What's Happening in Stur
Bi-Monthly: Dec/Jan 2026/7



Make Stur Sparkle

Copies of the full Stur Sparkle programme are distributed with electronic copies of the newsletter & there are plenty of printed copies around town separate from the newsletter.

To whet your appetite, our roving reporter – Ravin Bill's – illustrated report on last year's Stur Sparkle is online at snclc.org.uk and in electronic copies of this edition.

As Bill concludes: "Stur shines because Stur shows up"



2027



30th Anniversary of Closure of the Market

20th Anniversary of opening of The Exchange

1100th Anniversary of England - crowning of Æthelstan first King of (all) England.

Any thoughts, ideas, stories about the market: contact
sturbiz18@gmail.com

News from Sturminster Newton Town Council– Kate Squire, Town Clerk



Looking Ahead: Planning, Preparing and Protecting our Community

As we welcome the Christmas season, let's celebrate the spirit of togetherness and look ahead with hope. Much of the Town Council's work happens quietly in the background, but a great deal of what we are doing now is about looking ahead: planning for Sturminster Newton's future, preparing for change and making sure our community is as resilient as possible.

Strategic Plan and Communication Strategy

The Council has been developing a Strategic Plan, setting out our priorities for the coming years and helping us focus our time, resources and budget on the things that matter most to the town. Rather than simply responding to issues as they arise, the plan gives us a clearer sense of direction and a way of measuring the progress we make.

An important part of this is community engagement. We want to continue improving the way we communicate with residents, make it easier to find out what the Council is doing and, importantly, create more opportunities for people to tell us what they think. We are therefore developing a Communication Strategy to support the Strategic Plan and help us build a more consistent, open and two-way conversation with our community.

Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan

We are also reviewing the Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan. Planning policy does not stand still, and the review is considering how our existing policies sit alongside the new National Planning Policy Framework, as

well as changes locally since the Plan was originally prepared. The aim is to make sure the Neighbourhood Plan remains relevant, effective and able to play its proper part in decisions about future development.

New Town Council Website

Another important piece of work has been the development of the Town Council's new website. As well as making information easier to find, the new site is being designed to meet modern accessibility requirements, helping ensure that Council information and services are accessible to as many people as possible. It will also be an important part of our wider work to improve how we communicate and engage with residents.

Community Emergency Response Plan

Good planning also means being prepared when things do not go to plan. During the past year our Community Emergency Response Plan has been put into practice in very real circumstances, including the flooding at the bridge back in January and, more recently, the bus fire and road closure in Bridge Street. Our team responded to both incidents, demonstrating why having local arrangements in place matters.

The Council has an Emergency Response Plan, but emergency planning is never really "finished". Our working group will continue to review and develop the plan, learning from incidents and incorporating new guidance, ideas and suggestions so that we are as prepared as possible when our community needs us.

Budget 2027/2028

Looking ahead also means planning our finances. The Town Council is currently considering its 2027/28 budget, and residents are invited to come along and talk to us about it before the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 2 December 2026, from 6.45pm to 7.45pm. This is an opportunity to find out more about what the Council spends, the services it provides, and the choices involved in setting the budget for the year ahead, as well as giving residents the opportunity to share their views.

Grant Applications

The Town Council invites applications to its grant fund from 16 November 2026 to 15 January 2027. Community groups and projects that directly benefit residents of Sturminster Newton can apply for up to £750. For full details, visit the Town Council website at www.sturminsternewton-tc.gov.uk or pop into the Council office to collect an application form.

> These may seem like very different pieces of work, but they have something important in common. They are all about looking beyond the immediate issue in front of us, listening to our community and asking what Sturminster Newton will need next.

Christmas and New Year Office Closure

The Council office will close at 12.30pm on Wednesday 23 December 2026 and reopen at 9.30am on Monday 4 January 2027.

News from Dorset County Council – Cllr Carole Jones



The new Planning Reforms came in to play as of the 31st of October. This is a new national scheme of delegation which decides which planning applications will be decided by Planning Officers with only very significant applications coming to Committee.

What's changing and why

The Government wants planning decisions to be clearer and more consistent across the country. Committees should spend their time on the bigger proposals, with minor decisions made by officers.

- The Government consulted in June 2025 and April 2026. Dorset Council objected both times.
- The new rules are national, so Dorset Council must update its Constitution to match.
- Dorset already delegates most decisions to officers, so day-to-day much stays the same.
- **The big change:** some applications that could go to committee today will no longer be able to.
- **What does not change:** Town and Parish Council comment still count. Every officer report must set out how they were considered.

Every application now sits in one of three groups, The group determines whether a committee is needed. (Mostly it's not!)

Schedule 1 MUST BE DELEGATED TO OFFICERS. – Householder extensions, 1 – 9 homes under 0.5 HA. Minor changes to existing shops, offices and other class E premises, permission in principle, discharge of conditions, reserved matters where outline is for under 500 homes (!) – Yes, I personally disagree with this!

Schedule 2: DELEGATED UNLESS THE GATEWAY TEST IS PASSED. 10 of more homes, (major applications) retrospective applications, listed building consent and pretty much everything not in schedule 1.

The third group is Own Interest. These are applications made by Dorset Council, or any of its staff or councillors. These could come to committee.

Understand the Gateway Test

A Schedule 2 application only goes to committee if **both** the nominated officer and the nominated member agree it raises at least one of these:

1. An issue of **economic, social or environmental significance** to the local area, or
2. A **significant planning matter**, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.

The starting presumption is that Schedule 2 applications are delegated. Committee is the exception.

What might count as significant (Government examples):

- An outline application for a large, multi-phase housing development
- Change of use of a community shop in a rural area
- Changes to a notable listed building in a town centre

What is unlikely to count:

- Applications that broadly follow the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan allocations and national policy (unless they raise new material considerations)
- Applications already amended to deal with a consultee's concerns, such as highways or flood risk

The Government is trying to speed up house building, and the Planning System is believed to be at fault for slowing things down and refusing sites.

My own view: I believe this takes democracy away from those elected and does not fully allow the opportunity for members of the public to make their case in public. Officers will still be taking into consideration views put through on the online portal, so please do make the most of this and consider attending the Town Council Planning Meetings where you will have the opportunity to speak.

Devolution – is the only way Wessex?

Our new Prime Minister is of the view that there should be more elected mayors throughout the country and local matters should be devolved with money for regions. There are few details available as to what exactly this will mean in our area. It is proposed we join with Wiltshire, Somerset and BCP. This could bring over £140M of funding into the region but we would have to have an elected Mayor for the Wessex. We don't know the cost of this new office, how funds would be spent fairly across regions and whether this new office would bring with it a layer of bureaucracy. Personally, I believe residents should know all the facts and then put this to a Referendum – but we shall see…. Watch this Space!

Parking

The current Lib Dem Cabinet is proposing a rise in parking charges; my group and I are fighting this, but it appears the final decision will be theirs. Charges locally will or could be going up by 39% without any thought or regard for the local businesses in our town centre. A consultation will be taking place, and I would urge people to make their views known – our High Street is vital, and our local businesses need all the support possible.

News of The Vale Family Hub (formally Vale Pantry)

Warmth, support and a little Christmas magic at the Vale Family Hub

More families and individuals are coming to us for extra support. The cost of living is still biting hard, and as the colder months set in, many households are facing impossible choices – and all too often, food is the part of the budget that must give.

Earlier this week, a family in real crisis got in touch from Crossways, many miles from us. They had no car and hadn't been able to find help closer to home. Moments like this are among the hardest parts of what we do. We hate having to say no, but our resources only stretch so far, and we must focus them on our own community.

Sometimes we're asked to help a family in urgent need – with bedding, clothing or essential equipment – and we must turn to you, our community, for help in turn. Every time, you respond with such generosity. Thank you.

A warm welcome for everyone

We're a registered Warm Hub. That means anyone who is finding it hard to keep warm this winter is welcome to come in and stay cosy – read, relax, or simply sit and watch the world go by. We may be called a *Family* Hub, but we're here for the whole community, and everyone is welcome.

Free money courses

We'll soon be hosting free financial education courses run by Money Ready and commissioned by Dorset Council. They're ideal for any family or individual who is finding money tight. If you think they could help you or someone you know, get in touch and we'll let you know as soon as the dates are confirmed.

NHS Services – Long-lasting contraception services are now available at the Family Hub. If you have small children, we will look after them whilst you visit the clinician who can fit coils and implants. Please email us for appointments: info@valefamilyhub.co.uk

Citizens Advice Service: By appointment at the Hub, appointments take place on Wednesdays and Thursdays. In the last

year, our Advisor has managed to bring in over £170k of financial benefits to those in need. If you need help – give us a call. 01258 920040.

Christmas at the Hub

Our ever-popular **Bingo** returns on **Thursday 17 December**, doors open at 6 pm, with great prizes for every line! We run Bingo every other month, and it's a vital source of income towards our running costs – but the Christmas one promises to be epic.

We're also running a **Christmas Raffle** over the next few weeks, with a fabulous Virginia Hayward hamper up for grabs, so do come and buy a strip when you are passing!

Saturday 19 December is all about our little ones. Start the day with **Breakfast with Santa**, then join us later for **Tea & Ponies with Santa** – yes, you read that right: miniature ponies will be visiting the Hub for a magical Christmas experience! Every child will receive a gift.

To book either event, call us on **01258 920040**. And if you fancy taking on some Elf Duties on the day, we'd love to hear from you!

Could you volunteer?

The Hub is a real community space, open to all, and we simply couldn't run it without our amazing volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare each week or month, we'd love a chat about how you could get involved. We need help in lots of areas – our toddler groups, our Youth Hub, our café and more. Don't be shy: we're a friendly team and we'd love to meet you.



Can you help us fill Christmas stockings?

Christmas should be special for everyone. But for families going through hard times, the worry of not being able to give their children the Christmas they'd like can weigh heavily. This year we're making up stockings full of treats for the children who need them most – and we'd love your help.

Please support our Christmas Stocking Crowdfunder at **crowdfunder.co.uk/p/a-christmas-stocking** or scan the QR code below. Alternatively, if you can purchase any extra items to help fill our shelves, we would be so grateful. We are particularly looking for:

- Tins of Tuna
- Tins/Jars Hot Dogs
- Tins Soup
- Tins Baked Beans
- Cereals
- Packets Rice
- Biscuits
- Long-life Milk
- Toiletries
- Laundry products



We will be closed from the 24th December through till Monday 4th January.All enquiries please contact info@valefamilyhub.co.uk / 01258 920040 / 07968 348481

Thank you, as ever, for your support — we couldn't do any of this without you. With warm wishes, The Vale Family Hub Team

Shillingstone Station

Shillingstone Station – Victorian Carriages.

Given how many Victorian era Somerset and Dorset Railway carriages there must have been, it is sad that only four are known to have survived their withdrawal from service in the 1930s. All four survivors are owned by Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust, which is dedicated to tracking down and preserving anything associated with the much-loved line, and works in close collaboration with North Dorset Railway.



Two of the four, which have been stored at Shillingstone station for some years, recently left for renovation at a specialist workshop in north Wales. When they were discovered in 1996, they were being used as a makeshift bungalow in Sussex, complete with diamond-paned windows and a cat-flap cut into one of the carriage doors. A third was found being used as a cricket pavilion and is temporarily on display in Margate having been restored to its full Victorian First-Class opulence. The fourth is still on display at Shillingstone, having spent some time as a tennis club changing room, and then a railway enthusiast's summer house.

News of the move of the two carriages prompted one chap to write to tell us that his grandmother 'lived for a couple of years in such a carriage as part of her treatment for tuberculosis. It was in the orchard of Barton Farmhouse on Glue Hill; it was therefore obviously an S&DJR item. Sadly, when the new estate of Hillcrest was built it was sacrificed for bonfire night. Ironically the skill of the coach builders made it difficult to break up. I was probably ten at the time, so unaware of how precious a relic it was.'

Which raises a question... were there any others out there in the area? What happened to them? Do any still survive, perhaps in someone's field? North Dorset Railway would love to hear any memories – please write to the station or email pressoffice@northdorsetrailway.co.uk

Work is due to begin in Wales on the exterior of the first carriage in January and could take 18 months or more. It's planned that it will then return to Shillingstone for interior restoration and then, fingers crossed, it will be carrying passengers again on the former S&D line. But, be warned, it's a Third-Class coach, with comfort levels to match!

The fourth coach can be seen at Shillingstone station which is open Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays – entry is free.



The big day in Stur Sparkle is Saturday 28th November: Markets, Father Christmas, entertainers, lantern parade, lights switch on, Tractor parade, late opening etc.

Full programme attached to electronic copies of this Newsletter and plenty of separate paper copies.

SturAction

For the good of the town



Did you know we run four shops?

Here in Sturminster Newton, SturAction runs four shops for the benefit of the town. Every time you shop with us or bring in a donation, you help support local projects and events. Here's what you'll find in each shop.

1855 supports 130 local makers, creators, artists and businesses. Browse their gifts, art and food.

The Boutique. Find preloved clothes for women and children, with designer and occasion wear upstairs.

The Emporium. Explore the bric-à-brac, browse menswear in Dapper Chaps or visit our Preloved Art Gallery.

The Marketplace. Pick up preloved furniture and homeware. Families can also find free school uniform here.

October on the shop floor

1855 is now home to 130 traders, and we've had another reason to celebrate. We were named joint winner in the Retailer category at the Love Local Trust Local Awards 2026. Thank you to Maria for entering us!

Over at The Boutique, our £1 lucky dip bags went down a treat. We've also welcomed Dawn, who you might meet across our shops, Bradley and Teresa at The Marketplace, and Holly at The Emporium. It's lovely to have them with us!

Giving back to Sturminster Newton

Thanks to everyone who shopped with us or donated this October, we paid for the floodlights at St Mary's Church and contributed towards Stour Connect's Christmas Day lunch.

Free parking on the first Saturday

If you came to the Car & Bike Enthusiast event, you might have spotted our new free parking covers. Thanks to Rise & Sign, they now carry the blue SturAction logo. Look out for them on the first Saturday of each month!

SturAction – Making a Difference in Our Community in 2026

What a year it has been for SturAction!
As 2026 draws towards its close, it is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the difference that SturAction continues to make in Sturminster Newton and the surrounding villages.
SturAction, formally Sturminster Newton Community Benefit Society, exists to make our town a better place to live, work and visit. Its guiding principle is simple: money raised through its community shops is reinvested in projects and activities that benefit local people.

Our four shops – The Emporium, The Boutique, The Marketplace and 1855 – have continued to provide a fantastic shopping experience, bringing new life to our high street, encouraging reuse and recycling, supporting local makers and providing a home for more than 120 local artists, craftspeople and producers.

But SturAction is about so much more than shops!
During 2026, SturAction has continued to support the town's cultural and community life, including funding Sturminster Newton Art Weeks, helping local creativity flourish and bringing visitors into our town to discover its wonderful independent businesses and talented artists.
We have continued to champion local enterprise, community events and the importance of keeping Sturminster Newton a vibrant and attractive place to live & visit. Our work is driven by the belief that a thriving town needs people to work together, support one another and take pride in where they live.

None of this would be possible without our wonderful volunteers, customers, donors, local businesses and supporters. Every donated item, every purchase, every hour volunteered and every contribution helps make a difference.
As we look towards 2027, we are excited about what more can be achieved. There are always new ideas to explore, opportunities to support and ways to make our community even stronger.
Thank you to everyone who has been part of the SturAction story this year. Together, we really can make things happen!
SturAction – Local people, supporting local people, making Stur a better place.

Hello from The Exchange!

With the busyness we find within the building towards the end of another year we are reminded of just how unique a Community Centre we really are. Perhaps you may not have considered before how we transition from one function to the next, but it can be a remarkable accomplishment at times.

This past October, our spaces were transformed repeatedly to create space for all kinds of groups and events imaginable, from fitness groups, educational classes, celebratory events and vaccination clinics, that's all before we consider the live shows, we're best known for.

Just a few weeks ago, on a Friday afternoon, The Exchange hosted a memorial event for a local resident. As the organisers started to clear away, mid evening, a team of volunteers and staff arrived to transform the Bow room and bar area into a vaccination clinic. On the Saturday nearly 2000 people from across North Dorset received flu and covid booster jabs. At 4.30pm, as the doctors and nurses moved out, another team of staff and volunteers moved in. Two hours later the space was filling up as the bar and lounge for a Dire Straits tribute show.

First thing on Monday morning yet another team of volunteers cleared the theatre which by mid-morning was full of line dancers, the bar had become a bustling café, the Learning Centre was offering free IT advice downstairs and more volunteers were setting up for the Country Market on Tuesday morning. Another week was under way.

The Exchange supports the community around it in ways that many people take for granted or simply don't notice. We approach each task with pride, but we wanted to draw attention to the dedicated community of people who make all these things happen too.

You too, can support what we do here in many ways, by purchasing tickets or even just a by grabbing a coffee in the café next time you're passing through. You will always be welcomed by one of our fantastic volunteers.

News from under the Blue Lamp – PC ED Lewis



Many of you may not have seen the team around as much recently, so I wanted to take the opportunity to reassure you that we have been incredibly busy behind the scenes, working alongside our partners to keep our community safe and tackle the issues that matter most to residents.

Apart from responding to 999 calls, we have also, in the past few weeks, arrested four suspects in connection with several burglaries. In one case, two offenders were caught red-handed and, pleasingly, all stolen property was recovered and returned. With the other burglary we had exceptional support from the Town Council CCTV operator, without his help we would have had to have awaited forensic updates to ID the suspects.

Whilst we cannot share too much at this stage, we are also actively pursuing several prolific offenders who are causing harm within the town. Please be assured that a great deal of work is taking place, even when it is not always visible.

Partnership working continues to be a key focus for us. We recently attended and supported the Town Council's Community Emergency Planning Meeting, helping to ensure that local agencies are prepared to respond effectively should the need ever arise.

We are also awaiting progress on partnership work regarding an injunction against a particularly problematic tenant. If approved, this will place conditions on their behaviour and help provide greater protection and reassurance for neighbouring residents and victims who have been affected.

At the time of writing, we are on our way back from Southampton Magistrates' Court, where we successfully secured a Partial Closure Order on a property that has been generating significant ASB within the community.

This order means only the legal tenant may be present at the address. Police now have powers to enter the property and act against anyone found breaching the order. It is an important piece of legislation that allows us to address problem addresses quickly and protect residents. The order will initially remain in place for three months.

Away from enforcement activity, it has been fantastic to see so many people enjoying local community events. We were very impressed by the Cheese Festival (I went on and off duty), greatly enjoyed trying to spot members of the Town Council Staff during Stur the Cauldron, but became confused when we found KEN, but his ghost hat didn't say KEN! We are looking forward to joining everyone again at the Stur Christmas Sparkle on 28 November. Events like these are a reminder of what makes our town such a special place to live and work.

As we move into the darker evenings and following a recent increase in burglary offences, we would encourage everyone to spend a few moments thinking about their home and business security. Simple measures can make a real difference. Consider whether your property would benefit from CCTV, a video doorbell, improved locks or security lighting. If you have a key safe, think carefully about who knows the code and whether it should be changed.

Keeping our community safe is a shared effort, and small preventative steps can often have a big impact.

For further crime prevention advice, please visit the Dorset Police website: https://www.dorset.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/

Thank you, as always, for your continued support, information, and engagement. We are proud to serve such a strong and community-minded town, and we remain committed to working alongside you to keep it a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.

Ravin Bill an’ the Night Stur Sparkled

A report on Make Stur Sparkle **2025** by Ravin Bill, rovin’ reporter, to whet your appetite for this year’s events. For a bird’s eye view, we also employed a cub reporter – Raven bill

Prologue: Bill Gets the Word

“Right then, me dears,” said I, Ravin Bill, rovin’ reporter for the town newsletter, buttonin’ me green coat over me mustard waistcoat and settlin’ me checked cap against the November nip. Me red neckerchief were flappin’ fit to flag down a bus, and me notebook were open afore breakfast. Saturday the twenty-ninth o’ November, twenty-twenty-five: free parkin’, a townful o’ neighbours, and more twinkle promised than frost on a five-bar gate. I had one question writ big at the top o’ the page: **What makes Stur sparkle?** “Best go an’ find out,” I told me pencil. “And don’t ’ee dawdle.”

A Town Gets Ready

All week, Stur had been polishin’ itself up. Ladders leaned against shopfronts. Garlands went over doors. Volunteers tested strings o’ lights, then tested ’em again, for a bulb can be a contrary little article when folk be watchin’. At The Exchange, tables were marched into rows. Down by the Railway Garden, Father Christmas’s grotto gained a chair, a sack and enough greenery to hide a small pony. At St Mary’s, tree after tree arrived to join the festival, each one tellin’ its own story in baubles, ribbons and paper stars. “This bain’t magic,” I wrote. Then I watched three neighbours untangle one enormous knot o’ fairy lights without fallin’ out. I crossed it through and wrote, “On second thoughts, maybe ’tis.”

Market Mornin’

By ten o’clock, The Exchange Christmas Market were hummin’ like a kettle near the boil. There were handmade gifts, cards, cakes, jars, knitted wonders and crafty bits that made me say, “I could do that,” though all Stur knows I could not. I sampled one morsel for journalistic accuracy, then another to confirm me findings. Outside, folk drifted between the independent shops and eateries, grateful for free parkin’ and glad of an excuse to stop for a natter. Father Christmas received young visitors in his grotto on the Terrace by the Railway Garden, while grown-ups pretended they were only there to supervise. Then I spied a paper angel peepin’ from a window—first clue in the town quiz. “Aha!” says I. “News has wings today.”



A Red Coat by the Railway Garden

Father Christmas had a queue curling along the Terrace, and every child came out carryin’ a secret too large for their face. One small visitor whispered that the reindeer might prefer Dorset hay; another asked whether chimneys counted if they had been swept only “mostly.” I kept a straight reporter’s face, which is harder than it looks. “No names in the paper,” I promised, “but I can report that Stur’s wish list be ambitious.” Father Christmas gave me a look over his spectacles. “And what do you want, Bill?” “A dry notebook, a hot pasty and the truth,” says I. “Though I’ll not turn down a mince pie.”



The Forest Inside St Mary's

At St Mary's, the Christmas Tree Festival had turned the church into a little indoor forest. Some trees were grand, some funny, some quiet and thoughtful. One wore tiny books; another carried stars made by small hands; another looked as if a rainbow had stopped for Evensong. Volunteers shifted chairs, poured welcome into cups and made ready for the Choral Society. I took off me cap. "A tree outdoors catches weather," I wrote. "A tree in here catches memories." Then a bauble reflected me nose twice its proper size, so I added, "Also, some trees tell fibs."

The Lantern River

By four o'clock, daylight had packed its bag. The Rockit Choir warmed the square while scarves bobbed to the beat and shop windows shone along the street. At ten to five, Father Christmas lifted a mitten and the lantern parade moved from The Exchange toward Market Place. Paper stars, moons, robins and little glowing houses bobbed above woolly hats. One lantern leaned left; its carrier leaned right; between 'em they travelled straight. I trotted

alongside, callin', "Steady, me beauties—keep that river o' light a-flowin'!" The town seemed to hold its breath as the procession gathered by the dark tree.



Five O'Clock—Click!



Five o'clock sharp. A hand met the switch. **CLICK!** For half a heartbeat, nothin'. Then the great tree woke from root to star. Gold burst upward, green curled round the branches and red winked between 'em. The lamps answered. The windows answered. Faces answered brightest of all. Such a cheer rolled down Church Street that me cap jumped clean off. I caught it on me pencil—professional reflexes. "There!" I shouted. "That bain't only electricity. That be everyone seein' everyone else." The lanterns carried on toward St Mary's, where the Choral Society's welcome floated out to meet 'em.

Tractors in Their Tinsel

After the Rockit Choir had sent its last note friskin’ across the square, a far-off **PARP-PARP!** bounced off the roofs. Heads turned. Dogs sat up. About quarter past six, the first illuminated tractor rolled through town for Salisbury Hospice Charity, great tyres shining and fairy lights curled round every rail. Behind it came another, then another—tractors and other vehicles, twenty-nine in all, dressed in tinsel, stars and even Christmas trees. Their horns answered one another like brass geese. I climbed a safe perch and wrote as fast as me fingers allowed: “Farmyard thunder wi’ a skyful o’ stars!” In one cab, a young passenger waved with both hands; beside the route, volunteers held collection buckets and the crowd filled ’em coin by coin. The parade finished in Station Road car park, where folk could admire the vehicles close up and thank the crews. By the end, £949.45 had been raised for the hospice. “Now there,” I said, underlinin’ the total twice, “be sparkle wi’ a good heart underneath it.”



When the Horns Went Quiet

By seven, late-night shop doors were closin’ one by one. A crumpled programme skittered over the pavement. Somewhere inside The Exchange, Los Pacaminos were gettin’ ready for their eight o’clock show, but outside the last tractor lamps dwindled beyond the car park. I found a child’s dropped paper star, bent at one point yet still glowing. Its owner came runnin’ back, breathless. “Knew you’d find it, Mr Bill!” “Course,” says I, handin’ it over. “Rovin’ reporters sees everything.” Truth was, half the town had pointed me toward it. That were worth puttin’ in the paper too.

Sparkle Keeps Goin’

“Don’t ’ee think one bright Saturday were the finish,” I warned me readers. On Sunday the Tree Festival opened again, and Advent carols filled St Mary’s in the evenin’. From the first of December, angels took flight and hid in town windows, waitin’ for sharp eyes to find ’em. Friday the fifth brought the Moonlight Swing Band to The Exchange. Then Small Business Saturday on the sixth arrived with free parkin’, cars and bikes in the mornin’, traders and tastings at 1855, crafts at The Exchange, a Choral Society concert at St Mary’s and Rock for Heroes Christmas anthems after dark. On the eleventh came the Ridgeway Singers. Around ’em all were bingo nights, concerts, meetings, makings, greetings and cups o’ summat warm. Every event were a little lamp; together, they made December less dark.

Epilogue: The Deadline

Next mornin’, I sat at me desk with muddy shoes, an empty pie bag and sixteen pages o’ notes. Me editor peered over the top. “Well, Bill? What made Stur sparkle?” I looked at the list: volunteers, traders, singers, lantern-makers, drivers, collectors, churches, venues, families and friends. The answer would not fit in one headline. So I sharpened me pencil and wrote: **STUR SHINES BECAUSE STUR SHOWS UP.** “Bit long,” said the editor. “Bit true,” says I.



Ravin Bill's Last Word

So I folded me notebook, an' looked back at Stur all a-glitter. "Lights be pretty," says I, "but 'tis folk what makes 'em shine. Every lantern carried, every song sung, every shop opened late, every tractor trimmed an' every coin shared—there be the real sparkle, sure enough." Then off raven flapped above the Stour, cryin', "Good night, Stur! Keep 'ee light on for one another!"

Reporter's note: *This is an imaginative retelling based on the published Make Stur Sparkle 2025 programme and event reporting. The main town celebration took place on 29 November 2025; published reports record the 4.50 p.m. lantern parade, 5 p.m. light switch-on, approximately 6.15 p.m. illuminated vehicle parade, 29 decorated vehicles and £949.45 raised for Salisbury Hospice Charity.*

WHAT'S ON IN STUR IN OCT/NOV



The Exchange

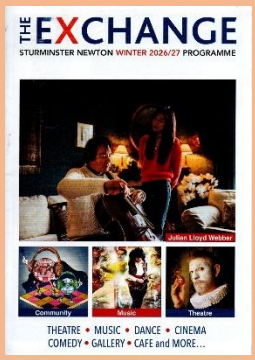
- For full details of all Exchange events, including extra events, see website stur-exchange.co.uk - buy tickets on the website, on 01258 475137 or at reception in The Exchange.
- Start times vary - check your tickets.

Theatre & Dance

- Friday 27th November 7:30pm. **Mark Smith - Antiques Expert**
- Thursday 3rd December 7:30pm. **Team Viking - James Rowland.** Heartwarming story of how James gaves his best friend the Viking send off he wanted. Originally at Edinburgh Fringe.
- Tuesday 8th December 7:30. **Quizmas - Living Spit**
- Thursday 14th January 7pm. Live from the National Theatre: Knockout Americam Play: **Golden Boy**

Film

- Some Thursdays 7pm £7.
- Often arranged at shorter notice - check website for more.



Pick up a copy of the Exchange brochure with full details of forthcoming events.

This hugely important community asset – The Exchange - needs your support: Buy event tickets, use the café/bar, volunteer your help or make a donation.

Music

- Saturday 28th November 7:30pm**. ELO Again - the Back to Blue tour.** Last few seats.
- Friday 4th December 7:30pm. **Moonlight Swing Band Christmas.**
- Saturday 5th December 7:30pm. **Supersonic Queen (Tribute)**
- Saturday 12th December 7:30pm. **Christmas Cracker Tenors Unlimited.**
- Wednesday 16th December 2:30pm. **Christmas Memories - Neil Sands**.
- Saturday 19th December 7:30. **Moscow Drug Club** - Underground Jazz
- Saturday 16th January 8pm. **Peter Howarth.** Lead singer with the Hollies.
- Sunday 24th January 2pm. **From Dusk To Dawn** - Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Suitable for all ages.
- Saturday 30th January 8pm**. All the Queen's Men.**

And also in The Exchange....

Citizens Advice

Fridays 9am to 1pm

SNADS Panto - Goldilocks

17-20 February

Craft Fair

Saturday 12th December 10-3

Country Market

Tuesday Mornings

Computer Help Drop-ins

Mon 9-12:30

Wed 9:30-3:00

Stur Sparkle	•Light Switch on and much more. Saturday 28th November.
Handmade for Christmas	•Open every day until 24th December. 9:30 -4:30. The Workhouse Chapel, Bath Road. Over 60 Makers.
Stur Lit Fest Event	•Saturday 5th December 2pm. The Exchange. Dr Tracy Hays: "Hardy's Hostelries" Flyer on community pages.
Choral Society Concert	•Saturday 5th December 6pm. **Christmas Concert**. See poster on community pages for details. [Dress Warmly!]
Garden Club	•Wednesday, 16th December. There will be no meeting in December. Contact: sturminsternewtongardenclub@gmail.com
(Stur) Orchestra Christmas Concert	•Saturday 19th December 10:45am. •The Exchange •Details on Community Pages
Heritage Trust & Family History	•New Opening times at the Mill from late March: Four consequtive days Friday - Monday.

Christmas Wreath Making	• Friday 4th December, Hazelbury Bryan Village Hall • Details on Village events page.
Farmers and Makers Market	•Sunday 6th December 10am-2pm. •Bere Marsh Farm, Shillingstone
Vintage and Classic Car Run	•New Years Day. •Leaves from main car park at 11am
Kids Film Festival	•Saturday 2nd January, 5:30, Ibberton Village Hall. Details on Village events pages.
Choral Society	•Restarts Monday 25th January 7pm •The Exchange •Contact 01258 472274 or via website •sturminsterchoralsociety.co.uk
Garden Club	•Wednesday, 27th January, Annual General Meeting at The Exchange at 7.00 pm. Talk by the Club on "How to Show your products". New Members and Visitors welcome. Seasonal Competitions. Contact: sturminsternewtongardenclub@gmail.com
ArtsReach Wild Wood Brew	•Thursday 4th February 7:30pm •Ibberton Village Hall. Details on Village Events Pages

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS & EVENTS



A Year in the Life of the Stur Community

SturTech—The Community Learning Centre.

Open Mon 9-12:30; Wed 9:30-4:30 (last drop-in 3pm). The Lydden room in The Exchange.

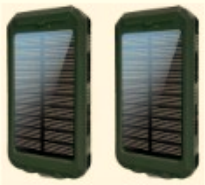
snclc@btconnect.com

snclc.org.uk 01258 475272



The Learning Centre is an agent for Fixy and Donate-IT – organisations that clear digital devices and re-purpose them. You can drop off most digital tech (except printers and monitors) you no longer have a use for at the Learning Centre. Please ensure Apple products are removed from your owned devices.

Mobile phone users are advised not to click on anything saying you must install a new PDF reader which may then continuously fill your screen with alarming messages. Similarly on lap/desk-tops beware of agreeing to notifications on web sites which may fill the right-hand side of your screen with alarming messages. If this (or similar) does happen to you, we can fix it, but in the meantime don't click on any of the messages however persuasive.



Are you with Angela on stocking up on Sauvignon-Blanc, Mascara and Shoes? Or going for the more practical items? We keep a small stock of computer accessories for client's convenience, including power banks to re-charge devices and drive LED lights which include a torch and critically can recharge itself on solar.



We also have a device for securing your mobile phone from snatches when using it as a phone or camera in busy places.

The Learning Centre is fortunate to have 8 volunteers with a variety of computer experience ready to help with advice, problems and learning on computers, smartphones and all digital devices. All welcome to the Drop-ins. We can also upgrade computers and we have a small stock of computer accessories—cables, mice etc.

SturTech is a charity—no charges, donations appreciated.



Sturminster

Badminton Club (mainly over 50's)



New year, new activity? Past Player, why not return to Badminton?

We have a thriving and fun badminton club playing at Sturfit at 7.30 am on Mondays and Thursdays. That might seem a little early for some, but it is a great way to start those days. We have space for maybe another 3 or 4 players. We are looking for people who have some racquet experience. Over 50's is just a guide, if you fit into our (quite wide) range of abilities all are welcome. We do not have any coaching facilities so beginners probably wouldn't suit.

We have an annual barbecue and Christmas dinner. We pride ourselves on being friendly and having fun — and, with varying skills, we all love our badminton.

If you or anyone you know might be interested, please call David on O7895 552085 or strelleyATsky.com, Candy on O7503 198960 or Jeremy on O7500 145530.

Little Lane – A Hidden Gem

Dylis Garside recently organised a cycle 'glow ride' taking in Little Lane.

The lane (almost) connects Okeford Fitzpaine off road with Shillingstone and then via the Trailway with Stur and Blandford.

Originally a direct route from Okeford to Shillingstone Station it was abandoned to mud. Then restored in 2017. It now makes a lovely walk or ride. The entrance is opposite the turning from Shillingstone to Child Okeford and finishing just short of the centre of Okeford Fitzpaine. Crossing the A357 from Trailway/Trailway Car Park does however take some care.




Sturminster Newton Orchestra
Please join us for a little
Musical Sparkle at our
Christmas Concert
at
"The Exchange"
Saturday Morning
19th December 10.45
FREE ENTRY!
Doors Open at 10.30
.. but you can enjoy a hot drink in the Café
from 9.00 !


STURMINSTER CHORAL SOCIETY
CHRISTMAS CONCERT
BOB CHILCOTT
Christmas Oratorio
GEOFF ALLAN
The Carol of the Bees
Gabriel's Message
ST MARY'S CHURCH
Sturminster Newton
SATURDAY
5th December 6pm
Tickets £12 on the door or from
07975 570381
sturminsterchoralsociety.co.uk
Refreshments
ANNEMARIE LEES musical director
CAROLINE D'CRUZ piano
SIAN WILLIAMS flute
CHARLOTTE COLLIER soprano
TOM MORRIS tenor
PHIL SMITH bass

Sturminster Newton Literary Festival

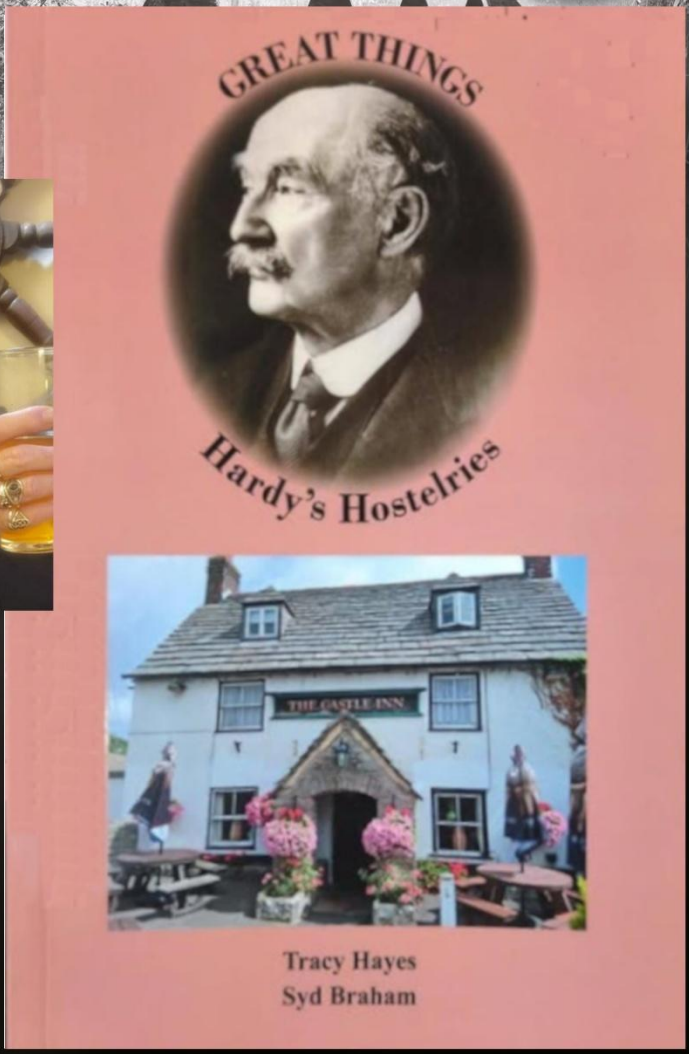
SATURDAY
5th December
2pm
The Exchange

BOOK HERE



Sat 5th December
2pm
The Exchange

Great Things
- Hardy's Hostelries
with
Dr Tracy Hayes



Visit: www.sturlitfest.com

STURMINSTER SCOUTING

Scouting in Sturminster has been a part of the town for over 100 years, however its future is in jeopardy due to a lack of leaders, not of children! Nationally, more than 100,000 young people are on waiting lists to join the Scouts, Beavers, Cubs, Squirrels etc across the UK.

Plenty of support is there for anyone interested and it is possible to help occasionally as part of a team, so if your work pattern means you can't commit every week this is not a problem.

Please help us to keep Scouting in Stur!

More information on www.scouts.org.uk or email sturscouting@outlook.com

STURMINSTER GIRLGUIDING

Brownies (7-10year olds). 18 of our Brownies had a great time on a sleepover in a library where they took part in challenges based on books. They are currently working on their 1st Aid badges in meetings as well as enjoying the usual games and other activities. They are looking forward to being involved with switching on the Christmas lights in Stur.

The Guides (10–14-year-olds) are upcycling old wooden tables into coffee tables and have been sawing, using sanders and painting. 30 girls went up to Wembley Arena for a Girlguiding-only Pop Concert where they had an amazing time singing along to a variety of artists and bands and enjoying a set by Radio 1 DJ Charlie Hedges. There is an Xmas sleepover to look forward to as well.

In September we opened a Ranger unit (14–18-year-olds). The Rangers have been working on a cooking challenge badge which so far has involved bread and soup making and preparation of a 2-course meal in pairs for the rest of the Unit. The rest of the term sees production of some 60 elf hats for the Xmas lights switch on, making a Christmas Tree for St Mary's display and more cooking. Next term we focus on 1st Aid and Emergency Aid.

We welcome help across all our units so we can offer more opportunities. We need two or three volunteers to open a Rainbows unit for children aged 4–7. We receive many enquiries but currently have no leaders. Support and training will be provided, and helpers do not need to commit every week. To find out more, visit www.girlguiding.org.uk or email sturguiding@outlook.com to offer your help.

u3a learn, laugh, live

STURMINSTER NEWTON

Across the UK, u3a members are discovering new things, staying active and having fun in later life. It's local, social, friendly, low-cost and open to all.
"Make the most of life once you're no longer in full-time work by exploring new ideas, skills and interests with Sturminster Newton u3a!"

We currently have 22 activity groups offering an extensive range of exciting activities.

Joining is easy!

For details, visit our website at:
hhtps://sturminster-newton.u3asite.uk/
Annual fees (April to March) are as follows:
£5 for individual membership
£9 for joint membership

You can be sure of a warm welcome!



NEWSTONE HOUSE
STURMINSTER NEWTON

FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMBER AT 2PM-4PM

Join us for some festive fun! Browse a variety of stalls, enjoy hot chocolate and mince pies, and try your luck in our raffle or money tree for a chance to win.

All proceeds to our Charity of the Year, The Vale Family Hub.

DISCOVER REFINED LIVING AT NEWSTONE HOUSE
Call **01258 474530**

Stourcastle, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, DT10 1FF

COLTEN CARE



Christmas Farmers and Makers Market

Sunday 6th December | 10am-2pm

Bere Marsh Farm, Shillingstone, DT11 0QY

CRT Events

www.theCRT.co.uk/events

WHAT'S ON NEARBY

Is there more going on? It's a Free ad reaching at least 1500 people. Send us your Oct/Nov events.



SERO'S

Christmas Wreath Making

Friday 4th December 2025

Village hall, Hazelbury Bryan

Morning session

10.00-1.15 Arrive, welcome coffee and shortbread, followed by a demonstration and wreath making. Followed by lunch with a choice of vegetable soups and rolls with a glass of bubbly

Afternoon session

12.45- 4 pm Lunch of a choice of vegetable soups and rolls with a glass of bubbly. Demonstration and wreath making

Places will be limited to 15 per session

Everything needed to create a beautiful festive decoration included

£40 per session

email serocharity@gmail.com for booking and further information

Or ring Cynth on 01747 476553 or 07733 989476

Or Kate on 01258 863695 or 07725 245066

(SERO – raising funds for local causes and Julia's House Children's Hospice.)

The FES FILM FESTIVAL

The Film Festival Made Just for Kids

Ibberton, Belchalwell & Woolland Village Hall

DT11 0EL

Saturday 2nd January 2027

5.30 pm

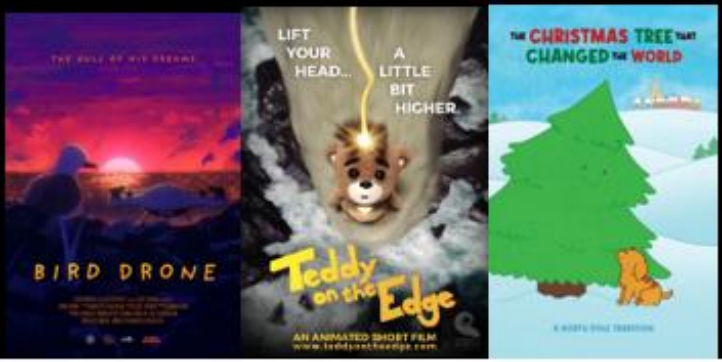
The FES Film Festival is back— this festival is all about giving children their own big-screen experience.

Bar Popcorn Ice-cream

Children £4 Adults £6 - all children must be accompanied

Booking ibbertonvillagehall@gmail.com 07771561099







Artsreach

Ibberton, Belchalwell & Woolland Village Hall, Ibberton DT11 0EL

Adverse Camber Story Brew Wild Woods

Thursday 4 February 2027

7.30 pm

Adults £14 U18 £6

Come over to the dark side in the wildwoods brew! Let your imagination run wild as you're transported deep into the heart of the dark forest. Featuring folk tales from across these islands and drawing on the magic of the forest, all blended together in the perfect brew of original music, folklore and conversation about winter herbs. Storyteller Pym Stockman, musician Kate Luxmoore and herbalist Arlene Burnett have brewed up a scrumptious new show, in tune with the spirit of the seasons. Each show is a blend of folk stories, music and conversation with the option of freshly brewed teas from medicinal herbs in the interval. Just like a village tea party! Audience Feedback:

"A feast for the senses" "So special" "Beautiful, intimate evening" "Joyous"

"Connected, rooted, plugged in"

Bar Teas/Coffee Cake Herbal tea

Booking ibbertonvillagehall@gmail.com or phone 07771561099

STURBIZ – NEWS OF BUSINESSES & SERVICES



SturBiz Breakfasts

An excellent opportunity for business and voluntary bodies to catch up and discuss what is happening in the town, what events are planned, who is doing what. All are welcome. Odd Months first Tuesday at Stour Connect Café 8-9am. Even months first Thursday at Newstone House 8-9am.

FEATURED BUSINESSES

The Newsletter is happy to mention new or enhanced businesses in & around town.



CLOVER

FLORAL STUDIO & CURATED GIFTS

Your local shop for thoughtful gifts and flowers for all of life's special moments.

Open Hours:
Tuesday – Friday : 8:30am–4pm
Saturday : 9am–1pm

Local Delivery Available

8 Market Cross, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1AN
01258 475 575 - molly@cloverfloristry.com - www.cloverfloristry.com

Introducing Clover Floral Studio & Curated Gifts

Clover Floral Studio & Curated Gifts has opened its doors at 8 Market Cross, Sturminster Newton, bringing a fresh new chapter to the town's much-loved florist.

Owned by local florist Molly Bartlett, who grew up in Hinton St Mary, Clover brings together her love of flowers and her deep roots in the Dorset countryside. A third-generation beef farmer, Molly continues to farm with her family alongside her new floral venture, drawing inspiration from the nature, gardens and changing seasons that have always been part of her life.

Clover offers beautiful, thoughtfully arranged flowers for every occasion, from birthdays and anniversaries to weddings and special celebrations, alongside local flower deliveries. The shop is also home to a carefully chosen collection of gifts, homeware, candles, lamps, greeting cards and wrapping, with plenty of lovely finds to discover.

Whether you're looking for a special gift, a beautiful bouquet or simply fancy a browse, Molly would love to welcome you in!

Rooted in nature, found with luck

What's Happening at Harts?

The festive season is in full swing at Harts! Don't forget we are open on **Sundays**, giving you even more time to browse our beautiful range of Christmas gifts and ensure you have all the cookware you need for the biggest meal of the year.

The Coffee Loft is now open from 9.30am on Sundays, perfect for a pre-shopping breakfast before the main store opens at 10am.

But that's not all—join us for a series of **in-store demonstrations** showcasing top brands:

- **Saturday 28th November** – KitchenAid
- **Saturday 5th December** – Cooking Demonstration with Lesley Waters plus Magimix Demonstration
- **Saturday 12th December** – KitchenAid

Plus, don't miss these special events:

- **Monday 21st December** – Breakfast with Santa + Storytime with Author Sue Murley (places must be booked through Harts Coffee Loft prior to the event and paid for on the day – 01258 472420). KitchenAid Demonstration.
- **The Big Sale** – Starts Monday 28th December

We can't wait to welcome you—come and make this Christmas extra special at Harts!



SPORT, HEALTH & WELLBEING





Badminton (over 50s - mostly)

- Mondays and Thursdays 7:30-8:30am at Sturfit
- Candy 07503 198960 or Jeremy 07500 145530



Sturminster United Football Club

- Youth Teams
- Spectator Facilities www.snufc.com



Zumba with Abby

- Mon 6:30-7:30pm Stour Connect (sports hall)
- 07901597129 zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com



Short Mat Bowls

- Tuesdays 6.45 to 9.45pm. Sports hall of Stour Connect. New members very welcome – just turn up. Bowls loaned & instruction given. David Birt O1258 472219



Pilates

- Wednesdays 11-12 am - The Exchange
- Zane 07730380471



Chair based exercise

- Wednesdays 2-3pm, The Exchange
- Jenny Wise 01258 451311



Pilates

- Thursdays 9:15 or 10:30 - The Exchange
- All levels welcome. Francesca 07342 886500
- info@whymovepilates.co.uk www.whymovepilates.co.uk



Hinton & Sturminster Cricket Club
facebook.com/StintonCC/
Shillingstone Cricket Club Youth and Womens teams.
shillingstone.play-cricket.com



FitSteps - Dance fitness class

- Wed 9.15-10.15am The Exchange
- Georgina Greenwood Tel:No: 07582 634911
- E-mail: gfit2dance@gmail.com



(Age Concern) Balance Classes with coffee morning on Wednesday mornings at Sturfit. Call 01258 475582 or email info@acnorthdorset.org.uk to book a place.

Now two additional Balance Classes on Mondays.



(Age Concern) Weekly foot care clinics at Stour Connect, Sturminster Newton. Call 01258 475582 or email info@acnorthdorset.org.uk



Pete's Functional Fitness Club at Butts Pond.

- Morning Gym 6-11am Rowers, Ski, Bikes etc.
- Body Weight Classes
- Deep Tissue & Sports Massage
- 07977 859965 peteroper@live.co.uk petesfunctionalfitnessclub.co.uk



The Boxing Club at Butts Pond

- Many age groups.
- The club has graduated a world champion.
- sturabc.co.uk



Martial Arts Club (various locations in town)

Unity Martial Arts offer a range of Martial Arts including TaeKwon-Do, Iaido, Kenjutsu and a new fun martial art that combines elements from 9 Japanese arts into one fun syllabus. Age 4years upwards.

Full accreditations. Details on unityma.co.uk



Nearest Bowls clubs: Blandford - blandfordbowlingclub.com

- Gillingham - bowlsdorset.org.uk/dorset/8/gillingham
- Shaftesbury - Shaftesburybowlingclub.co.uk
- Sherborne - sherbornebowling.club



Adult Walking Football

Thursdays 12pm-1pm. Stour Connect, Bath Road



Much more at Community Run Sturfit: Well equipped Gym, Exercise Classes, Sports Clubs, Dance Studio.

Call for details 01258 471774; Honeymead Lane DT10 1EW.

Support Groups including Blackmore Vale Partnership (BVP) Health Champion led Support and Peer Support Groups, contact details: bvpwellbeing@dorsetgp.nhs.uk, 01747 856786

Parkinsons Cafè	•1st Monday 10:30-12:30 •Christian Fellowship Hall- The Row •bvpwellbeing@dorsetgp.nhs.uk
Bereavement Peer Support	•Last Wednesdays of every month 10-11:30am •Stour Connect •bvpwellbeing@dorsetgp.nhs.uk
Caring for Carers	Last Tuesday 10:30-12:30 •Christian Fellowship Hall- The Row •bvpwellbeing@dorsetgp.nhs.uk
Age Concern Advice	•Drop in & telephone advice service Monday to Friday 9.30am to 1.30pm at Stour Connect, Sturminster Newton. Call 01258 475582
Military Veterans	•First Thursdays of alternate months (from May) •The Swan Inn 10-11:30 •See Poster Below
Pop-Up Health Hub	•3rd Tuesdays 10am-12noon. •Waiting Room - Sturminster Medical Centre •See Poster Below
Access Wellbeing	•Vale Family Hub Tuesdays 10am to 3pm Drop-in. •Details of Services: dorsetaccesswellbeing.co.uk

North, South & West Dorset
age UK
Let's change how we age

Open to everyone

NEW CLINICS · FROM OCTOBER

Foot care clinics in Blandford & Sturminster Newton

You don't need to live at the home to come along



Blandford
Whitecliffe House

Every other Wednesday

Starting Wed 7 October

Sturminster Newton
Newstone House

Every other Tuesday

Starting Tue 13 October

Nail cutting · corns & calluses · cracked heels · diabetic foot care · foot massage

Nail cutting	£25	Treatment	£35	Initial assessment	£45

With thanks to Colten Care for hosting our clinics COLTEN CARE

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT
01305 269444

footcare@ageuknswd.org.uk
ageuk.org.uk/northsouthwestdorset

The Blackmore Vale Partnership
The heart of the community



MILITARY VETERANS SUPPORT GROUP AND DROP IN SESSION



April 2nd Shaftesbury RBL 12:30-2pm	May 7th Stur. Newton Swan Inn 10-11:30am	June 4th Shaftesbury RBL 12:30-2pm
July 2nd Stur. Newton Swan Inn 10-11:30am	August 6th Shaftesbury RBL 12:30-2pm	September 3rd Stur. Newton Swan Inn 10-11:30am
October 1st Shaftesbury RBL 12:30-2pm	November 5th Stur. Newton Swan Inn 10-11:30am	December 3rd Shaftesbury RBL 12:30-2pm



ALL BLACKMORE VALE PATIENTS WHO HAVE SERVED ONE DAY OR MORE IN THE FORCES ARE WELCOME!
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE WELLBEING TEAM ON 01747 856786 OR EMAIL BVPWELLBEING@DORSETGP.NHS.UK

The Blackmore Vale Partnership
The heart of the community

Pets As Therapy

"POP-UP" HEALTH HUB

- FIND NEW INTERESTS
- MEET NEW PEOPLE
- GET LOCAL SUPPORT
- CHAT WITH OUR PRACTICE HEALTH CHAMPIONS

3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

10AM-12PM

IN THE WAITING ROOM
STURMINSTER NEWTON
MEDICAL CENTRE, OLD MARKET HILL
DT10 1QU

ALL WELCOME
REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

SEE YOU THERE

WEEKLY/MONTHLY EVENTS IN STUR

Mondays

New/Changed regular items in red



Community Learning Centre	•9am to 12:30, The Exchange •Help with Computers, Tablets, Phones etc. •Learning from basic to advanced
Parent & Carer Support Group	•9.30-11.30am Term Times, Stour Connect.
Rhyme Time (under 5s)	•10-10.30am Term Time, The Library. Free. •For more info, call 01258 472669
Blackmore Vale Lions	•7 for 7.30pm 2nd Monday every month at The Hub, off Station Road, Stalbridge. Social / meal often on 3rd Monday at various locations. facebook.com/Blackmore.Vale.Lions contact bvlions@gmail.com New members keen to serve the community actively sought.
Choral Society	•Restarts Monday 21st September. 7:30pm. The Exchange. Poster on Community pages. •Contact 01258 472274
Parkinsons Cafe	•First Monday of each month at 10.30-12.30 at Sturminster Christian Fellowship. Free refreshments and a warm welcome provided.
Market Day	• Plants, Household goods/Watch Batterys etc. Morning - Market Place
ROKiT! Choir	•7:30-9:30pm Now in the Methodist Church. Church Street. •www.rokitchoir.com

Tuesdays

Country Market

- 9am till 12; The Exchange Atrium
- Local Craft, cards by Aide Ray, fresh meat, eggs, fresh baking, small portions suitable for one, fresh veg , plants & seasonal produce; Crafts.

Coffee Companions Hour

- 10 till 11am at The County Market in The Exchange
- Coffee Companions sit and chat and get to know folk. Very friendly, social morning.

Rotary Club

- 6.45 for 7pm; 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
- Details: secretary@sturminsternewton.rotary1110.org

Reminicence Adult Craft

- Every Tuesday 2-4pm Adult colouring and puzzles.
- 4th Tuesday of the month 2-4pm Adult craft session. Open to all. Free.

Carers Coffee Morning

- Last Tuesday of each month at 10.30-12.30 at Sturminster Christian Fellowship. Free refreshments and a warm welcome provided.

Youth Club

- Vale Family Hub 5-7pm.
- For 9-12 year olds.

Wednesdays

Community Learning Centre

- 9.30am-4.30pm The Exchange Drop-in for help, advice, problems with computers , tablets, smartphones… snclc@btconnect.com snclc.org.uk O1258 475272

BCP Holy Communion	• 10am St Marys
Mothers Union	•2 pm 3rd Wednesdays in members' homes, Brenda Stables 01258 471487
Youth Club	•Year 9. 6-8pm •Unit 2 Richmar Trading Estate, Butts Pond
Citizens Advice	•Vale Family Hub 9:30am-4pm. •Booking Essential 01258 920040 •Free, impartial and confidential advice.
Knit & Natter	•Free drop in every week 2-3.30pm. Exchange Cafe -all skill levels and wool crafts welcome -contact 07791 604007 for more info
Creative Writing Group	•3-5pm 2nd Wednesdays; Exchange Cafè •Richard: O7535534295, rik.hewittAToutlook.com •Jane: O1258 2695O8 scarletmermaidATyahoo.co.uk
Garden Club	•7.30 pm, 4th Wednesdays •The Exchange. New Members welcome •sturminsternewtongardenclub@gmail.com
Blackmore Vale Family History Goup	•7:30pm 3rd Wednesdays,. •Felicity Harrison O1258 472942. The Exchange
Bell Ringing Practice	•7:30pm St Mary's Church; New Members Welcome. •Nick Dallison 07532 092030

Thursdays

Lego Fun Ages 3+	•3-5pm; The Library; Free Drop-in. •For more info, call 01258 472669.
Citizens Advice	•Vale Family Hub 9:30am-10:30am. •Booking Essential 01258 920040 •Free, impartial and confidential advice.

Fridays

Cuppa & Company	• Every Friday The library. Free drop-in.
Homestart Early Family Connections	•A stay & play group for families with children 0-5 yrs •The Exchange, ground floor. •10am - 11.15am. Donations welcome.
Citizens Advice	•Friday mornings. The Exchange. •Book by emailing advice-nd@centralca.org.uk •Free independent, impartial & confidential advice
Youth Club	•Years 7&8 4-6pm. •Unit 2 Richmar Trading Estate, Butts Pond
Blackmore Vale Masons	•6:30pm Last Friday of month (except Dec/Jul/Aug). The Lodge, Church Street. Social & Charitable events. •Contact 3625@dorsetfreemasonry.info

Saturdays

Free Parking continues 1st Sat of month.

Sturminster Newton Orchestra

- Do you enjoy playing a musical instrument? Why not join us in The Exchange 9.30am
- No auditions. All levels and ages welcome
- Contact: Diana Harris O1747 854 481 SturminsterNewtonOrchestra.com

Bargains & Banter

- 7-11 am The Exchange/Co-op Car park. Draws together a regular flow of like minded folk who enjoy a rummage though Dave's latest Tools and Curios or bringing their own for him to buy and value, alwas with friendly chat. Established 1989!

Craft Market

- 1st Saturdays, Exchange Atrium

Car & Bike Enthusiasts

- First Saturdays 9am till 12 noon
- Town Centre car park or Recreation Ground

Sociable Arts & Crafts

- 10.30am-12.30pm Once a Month
- The Exchange
- Shelly O1258 817682

1855

- First Saturdays of the month: "Meet the traders" 10am-12 noon.

Mrs Potters Cakes

- Last Saturday of month am. Exchange Atrium

Code Club

- Alternate Saturdays Code Club 10:00 to 11:30 For children 8-13years, free please contact the library to book in on the sessions
- Alternate Saturdays Creation Station 10:30-12:00 Free, open to all children under 8 years old must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

WEEKLY/MONTHLY EVENTS IN VILLAGES

Please tell us about other regular events in your village.



Mondays

- **3rd Mondays 7:15pm Marhull Music Society**. Village Hall. *Yvonne on O1258 82O247 or mikyon**AT**aol.com . More on community pages.*
- **Yoga 10:15am Stourpaine Village Hall** - Chrissie 07757627692

Tuesdays

- **Short Mat Bowls Okeford Fitzpaine** 7:15pm Village Hall Equipment provided; Barbara O1258 861524
- **Stretch & Tone Classes Ibberton** 9:30am Village Hall; £7; Contact: James Self O7985 194994
- **Vinyasa Flow Yoga Hazlebury Bryan** Village Hall 9:30am. Mixed Ability. sairaATmelluah.co.uk O7809 141815
- **Badminton - Stalbridge Hall** 7:30pm. Contact Phil 01963 362799
- **Play Around,** All abilities music group. Second Tuesdays 6:30 Henfield Airfield. contact Caroleavis123@btinternet.com

Wednesdays

- **10 am, Art 4 Pleasure, Manston** Village Hall; Pat O1258 721467
- **2pm Blackmore Vale Flower Arrangers** 2nd Wednesdays Royal BritishLegion Club Marnhull (no meeting in August). Sandy 01747 685837 sandramilne22@gmail.com

Thursdays

- **Youth Club** (10-14s), Shillingstone Church Centre, Last Thursday
- **Short Mat Bowls Okeford Fitzpaine** 7:15pm Village Hall
- **Stretch & Tone Classes Ibberton** 9:30am Village Hall; £7; Contact: James Self O7985 194994

Fridays

- **7.30pm Barn Dance**. First Fridays. Portman Hall, Shillingstone 01258 861184
- **2nd Fridays 10:30-3:30 Blackmore Vale Arts Group**. Marhull Village Hall. *Yvonne on O1258 820247 or mikyon**AT**aol.com*
- **Last Friday; Hazlebury Brian, Community Lunch**, Noon, Village Hall, min £5
- 2nd Friday (except Jun/Dec) Hazelbury Brian Coffee Morning. 10:30 Village Hall. All Welcome.
- Last Friday (except Jun/Nov/Dec) Hazlebury Brian, Community Lunch, Noon, Village Hall, All Welcome. min £6. Jill Noades, 01258 817197

Saturdays

- **Blandford Hospital Shop**: Collection point incl. larger items. First Saturdays. 10am-12noon Old Poisedale Building, Hinton St Mary.
- **Village Market/ Coffee Morning**; Shillingstone Church Centre; first Saturdays

Sundays

- **9:30am & 6pm Mass RC Church Marnhull: Father Cletus Ibeka**
- **Presbytery: St. Benedict's, High Street , Gillingham , SP8 4AG**
- **Tel: 01258 820388 E-mail cletus.ibeka@prcdtr.org.uk**

Daily

- **Boules Pitches** and equipment now available. The cricket pitches Hinton St Mary. Anytime *except* 4-6pm. Janet O1258 472300
- **Shillingstone Station**: Open Weds / Sat/ Sun 10-4

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES



St Mary's Sturminster ...

SERVICES AT:	St Mary's	St Thomas'	St Peter's
DEC 2026			
Wednesday 2 December	**10am** Holy Communion		
1st Sunday 6 December	**11am** Holy Communion		**9.30am** Holy Communion
Wednesday 8 December	**10am** Holy Communion		
2nd Sunday 13 December	**9.30am** Morning Prayer **6pm** Evensong	**11am** Holy Communion	**9.30am** Morning Prayer
Wednesday 16 December	**10am** Holy Communion		
Friday 18 December			**6pm Carol and Christingle Service**
3rd Sunday 20 December	**11am** Holy Communion **4pm Carol Service**	**6pm Carol Service**	**9.30am** Morning Prayer
Christmas Eve 24 December	**4pm Crib Service** **11.15pm Christmas Midnight Holy Communion**	**9pm First Mass of Christmas**	
Christmas Day 25 December	**11am Christmas** Holy Communion		**9.30am** Christmas Holy Communion

Vale Methodist Church (based in Sturminster Newton & Kings Stag)
Services @ Sturminster Newton 10.30am. every Sunday morning. Services @ Kings Stag every 2nd,4th &5th Sunday in the month @ 6pm

SERVICES AT:	St Mary's	St Thomas'	St Peter's
4th Sunday 27 December	**11am** Holy Communion		**9.30am** Morning Prayer
Wednesday 30 December	**10am** Holy Communion		
JAN 2027			
1st Sunday 3 January	**11am** Holy Communion **4pm Christingle Service**		**9.30am** Holy Communion
Wednesday 6 January	**10am** Holy Communion		
2nd Sunday 10 January	**10.30am Joint Covenant Service at Methodist Church** **6pm** Evensong	**11am** Holy Communion	**9.30am** Morning Prayer
Wednesday 13 January	**10am** Holy Communion		
3rd Sunday 17 January	**11am** Holy Communion	**4pm** Evensong	**9.30am** Morning Prayer
Wednesday 20 January	**10am** Holy Communion		
4th Sunday 24 January	**11am** Holy Communion **6pm** Evensong	**11am** Morning Service BCP	**9.30am** Holy Communion
Wednesday 27 January	**10am** Holy Communion		
5th Sunday 31 January		**11am** Benefice Holy Communion	

Diary of Church Events:

Tots'n'Toast Under 5's Toddler Group. St. Mary's Church Hall, Tues 9.30am - 11.30am during term time. £1 donation per child towards refreshments. Contact Revd Mary Gubbins O744O68O387

St. Mary's Monthly Coffee Morning. St. Mary's Church Hall. First Friday of the month. 10.30am - 12 noon. A warm welcome open to all. Free. Contact Revd Mary Gubbins O744O68O387.

Other Religions (or None) are available.

St. Mary's Coffee Morning



Please join us for coffee and a chat

A friendly welcome – Open to all

Held regularly on the First Friday of every month.

Place	• St. Mary's Church Hall
Time	• 10.30am - 12 noon
Dates	• Friday 2nd Oct • Friday 6th Nov • Friday 4th Dec

For any queries, please contact Revd. Mary Gubbins on 07440680387, or email revd.mary.gubbins@gmail.com

Christmas Tree Festival 2026

St. Mary's Sturminster Newton







All are welcome to visit St Mary's Church to see a display of individually crafted and decorated trees from local groups

Free entry and vote for your favourite!

Sat 28th Nov	10am - 7pm 5pm - Welcome to Father Christmas with The Choral Society Choir and free refreshments
Sun 29th Nov	12 noon - 4pm
Mon 30th Nov	10am - 4pm
Tues 1st Dec	10am - 4pm
Weds 2nd Dec	11am - 4pm

Christingle

The Children's Society

Let's come together to celebrate Christingle.



Christingle is a great way for communities everywhere to get together this Christmas to catch up, make some special memories, and have fun.

Come and join us!

Location: St. Mary's Church Sturminster Newton

Date: 3 January 2027 **Time:** 4pm

To find out more, contact: Revd. Mary Gubbins 07440 680387 revd.mary.gubbins@gmail.com

Scan the QR code to find out more.

christingle.org

MCB479w/0525_XTC008_24 © The Children's Society 2025. Charity Registration No. 221124

EDITORIAL



The full edition of the newsletter is online (at sncl.org.uk then click What's Happening in Stur) together with previous editions & features. Ravin Bill's illustrated reporting of Stur Sparkle (and Stur the Caudron and the Cheese Festival) are exclusively available in Emailed, Website and Facebook versions of the Newsletter. The compact version in A5 booklet format is funded by the Town Council and is available to collect from The Exchange, Emporium, Library, 1855, Church and Family Hub and available to read in cafés & pubs.
To request copies to be Emailed to you or to include your regular or one-off event and other contributions, please Email it to whatshappeninginstur@btconnect.com If you need help with your entry or anything else regarding the newsletter, please call in to the Learning Centre in The Exchange on Mon(am) or Wed.

Production & Distribution Team: David Shepherd; Penny Mountain; Kate Squire.

COPY DATES

15th of the preceding month:

Jan 15th for Feb/Mar

Mar 15th for Apr/May

CONTACT

whatshappeninginstur@btconnect.com

sncl.org.uk/whatshappeninginstur.html

Please note that all @ symbols in **personal** Email addresses are displayed as **AT** and leading zeros in phone numbers are letter 'O' in this on-line newsletter.