

Merry Christmas

from all of us in PACDG and the **Community News**



Issue 326 December 2023

The Community News is an information service from PACDG - the Presteigne Area Community Development Group
"Working Together For Our Community"

**Next Issue - deadline for contributions 10am Sunday 14 January
n.b. no surprise - there will be no end-December issue!!
email news@pacdg.org**

- if you have any questions on what's happening - or not happening - in our community, do let us know and we'll do our best to provide an answer, or at least point you in the right direction - email the Editor
 - please email if you see or hear of anything that will be of help to other residents, including local area jobs
 - if you need assistance in any way, email us and we'll pass on your message to people who can help.
- ...AND IF YOU NEED TO CHECK BACK ON PAST ISSUES FOR INFORMATION, YOU CAN SEE THESE (along with lots of other good information) ON THE TOWN WEBSITE www.presteigne.org.uk/calendar

THANK YOU!

...**Book stall.** Many thanks to all those who supported/contributed towards a very successful Book Stall when £355 was collected for Medicins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders). Also to MBA for hosting us in the Assembly Rooms Foyer. Unsold books were donated to the National Trust second hand bookshop at Croft Castle. Happy midwinter reading, Rolly

...**from Debs - a big thank you to all involved in the Christmas trees throughout Norton.** From those who had the idea. To each and everyone that chipped in towards the cost. To the Men's Shed for constructing them & the folks who have installed them around different places in Norton - they look fantastic. Simply thank you all.

...**Sidney Nolan Trust** - We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone that we've worked with during the year. The artists and curators we've collaborated with, the schools we've hosted, the visitors we've welcomed, our amazing volunteers, our friends & supporters. Together you've made 2023 a brilliant year and we look forward to working with you in 2024.

TOWN COUNCIL NEWS

...**New Radnor Community Broadband Scheme.** Good news (in part). BT Openreach have met with the Community Council and are bringing a community fibre scheme to the New Radnor exchange area. Leaflets have already been distributed if you are eligible and a representative from BT may well have called to ask if you have any questions. As with the previous scheme you will need to pledge your government voucher BUT with this scheme you will need to commit to taking out a 12 month contract for full fibre. Prices will vary with your service provider (Sky/BT etc) so do check before committing. Unfortunately BT are not committing to the 100% connection for all our properties promised by Broadway however if you are not eligible/have not had a leaflet, please do still get in touch with the project manager, Gavin Jones on gavin.jones@openreach.co.uk or Tracey Price, Clerk to the Council on newradnorcc@outlook.com to ask if your property could be considered. Please share this information if you can to make as many people as possible aware of the new scheme. More information as we get it. As with the previous scheme a certain number of properties need to be signed up before BT will proceed. Please note - to be kept informed by BT please go to openreach.co.uk/connectmycommunity.

SCAM ALERTS (from Which? and others)

..**beware of 'friend with a problem' scamming emails doing the rounds at the moment.** These are similar to the 'son or daughter problem' emails. You get an email from a friend's (hacked!) address saying something like "I'm unable to speak over the phone due to a serious throat pain caused by laryngitis. Can I ask a quick favour from you please?". These are trying to get you to respond then to wheedle some money or purchase from you. Call your friend if you're unsure, and to let them know their email's been hacked. Don't be tempted to reply!

...**don't be taken in by Lloyds (and other bank) scams** with emails saying something like "Your Lloyds Debit Card has been temporarily blocked to prevent fraudulent payment to Argos UK for 199.99 GBP. If this was you, you don't need to do anything. If not, please Contact Our Fraud Prevention Team

immediately on 02037584413. Kind regards, Lloyds Bank Fraud Prevention Team". Do not call the number! Report and delete.

...**Royal Mail stamp scam** - the price of stamps has risen again this year, and with the holiday season approaching you might be looking for ways to save when sending cards and gifts. However, scammers are unsurprisingly taking the opportunity to impersonate Royal Mail with fake offers for stamps at bargain prices. Dodgy ads on Facebook for these phoney offers lead to phishing websites designed to steal your personal and financial information. Buy your stamps at a Post Office.

...**Fake ads impersonate parking apps. Scammers abuse online advertising to trap drivers.** We found ads on Google that are impersonating JustPark, PayByPhone, and RingGo – all of which appeared at the top of search results on mobile phones and above the genuine websites for these companies. Which? is warning drivers to avoid searching for parking apps online and instead download official apps through Apple or Google Play app stores. These sneaky scams are easy to fall for!

EVENTS & DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

...**don't forget - tomorrow! Presteigne Christmas Grotto, Friday 15th December, 4pm to 7pm** - a lovely event for the whole family! The Christmas lights will sparkle on the High Street as Father Christmas sets up his magical grotto at the Rose Cottage Cafe garden. Presteigne Pop Choir will be singing from 4pm, situated by the charity shop. Hot dogs, free mince pies and mulled wine will be available from the stall opposite Rose Cottage. The event is organised and funded by Connect (The Presteigne Area Business Network). Please support the High Street and all our local businesses by doing as much of your Christmas shopping and present buying in Presteigne as possible!

...**Press Gangers at The Dukes - What is there to do between Christmas and New Year???** Usually, not a lot but now come to The Dukes for an evening of song and singing! Press Gangers will be there on Thursday 28 December from 6.30pm until late to entertain you with a lot of shanty, and a few Irish songs as well, supported by Big Me Up Baby with their take on popular songs in their first gig here in Presteigne. Come along for good booze & rousing shanties - and be prepared to sing along! Entry is FREE but with a retiring collection for Welsh Air Ambulance

...**Presteigne Pop Choir Christmas Concert** - Sunday 17 December, 3pm at the Assembly Rooms, Presteigne. Donations for entry and refreshments.

...**Presteigne Church Services in the run up to Christmas** - Sunday 17 December Carols at the Methodist Church 3pm, followed by tea; on Christmas Eve Carols at St Andrew's Church 5pm; on Christmas Eve Carols & Mass at the Catholic Church 8pm.

... **St Michael's Church, Discoed**, near Presteigne. Christmas Day 9.15 am - a short, joyful service. All welcome. Mulled wine and mince pies after. Please tell your family and friends. New Years Day - bell ringing, an informal prayer with a glass of wine afterwards. All welcome (including well-behaved dogs) For more information go to www.discoed.org

...**"Gather Round and Sing for Christmas Fun"** at Presteigne Baptist Church Saturday December 16th at 10.30am with Marion Rowlatt and Michael Tavinor

...**Presteigne Methodist Church - Coffee Morning** on Saturday 16th December from 10.30 until 12 in the church itself. We will be offering coffee and mince pies, a raffle, lucky dip and a warm welcome - look forward to seeing you there.

...**Envision 2024: Craft Your Intentions for the New Year.** Spend a day focused on your new year with Creative Writing and SoulCollage. January 6th, 2024 ground floor of Presteigne Assembly Rooms 10am - 5pm. £40. Pre-registration required at www.craftedessence.com. While some things are out of our control, we can still chart a course and orient to a particular path for the year ahead. Each January, I like to consider where and how I will focus my energy. Which areas of life need my attention? How do I want to show up and feel? What can I learn? Your questions may be different. Come and find out. SoulCollage is an easy, intuitive collage process focused around self-discovery. www.soulcollage.com

...**Radnorshire Arms, Presteigne - last quiz for this year** will be our Christmas Quiz night on Thursday 21st December! Contact to hotel or call in to book a table.

...**Dom Pipkin & The Ikos.** Saturday 16th December, 8pm. Doors open 7.30pm at The Assembly Rooms, Presteigne. One of Europe's most authentic and spirited blues and jazz piano players "The soul of New Orleans in the UK" *Dom Pipkin* is at the forefront of musicians keeping the classic New Orleans sound alive. His world-travelled band *The Ikos* have taken New Orleans funk and blues and created from it their own unique sound and songs. Tickets - £15. Under 25's - £10 (limited tickets) from the Workhouse Gallery or online at WeGotTickets.com

...**'Home of the Free'** with support from Jessica Rising. Friday 29th December, 8pm. Doors open 7pm at the Assembly Rooms, Presteigne. Presteigne residents Alex Valentine and Dave Luke, delivering original songs and classy interpretations in the country-folk genre. On this occasion their soaring harmonies presented on a bed of string instruments will be augmented by local maestro John Hymas. 'Jessica Rising' are long-time friends Jesse and Hels singing Jesse's melancholic, emotive songs, and some folk covers too. Fiddle and guitar back close-harmonic stories of heartbreak and freedom. Tickets - £12. Under 25's - £8 (limited tickets) from the Workhouse Gallery or online at WeGotTickets.com

...**Presteigne Screen presents 'Squaring the Circle'** UK 2023 111 mins Rated 15, on Friday 15th December at The Assembly Rooms, Presteigne. Doors open 7:30pm for Bar, Coffee, Tea and Cakes. Films start 8:00pm. Pure nostalgia for Baby Boomers. Think 10cc, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Wings and many other mega-groups, and you'll know what we're talking about. This fascinating documentary tells the story of the maverick design team Hipgnosis that produced some of the most memorable and original album covers ever. Its hippy co-founders Storm Thorgerson and Aubrey 'Po' Powell are credited with inventing the concept of the album cover as affordable art form, conceiving fun and audacious designs that involved desert locations and flying pigs over London. Each has a tale to tell – including the truth about the burning man on the Pink Floyd cover for *Wish You Were Here!* Tickets £5 at door. Buy online to guarantee you a seat through our website or direct at [WeGotTickets](#)

...**Presteigne Plenty: Your last chance this year to grab some of our luscious local produce!** We still have some of our delicious, locally sourced apple juice available. And because we know some of you were disappointed at missing out on our speciality mincemeat at St Andrew's Fair last month - we've made one more batch! Come and find us next to the Presteigne Christmas Grotto on Friday 15 December, 4-7pm or until we sell out - and if the Fair is anything to go by that could well be at 4.30pm so hurry!!

...**from Chatterbrook WI** – our next get-together is on Thursday January 11th at 7.00 in St Andrew's Church Hall. Our first speaker of 2024 will be historian Philip Bowen, to teach us / remind us about The Fifties. Visitors are very welcome, £4 on the door. Further information 07536 979665 and see <https://facebook.com/ChatterbrookWI>

...**from Presteigne Floral Art Society** - we meet in Lingen Village hall on Wednesday January 13th at 7.30. Our demonstrator will be one of the florists from The Flower Box in Knighton, and her designs will be 'Without Floral Foam'. Visitors, as always, are welcome - £6 on the door. The informal flower classes in Whitton Community Hall resume on Thursday January 18th. Contact the Secretary for further details on 01544 340453. See our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/610659036597894>

NEWS FROM THE HIGH STREET & LOCAL BUSINESSES / ORGANISATIONS

...**The Salty Dog is 12 years old yesterday** - we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our lovely customers for supporting us all these years, love from all of us xxxxxx ps. Some nice citrus in and ... any egg boxes please? Just drop them into the shop - we're running really low!

...**from St Andrew's, Presteigne - new edition of The Parish Magazine** is now available - look out for its bright red cover around town and in our churches. This issue covers both December and January and is full of interesting articles, dates for your diary - especially those all-important Christmas Carol Services and concerts - and lots of advertisements for local businesses and tradespeople. Thank you as ever to those who contribute to the magazine, edit, print, collate and distribute it.

...**Emily George - Children's dance classes** with EG fitness and dance!! We will have spaces for new starters in January, we take from reception-age 16 and classes take place in Knighton and Presteigne, We combine styles such as hip hop, jazz and modern to create a fun and exciting class! With options to add on extra classes such as Tap, Musical Theatre and Acro. Get in touch to book in!!

...**from Annie at Mid-Border News - Greetings!** Cut & paste the link below to view the online edition of MidBorder News; I hope you enjoy reading it. In this issue we have A Brief History of Pembridge by regular writer Old Peculier, talks and films, lots of Christmas events, council news, Music in New Radnor, Clun Valley Jazz Festival and a couple of New year parties. There are lots of things to do and see in our local towns and villages over the festive period: I'm always amazed by the sheer richness and variety of what goes on in our border area. And most of it organised by dedicated volunteers, from litter-picks to full-on festivals. We look forward to seeing what emerges next year and it only remains for me to wish you all a peaceful Yuletide and good health and happiness in 2024. Warmest wishes, Annie www.issuu.com/midbordernews/docs/midborder_news_winter_2023

...**Radnorshire Arms - regrettably our planned New Years event has had to be cancelled** due to lack of interest, but we will serve our carvery as usual on New Years Eve. Lunch time 12:00/12:30 14:00/14:30. Thanks to all for the support with the meat raffle and the quiz nights - we have raised £154:00 for Sandra's Marathon fundraiser in aid of Cancer research. The meat raffle draw continues to be held every Sunday @1pm

...**The Warehouse** - only 2 weeks until Christmas. Lots of lovely items for sale .Stock up now with extra crockery and glasses. Please note that the Warehouse will close on Friday 22 December and reopen on Wednesday 3rd January. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

...**Presteigne Little Peoples Playgroup - Christmas Holiday Club** 9 months to 12 years - Few more spaces left. Please contact us if need a childcare for the holiday season. Please don't forget we also have 2 inset days - 22nd December 2023 and 8th January 2024.

...**Sidney Nolan Trust** - We're conducting a short survey to find out what you'd like to see from us. The aim is to collect a comprehensive picture of what the local community like to see, hear and do and how we can help make that happen for you. We want to hear your honest feedback so we can keep improving our exhibitions, learning programmes and events. Please cut and paste the link to complete

this quick survey and let us know your thoughts (your answers will be anonymous) https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5FmnpWZYhWGftQf5y_rkrsPJhh5YQ_Ch30Zbf17raSGqNWA/viewform

...Norton Community Trust - As we head into the Festive Season, here is an update on progress with the Norton Hub – and it's all good news! The work of adapting the former church as a community hub is – drum roll! - virtually complete! It's taken a while, with various unexpected blips and delays – but we expected that (if you know what I mean!) The latest situation is that all the internal work on the building should finally be finished by 20th December. At that point, the architect is scheduled to return to site for a “snagging” review – so basically tidying up any loose ends in preparation for the contractor to hand the completed building back to the Trust before Christmas. What a lovely present that will be. Following the Christmas period, the next job will be all the internal cleaning and decorating, and then moving the furniture and fittings that have been in storage into the Hub. We will be looking for volunteers to help with all of that, so if you're not already on our volunteer list and would like to be involved, please do let us know – call 01544267109 or email volunteering.nct@gmail.com. Opening the Hub to the wider community will finally be possible after the work receives the necessary Building Control approval and the sewage connection and path have been completed. We are hopeful (ever hopeful!) that all of that will be done by mid-January. Which means that if all goes to plan, you will have the opportunity to visit the new Hub at a number of open mornings for local residents in late January. Dates will be confirmed as soon as possible. We really hope as many residents as possible will come to visit, not only to see the end result but also to share your thoughts and ideas about how the Hub can best serve the needs of the local community in future. Warm wishes to everyone for the Christmas season!

...Presteigne Freegle - If you have NEW stuff coming in and now have old stuff you don't need anymore, be sure to OFFER unwanted things on your local FREEGLE group. We're the biggest British FREE REUSE network with 500 groups all around the UK (including our local Presteigne Freegle) making it easy to re-home things instead of binning them! In the right hands most things can be repaired, refurbished, repurposed or reused and FREEGLE makes it easy to find the 'right hands'! Give it a go, 30% more waste is generated at Christmas time, so don't be a tosser and start being a giver. Grab our mobile app to do that <https://www.ilovefreegle.org/mobile>. Happy Christmas! Terry & Richard.

...Wild Thyme - if you're stuck for a Christmas gift this year, we have Wild Thyme Gift Vouchers available, or we can create a specific value just for you. Please drop in, call or send a message and we will arrange for you to collect. Merry Christmas

OTHER NEWS

...from Powys CC - like information on domestic energy saving grants funded by energy companies for improved insulation or heating systems? Visit <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14595/Powys-Energy-Saving-Scheme-ECO4-Flex>

...Universal Primary Free School Meals. All children in Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 now receive a free school meal as part of the rollout of the Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) scheme. As of January 2024, Year 4 learners will also receive a free school meal as part of the rollout. If you are on a low income, please continue to claim for free school meals via <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11906/Free-school-meals> as you may also be entitled to other support such as the School Essentials Grant for uniform and other school clothing. More info about free school meals, School Essentials Grant & universal primary free school meals is available from the Welsh Government see <https://www.gov.wales/get-help-school-costs>

...Broadband Update for High Street, Hereford Street & Lugg View - properties on Hereford Street, High Street and the older part of Lugg View have all been redirected into the cabinets that provide FTTC broadband with a maximum speed of 80mbps download and 20mbps upload. Go onto the Openreach fibre checker, put in postcode, select address. If not available to order, register your interest and it should be available to order within a week or two. Beverley

...Powys Teaching Health Board - Don't run the risk of being without your medication this festive period. Bank Holidays may mean that more time is needed for your GP and pharmacy to process your prescriptions. Plan ahead by ordering your repeat prescriptions at least seven days in advance <https://pthb.nhs.wales/HelpUsHelpYou>

...Powys CC - have your Christmas lights lost their sparkle? Please make sure you recycle them, along with any other old electricals, at the Household Waste Recycling Centres.

R.I.P.

...Father Brian Gill. It is with sadness that the death was announced, on December 2nd, of Father Brian Gill - former Rector of Presteigne. The funeral will be held on Tuesday, December 19th, at St. Ethelbert's RC Church in Leominster, at 2 pm. All are welcome to attend. Enquiries to [01544 260800](tel:01544260800).

PACDG - the Presteigne Area Community Development Group ...“Working together for the Community”

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