

# PRESTON NEWS

Community | Neighbourhood | Friendship

## Dates for the diary

Parish Council meeting - 2nd March, 7pm in the Village Hall

Friday coffee mornings - 10th March

Preston & Siddington WI centenary - 16th March.  
Celebration tea party in Siddington village hall

Village Litter Pick - 25th March

## Refuse collections

Wednesdays fortnightly;

1st, 15th, 29th March

12th, 26th April

Food waste: weekly

Wednesdays

Green bin renewal price: £57

## TEA & COFFEE MORNING PRESTON VILLAGE HALL

10AM - 12 NOON  
SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR  
TEA, COFFEE, BISCUITS  
AND A BOOK SWAP



ENTRY - £1 PER PERSON

## Pause for thought

from the Churnside Benefice

As I write, the churchyard at All Saints is covered in a carpet of beautiful early spring flowers, snowdrops, crocus and cyclamen, and the daffodil bulbs are beginning to push their way through the ground. All winter these bulbs have lain dormant in the cold, dark ground. Now, with spring on the way they are beginning to grow, pushing green shoots above the ground, revealing their beautiful flowers, bringing with them signs of hope and the possibility of new beginnings and new life. It is amazing how the flowering of the snowdrop, crocus or daffodil bulb can totally transform plain ground into something beautiful that reveals the glory of God's creation. In winter you don't even know that the bulbs are there, sleeping, preparing, waiting for spring to arrive when they will come alive again.

Spring flowers remind me that there is always hope, even when it seems that all hope is gone. As a Christian I believe that there is always hope because there is always God. God is always there with us, through the sunshine as well as the storms of life. God is a constant in our lives and never leaves us or forsakes us. It has always seemed rather appropriate to me that Easter falls in spring as the themes of new life and hope combine.

God Bless

Revd Jennifer McKenzie

vicar@churnsidechurches.co.uk

**On Sunday 19th March, All Saints Church Preston will be holding a special Mothering Sunday Service, with singing, prayers and a little gift for everyone. The service will take place at 10am in the church and will be followed by refreshments. Everyone welcome!**

## Church cleaning rota

22 FEBRUARY - 6 APRIL

No flowers for Lent

12th March - Mrs Mingins/ Mrs Thornton

26th March - Mrs Bainbridge

9th April - Easter Sunday - date for decorating TBC

23rd April - Mrs Bainbridge

14th May - Mrs Cooper

28th May - Mrs Jones

11th & 25th June - Mrs MacKinnon & Mrs Canton

## Church services

12th March 9.30 - Morning Praise

19th March 10.00 - Mothering Sunday service

26th March 9.30 - Holy Communion

All services in the benefice can be viewed at [www.churnsidechurches.org.uk](http://www.churnsidechurches.org.uk)

### Prayers

The streets and areas in the Churnside Benefice to be prayed for in all our churches during March 2023 are: Pound Close, Primrose Way, River Way and Robert Franklin Way.

There is a prayer board inside the main door of All Hallows Church, South Cerney, for your personal prayer requests. Anything placed there is prayed for at Morning Prayer each day.

## Village Hall

### Art Group

Monday 1-3pm & Thursday 10-12am

Contact Cathy at [artinpreston@aol.com](mailto:artinpreston@aol.com) or feel free to drop in!

XXXXX

### Yoga

Wednesdays 18:15-19:30

These classes can be accessed in person or via Zoom if you prefer to stay at home!

Contact Mark at [mark@cotswoldyoga.co.uk](mailto:mark@cotswoldyoga.co.uk)

XXXXX

To make a booking for the village hall, email Anne Mingins at [annemingins@icloud.com](mailto:annemingins@icloud.com).

## Coronation street party

To celebrate the Coronation of The King and Queen Consort, Preston will be holding a street party on Sunday 7th May at 12 noon. Prosecco and soft drinks will be provided. Bring food to share with friends and neighbours!



## News from the Parish Council

### PARISH COUNCIL REDUCES COUNCIL TAX

With an increasing number of properties being occupied at Siddington Park, the Parish Council has been able to reduce the Council tax burden on residents by 20.26%. Instead of Band D residents paying £106 per year, they will pay only £85 from April 2023 and all other Bands will be reduced accordingly.

This only applies to the Parish Council element of the Council Tax as it is expected that the Police Authority and the County and District Councils will increase their Precepts.

### NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday, 2nd March at 7pm in the village hall.

### ANNUAL VILLAGE LITTER PICK

Saturday, 25th March - meet at 10am at the top of the village. Everyone is welcome. Litter pickers and bin bags provided but please bring your own gloves. All help greatly appreciated!

### VACANCY

We have a vacancy on the Parish Council and will be able to co-opt after 14th March. However, due to the elections on 4th May, all Parish Council seats will be up for election so we are looking to fill this vacancy for 7 weeks, in the first instance. If you are interested then this could be the ideal opportunity to give us a trial run. For more information please contact the Parish Clerk ([clerk@prestonpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@prestonpc.org.uk) or 07870 170823) or any Parish Councillor.

## A gardener's guide

Signs of new life are appearing in the garden; from the red tips of peonies to the bright green frills of new delphiniums, from frogspawn in the pond to birds building their nests.



It really is a joy to see the garden growing before our eyes, and here are some jobs to help it wake up from its winter rest:

1. Check bird boxes and if empty, clean them out. Leave out natural fibres and plant materials for nest-building. Fill bird feeders with seeds, peanuts and fat balls and then sit back and watch the huge variety of feathered visitors to the garden!
2. Start sowing seeds for a good summer crop. Sweet peas, peas, beans, brassicas, beets and tomatoes can be sown on windowsills or under glass, whilst carrots and parsnips can go straight into the ground.
3. Chit potatoes by putting them in egg boxes with the 'eye' upright and leave them in a bright spot inside to sprout. Plant out when the shoots reach approximately 2cm.
4. Give the lawn an early spring feed, fork to aerate, rake out any dead and give it its first cut on a high setting.

## Cirencester Guide Dogs

By Alex Beadle

Cirencester has an active and enthusiastic Guide Dog volunteer group, of which I've been a member for 8 years.

As a charity, Guide Dogs provide numerous services - from dogs to equipment, information, training and sighted guides amongst others.

A vast amount of training is put into the dogs from birth to partnering the dog with an owner. The first year or so is spent with a volunteer puppy raiser with whom they live during this time. The puppy is taught basic commands, getting them used to all aspects of life they would experience with an owner - going to work, shopping, cafés, pubs, cinemas. The aim is to raise an all round capable dog before moving onto the next stage of training at around 12-15 months old.

This training, now with a Guide Dog trainer, lasts approximately 16 weeks and is spent honing the commands, introducing the harness and learning obstacle and traffic aspects of guiding.



*Puppy-mum Katie & working Guide Dog Lexi*

The last phase of training is takes 12 weeks and focuses on the safety side of guiding, as well as starting to look for potential matches with an owner, followed by working with the owner to ensure a good partnership.

Guide dogs support the owner and dog through their working life together and if need be find the dog a home when they retire.

## In memoriam

### *Helen Smith*

Always kind, Helen was an extremely gifted artist who loved living and painting in Preston. She passed away suddenly last month and will be sadly missed.

## Tips & tricks

With such diversity of interest, careers and life experience in the village, we've asked some residents to share some of their tips & tricks!

Maxine Tuckey has offered some of these ideas to keep your home sparkling:

- Bicarbonate of soda is a brilliant product for removing stains on hard surfaces such as Belfast sinks, granite work tops and fridges.
- E-cloths (which you can get at Lakeland & Waitrose) are a great way to clean your windows, mirrors and photo frames because all you need is warm water and a micro-cloth to clean them and then you simply buff dry with the e-cloth!
- Another kitchen cupboard favourite is baking soda - perfect for those smelly trainers. Put a couple of spoonfuls in your shoes overnight to absorb the smell and then Hoover out. Repeat depending on smell level!
- The best thing about this idea is they are all chemical free and cost effective - a must in today's world.

Not all the dogs qualify as a Guide Dog. They need to be confident, relaxed and focused when working. Some go into the breeding programme to continue with the next generations of puppies. Some can go on to fulfil a different role, such as being a buddy dog to a child who has a visual impairment or a neurodiversity such as autism and who may hugely benefit from the bond with a dog. Others go on to be a pet! The most important thing is the dog's welfare - if they enjoy working they will. If they don't, they can't be made to!

Any of our owners will tell you that their Guide Dog has made an immeasurable difference to their life. Many visually impaired people feel excluded and very cautious out in public, particularly on their own, and will avoid a lot of situations. Once they are paired and trained with their dog, life opens up for them again!

I started off by puppy raising my first dog Andrea, who is now a working Guide Dog in London. I began fundraising with the group, and once our son was about 6-months old I started boarding pups and dogs, much to his delight!

I had my second puppy just before the first lockdown, which was incredibly challenging. Guiding life wasn't for her so she went to be a well-loved pet.

My boarding role has expanded since then. I have regulars to stay, and working dogs I free run. I have taken up my speaker role again, going to local groups looking to gain an insight into Guide Dogs.

This is a small snippet of the charity and what roles exist. If you would like to find out more, would like to donate or would be interested in any volunteer role please contact me through the village chat group or take a look at [www.guidedogs.org.uk](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk).



*Fundraising by two owners with their dogs, and other a puppy raiser with year-old puppy in training*

## A breath of fresh air

If you feel like a gentle but beautiful springtime circular walk, try North Meadow just this side of Cricklade. It is home to 80% of the British population of snakeshead fritillaries which are usually in flower from April to May. There are a number of marked routes of different lengths around the meadow, with the longest being about an hour.

There is usually on-road parking along High Street, and when you've finished, the Red Lion in Cricklade is well worth a visit!



## Village communications

The newsletter will only be issued via email, unless you have specifically requested a paper copy.

Village updates and reminders will also be conveyed via the two village WhatsApp groups. To connect to these groups, message Julie Tomblin on 07973 444902.

## Kids' Corner

This month, Isaac Holmes (age 8) would like to share a 2-minute speech he wrote and delivered as part of his school's public speaking competition!

### The Birth of the Solar System

"I love space and so today I am going to tell you how the solar system was born, which I *personally* think is fascinating!

Our solar system was formed about 4.5 *billion* years ago! It was made by a solar nebula which is a vast spinning cloud of dust, ice and asteroids. The asteroids *smashed* into each other to make the core of all 8 planets, and of Pluto which is a dwarf planet. The collisions made *so much* heat, the inner rocky planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars) formed in a molten state and became solid as they cooled. Earth's moon was made in a collision with a Mars-sized object and Earth. As a result of this *enormous* impact, the two planets *cracked* and the debris formed a ring around Earth. I bet you didn't know Earth once had a ring! Over a few thousand years the debris stuck together and as it orbited Earth, it collected more and more and made the Moon.

If I have inspired you to learn more, I can recommend the NASA app, some great YouTube videos and a space encyclopaedia like mine. And if you look up at the sky carefully in 30 years time, you'll see me waving from the International Space Station!"



The next full edition of the newsletter will be issued at the beginning of May.

All contributions are welcome. If you are a budding journalist, poet, artist, photographer, cook or even quiz master, we'd love to hear from you!

Perhaps you have an idea for a regular slot, or you have an event you'd like to share or a story to tell.

The deadline for each edition is the 20th of the month.

Let us know what you would like to read about in forthcoming issues by emailing [newsletter@prestonpc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@prestonpc.org.uk).

Ed.