

Congresbury *Life*

Issue 9 | February/March 2025

News from the Parish Council

Well, I hope you all had a good Christmas and a happy New Year and are returning to work/school etc with renewed vim and vigour! (This always makes me chuckle as I can't help thinking of the cleaning powder my mum used to use on the bath after we'd had our weekly scrub down).

Some rather bad news on the planning front, it seems as though, despite a strong fight and many thousands of words being exchanged, the Mulberry Close planning application has been approved. Wrong in my opinion, but what do I know! N. Som. Highways Dept. came to a public meeting in the OSR and gave us another insight into their plans for the Smallway junction. These were better than before but still not very satisfactory from a residents' point of view. Those of us who live on Smallway know just how dangerous it can be and residents of Carhouse Grove still have no safe pavement to the bus stop at the Cadbury Garden Centre. And of course, when Yatton goes to 20mph and Smallway is still 40, well, interesting I think is the word!

When the weather has improved (don't hold your breath) The Environment Agency are going to

repair the damage that their work has done to the north end of the Millenium Green, a couple of people have complained to me about it, and I've explained that whilst the ground is still so wet it will be made worse not better to work on it.

Finally, I hope you've all noticed the lovely new windows in the OSR, they were long overdue but had to be specially made as replicas because of the building's historical status. Let's hope for some dryer weather and we can all get out into our gardens.

Jane Clarke, Chair,
Congresbury PC.

Broad Street Christmas Fair

A good time was had by all who braved the weather to join the carol singing with Congresbury Brass and Congresbury Singers, and dancing with Mendip Morris. The raffle took nearly £1,600 for the Scout and Guide group and Weston Hospicecare and the stalls from local groups were well supported. Many thanks to local businesses who supported the event, to the parish office and Parish Council for their support, to all the volunteers who pull this event together, and to local residents who tolerated the road

closure. If you would like to support future events in any way, please contact congresburyfair@outlook.com.

Congresbury Welcome Festival 2025

Just over sixty years ago Congresbury was doubling in size, and it was decided to have a series of events to welcome newcomers into our community. It is from those events so many years ago that our villages reputation as a welcoming community began.

This year the Parish Council has decided to revive the idea with a weeklong **"Welcome Festival"** during the last week of June.

Fortunately, on the first weekend we have the **Village Fete and Flower Show** already arranged. Our local MP, Tessa Munt, will be with us for the occasion.



Every **venue/meeting place** in the village is being asked to open for a **"Coffee morning"** on both Saturday mornings to show off their activities and give everyone the opportunity to visit and see what is on offer.

Finally, as individuals and local roads etc we suggest that, depending on weather, either **Coffee evenings** or **Barbeques** can be arranged during the week between, rather like some of events arranged to celebrate the Coronation.

What do you need from your local Children's Centre?

Congresbury Children's Centre is located on the St Andrew's School site. Join our parent/carer ideas group and help to make a difference to children and families living in your local community. Register your interest by emailing us at: ccideasgroup@n-somerset.gov.uk

Or by sending us a message on Facebook or Instagram

 North Somerset Children's Centre
 @northsomersetchildrenscentres

Congresbury WI

Members enjoyed a fine Christmas lunch together at the start of December, but New Year brought the unexpected death of Barbara Hicks - a great loss to her family and her many friends in the village and the WI.

Our speaker on February 19th will be Ali Ball, talking on Ancient Egypt and on 19th March Pam Stewart will show us how to make Easter decorations we had never dreamt of!

We always welcome visitors and new members to our meetings in the Methodist Hall on the High Street. (2.15 start on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.)

Visitors at present pay just £2 per session to enjoy the talk, followed by tea, biscuits and a pleasant chat.

Susan Hibberd, Secretary.
(Contact 01934 833544)

Congresbury Allotments Association

This is a quiet time of year on the allotments, but we've been enjoying our winter veg over Christmas. Several plots will be falling vacant soon as some of our established gardeners are giving up due to health issues or to moving out of the area. Further plots will also be available if current

tenants have failed to keep them in reasonable order. Do apply to Catrin at the Parish Office if you'd like to be put on the waiting list. admin@congresbury-pc.gov.uk

The Allotments Association is concerned that current tenancy rules have no mention of ponds on the allotments, although we already have several on site. We hope the Parish Council will allow the installation of (suitably designed and installed) small ponds. Their value in encouraging biodiversity is now widely accepted. They would benefit wildlife, reduce slug depredation and improve pollination by encouraging bees. They could also provide a bonus for any prospective tenant interested in creating a small wildlife habitat within the cultivated area of their plot.

Susan Hibberd, Secretary,
Congresbury Allotments Association.



BLUEY APPEAL

We urgently need more drivers.
Could you help?

Driving Bluey is not daunting,
we have men and women drivers.

ALL TRAINING GIVEN

Don't want to drive? Could you help on the committee, liaising with users, taking and co-ordinating bookings? Can all be done from home!

We have been providing transport for Congresbury residents for 24 years now, don't let's lose this wonderful asset to the village!
VOLUNTEER TODAY
Ring: 01934 257247 or email: bookingmanagerbluey@gmail.com
to register your interest.

Thank You from the Directors -
Congresbury Community Transport

Regular Bluey Tuesday shopping trips continue, and longer trips may restart in April, if drivers come forward.



You are welcome to join us at one (or both!) of our next two events:
Thursday, 13th February - 7.30-9pm (7.15 for refreshments)
Horsecastle Chapel,
18, Horsecastle Farm Road,
Yatton. BS49 4QQ

An illustrated talk by Congresbury resident, Michelle Walker: "The State of Our Rivers (and what we can do about it)"
Michelle is Technical Director of the Rivers Trust with 30 years' experience in geospatial data and she leads a team supporting the network of 65 member River Trusts. In her spare time Michelle volunteers for both YACWAG and the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust, guiding educational and citizen science activities.

Pub Quiz: Sunday, 9th March - 7.30pm (for 8pm start)
The Plough Inn, High Street,
Congresbury. BS49 5 JA

The return of this extremely popular, fund-raising event will be led this time by Phil Mellor - many thanks to him. Arrive early for a good seat. There will be a raffle midway through the quiz.

Congresbury Community Library

We have our last two winter talks, On Thursday 27 February Kerris Harrop is presenting a talk on the "Ladies Mile", a book by Victoria Hughes', published in 1977. The book is based on diaries written during her employment as the toilet attendant.

She describes the comings and goings of various characters and how she befriended regular users who were mainly working girls. Talk starts at 7:30 pm in the Methodist Hall, Congresbury, tickets cost £4. Our final talk on Thursday 28 March is by Merryn Threadgould on Mrs Jarley's Waxworks. She will be talking about the recreation of "Mrs Jarley's Waxworks for the working men and women of Lostwithiel" over 100 years after the original event. The talk starts at 7:30 in the Methodist Hall, Congresbury, tickets cost £4.

Friday 21 February Lego Session in the library between 2 and 4:00 pm. For all ages.

Monthly Knitting Club Friday 21st February and 21st March between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm. In the library, all welcome, wool and knitting patterns available.

Jigsaws available to buy or swap at all times, plus books to borrow from our Honesty Library.



Congresbury Youth Partnership

Our Plans for February Half Term Holiday
Monday 17th Feb 10-4 Bus to "We the Curious" in Bristol
Wednesday 19th YACWAG 10 - 4
All day fun at the club, including Higgy's Nature Quiz and Art Competition

Find more details on Facebook and book with karen@congsyp.org.uk

We also welcome new members at our term time sessions at Congresbury Youth Club
Monday 3.30-6pm Code Club, supporting young people of all age experimenting with SCRATCH and PYTHON coding languages, and with simple electronics.

Wednesday 3.30 - 5pm After school club for school years 4 to 6

Wednesday 6.30 - 8.30 Youth Club for school years 7 - 11.

Just drop in! The first attendance at any session is free, thereafter a charge between £1.50 and £2.20 is made to cover basic running costs.



My family were able to share Christmas this year with the lively and engaging Chloe, an exchange student from Hong Kong. If you have a spare room and a space at your table, I highly recommend this; it's fun, and educational for guests and hosts. You can host a student for a weekend at any time of year. A payment towards your expenses for hosting can be made if necessary. Check it out. <https://eiluk.org/host/>

Alex from CYP

A Village of Gardeners

Congresbury has always had a reputation for its delightful gardens, and Congresbury Gardening Club has taken advantage of this by attracting members with interesting talks, visits to local gardens and Garden Shows. Treasurer Jacqui Coulson reported a healthy membership of nearly 100, with new members continuing to join. The Spring and Summer shows and the Plant Sale all proved successful, and the local open gardens were well supported. The small surplus income for the year was only slightly down on the previous year, and there was a healthy bank balance which may well be used for the benefit of members this year with an afternoon event

The Gardening Club are kicking off 2025 with talks on Perennial Vegetables in February, The Chatty

Gardener in March and Shrubs for Fruit and Berries in April. We meet the first Thursday of each month at the Methodist Hall starting at 7.30 pm. New members and visitors are always welcome, and more details can be found on the club's website www.congresburygardeningclub.com

Congresbury Rec Club

"Come down to the Rec Club for some warmth, company and a hot drink. We will be running the community living room again for 6 weeks starting on Friday 17th January. Every Friday at 2-4pm, all are welcome, and we hope to see you there.

The Rec Club are also always looking for volunteers and people who are willing to support a well-used community venue. Whether you can volunteer an hour here and there to help with some maintenance, cleaning beer lines or gardening, or whether you have experience and skills running a business and want to join the committee to support with bills, contract negotiations, finances, then please do get in touch! manager@congresburyclub.co.uk



Do you have spare time that you can give to some over 65? Voluntary Action North Somerset is looking for people to volunteer with a local Good Neighbours Scheme. The scheme aims to give people over 65 a hand to stay independent in their own homes as long as possible.

If you have spare time and want to know more about the scheme then please contact Tracy on 07458073262 or email tracy.edwardsbrown@vansmail.org.uk

Candle Recycling at St Andrew's Church - especially after Christmas!

The collecting pallet based in the car park has been removed by the company for emptying but we are still part of the scheme and are anticipating a replacement container by the end of January. In the meantime, there is the internal collecting box at the back of the church or if you just leave your candle remnants bagged up on the coffee bar, we can store them until the box returns. We are pleased to be part of Recycled Candle Company's recycling scheme so please use us.

Any queries, please contact Ruth rwratten@btinternet.com



CHSW Soup and Puds lunch at the Methodist Hall on Thursday March 20th.

CONGRESBURY HISTORY GROUP

Spring Programme 2025 (February to May):

February 19th Andrew Mudd - Archaeology at Hinkley Point Remarkable discoveries at the site of the new Nuclear Power Station

March 19th Clive Burlton - The Citizens of Bristol at War. Film footage of the work of the emergency services in Bristol in 1942

April 16th Simone Einfelt - Collecting Stories from Congresbury and the Strawberry Line. A Multimedia Art Project

Please note: All meetings start at **7.30pm** and are held in the Methodist Hall unless otherwise stated. New members/visitors welcome - Annual Membership £15 or £4 per meeting. Contact information: Chair: Chris Short

01934 833764 Secretary: Ann Gunner 01934 852701 Treasurer: Geoff Pearson 01934 833485
www.congresburyhistory.org.uk

Footpaths Group

Tuesdays 4th Feb and 4th March. Short walks meeting Riverside Car Park 9.30

Sundays Feb 16th and 16th March. Monthly longer walks meeting at Riverside Car Park at 10.00. Bring a packed lunch. Shared transport will be available. No need to book.

Congars Cafe

Congars Cafe, turned 5 years old back in December, with our new vision being presented at the annual Christmas Street Fayre. The cafe is hoping to do some renovations to make better use of the space available for hire, to allow for more community activities to take place.

The café can already be hire for one off and regular community activities. There is a weekly men's mental health club, through Talk Club, which meets every Monday evening starting at 5.30pm. Every 3rd Monday of the month, starting at 2pm, is a bereavement support group called STAR. Then every other month on a Monday is the ladies wellbeing coffee morning. More dates to follow.

On Wednesday 5th February and Wednesday 5th March, Julie (manager from Weston Hospice charity shop), will be hosting evenings around wellbeing with the 1st one covering Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), an alternative treatment for physical and emotional pain.

On Wednesday 19th March, we are hosting First Aid Awareness Class for Adults, run by Katy from North Somerset Mini First Aid. If interested, book this one through their website.

For all other enquiries please book through the cafe.

Save the Millennium Green Again!

Where there was once agricultural land which was hard to farm, given the potential flooding and heavy use of the footpath along the river, thanks to the vision of Sue Grant and the then Parish Council our community gained an amazing resource - The Millennium Green and the Paddock Nature Area with community orchard, joined by the blue bridge. When part of this was threatened by proposed work by the Environment Agency, the community came out, responded strongly to protect it, and won their case that the area be largely preserved as it was dreamed of in the year 2000.

However, in 2025, we face an equal threat, as this wonderful recreation area inevitably needs more money and attention than the empty fields which preceded it. Although it is the responsibility of the Parish Council, their budget is stretched very thin at the moment, and we have to help them. You lovely people who defended it two years ago must come together again, and work to maintain it. You can join the volunteer group and offer your occasional labour. Some who are less fit could form a "Friends of the Green" group, offering fundraising and administration tasks. To join the discussion, email lizzie.burd@congresbury-pc.gov.uk

If you are keen to volunteer for the village or have a piece that can be contributed to the magazine, please get in touch.

Our motto is *BIG TEAMS OF PEOPLE EACH DOING A LITTLE.*
congresburylife@gmail.com

This edition of Congresbury Life is sponsored Congresbury Parish Council