Congresbury Life

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT ROWLES

Parish Council

We're missing Jane's humour this edition, as she's not feeling well enough to contribute. Jane has served the village for many years, and Congresbury Life would like to wish her a speedy recovery.

There are vacancies on the Parish Council, with too much work falling on too few people. If you'd like to help, contact clerk@congresbury-pc.gov.uk

N.S Council

Residents have been in touch about the amount of roadworks around the village. I know the disruption is frustrating and makes daily journeys more difficult. While some works are run by North Somerset Council, many are carried out by utilities and other third parties. Following feedback from council officers and myself, Wales & West have agreed to pause their works for the next couple of years. I hope to see many of you at village events in the run-up to Christmas.

Cllr Dan Thomas

Christmas Fair

Join us from 6pm on 2nd December for a festive evening of community spirit and Christmas cheer!

Enjoy carols from Congresbury Singers and Congresbury Brass, followed by Mendip Morris.

With over a dozen community groups taking part, there'll be plenty to enjoy, including mulled wine, German sausages, homemade festive cookies, magical hot butterbeer, local apple juice, a bottle tombola, human fruit machine, candy floss and badge making, and much more, including Robin King welcoming Father Christmas, alongside the Restore shop and Broad Street Hair & Beauty opening their doors.

Join us for some Festive Fun!

CYP

We continue to host regular youth groups on Wednesdays in term time as well as Code Club Drop In on Mondays. Please note our Wednesday junior after school session for age 8-11 is now at capacity, please contact Sarah to check when space becomes available. We will be running a stall at the Broad St Xmas fair on **Wed Dec 2nd** so look forward to seeing you there.

To support our activities for young people, we run a 100 Club monthly draw. The cost is £18.00 per year for twelve entries. We will be recruiting new members in Congresbury Precinct on **Saturday Nov 28th** from 9.30 to12.00 find us there, or on Facebook, and at alex@congsyp.org.uk or sarah@congsyp.org.uk

We would also like to thank two local companies which have given their time for free to support us recently with maintenance issues at Congresbury Youth Club. Big shout out to **Darren at WRS Alarms and Andy at Stonewall Windows**. We hope readers will consider supporting them in return; it's what makes our community work.

What's On!

DETAILS OF EVENTS INSIDE THIS EDITION

28 NOV XMAS STAR WORKSHOP (ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION)

01 DEC CONGARS HUB

02 DEC BROAD ST XMAS FAIR

06 DEC CYP CHARITY QUIZ (THE PLOUGH)

10 DEC WREATH WORKSHOP (REC CLUB)

13 DEC FOOTPATH GROUP WALK

14 DEC MP SURGERY

15 DEC CONGARS HUB

15 DEC CAROL CONCERT (CONGRESBURY SINGERS)

20 DEC RNLI CHARITY QUIZ (THE PLOUGH)

20 DEC XMAS RHYME TIME (LIBRARY)

05 JAN FOOTPATH GROUP WALK

07 JAN SMALL PLACES TALK (GARDENING CLUB)

09 JAN PRUNING MILLENNIUM ORCHARD

17 JAN FOOTPATH GROUP WALK

20 JAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECRETS OF THE NATIONAL TRUST (HISTORY SOCIETY)

28 JAN PORTISHEAD RADIO TALK (ORGANISED BY THE LIBRARY)

LOOK OUT FOR OTHER REGULAR EVENTS INSIDE

Tessa Munt - MP for Congresbury

Autumn signals a busy part of my year, with lots going on locally and in Westminster. One of the most joyous occasions was being invited to a gathering of local Squirrels, Beavers, Rainbow and Cub packs at Puxton Park, celebrating their organisations' birthdays.

On a more solemn note, I joined the Samaritans' Dawn Walk from Weston's Grand Pier and heading to Uphill, where we watched the sunrise and breakfast donated by Gemma at The Boathouse. The Dawn Walk is a special event, and the Samaritans an amazing organisation with brilliant volunteers. Thank you for all you do.

May I pass on my thanks to Alex Ballard for laying a wreath on my behalf on Remembrance Sunday.



My colleague Daisy Cooper MP, Lib Dem Deputy Leader and Treasury Spokesperson, came to my 'patch' and spoke about Government decisions affecting rural businesses, especially hospitality, leisure and tourism, answering many questions posed by local business leaders.

I've spoken in many debates and asked lots of questions of Ministers in the last couple of months, many of which can be seen on my website: www.tessamunt.co.uk

Your most local 'surgery' is in December– but there are many more nearby. Please contact me for details.

Monday 14th December from 09:30 to 10:30 at The Community Café, Congresbury

No appointment is necessary - it's first come, first served. If you can't come to meet me, I'll come to see you.

May I wish you and yours a very merry Christmas, and a healthy and happy 2027.

01934 440639, tessa.munt.mp@parliament.uk, www.tessamunt.co.uk To keep updated fully on my work as your MP, find me on Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky and LinkedIn.

VANS Good Neighbour Scheme

VANS Good Neighbour Scheme (GNS) is up and running. Our first client spent a morning walking around their local community supported by a GNS volunteer. The scheme would like to support more people who need a small task completed and so now is a great time to get in touch and put yourself forward to volunteer with us.

Just send an email ians@vansmail.org.uk or give us a call on 01934 416486



Congresbury Community Library

Start your Xmas celebrations by coming along to our Xmas Rhyme-time, plus Xmas stories and coffee and mince pies on **Wednesday 23rd December, between 10:30 and 12:00. Free for all.**

Please note that the library will be closed on 25th,26th and 28th December and January 1st.

Our January talk is being given by Lawrence Bennett on Portishead Radio, a radio station that provided worldwide maritime communications and long-range aeronautical communications. **It starts at 7:30pm on January 28th in the Methodist Church. Tickets £4 from the library or at the door.**

New Resources –

Blood Pressure Monitor Kit. The kit can be loaned for a maximum of 2 weeks **free of charge** to library members above the age of 18. Call into the library for further details.

25 Thermal Imaging Cameras are available to borrow for free for one week from the North Somerset library service. The cameras use infrared technology to find heat loss spots in the home, to help you identify where home improvements are needed to help you stay warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Call into the library to register your interest.

Finally, we would like to wish all our library users a merry Xmas and look forward to serving you in 2027.

Fundraising Quizzes

At the Plough **most Sundays**, starting from 7.30pm. Teams of 2–6, £1 per person. Friendly competition, plenty of laughs and a raffle with prizes! Thousands have been raised for local good causes over the years. **Want to host a quiz for your organisation? Speak to the landlord.**

Recreation Club

Get into the festive spirit and create a beautiful Christmas wreath to take home with **Congresbury Recreation Club on Thursday 10th December, from 7:00pm Tickets are £55**, which includes all materials, a drink, and a mince pie.

01934 752505 or forgetmenotflowers.co.uk

WERN Village Agent

Looking for support to stay independent at home? Maxine Gilman offers free, confidential advice for over-50s on care, finances, Attendance Allowance, tech, wellbeing, and more **Call 07967 344766, maxine@wern.org.uk**, or meet her in person at Congars Hub which is held every other week. Contact Maxine for dates.

Congars Hub

The Congresbury Games and Social Group meets **every other Tuesday, from 10:30-12:00, our December sessions are on the 1st and the 15th**, we are located at the Youth Centre at the Millennium Green. For more info email sonya.stocker@sky.com

Bluey

Our last trip of the year will be on **Wednesday 9th Dec to Exeter Christmas Market.** Trips will re-start in the Spring.

New drivers are still needed, only a standard car licence required if you are under 70, and full training given – can you help?

To book a seat or for more information please ring: **01934 257247 or email:** bookingmanagerbluey@gmail.com.

The "Bluey" Quiz at The Plough will be in January (date TBC)

We would like to thank our users, clubs, societies and organisations for their patronage and wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Directors – Congresbury Community Transport

Gardening Club

We kick start the New Year with a talk by Matthew Symonds on Gardening in Small Spaces on **7th January**. If you haven't yet discovered us then please come along and try us out. We meet at the Methodist Church on the first **Thursday of each month at 7.15pm for a 7.30 start.** We'd love to see you.

We are putting together a group of members/village folk who would like to help with organising and staging the two shows that we hold each year, a Spring Show in March and the Rose Show in June. If this is something that you would like to know more about then please **contact Liz on 07507 464615**. It would be a great way to meet other gardeners and get involved in village life.

Congresbury Volunteers

We are planning our annual pruning of the Millennium Orchard on Saturday 9th January, at 10am weather permitting. To join us, please contact lizzie.burd@icloud.com

If you can bring secateurs or loppers, so much the better, but all are welcome. Equipment can be provided, and training given. The annual Wassail, with mulled juice and cake at Congresbury Youth Club will also be in January. Watch out for posters and information on congresbury.net

Congresbury Singers

Christmas Carol Concert. **Tues. Dec. 15th 7.30pm at St Andrew's Parish Church, Congresbury.**

Tickets £12 from the door or usual outlets and include seasonal refreshments

Community Cafe

Over the last couple of months, the café has donated the following amounts:

£500 Children's Hospice South West

£500 South Western Ambulance charity

£1,100 Macmillan Cancer support

£500 Congresbury Youth Partnership

So far this year we have made donations totalling **£6,120.**

The last café session this year will be Friday 11th December and the first session in 2027 will be Wednesday 6th January.

Congresbury Footpaths Group

Join us on Tuesday December 1st for a short walk of about 4 miles ending with a refreshing coffee break. Meet at the Riverside Car Park at 9:30am to arrange transport.

Our longer walk is on Sunday 13th December. It will be about 4.6 miles with two short climbs, starting and ending at the Star in Star where we will be having our annual Xmas meal at 1:00pm. **(If you would like to join us for lunch please contact Di Hassan, 07460090500 by 6th December at the latest)** Meet at Riverside car park 10:00am to share transport.

On January 5th we have a flat walk around Cheddar and the Axbridge Reservoir, ending at a local coffee shop. Meet at Riverside Car Park at 9:30am to share transport.

The walk on Sunday 17th January is from Stockhill Wood Car Park walking to Underbarrow Farm, Priddy and Nine Barrows Lane to the Tumulus and Priddy Mineries. Walk is just 4.8 miles and flat so a great way to start the new year. Meet at 10:00am at the Riverside Car Park to share transport. Bring a packed lunch. Dogs on leads will be welcome.

Walking with friends and neighbours is a great way of exploring the local area as well as keeping fit and getting out in the fresh air which helps to lift the spirits during the winter months.

Congresbury WI

We are moving! From November 2026 we will be meeting in St Congar's room in the Old School Rooms. Meeting times will stay the same - **2.15 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month**. And, of course, we'll extend a warm welcome to visitors and potential new members. The charge for non-members (**which includes tea, biscuits and sometimes a celebratory cake**) is £4. We not only have a change of venue but also a new president. Angela Jones was voted in unanimously at our October AGM to take over from Valerie Harding who has served our branch for a magnificent 30 years.

Another cause for rejoicing has been the installation of the new WI bench on the Millennium Green. We'd been fundraising for just 2 years to pay for a new, sturdy yet comfortable bench and feel proud of our achievement. We are very grateful to the village resident who installed the bench for us free of charge! And to Lizzie Burd of the Millennium Green Trustees for her great help in making the necessary arrangements. Reports from villagers who have tested the bench are very positive, both for design and position!

Our December meeting will be our traditional members' Christmas meal in Star village at "The Star" - on the second Wednesday of the month, for a change. As usual we'll bring contributions for local food banks. In January Jonathan Holt will be introducing us to "Follies of North Somerset" – buildings, not idiotic ideas!

Susan Hibberd, Secretary.

Village Fete 2027

Next year's fete will be on Saturday **19th June.** The committee have started the planning process, initially by holding events within the village to raise funds. **The next event will be a Medieval Banquet in February/ March.**

The theme for the fete will be a **Celebration of Star Wars**, which is 50 years old in 2027. If you have any ideas about what you would like to see at the Fete or memories of a particular activity/display that you enjoyed please let us know.

Yatton RFC

Yatton Rugby Club is inviting local boys and girls to join their Under-7s squad!

Sessions take place on **Sunday mornings at their brand-new pitches on Kenn Road,** offering a great chance to learn new skills, make friends, and have fun. To find out more or get involved, **contact Paul Short on 07814 875576**

Churchill Music

We welcome CarmenCo to **St Johns Church, Churchill, on Sunday 6th December, from 3pm to 5pm**, for My My My Delilah! — A concert/play exploring the story of Samson and Delilah from her point of view.

Tickets: www.tinyurl.com/carmencocm

Friends of St Andrews



A BIG thank you to all those who attended the Harvest Supper held in the Memorial Hall at the end of September. Fabulous food and fun was had by all. Thanks especially to the wonderful caterers, to the music group, and to Alyx and Jamie for the musical entertainment. To be repeated next year – please join us!

St Andrews Church

From **7th December**, St Andrews Church will be hosting a special Christmas Window Display throughout the festive season.

A variety of organisations and groups from across the village are coming together to create their own unique Christmas-themed window displays. These festive creations will remain on show over Christmas, providing a wonderful opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy the creativity, imagination, and community spirit that make our village so special.

Everyone is warmly invited to take a stroll around the Church and admire the displays. Whether you're looking for festive inspiration or simply a chance to enjoy the Christmas atmosphere, there will be plenty to see and enjoy.

We would love for you to come along, explore the displays, and celebrate the season with us, we look forward to welcoming you and sharing the festive spirit this Christmas.

YACWAG

'Tis the season to be jolly so why not visit our stall at the always-lively **Congresbury Christmas Fair in Broad Street 6pm – 8.30pm on Wednesday, 2nd December?** Available to buy will be our lovely 2027 YACWAG calendars and our newly produced mugs – both perfect little Christmas presents for friends, family or anyone who loves our local wildlife. And of course, buying them helps support the work we do to protect nature locally.

The ever-popular youngsters' Lucky Dip will also be there as well as wildlife themed badge-making. Every purchase and donation helps us continue our work supporting local wildlife and habitats.

In the new year our season of winter talks continues with:

Nature is our Neighbour – the story of YACWAG

Thursday, 14th January, Horsecastle Chapel, 18 Horsecastle Farm Road, Yatton. 7.30pm start but refreshments available from 7.15pm

Free for members, but non-members are very welcome with a suggested donation of £3 per person, refundable if they join YACWAG on the night.

Tony and Faith Moulin will talk about the exciting journey YACWAG has been on since 1999, accompanied by beautiful photos taken in and around our reserves in Yatton and Congresbury. Gain an insight into the history of our local wildlife charity, be inspired about its current actions and share hopes and dreams for the future.

Tony and Faith's book, "Encounters with Nature," will be on sale at both above events if stocks remain.

Information about YACWAG can be found on our website yacwag.org.uk where you can also sign up to join us – annual membership is only £5-£15.

Local News!

Residents living near Kent Road Green are delighted to have a bench to rest on again. We are grateful to our good neighbour, **Marion Johnson, who donated the bench to replace one that had been removed.** After years in storage it has been installed for the enjoyment and relaxation of locals. Marion is now in a care home but is happy to know it will be appreciated at last.

Many years ago, the old churchyard was placed under a low-maintenance mowing regime to encourage wildlife. This proved unpopular and was abandoned. **If you have concerns about its current management, please contact the Parish Council, not St Andrew's Church**. As a closed churchyard, its upkeep, including the walls but not individual graves, is the responsibility of the Parish Council under the Local Government Act 1972.

Allotment Association

Activity on the allotments is winding down, though there are still plenty of crops to harvest. But members have been occupied in other ways. We now have a fine official constitution (useful when applying for grants) which will be presented to members for adoption at our AGM in the New Year.

The access gate to the allotment site was damaged some time ago and there have been increasing concerns about security. A request for quotes to replace it was made at a Parish Council meeting years ago but a decision was made to invest instead in the vastly improved water supply, installed in 2022, which has been much appreciated in recent droughts.

We know there are always pressing demands on the Council's budget so we decided to start fund raising this year to offer support to the Parish Council in providing a replacement gate in the future. Thanks to the hard work of a committee member we were awarded a grant of £1000 by Bristol Airport's local fund. This has been added to takings from the plant sale and the village fête.

On **28th November** we will be holding a Christmas Star workshop, using hazel whips from the allotments, to bring in more funds. Our Christmas Social is still to come and we'll have a stall at the Christmas Fair in Broad Street – all to raise more money towards the purchase and installation of a secure gate.

With the support of the Parish Council's Allotment working group we hope a solution can be found to the height of the border hedge that hasn't been cut for 2 years and also that action can be taken on neglected plots. And of course we look forward to welcoming new, enthusiastic tenants to join our group of friendly plot holders for the next growing season.

There are always changes at rent renewal (the end of February) when a few tenants decide to relinquish their plots so do contact admin@congresbury-pc.gov.uk Susan Hibberd, Secretary

A message from the team

If you'd like to support the village by volunteering or have a piece for the magazine, please get in touch.

Big teams of people each doing a little

Congresburylife@gmail.com

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