger and less experienced colleagues. He had little time for the rituals and status of the university, but was very engaged in research, ideas and debate about how urban environments work and how they might be made better for the people who live in them. He liked to see results and effect change. He was chair of the Bridge Foundation Charity. He was one of Quartet's vice-presidents and served as a trustee on their board and their national membership organisation, UK Community Foundations. He set up his family fund with his wife, Di, as part of the national matched giving Grassroots challenge in 2010, taking advantage through another national scheme in 2015 to boost his philanthropy. Through their fund, Murray and Di supported organisations that provided opportunities to disabled children, young people and their families across the West of England.

He did so much and Abbots Leigh will be a poorer place without him.

A Celebration of Murray's life will take place on Friday, March 20, at 2pm in Holy Trinity Church in Abbots Leigh followed by refreshments in The George.

Simon Talbot-Ponsonby



*‘ He did so much ... Abbots Leigh will be a poorer place without him ’*

## ABBOTS LEIGH WI



The next meeting is on Tuesday, February 10, at 7.30pm in Abbots Leigh Village Hall. Sarah Bennett Baggs will be coming to tell us about 'Life as a Racing Driver'.

We will meet again on Tuesday, March 10, when Sarah Bell will talk on 'Running an Alpaca Farm'. Visitors are always very welcome.

*Louise Wall* [louiseaw@aol.com](mailto:louiseaw@aol.com)

## TEA TIME SPECIAL

The speaker for Monday, February 16, will be The Rev. Janet Leigh who will tell us about her dramatic trip to Uganda, complete with coloured slides.

*Are you free on a Monday afternoon? Come for a chat, a cup of tea and delicious cake. We meet in the vestry at St Mary's Church, Leigh Woods, at 2.30pm on the third Monday of each month. Inclusive price of £2.50.*



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

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**City of Bristol Choir - That Friday Feeling 20 March - 7pm for Complimentary Refreshments then 7.45pm Concert. All Saints Church, Clifton BS8 3ED.** Inspiring choral and organ music to invigorate, refresh and soothe the soul. Tickets £16.50 adults, £5 students and under 18s. Book online at [www.cityofbristolchoir.org.uk/shop](http://www.cityofbristolchoir.org.uk/shop).



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