

BRENT KNOLL NEWS

DECEMBER 2025



75p

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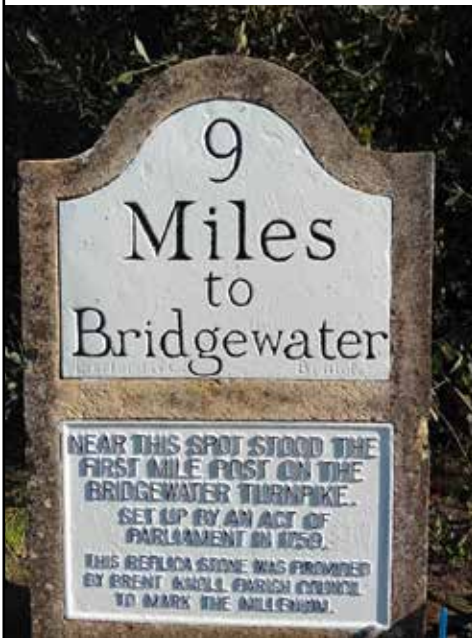
Christmas Opening:

Christmas Eve 8.30 - 12noon

Christmas Day CLOSED

New Years Day 8.30 - 12noon

(other than these days, the same as normal)



Have you noticed that the Commemorative Millenium Milepost has recently been refurbished.

This is thanks to the efforts and donations of George Brown and Tony Hill

Thank you both for helping to maintain this village commemorative asset.


Bob Filmer

Chairman

Brent Knoll Parish Council

The Parish of Three Saints

St Christopher's, Lympsham St Michael's, Brent Knoll St Mary's, East Brent

<p align="center">Contacts</p> <p align="center">The Parish is currently in vacancy Please contact Church Office</p>	<p align="center">Baptisms</p> <p>To arrange a Baptism, contact the Church Administrator. Please also see Church of England website for more information- www.churchofenglandchristenings.org</p> <p align="center">Weddings</p> <p>Weddings can be arranged by contacting our Church Administrator who will discuss, availability of dates and times, also talk with you about the qualifying connection you must have with the Parish and to take your contact details.</p> <p>You will then be contacted to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet to discuss your commitment and requirements.</p> <p>Please also see Church of England website for more information- www.yourchurchwedding.org</p> <p align="center">Funerals</p> <p>Your chosen Funeral Director will contact our Church Administrator to arrange your requirements.</p> <p align="center">*****</p> <p>Visit our website – www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk Facebook: TPOTS Twitter: @TPOTS6</p> <p>Safeguarding – Contact Ginnie Soffe 01278 769117 or Church Office 01278 769082 e-mail safeguarding.tpots@gmail.com</p>
<p align="center">Associate Priest Reverend Neil Biddiscombe Tel 07862 045215 e-mail - associatepriest.tpots@outlook.com</p> <p align="center">Church Administrator – Mrs Carole Carter Church Office, Church Road, East Brent, Somerset, TA9 4HZ Tel 01278 769082 e-mail office.tpots@gmail.com Office is open Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10am – 1pm</p>	
<p align="center">Churchwardens</p> <p>St Michael's, Brent Knoll Mike Smith 01278 760691 mikesmithchurch@gmail.com Frances James 01278 760287</p>	
<p align="center">Church Treasurer – Contact Church Office 01278 769082 / office.tpots@gmail.com PCC Secretary – Mrs Carole Carter 01278 769082 / office.tpots@gmail.com</p>	



December 2025

7 th 2 nd Sunday of Advent	10.00am	Parish Eucharist	St Michael's, Brent Knoll
14 th 3 rd Sunday of Advent	10.00am	Service of Remembrance	St Mary's, East Brent
21 st 4 th Sunday of Advent	8.30am 10.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion BCP Parish Eucharist Carol Service	St Christopher's, Lympsham St Christopher's, Lympsham St Christopher's, Lympsham
24 th Christmas Eve	4.00pm 11.30pm	Crib/Nativity Service Midnight Mass	St Christopher's, Lympsham St Michael's, Brent Knoll
25 th Christmas Day	10.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist	St Mary's, East Brent
28 th 1 st Sunday of Christmas	10.00am	Parish Eucharist	St Mary's, East Brent
Night Prayer every Wednesday at 7.30pm – ZOOM – link from parish website			

For latest information please see www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk or notices in church porches.

St Michael's Church Register

At Rest - Mary Dimmock



Brent Methodist Church (<https://eastbrentmethodistchurch.org.uk/>)

Minister	Revd. Steve Bennett
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The service of Remembrance in Brent Knoll at the Parish Church memorial was led by Brian Dallimore, Brent Knoll British Legion chaplain, supported by Rev Margaret Trapp. The laying of wreaths was placed on the memorial along with crosses for each of the Brent Knoll fallen. These, as the names were read out, were placed by Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. The service continued in front of a large congregation where readings and hymns reflected on the sorrow and loss of so many through war.

As we travel through Advent, some dates for your diaries.

We shall be holding our Christmas concert and fayre on Saturday 6th December at East Brent Chapel. The popular local choir 'All Sorts' will be performing a Christmas themed concert. Do join us at 11.30am to enjoy listening and joining in, to what promises to be a really festive occasion followed by soup and rolls, coffee and mince pies in the hall. Then browse the stalls, books, jigsaw puzzles, bric-a-brac, tombola and, of course, cakes! No tickets required, just come and enjoy.

The following week, we shall be joining in the Christmas tree festival on 13th/14th December at the Parish Church of St Michael.

Our annual Carol Service will be held on Friday 19th December at 7pm at East Brent Chapel. Please do come and join in at this popular annual event, held by candlelight.

Our Christmas Day service will take place at 10am. A shorter service where we celebrate Jesus' birth and to which all are welcome.

From all of us here at Brent Methodist Church, we continue to hold the Village in our prayers as we wish you every blessing this season promises.

God bless all of you, from all of us

Rosemary Krull (on behalf of all of us at Brent Methodist Church)

Services at Brent Methodist Church (East Brent) @ 10.30am

7th December : Mrs Janet Widdess

14th December : Mrs Joyce Pipet

21st December : Rev Steve Bennett

28th December : Rev Michael Pullan (Holy Communion)

All-Sorts Choir

Where are all the Male Singers? We would love you to join our choir. Don't be shy, I promise we won't hurt you! We just have one male singer who would love to have others to sing with. Are you that person?



We are the All-Sorts Choir who rehearse on Thursday nights in the East Brent Village Hall from 19.30 – 21.15.

We are also looking for ladies as well so please come along to our rehearsals to see if we are the choir for you.

Throughout the year we sing at Care Homes, Associations, Churches or at events to support local charities and it would be great if you could join us. There are no auditions, just come along for a taster session.

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Sue Toon

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Open Sundays from 12pm – 3pm and 5:45pm – 9pm

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Notes from the Parish Council

November meeting



Approval of minutes of the meeting held on the 1st October.

Planning Matters – None

07/25/00027: Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 07/24/00008 (Erection of extension to East Elevation, erection of extension to West Elevation on site of existing conservatory (to be demolished) and erection of terrace and steps into rear garden to amend the approved plans in schedule A, at 157, Brent Street, Brent Knoll, TA9 4BE.

Response: The Parish Council supported this proposal on the grounds of property enhancement in keeping with surrounding street scene.

Financial Matters Agreed

- (a) Statutory Payments List: Approved by Members for 2025/2026.
- (b) Variable payments List: Approved by members at this meeting.
- (c) Village Contract 2026/2029 resolution to appoint JP Mayo.
- (d) Toilet Cleaning Contract 2026/2029 resolution to approve Incleanz.
- (e) Initial consideration of 2026/2027 Budget further in December.

Play Area

Play surface and other matters within the play area. A decision was taken to replace the safer surface under the Climbing Frame at the lower cost of £5323 including VAT, this decision is subject to the Council achieving some contributions from grants. Also, replacement of the Abacus on the climbing frame £546.86 including VAT and replacing a metal panel on the MUGA in the sum of £1172.40 including VAT the work to be carried out by GB Sports. Agreed unanimously.

The award of 1st Prize in the Somerset Small Playing Field of the Year was welcomed by members of the council.

Other Key Decisions taken by the Parish Council

- (a) To move forward on a new Website with Aubergine.
- (b) To Replace the Council Laptop at a cost of £584.
- (c) New secure Council Domain using the '.gov.uk' protocols.

A **full copy** of the minutes is available on the website and can also be obtained by contacting the clerk. You can also view the meetings by following this link [Brent Knoll Parish Council meetings - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXx-BC7euoE9ha5ptq7HM2Q) or entering <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXx-BC7euoE9ha5ptq7HM2Q>.

Future Meetings

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on **Wednesday 3rd December** at 7pm in the **Jubilee Room**. The Parish Surgery will be on **Tuesday 2nd December** in the **Jubilee Room** of the Parish Hall from **10am to 12 noon**. Contact the Clerk on any Council matters. Provisional meeting may be on 17th December.

Owen J Cullwick, Tel No. 07917 445 215 clerk@brentknollpc.co.uk

Brent Knoll Take-Away

Dates for your diary:

11th December 5-7pm - Fish & Chips 25th December 5-7pm - **No Fish & Chips!**

Brent Knoll's Community Shop News

Everything is geared up and ready for Christmas at Brent Knoll Community Shop, including seasonal meats from Havercrofts, our local supplier. Order forms are available in the shop and should be completed by Thursday 11th December, with collection from our gazebo on the village green on Tuesday 23rd.

For a special gift, we'll be stocking "Deepest Somerset", the new book featuring contributions from many of the county's famous people. Proceeds will go to the Somerset Community Foundation, the county's charity co-ordinator.

This year, the shop will also have a special post-box for the scouts to deliver your local Christmas cards. Just pop your cards and donation into the box.

On the topic of post boxes, the shop fully supports the Parish Council's efforts to get Royal Mail to locate a post box outside the shop. We're also supporting the Plunkett Foundation's participation in the Government's consultation process about the future of rural Post Offices,

While there will be no "Sausage Sizzler" in December, they will continue in the New Year on the last Saturday of each month. Also in the New Year, plans are under way for the next Quiz Night in the Parish Hall and a wine tasting evening.

Meanwhile, we recently had fun with Simon Parkin, live on air when BBC Somerset focused their "Clash of the Professionals" quiz each day for a week on community shops. We were the second shop to take part, but only managed seven and a half points, but it was great that community shops were given the limelight. *David Sturgess*

BRENT KNOLL PARISH SURGERY

with our Parish Clerk

Owen Cullwick and a Parish Councillor

will be holding a Parish Surgery on

Tuesday, December 2nd, 2025

10am to 12 noon

Jubilee Room, Brent Knoll Parish Hall

Please use this opportunity to meet your Parish Clerk and councillors to discuss any issues

Small Local Grants from your Parish Council

The Parish Council in Brent Knoll will be making small grant donations to local and charitable groups once again for 2025/2026, the application form is available from the clerk and considerations given to those who provide a service to the residents of Brent Knoll. The application deadline is December 20th, 2025 and a decision will be made in January 2026.

Full Grant awarding Policy is available on request and is on the Website.

Owen J Cullwick, clerk@brentknollpc.co.uk, 07917 445215



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St Michael's Churchwarden's report

As we approach the Christmas period, we start Advent on November 30th reflecting on the candle in the Advent ring, starting with the first candle representing Matriarchs/Patriarchs. The 2nd candle represents the Prophets; the 3rd represents John The Baptist and the 4th candle represents Mary the Mother of Jesus and the 5th is lit at Midnight service/Christmas Morning representing Jesus as the Light of The World.

Please pop into the church to see the candle.

We welcomed The Royal British Legion into the church and at the War Memorial for the Act of Remembrance Service. It was lovely to see around 150 people in the church including the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows. The service was taken by Brian Dallimore, the Legion Chaplain along with the Rev Margaret Trapp. A special thanks to all who took part in the service.

As we write we are still in Vacancy, the job has been advertised again and the closing date for applications for a new Priest in Charge for ourselves with Berrow and Brean was October 30th. We again thank Rev Neil Biddicombe who continues to enable us to have a service of Holy Communion each week in the Parish with the help of visiting clergy.

The Christmas Services are as published in the Brent Knoll News and on local notice boards and we look forward to seeing you over the Christmas period.

Please don't forget the Christmas Tree Festival, as mentioned elsewhere in the magazine. If you are passing the Church, please remember our –'Honesty Café' and 'Borrow Books' bookcase.

Thank you all for your prayers and support, may the peace and blessings of Christmas be yours and may 2026 bring you happiness and peace.

Mike Smith, St. Michael's Church warden, 01278 760691, mikesmithchurch@gmail.com



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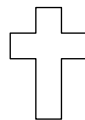
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Not going Home for Christmas!

We always try to get our casualties home for Christmas if we can. Sometimes their injuries make that impossible and we then try to give them an extra tasty meal. We at least know that they are snug and warm even in the coldest of nights. Our staff and volunteers work all through the Christmas period to ensure that there is help if needed.

Sometimes we find that wildlife hasn't read the book (!), and things arrive in the wrong season. A mallard duck once produced six lovely yellow ducklings in the middle of December when it was snowing! She then deserted them, but we were able to rear them with an incubator and keep them indoors until the spring came.



In December, a few years ago a vet in Italy got in touch with me as he had a female badger in care with a broken back leg. This he had fixed but he was finding that she was sleeping for long periods and only eating every few days. I explained that as they had delayed implantation, females go into a deep sleep in the winter which allows the embryos to attach and start to grow. Gestation is 7 weeks and 1 day. I therefore said that it was best to leave her to eat when she felt like it and let nature take its course. A very happy vet contacted me

a few weeks later, a very proud 'dad' of two cubs and the leg had healed beautifully.



We always look at December as being the end of a year, but many animals have started to think about breeding. Going into January, you will be hearing the foxes starting to call for mates. Tawny and Barn Owls may already be thinking of nesting sites for their next brood.

Even in the short winter days, I seem to find things to do out in the garden just for a few hours. I know I will soon be accompanied by my robin who is always keen to see

what I am turning over in case the odd worm or millipedes are uprooted. They are the only birds that continue to sing in the winter to protect their territory. Wrapped up warm, it's a good time to walk over to our Millennium Wood to look out for the signs of where the deer have been sleeping, the latrines that the badgers have used to mark their territory although not so active at this time of year. It's lovely to see the wildlife or their signs to show me how we share our fields with wildlife – and the dog enjoys a walk too. Then it's back into the warm and maybe a mug of mulled wine!

I hope you and your family have a lovely Christmas and send our good wishes from us all at Secret World Wildlife Rescue.

Pauline Kidner

Poppy appeal 2025



I would like to thank those that helped with this year's poppy appeal; with your help we have already exceeded last year's total of £17,000. Full details, results of our efforts will be provided when all boxes are in and counted.

Chris Poulter - Poppy appeal organiser for Brent Knoll, East Brent and district.

Front Cover Photo -

Thank you to Chris Page for the cover photos of the Harvest Supper with the Lipinski Brothers. Particular thanks to the Rangers for their efforts serving the food. *Bob*

Meet and Eat

Our Meet and Eat Christmas celebration will be held on Monday December 8th at 12.30pm in the Brent Knoll Parish Hall. Please book with Gill or Liz on 01278 760810 by Friday Dec 5th.

We wish all our regular diners a Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year. The team will take a break in January. *Meet and Eat team*

Tea & Chat

We will be going out for our annual Christmas meal on Wednesday 10th December, for further details please contact me, as whilst I am writing this, I don't know time or venue.

Sadly, this last year or so has seen some of our members suffer ill health or bereavement but we hope that our regular groups help to combat the loneliness and add a touch of humour to the month.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone reading this a Peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. *Margaret Smith, 01278 760691*

Women's Society

We enjoyed an early Christmas meal together at The Red Cow at the beginning of December. Thank you to those who were able to join us and to the staff of the Red Cow.

We will **not** be meeting in January 2026 but will be in contact with our members with details of our February meeting.

Julie and I wish you a Very, Merry Christmas and a Happy ,Healthy New Year. *Ann*

Fun in Fundraising

Thank you to all who came to the successful Spud and Pud lunch on November 1st. We had 41 guests who seemed to enjoy the delicious food, the atmosphere and autumnal surroundings.

Please put in your diaries that next year's Soup and Pud lunch will be on February 7th.

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

This year the event will be on Friday 12th 3-7 pm, Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th 10am-4pm.

If you are exhibiting you will notice we have asked for exhibits to be put in on the Thursday, this is to enable the school classes to have private viewings of the whole experience during Friday school hours.

This year being our 3rd year we have also invited Santa to join us. There will be a light trail from the church door to his Grotto.

We are expecting around 50 exhibits ranging from a tea tray to 6 foot trees and made from all material, wood and all sorts of things. If you've not been before do try to visit, it is amazing to see the creativity of individuals, groups and businesses. All we ask is for a £1 for admission for Church Funds. We will also be having some craft stalls, raffle, tombola, children's games and activities and Seasonal Refreshments.

During the event we will have live musical entertainment of soloists, a singing group, organ and keyboard music culminating in the School Choir at 3pm on Sunday 14th.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Wishing you all a Peaceful Christmas and Happy and Healthy New Year..

Mike and Margaret Smith, 01278 760691; mikesmithchurch@gmail.com, on behalf of the Fun in Fundraising Team, St. Michael's Church

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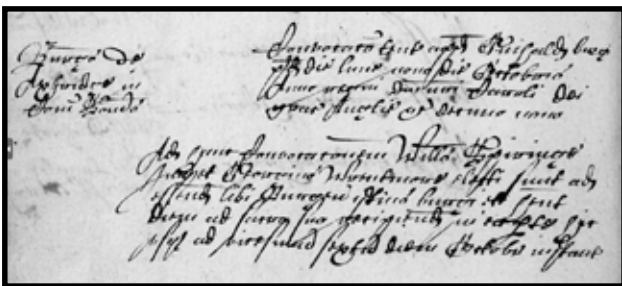
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The Lodge, Shrub Farm, Burton Row,
Brent Knoll TA9 4BX

Brent Knoll House Histories – 103

Last month I noted the references to the poor in William Spearing's will, which were obtained from a modern transcript of a relevant part of the will. During November I decided to have a look at a seventeenth century copy of his will, dated July 1691, which still exists in the Axbridge Archive, now housed in the South West Heritage Centre Record Office, just outside Taunton (I assume William Spearing's family retained the original). It was not quite what I had expected. Firstly, it was a rather large document, but also, it was not always very easy to read. Some of the reason for that is the fact that seventeenth century writing and spelling are not quite the same as they are now, to say the least. However, I can usually manage most of that, with a little careful analysis, but another reason, which is mentioned in a couple of documents which accompanied this copy of the will, made life a little bit more difficult.



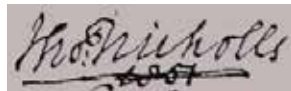
Apparently, in 1851 this copy of his will was "presented to the Mayor and Council of Axbridge. It was mounted, framed and hung in the Council Chamber of Axbridge Town Hall." It then states that there was a note, which had been glued to the rear of the board on which the document had been nailed (!), which was "too fragile and fragmentary to be removed and preserved" when the document was finally removed from its frame in 1974. It read, "William Spearing, for many years of this Corporation, died in the year 1691," (though his monument says he died in 1690!) It then goes on, "This document remained in Darkness for many years and was presented by Thomas Nicholls Esq, Town Clerk, who had possession of it for more than fifty years." I am not sure why he had possession of it, as it would appear to belong to the Corporation. Unfortunately, a number of documents over the years were lost because people "had them in their possession." It continues, presumably referencing Thomas Nicholls, "A humble individual of this Corporation considered it unpardonable that the intentions of this good man should be laid down in silence, when so many poor of this Town is constantly relieved by his Bounty and extensive Charity, caused it to be placed in the Council Chamber by permission of William Maggs Esq, Mayor, and the rest of the Common Council, in the year 1851."

Thomas Nicholls was a Solicitor who lived in St Mary's Street, just behind the Oak House and is described in an 1840 Directory as, Town Clerk; Clerk of the Peace and Prothonotary (a chief clerk in a law court); Perpetual Commissioner for taking acknowledgements of married women (an interesting one, which acknowledged that a woman's property was not automatically taken over and owned by her husband on marriage, as it had previously been, and her right would be assessed independently from her husband, to ensure she agreed with any of his decisions about a sale); Commissioner of Queen's Bench, Common Pleas & Exchequer; Agent for the British Insurance Office & Westminster Insurance Office, for whom the London Agents were Messrs. Lawrence & Taylor, 25, Old Fish Street., Doctor's Commons. The first two of those were standard for the Town Clerk, but when a Royal Commission interviewed an Axbridge Town Clerk earlier in that century and asked him what it meant, he had no idea!

Continued on page 20

Brent Knoll House Histories – Continued

In 1851 there is also a Thomas Nicholls who is listed as a Capital Burgess. He lives at the top of the High Street opposite the former Methodist Church, which is now an Arts Centre. I assume he is probably the father of the Town Clerk, but he has an unusual feature in his signature, which always records the year in which he signs anything as shown here.



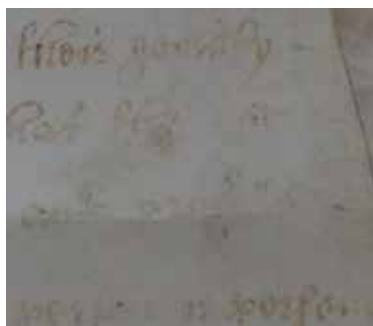
The copy of Spearing's will remained in the Council Chamber until 1974 when, "because damage



The top edge of the document showing a just readable part.



A less readable part at the bottom of the document



A side edge which is almost all unreadable

from light, damp and wood beetle was becoming very apparent, it was removed from its frame and placed for safekeeping among the Town Trust records", which is why there are parts of it which are unreadable today, particularly around the top and bottom edges.

William Spearing does start his will in the traditional way by stating, "In the name of God Amen, the tenth day of September in the fourth year of the reyne of our Soverayne Lorde..." But then this part gets very difficult to read, though it obviously would refer to King James the Second and list all his dominions, which would still have included France in those days, as well as the nations of the United Kingdom, including Ireland, which is the last one mentioned and the only one still visible.

William Spearing then goes on to say, "being in good health and of perfect memory, praised be God, yet considering the frailty of this mortall life, the uncertainty of the tyme and the certainty of death, and how often it falleth out that troubles and contentions doe arise after men's death concerning their temperall estates, for prevention whereof I have thought it requisite and necessary (a word is crossed out here and another has a tear through it, but I think it says, "to settle and dispose,") of my Estate which God hath given me in time of health, that soe it may be quietly enjoyed after my death by such person and persons as I am desirous should have and enjoy the same."

What was not mentioned in the bequest to the poor in last month's transcript is that the very first item he mentions in his disposal items is, "I give unto the poore of my parish of Axbridge in the County of Somersett fforthy shillings to be distributed amongst them the day of my interment." Later he also gives ten shillings each to the Churchwardens and Overseers "as an acknowledgement for their paines in managing the said estate."

More next month

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Join us at Brent Knoll Short Mat Bowls Club.

We play Monday and Friday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm in Brent Knoll Parish Hall.

It is a game for all age groups and will help to keep you fit.

Bowls can be supplied and beginners are welcome.

Please contact Glynis 07709970215 for further information.



Glynis Carey, Secretary

2025 "200+ Club" October and November Draws

The October and November draws were made at the Parish Hall Committee meeting in October. The winning numbers were:-

October	No.	Prize	Name		
First Prize	123	£ 20	Mrs K.M. Roberts	The Willows	Brent Knoll
Second Prize	223	£ 20	Miss E.C. Frost	Old Church Road	Axbridge
Third Prize	350	£ 16	Ms J. Prosser	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
Fourth Prize	13	£ 12	Mrs S. Harvey	Church Lane	Brent Knoll
Fifth Prize	38	£ 12	Mrs A. Reason	Orchard Grove	Brent Knoll
Sixth Prize	173	£ 10	Mrs J.E. Wright	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
Seventh Prize	113	£ 8	Mr & Mrs R. Smith	Burton Row	Brent Knoll
Eighth Prize	109	£ 6	Mr & Mrs T.C. Hannah	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
November	No.	Prize	Name		
First Prize	63	£ 20	Mr P.G. Loynd	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
Second Prize	133	£ 20	Mr & Mrs G.S. Ricketts	Wick Lane	Brent Knoll
Third Prize	239	£ 16	Mrs M.A. Bryant	Station Road	Brent Knoll
Fourth Prize	137	£ 12	Mrs K.M. Roberts	The Willows	Brent Knoll
Fifth Prize	203	£ 12	Mr D.E. Sturgess	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
Sixth Prize	227	£ 10	Miss A. Haber	Brent Street	Brent Knoll
Seventh Prize	167	£ 8	Mr G.E. Brown	Station Road	Brent Knoll
Eighth Prize	156	£ 6	Mrs D.T. Tucker	Burton Row	Brent Knoll

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Parish Hall by joining the 200+ Club, we have over **350** numbers. This will help make sure that our Parish Hall continues to meet the needs of our local community and remains at its heart.

Bob Filmer, 200+ Club Co-ordinator

Advertising in the Brent Knoll News

The advertising year for the Brent Knoll News runs from September to July/August. We do have some spaces available for new advertisers for 2025/26

If you would like to advertise in the BKN, or know of a local business/organisation that would like to, please contact me on bob@flockman.com and I will forward details of the size and cost of advertising space available.

The BKN is delivered free to every household in Brent Knoll, is on sale at the village shop, parish church and online at <http://www.brentknollvillage.co.uk/BKnews/latest.pdf>.

Bob

Bishop's letter - Christmas joy for all people

We fear that we live in a world of increasing polarisation. Conflicts between and within nations play their part. The amplification of division and hostility by social media algorithms doesn't help. Culture wars exacerbate matters further. Sometimes it feels like common ground is disappearing from underneath our feet like a sandbar being overwhelmed by the tide.

In such a climate, it's good to return to the message that heralded the arrival of Jesus. 'I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be for all people' says that angel who announces the saviour's birth (Luke 2:10). Jesus' story quickly includes all types and sorts of humanity. From local shepherds to exotic visitors from afar. I wonder what the conversation was like as they all crammed into the stable to see the newborn child?

Jesus's story quickly shows that not only is he for all people but that he needs all people. His family must have needed assistance when they fled as refugees to Egypt. Jesus must have needed help when his parents left him behind on a family outing to Jerusalem aged twelve. Jesus was constantly calling on and engaging with others as he went about his teaching and ministry.

What might counter the polarisation of our day? Amongst our greatest resource is to seek out the emotion that accompanied the news of the saviour's birth – joy. When we encounter joy – from that cup winning goal to the marriage of much loved friends – such moments are never the time for division and enmity. We're all far too busy shouting and hugging each other! The invitation of Christmas is to experience such joy afresh. Often, we see joy most obviously in children's experience of the season. Might we seek it for ourselves too? For joy breaks down divisions, overcomes barriers, reminds us that we are one.

'I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be for all people' says the angel. A very merry and joyful Christmas to you all. *Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells*

Brent Knoll Bazaar, Farmers' Market and Parish Café

Brent Knoll Bazaar, Farmers' Market and Parish Café has enjoyed another great year.

Our stall holders, holiday visitors and regular village crowd all meeting together in our Parish Hall.

A BIG THANK YOU to all our stallholders and 'Team Bazaar'. Without you all there would be no Bazaar. This year three of our very!! long time Kitchen team have retired!! So, a **Huge Thank You** to Sandra, Elaine and Bella, we miss you and we welcome the new team who have stepped in to carry on feeding us!!

Our Parish Hall is a charity and needs constant care and maintenance, hence our regular events, held for all villagers to enjoy.

Do come and join us for our Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 13th December 10-12 noon. We wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas. *Viv Hares*



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Burton Row Community Speed Watch update

Location B3140 Burton Row Speed Limit 30mph

Official Speed Watch Sites: Brent Knoll - 8. East Brent - 1

Reporting period 1st October to 31st October

Speed watch 1 hour sessions - 6

Total vehicle numbers - 939

Maximum speed - 45mph

% Exceeding (30MPH): 20%

Vehicle speeds recorded Exceeding Burton Row (B3140) Highway Legal (30MPH) Limits (Shown as % in ascending order) as follows:

(1) 01 Oct: 14%

(3) 27 Oct: 20%

(5) 13 Oct: 22%

(2) 10 Oct: 19%

(4) 06 Oct: 22%

(6) 17 Oct: 23%

There were **18 letters issued by the police** for those speeding during September and October.

Burton Row Speed Watch Group

In the News

- 1945 November 24 Obituary. Mr Martin Schunck of High Barn, BK died aged 58. He had lived in the village for about 10 years and was widely esteemed. He left a wife and 2 children.
- December 1 Over £2,200 for forces
To all Brent Knoll men and women serving in the Forces during the war 10s.1d has been sent each quarter and £2 at Christmas from the Cheer Fund.
From the "Welcome Home" Fund 11/- was given for each quarter of service.
The total amount paid out of these funds amounts to £2,203.3s.6d
- December 15 Motor mishap
Mr F.A. Chubb, well known Highbridge Cheese Factor and his daughter, Miss Dorothy Chubb, both of Brent Knoll, received injuries in a mishap on the railway bridge at Brent Knoll on Monday morning. Miss Chubb was detained in the Burnham Hospital.
- 1946 January 12 Wedding at Brent Knoll.
Major Michael Perks RE, eldest son of the late John Perks and Mrs Perks of Nightingale Farm.
- January 19 Fine Brent Knoll record for War work.
Over £900 raised.
10 flag days raised £125.10s.4d.
"Rural Pennies" and special efforts for same £371.4s.7d.
Whist Drives and Carol singing by Girl Guides and Boy Scouts £187.12s.7d.
Plus other events totalled £904.10s.1d.
- March 2 Farm Cottage tenancy
James Rice, farmer of Berrow, cottage occupied now by Herbert Redman, farm worker no longer employed by Mr Rice. New farm worker William J Grant.
- March 9 County Council Election Result
The first County Council election since 1937 took place on Saturday, the result for the Brent Division being declared as follows:-
Mr EG Holt 753 Brent Knoll
Mr GJ Gilling 717 Rooksbridge

George Brown

NP

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PARISH HALL COMMITTEE

FORTHCOMING EVENTS for your DIARY

2nd Saturday Bazaar, Farmers' Market and Parish Café 10am-12 noon

6&7th December Children's Book Fair (am) 18th April Jumble Sale (am)

2026 6th June Village Fête (pm)

28th February BAD Performance (eve) 18th July Music on the Green –

21st & 22nd March Book Fair (pm) 'Funkydillies' (eve)

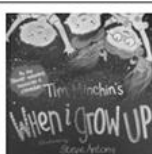
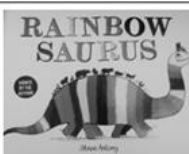
Next meetings - Monday 8th December, 7.30pm in the "Jubilee Room".

Sandra Few

Children's Book Sale - Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th December



Brent Knoll Parish Hall are extremely lucky to have been given a wonderful collection of children's books. They range from books designed for young children to books aimed at teenagers, and all are in excellent condition. On the dates mentioned above we are aiming to hold a book sale, entirely devoted to children's books, just in time for you to find some really good Christmas presents for all those young bibliophiles who love reading or being read to – many also have a range of delightful pictures for those too young to appreciate the texts. The sale will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on each of those dates.



Saturday December 6th & Sunday the 7th

10am to 4pm

BRENT KNOLL

PARISH HALL

Baby books to

teenager books - Just in time for Christmas

Part of the proceeds will be donated to Children's Hospice South West



Christmas Dreaming

It was the day before Christmas

Colourful lights twinkling and flashing on houses and trees

Shops filled with Christmas decorations, food and gifts for everyone

Church bells ringing

Happy and excited children laughing and singing

Soon would be the beginning of a very special day

As darkness falls, Arthur, Daniel and Sophie, now tucked up in bed, excitedly said, "We won't sleep tonight. We want to stay awake so we can see Father Christmas".

Soon they were all fast asleep, dreaming about tomorrow - Christmas day

In the night they heard a strange noise. It was a 'Whooshing' sound. Whoosh, Whoosh, Whoosh, Whoosh.

Then they heard the sound of Bells jingling and ringing, followed by a 'BUMP!' on the house roof.

What are those strange noises? What is happening? thought Arthur, Daniel and Sophie.

Next they heard the sound of heavy footsteps, keys turning in locks, doors slowly opening and the sound of someone carrying a heavy load.

Soon they heard the sound of footsteps again, followed by the sound of doors slowly closing, keys turning locks again and then the same 'Whooshing' sound. Whoosh, Whoosh, Whoosh, Whoosh.

Then everything went very.....very.....quiet....Not a sound could be heard.

Arthur and Daniel jumped out of bed, looked out of the window and saw something moving in the night sky. It looked like a..... Helicopter ??

Could it be that Father Christmas came to 'THEIR' house in a Helicopter?

No, No thought Daniel, it can't be Father Christmas, he always arrives on a Sleigh pulled by Reindeers.

Arthur and Daniel are suddenly woken up by Sophie who is saying "ARTHUR, DANIEL, WAKE UP!, WAKE UP!. It's Christmas Day. Let's go and see if Father Christmas has been and if he has left us any PRESENTS".

Arthur, Daniel and Sophie excitedly ran out of the bedroom into the lounge. There, next to the Christmas tree, with all its colourful decorations and lights twinkling bright, are lots and lots of presents with.... 'THEIR' names on them.

Sophie suddenly stopped next to the Christmas tree and said "Did you hear that?"

"Hear what?" said Daniel.

"I heard a voice say: 'Merry Christmas, Ho, Ho, Ho' said Sophie".

Did Sophie hear Father Christmas say "Merry Christmas Ho, Ho, Ho?".

Was the 'Whooshing' sound, and BUMP! noise, they heard in the night, made by Father Christmas landing his Helicopter on 'THEIR' house roof?

Or was the sound of bells coming from Father Christmas's sleigh?

Arthur, looking up at the Christmas tree, started jumping up and down and said

"Daniel, Sophie look!, over there, near the top of the tree, is a small Red Helicopter. Did we hear Father Christmas in the night.... Or did we.....JUST DREAM IT"

Who knows, even Arthur, Daniel and Sophie don't know. All we know is: IT'S CHRISTMAS! "YAY".

Merry Christmas everyone, have a wonderful time

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December Sudokus

Easy Sudoku

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A		2				5		6	3
B	6		8			3	4		
C						6			
D			9				2	1	
E					7				
F		3	7				8		
G				2					
H			6	9			5		1
J	5	7		6				4	

Hard but not too much

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A				4	1		6		
B	2			5					
C				2				8	3
D		3							2
E			8		9		4		
F	4							6	
G	1	8				7			
H						6			1
J			2		8	5			

Can I again thank Klaus Brenner for sending me a number of Sudokus so we can continue to have them in the BKN each month and to continue David's tradition. Bob

An Advent and Christmas Message

As we approach our celebration of the miracle of Bethlehem, may the light of Christ warm our hearts, steady our hope and renew our love for one another.

Christmas is the story of God drawing near. In the hush of a stable, in the vulnerability of a baby, God chose humility as the way to bring healing and reconciliation to a broken world. Though I'm sure that God has it all in hand, I for one would rather that this healing and reconciliation came about a bit quicker! Having come close to us as a baby, that same God continues to come close to us day by day - into our homes, our joys, and our sorrows - calling us to receive and to share the gift of grace.

As we prepare through Advent for Christmas, I offer you four gifts.

Hope - The birth of Jesus reminds us that darkness is never the last word; light breaks in and transforms what seems hopeless.

Joy - Christian joy is not a fleeting feeling but a deep assurance rooted in God's presence with us.

Peace - As the angels proclaimed, Christ is the Prince of Peace; we are called to be peacemakers in our families, neighbourhoods, and parish.

Generosity - The manger teaches extravagant giving; we should respond by offering time, prayer, and practical help to those in need. In particular, I encourage you to donate to our local foodbank. Donations can be left in the church.

We also offer you an invitation: join us this Christmas to worship, to sing, and to welcome the Christ-child together. We are an Inclusive Church and everyone is welcome here. Details of our Christmas service times and locations can be found in this newsletter and on our website www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk.

May the joy of the angels, the peace of the shepherds and the hope of the Magi be with you and your loved ones this Christmas and in the year ahead.

With every blessing.

Rev'd Neil Biddiscombe, Associate Priest

Just for Fun – December Crossword

Across -

- 1) Kidnap (6)
- 5) Happens again (6)
- 8) Hate with a passion (6)
- 10) Sailors (6)
- 11) Regions (5)
- 12) Liquified by heating (6)
- 13) The pieces joining a wheel's rim with its centre (6)
- 14) Land surrounded by water (6)
- 18) Schoolboy feast (5)
- 19) Sober and dignified (6)
- 23) Concluding (6)
- 26) Gives temporarily (5)
- 27) Next to (6)
- 30) Excellent (6)
- 34) The sea (5)
- 36) Not present (6)

Down -

- 1) Helps (7)
- 2) A girl's best friend (7)
- 3) Mild, merciful (7)
- 4) Musical notes (5)
- 5) Preparedness (9)
- 6) Wicker basket for holding fish (5)
- 7) Increased in value, gone up (5)
- 9) An offering of one tenth (5)
- 15) Male offspring (3)

- 16) Mr Baba, who had forty thieves for company (3)
- 17) Man's best friend (3)
- 20) Before (poet.) (3)
- 21) A French friend (3)
- 22) Negatively charged particles (9)
- 24) A Swim (3)
- 25) Neither, --- (3)
- 27) Uplifting underwear (3)
- 28) Female sibling (famil.) (3)

- 29) University teacher (3)
- 31) Concerning the womb (7)
- 32) Imposing building (7)
- 33) American friends (7)
- 35) Anything valuable (5)
- 37) Shout of approval at the end of a performance (5)
- 38) Modifies something written by another (5)
- 39) Staccato jazz form from the forties (5)

Trevor Wellavize

1		2		3	4			5		6		7	
				8			9						
10								11					
				12									
13								14	15		16		17
					18								
19	20		21		22			23		24		25	
					26								
27		28		29				30	31		32		33
				34			35						
36	37		38					39					
					40								
		41						42					
					43								
44								45					

- 39) At the back of (6)
- 40) Slice of bacon (6)
- 41) Spanish friend (5)
- 42) Pacific atoll where nuclear weapons were tested (6)
- 43) Sovereign state (6)
- 44) Skites (6)
- 45) Fades out, drifts away (6)



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Nature Diary December – Looking back over the year

Looking back on 2025 the outstanding feature was the contrast in weather patterns. In January we were having to cope with floods after torrential rainfall around the turn of the year. We then went into a very dry period in spring. Summer began as normal in June but July and August produced heatwave after heatwave and one of the driest summers on record. As I write this Diary we are back into “average” conditions, but, despite significant rain, none of the springs around the Knoll has yet to produce any water flow. When we recently visited Cheddar Reservoir at least a quarter of the area was dry. I am sure that this will change with the coming winter, but we will need more than average rainfall to replenish the reservoir levels for 2026.

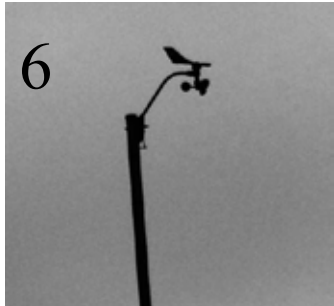
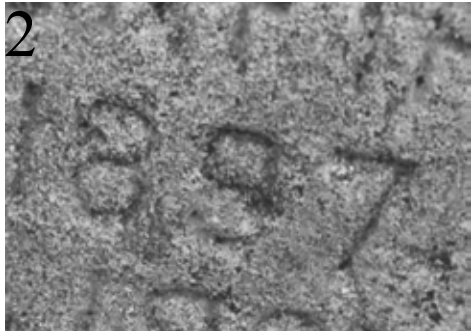
As expected, the weather affected plant growth. The wet winter meant that the primroses in St Michael's churchyard were at their best, with a wonderful display on the path to the lychgate. Primroses thrive under cool and damp conditions, so let us hope that the dry summer has not affected them too much. Grasses died back in July after setting seed in the usual way. The fact that grasses have started to grow again demonstrates the remarkable feature of this class of plant. One of their survival mechanisms is to “shut down” when water is scarce and to start growing again when the drought ends. On our trips to Botswana over the past twenty years we have seen both dry and wet seasons. Sub-Saharan ecosystems have adapted to this variation in water supply and major animal migrations such as that of the wildebeest have resulted. The leaves on woody plants in southern Africa also have waxy leaves to cut down water loss, but in the dry season they do drop their leaves as deciduous plants in Europe do in winter. This has happened with local shrubs in Brent Knoll, but another effect of our drought has been for woody plants such as shrubs and trees to over-produce flowers and berries. In the first week of November the hawthorn that grows in one of the driest parts of the churchyard was in full bloom. Firethorn (*pyracantha*) has yellow and red varieties. At St Michael's we have a yellow variety that was heavily weighted with berries this autumn and on Brent Street I have noticed a number of fiery red firethorn hedges. Come Christmas and all these berries will have been stripped from the bushes by thrushes and blackbirds.

Following the poor showing of many butterflies in 2024, what happened in 2025? The short answer is that 2025 was a much better year. However, there were some interesting variations on what might have been expected. White butterflies were relatively scarce at the beginning of the season, but large whites, in particular, had a better second half of the season. I noticed this on my veg plot. In the early part of the year brassicas that I planted thrived. Unfortunately, I failed to net them in mid to late summer and my efforts to control the caterpillars in July and August failed miserably. The brussels sprouts and purple sprouting broccoli plants are now skeletons! Common blues were seen in good numbers this year. Normally I know where they will be seen in specific sections of the butterfly walk, with a particular stronghold being the top of the Knoll. It is unusual for their numbers to exceed 10-12 on a single walk. However, on one occasion I counted 30 on my climb up the Knoll. The odd thing was that the count the following week was zero for that section. Where had the other common blues gone in the meantime? Other highlights of the year were good numbers of wall browns early in the season, and a clouded yellow. This is only the second time in 17 years that I have ever seen a clouded yellow. Other transect walkers in Somerset report them regularly every year but Brent Knoll seems to miss out.

Finally, our Church swallows did not reappear in 2025. It would seem that the death of one partner in 2024 has, indeed, been fatal, as I suspected it might be. *Geod*

Brent Knoll Feature – 59

Recently I came across some pictures I used for a quiz at a Village Fête shortly after I arrived in Brent Knoll in the late 1990s. As it is coming up to Christmas, I thought it may be good to repeat part of that quiz again. So, all but one of the pictures below were taken at that time, but should still be recognisable today. Can you identify them and state which of them is the only new picture?



Answers will be given in next month's BKN. John Page

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Update from Tessa Munt, MP for Brent Knoll

Last month, I spoke in Parliamentary debates on various subjects - from Sudan to Business Rates, the new 'Hillsborough Law' to the Infected Blood scandal and prison sentences to Powers of Attorney.

October marked Breast Cancer Awareness Month and I gladly attended a Macmillan Coffee Morning in Parliament and the Breast Cancer Now's 'Wear It Pink!' event. It's good to know progress has been made, awareness raised and I know the Prostate Cancer UK campaigns are equally important annual events in Parliament too.



I've criss-crossed the constituency visiting schools and businesses, harvesting organic walnuts (!), attending meetings, events and surgeries.

I was honoured to join the families of those who died in a Chinook helicopter crash in the Mull of Kintyre in June 1994, delivering a petition to 10 Downing Street. 31 years later, the families, one of whom is local, still have no idea what happened. They're calling for the Defence Secretary to meet them, release the documents – now locked away for 100 years – and tell the truth about what happened that day. I'll work to make progress and bring justice to the families involved.

November is a more sombre month, with remembrance at its core. 2025 saw Parliament mark 75 years since the House of Commons chamber was rebuilt after being bombed in 1941. Our communities honour those who lost their lives, particularly in the Great War and the Second World War. Every year I wear both a red and a white poppy. The red poppy reminds us “never forget” the loss of British military personnel and the allied forces who died alongside them. The plea of the white ‘peace’ poppy - first worn in 1933 - is “never again”. We remember everyone who died, those physically and mentally injured, made homeless or stateless by war. Civilians are victims of war too, as our daily news broadcasts constantly remind us.

What matters to you, matters to me. If you want to bring anything to my attention, please contact me or come to a ‘surgery’. The most local venues are here, but my office can give you the full list:

Friday 5th December from 12:00 to 13:00 at **The Brent Knoll Inn, East Brent**

Saturday 6th December from 11:30 to 12:30 at **The Lamb Inn, Axbridge**

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

I wish you a merry Christmas and a peaceful and happy New Year! Thank you. *Tessa*

You can contact me:

Call: 01934 440639 (answerphone outside office hours)

Email: tessa.munt.mp@parliament.uk

Post: Tessa Munt Freepost (you won't need a stamp!)

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Brent Knoll Weather Report – October 2025



October got off to a quiet start, with hazy sunshine and a mild south-easterly breeze on the 1st and rather more cloud on the 2nd. This was the lull before the storm, because in the western Atlantic things were far from quiet thanks to hurricanes Humberto and Imelda. One product of the complex weather situation off the east coast of America was Storm Amy, which formed in mid-Atlantic on 2nd October.

A powerful jet stream carried Amy to the west of Ireland on the 3rd and the north of Scotland on the 4th, with the low deepening all the way – the lowest pressure recorded was 947.9hPa at Shetland, a new October record for the UK. Amy caused severe damage and disruption in Ireland and the north of the UK, with some fatalities. The effects were felt here as rain during the afternoon of the 3rd as the warm front passed through, followed by more rain on the cold front later in the evening as the breeze veered west and freshened. Overnight wind speeds increased further, with gusts of over 40kts from early morning until mid-afternoon on the 4th and it wasn't until the evening of the 5th that things quietened down as Amy moved off east into the Baltic.

The 6th and 7th brought a complete contrast with sunshine and a light north-westerly breeze, thanks to a brief ridge of high pressure. The 8th was a day of cloud and drizzle, but on the 9th an area of high pressure moved up from the Azores to cover the whole of the UK. This high stayed with us for a week or so, but as sometimes happens during the cooler months it had a good deal of cloud trapped beneath it, without enough strength in the sun to burn it off. Hence instead of blue sky and sunshine, this high pressure brought us a spell of anti-cyclonic gloom with the sky full of featureless grey stratus.

There were a few breaks in the cloud. A clear night on the 11th/12th produced the lowest temperature of the month, with 2.7C recorded around dawn. On a couple of evenings, the cloud broke up shortly before sunset and we were treated to colourful sun dogs caused by hexagonal ice crystals in the atmosphere.

The high pressure slipped away east on the 18th and the first of a series of Atlantic lows moved in the following day, bringing showers and yet more cloud. During this period Comet Lemmon (C/2025 A6 (LEMMON) to give it its official title) was reaching its closest approach to Earth and I was beginning to despair of getting a glimpse of it. Fortunately, there was a break in the cloud on the evening of the 21st, the day of the closest approach and I was able to get a clear view with binoculars. Those with younger eyes and dark skies might have seen it unaided.

The procession of Atlantic lows continued for the rest of the month, including Storm Benjamin which moved quickly up the English Channel overnight on the 22nd/23rd. This low brought flooding and gales to the Channel Islands and western France and the south-east of England also suffered some disruption. The wettest day of the month here was the 24th which was a day of sunshine and showers totalling 12.2mm. We managed some hazy sunshine on the 25th, but in general the end of the month was dull and wet.

The rainfall total for October was 62.8mm, below average but within the normal range. Unfortunately, Bristol Water's monitoring site was rather out of date at the time of writing, with Cheddar reservoir still showing only 30%, but no doubt October's rainfall will have helped to improve that figure. The average temperature for October was also about what we would expect, at 12.8C. Perhaps the most notable feature of October was the absence of sunshine, not helped by cloud trapped under the high pressure in the middle of the month.

Stephen Baggs; www.knollweather.co.uk

Useful Village Contacts:

St Michael's Church, Brent Knoll			
Parochial Church Council, Secretary,	Carole Carter	office.tpots@gmail.com	769082
Church Administrator	Carole Carter	office.tpots@gmail.com	769082
Church Warden	Mike Smith	mikesmithchurch@gmail.com	760691
Warden Emeritus	Miss Frances James		760287
Church Cleaners	Margaret Smith	mjbsmith87@gmail.com	760691
Church Flowers	Vacant		
Poppy Organiser	Mr Chris Poulter		760804
Brass Cleaners	Sarah McClean		07766 391774
Methodist Church,	Revd. Steve Bennett	steve.bennett@methodist.org.uk	784808
	Janet Southwell		760445
Baptist Church: Burnham, College St.	Revd. Steve Ayers		783920
Catholic Church: Burnham & Bridgwater	Father Frank Wainwright,		422703
Member of Parliament	Tessa Munt	tessa.munt.mp@parliament.uk	01934 440639
Somerset Councillors	Bob Filmer	bob.filmer@somerset.gov.uk	760760
	Tony Grimes	tony.grimes@somerset.gov.uk	786208
Parish Council,	Owen Cullwick	clerk@brentknollpc.co.uk	07917 445215
Clerk	Bob Filmer	bobf@brentknollpc@gmail.com	760760
Chairman	David Knott	davidkbrentknollpc@gmail.com	07772 867771
Planning enquiries	Amanda Reason	amandarbrentknollpc@gmail.com	07971 687174
Footpath Contact	Jenny Butters	administrator@brentknollparishhall.co.uk	760477
Parish Hall	Bazaar	vicechairman@brentknollparishhall.co.uk	760308
	Eddie Fuller	chairman@brentknollparishhall.co.uk	760760
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Brent Amateur Dramatics (BAD)	Sarah Joyce		07985 423265
Brent Knoll Companions	Ann Robson & Karen Russell		760981 & 769382
Conservative Branch	Bob Filmer	bob@flockman.com	760760
Ecumenical Group	Revd. Margaret Trapp		760573
Guides/Brownies/Rainbows	Jane Sinnott	jane_bkg@hotmail.co.uk	
Meet & Eat	Liz Bream		760810
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Live Events at the Cinema – Tosca

Wednesday, October 1st saw my friend Denise and I back at the Ritz cinema in Burnham, to see and hear this wonderful opera which is full of tragic events.

The story is that the local (Rome) police chief, **Scarpia**, a very nasty piece of work, is searching for an escaped prisoner and thinks that **Caravadossi**, an artist, has helped said prisoner to hide. This is exactly what Caravadossi has done and is taken off from his painting in the church to Scarpia's torture room. He will not divulge the whereabouts, however, despite horrible things happening to him. Meantime, his lover, singer **Floria Tosca** has followed him to Scarpia's house and is made to listen to the torture, while Scarpia makes promises that if she will yield to his desires, he will spare the painter. Scarpia himself sits listening to the painter's cries and drinking wine, while Tosca pleads with him. Eventually, she can bear it no longer and agrees to his demands (I leave you to guess what those are!). Scarpia says he will arrange a fake execution for Caravadossi, as he has to keep up appearances with his underlings. In reality, he arranges that the execution is real, but Tosca will not know this until after she has given him what he wants.

Tosca, in Scarpia's house, finds herself unable to do what he asks and on finding a weapon to hand, kills him. She then goes to tell Caravadossi what he must do, i.e. when "shot" lie still as if dead until the officers have gone away and they will then get a safe passage out of the country. She then finds that Scarpia has double-crossed her and her lover is dead, so throws herself out of the window.

The 2 main characters were sung and acted superbly by **Freddie de Tommaso** and **Anna Netrebko**, whose tenor and soprano voices blended beautifully in the duets and arias they sung. **Gerald Finlay**, singing the part of Scarpia, had a very powerful bass voice and used it to good effect, enjoying the suffering of both the lovers.

The Opera House has a new director in **Oliver Mears** and a new musical director in **Jakub Hrusa** and this was a version set in the modern era, with up to date costumes by **Ilonka Karas** (Tosca's dresses were stunning). The sets - the church in Act 1; Scarpia's house in Act 2; the ramparts of **Castel Sant'angelo** in Act 3, all designed by Simon Holdsworth were simple but very effective. The orchestra, as ever, were brilliant, they don't always get the recognition they deserve, as they work very hard, whether opera or ballet, but never let us down.

All in all, a great start to the season and we look forward to the next offering.

Pauline Chadwick

Just for Fun – November Crossword Answers

Across -

3) Shaved	15) Swift	27) Sincere	38) Ray	48) Aeon
7) Salt	17) Rev	28) VIII	39) Secreting	49) Leeks
9) Adage	18) Cleverest	29) Gnat	42) Rat	50) Scab
10) Rata	21) Art	30) Spreads	44) Again	51) Serene
12) Ado	23) Stood	33) Tiptoe	45) America	
13) Abalone	25) Tables	35) Liars	47) Rib	

Down -

1) Lasses	7) Sale	20) Stews	32) Air	40) Crane
2) Calico	8) Thefts	22) Repair	33) Treads	41) Eerie
3) Seated	11) Tartar	24) Trivia	34) Pyre	43) Arab
4) Above	14) Oval	26) Begging	35) Liable	46) Cos
5) Erase	16) Florist	27) Spree	36) Agates	
6) Dab	19) Run	31) Postie	37) Sanest	

A Visit from St Nicholas



Twas the night before Christmas
when all through the house.
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care
in hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds.
While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads.
And Mamma and her kerchief and I in my cap.
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter.
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter
Away to the window I flew like a flash.
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new fallen snow
gave the lustre of midday to objects below.
When what to my wondering eye should appear
but a miniature sleigh and eight tiny deer.

With the little old driver so lively and quick
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick
more rapid than eagles his coursers they came
and he whistled and shouted and called them by name.

Now Dasher! now dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!
On Comet! on Cupid! on Donner and Blitzen.
To the top of the porch to the top of the wall
now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all.

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly
when they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
so up to the house-top the coursers they flew
with a sleigh full of Toys and St Nicholas too.

Roger Ward

What is the “200+ Club”?

This is a brief explanation of the “200+ Club” for those who are not currently members. Members purchase one or more “Numbers” for £ 12 each. All Numbers are entered into 12 monthly draws with prizes of £20 and £12, plus two special prizes, one in June of £60 and one in December of £120.

If more than 100 numbers are purchased, the number of prizes is increased to keep the prize money and the chance of winning roughly in proportion. The draws are made at Village Events and Parish Hall meetings with winners published in the Brent Knoll News. Winnings are paid by cheque.

If you would like to join the “200+ Club”, with a chance to win a prize and to support the maintenance and ongoing improvement of the Parish Hall at the same time, please see the article and application form in this issue of the Brent Knoll News.

Bob Filmer, 200+ Club Co-ordinator

Light up a Life

For many of us, the festive season is a time to gather with loved ones, while remembering those we miss so much. This winter, St Margaret's Hospice is once again inviting their local community to remember their loved ones by dedicating a star in their memory in support of their Light up a Life appeal.

The hospice is also inviting the community to attend their 'Light up a Life' gatherings. These moving events provide an opportunity to remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones through readings, music and the lighting of candles.

Thursday 4th December – Monkton Elm Garden Centre, Taunton – 6pm to 7.30pm

Sunday 7th December – St John's Church, Yeovil – 2.30pm to 4pm

More information: <https://www.st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/ways-to-give/light-up-a-life/>.

Izzy Rossiter

Live Events at the Cinema

Last Wednesday, November 5th, Denise and I set off for the cinema showing of "La Fil Mal Gardee", a ballet which is not as well-known as others and not danced as often. We were looking forward to the performance which promised us Francesca Hayward in the principal role. The cinema was full and we were all set, waiting - and waiting - when one of the staff came down to the front and said that there was a blip and sorry for the delay.

We all sat for another 15 mins, then he came down again and said, "Really sorry, but the delay was going to be long and if we would like to make our way to the foyer we would get our money back if we wanted". Most people went, Denise and I decided we would wait a bit and sit there rather than joining a long queue.

Denise had ordered an ice cream for the interval, so asked for it and we sat there while she ate it. Better than dribbling it down yourself eating while walking in the street!!

The young lady who manages the cinema now came and sat on the steps and spoke to us (we are **known** at the cinema!) and told us that there had been a blip in the satellite. They have a box on one side of the building to talk to the satellite and another box on the other side of the building to feed into the projector. Because of the blip the boxes weren't talking to each other and she had tried to reboot, but it was taking a long time.

She was very upset, as she said it would happen when there was a full house in! Not her fault, but the cinema would bear the expense of the problem. Obviously, she was upset at not being able to give people a good night out.

Denise and I decided that sitting in an empty cinema was a new experience!!! Not something I have done before!

There are new performances coming from the National Theatre, one on 27th November called "The Fifth Step" featuring Jack Lowden and Martin Freeman and written by David Ireland. Try a play at the cinema.

Then Andre Rieu's Christmas Concert December 6th at 7pm and Sunday 7th at 2pm followed by "The Nutcracker" on December 10th - take your children they will love it.

January brings "La Traviata" on the 14th and "Hamlet" on the 22nd.

February has the ballet "Woolf Works" on the 9th.

Give the Ritz the chance to recoup their losses and come to watch some wonderful things at a fraction of the price you would pay in London, atmosphere is what you make of it, so ignore people who say there will be no atmosphere, we also get interviews with the cast and directors of orchestra and ballet/opera.

Pauline Chadwick

“200+ CLUB” – 2026

There's been a good response to the 2026 200+ Club with over 150 numbers already reserved. If you haven't joined yet, you can do so by filling in and returning the application form below, or, if you were a member in 2025, by returning your reply slip. Don't forget, the more members the more prizes!

Anyone aged over 16 years can be a member of the 2025 “200+ Club”. Don't forget, your relatives and friends can join (they don't even have to live in the village). As well as locals, we have members from America, Australia, Axbridge, Banwell, Basingstoke, Bracknell, Bristol, Bromsgrove, Burnham, Clevedon, Devon, Germany, Highbridge, Kent, Lymsham, Mark, North Curry, Puriton, Taunton, Watchet, Worle, Yorkshire and even East Brent! Your chances of winning are much better than the Lotto!!

Below is an application form for next year's membership. I would be most grateful if you could complete and return it to me, together with your subscription, as soon as possible, either via the Village Shop or directly. In January, I shall write to all those who join, giving details of their allocated number(s) and the date of the first draw in 2026!!

NOTE - Cheques will **NOT** be cashed until after 1/1/2026 *Bob Filmer, 200+ Club Co-ordinator*

WIN UP TO £120!!

Monthly draws entitle winners to prizes including:

1st Prize £ 20 + others including £ 12

In addition, two annual draws entitle winners to EXTRA prizes including:

Summer Draw Christmas Draw

1st Prize - £ 60 1st Prize - £ 120

The **more numbers issued**, the **more prizes**, keeping the chances of winning just as high.

In **2025** we will have paid out **119 prizes** totalling **£ 1,856!!**

Numbers will be allocated at a cost of £ 12 per year (£1 per month)

ALL PROFITS TO BRENT KNOLL PARISH HALL

✂-----

Complete below and return with your payment of £ 12 per entry to: Bob Filmer, Wascelyn, 48, Brent Street, Brent Knoll or the Brent Knoll Village Shop.

You can apply for 1 or more numbers. Why not get your friends and family to have a go and support your **LOCAL** Parish Hall at the same time. They make **excellent Christmas presents!!**

Your Name Mr/Mrs/Ms

Address

Telephone

Yes, I would like to buy number(s) in Brent Knoll Parish Hall “200+ Club”

Please enclose cash or cheque for £ 12 per “200+ Club” number.

Cheques payable to **“Brent Knoll Parish Hall”**

If you would like to pay by **BACS** please tick ☐ and add your **e-mail** below

.....

Wishing you all Good Health, a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Bob Filmer, Editor
Page

Diary for December

1 st Recycling & Rubbish	Your House	Early!!	
1 st Short Mat Bowls Club [Mondays]	Harris Room, Parish Hall	2.00-4.00pm	23
1 st Pilates [Mondays]	Nuttall Room, Parish Hall	6.15pm	
2 nd Burnham/Cheddar Bus [Tuesdays]	Brent Street/Burton Row	9.30-2.30pm	
2 nd "Chatty Café" [Tuesdays]	Lymsham Pavilion	10.00-1pm'ish	42
2 nd Parish Surgery	Jubilee Room, Parish Hall	10.00-12noon	7,8
3 rd Pilates [Wednesdays]	Nuttall Room, Parish Hall	8.30am	
3 rd Parish Council – Public Session	Jubilee Room, Parish Hall	7.00pm	7
Parish Council Meeting	to follow immediately		7
4 th B&H Choral Society [Thursdays]	Methodist Hall, BoS	7.30pm	
4 th All-Sorts Choir [Thursdays]	East Brent Village Hall	7.30-9.15pm	4,43
5 th Burnham/Cheddar Bus [Fridays]	Brent Street/Burton Row	9.30-2.30pm	
5 th Short Mat Bowls Club [Fridays]	Harris Room, Parish Hall	2.00-4.00pm	23
6 th Hand Bell Ringing Group [Saturdays]	Ivyclad Hall	10.00am	
6 th Children's Book Fair	Parish Hall	10.00-4.00pm	31
6 th Methodist Christmas Concert & Fayre	East Brent Chapel	11.30am	4
6 th Music by Candlelight	St Michael's Church	6.30pm	27
6 th &7 th Andre Rieu Christmas Concert	The Ritz Cinema		52
7 th Children's Book Fair	Parish Hall	10.00-4.00pm	31
8 th SORT IT+ Recycling	Your House	Early!!	
8 th Meet & Eat Christmas Celebration	Nuttall Room, Parish Hall	12.30pm	16
8 th Parish Hall Committee meeting	Jubilee Room, Parish Hall	7.30pm	31
10 th Tea & Chat Christmas Meal	t.b.a.		16
10 th 'The Nutcracker' (ballet)	The Ritz Cinema		52
11 th Green Waste Collection [Thursday]	Your House	Early!!	
11 th Fish & Chips	Village Green Car Park	5.00-7.00pm	7
12 th Mobile Library [Friday]	Old Post Office	9.15-9.45am	
12 th Deadline for January Brent Knoll News		12.00 noon	54
12 th ..14 th Christmas Tree Festival	St Michael's Church	see page 16 & 33	
13 th Bazaar, Farmers' Market & Parish Café	Parish Hall	10.00-12noon	24,31,43
15 th SORT IT+ Recycling	Your House	Early!!	
17 th Brent Knoll Companions:	Harris Room, Parish Hall	2.30pm	
17 th Provisional Parish Council Meeting	Jubilee Room	7.00pm	7
18 th 'Beer and Carols'	Red Cow	9.00pm	12
19 th Methodist Carol Service	East Brent Chapel	7.00pm	4
20 th Closing date for Parish Council Grant Applications to the Clerk			8
22 nd Recycling & Rubbish	Your House	Early!!	
24 th Midnight Mass	St Michael's Church	11.30pm	3,12
29 th SORT IT+ Recycling	Your House	Early!!	

POSTAL Subscription

The Brent Knoll News is available by post for those outside the village. All you need to do is to send name and address together with a cheque for £20 (incl. UK postage), to the editor, payable to "Brent Knoll News" and we'll do the rest. You could even give it as a present!

Deadline for the January 2026 Issue –

All contributions to be received by noon on **Friday 12th December**, to:- bob@flockman.com.
The Brent Knoll News welcomes all contributions. Views expressed are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the editor or the standpoint of the Brent Knoll News. The Brent Knoll News does not endorse or recommend businesses that advertise in this publication. The Editor reserves the right to edit or amend any contribution.

BRENT KNOLL VILLAGE WEBSITE: www.brentknollvillage.co.uk

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