

Preston Brook Village News

March 2020



Welcome to the Spring Edition of our Village Newsletter full of the reports from our local groups, your tips and many other interesting articles.

Spring is around the corner. At the time of going to press we hoped it was around the corner, as the storms have been arriving each weekend with a different nae, strong biting winds, rain and more rain, we are awash with daffodils, snowdrops and crocus around the village. Hopefully you will be reading this in April sunshine. Munching your Easter Eggs perhaps.

Now work time. Yes it is time to rise from the comfy armchair and get digging and ground preparation. There are gardening tips inside this edition, for those who are green-fingered. However, I am reliably informed that it is too early to rush into planting delicate plants, so try not to be tempted by the supermarket varieties just yet, because the frost will be still around for some time to come.

Remember we have the Plant Sale in May (all being well) with professional advice given on the day. Spring is the time for new shoots and there are some new events that have already started in the Village Hall. There is more information about it all inside this edition and also on our Village Hall website.

At time of preparing this newsletter, the matter of Covid-19 has raised it's ugly head. We have some information for support during this unprecedented period of time.

Corona update

Please see insert of this newsletter for further information and support with Coronavirus

Coronavirus – Support for residents

Well, who thought that this day in age, we'd be confined to self-isolation, having to socially distance ourselves from others by over 2 metres, have to work around the manic buyers of toilet rolls, milk and eggs for this unusual but deadly disease called Covid-19! It certainly is a change to which we're all having to adjust to but with good reason too!

That said, we need to be mindful of those who are vulnerable within our village who are subject to 12-week isolation and cannot shop or get around for other health reasons.

Residents have come together via a WhatsApp group offering volunteer support for those across the village who need help and support with shopping and other matters but ensuring that health is protected at all times. If you'd like to be added to the group please text the Clerk on 07753848382 or Lisa at Village Hall on 07967 651909.

These are times when communities truly do pull together and work to support each other. We have a list of volunteers that live in our village, they may even be your neighbours, they are there to help you. This isn't just for shopping needs but they will act as a listening ear, someone to talk to in times of isolation also helping protect your welfare, prevent loneliness and support your general health and wellbeing.

The SPAR shop have also offered to carry out a pick and pack service for residents in the village, this needs to be done via a volunteer so if you need shopping delivered then please contact one of the people below.

Preston on the Hill

Jean	07903 010251
Melissa Kerr	07702041915

All Areas Covered inc Dutton

Julie	07739 982081	julie.sutherlandllll@gmail.com
Leasha	07783 955428	leasha.sutherland@gmail.com
Lauren	07518 344994	lauren.sutherland@live.co.uk
Sue	07792 505128	s.hill56@hotmail.co.uk
Vicki	07597 295546	
Jane	07783 440492	
Jean	07841 660546	
Neil	07930 345413	
Jason	07966 211959	jason@jac2ltd.co.uk
Elaine McGavin	07763206232	

Shepherds Fold/Chester Road/Aston Fold/Gorsewell

Krystal	07725164806
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Gorsewell/Coronation/Aston

Lisa	07967 651909
Gary	07841 660546
Sandra	07854795187

For further information please email clerk@prestonbrookparishcouncil.gov.uk or call 07753 848382.

There is more information available online www.gov.uk/coronavirus also visit www.halton.gov.uk for more information on a local level.

Daresbury Church have also set up a volunteer database through their website. If you wish to join their volunteer list, please visit www.daresburycofe.org.uk

Please remember to look after yourself and each other!

Gardening tips for April

April is the busiest time in the garden, but don't panic, take things one step at a time and you'll get it all done. It's important to take a few moments to sit in the sun, listen to the birds, and admire any colour you have in the garden.

Also this is a good time to make a note of any gaps in your spring planting to order any bulbs in the autumn for next year.

This month the focus is on flowers. Start to direct sow hardy annuals, eg marigolds, poppies, nigella, etc. and now is the time to harden off seedlings that have been started off indoors. Try to do this on warm still days. Place them outside during the day, but take them in again late afternoon, and do this for about a week or so. This way they will get used to the cooler conditions before being planted outside. Start planting out hardy perennials, eg cosmos, in sheltered spots at end of the month.

Sow perennials – these could include hollyhocks, delphiniums and echinaceas. Fill a seed tray with peat-free compost and dampen with water. Sow seeds spaced at least an inch apart in a grid across the compost surface. Then scatter (or sieve) a fine covering of compost over the seeds. You don't need to water again immediately. Place in a light, cool spot, eg a window ledge or, if you have one, in a propagator. Plant out sweet peas – two plants to each upright. Dig a good, deep hole and fill the base with farmyard manure. Tie them in to the base of the arch or frame and water them in well. Create new plants from last year's pelargoniums – take cuttings now and they'll be ready to be replanted in a couple of months.

Now is also the time to pot up dahlia tubers and you will have wonderful flowers to cut all through the summer months. Finish planting summer flowering bulbs. Plant them in pots or in the ground. Plant lily bulbs straight into the ground. Give them plenty of room and, on heavy soil, add grit for drainage to their planting hole. Most varieties thrive with their bulbs in some shade and tops emerging into full sun. Any indoor forced bulbs can be planted into the garden when they've finished flowering. Remember, paperwhites are not hardy, but don't compost them – it is a good idea to keep the bulbs for planting again next autumn inside.

One other last tip:

Last chance to sprinkle Garlic Fertiliser granules along the edges of vegetable beds and border edges to combat unwanted slugs. This should ideally be done during February but it was rather wet this year. This is safe for birds and other wildlife. Originally for the growing of garlic bulbs then it was discovered that slugs detest it. Applying it in February is to start with the early batch of snails and slugs before they multiply.

Preston Brook & District History Group

- **November's** topic was a very interesting talk from Harry Wells on Warrington's First Mayor & Philanthropist William Beamont. This was also an illustrated talk, which really the majority of our

evenings are. The Annual Christmas Dinner at the Legh Arms was a very successful evening with a chance to let our hair down.

- In **January** we had a talk on the 'Engineering Excellence on the River Weaver' by Colin Edmondson. The history of the locks, bridges & navigation on the river.
- **February** was the History of the Lancashire Coalfields, Again many interesting facts and memories from Alan Davies.
- **March** is The History of the Chester & Holyhead Railway by Michael Blackburn
- **April** will be John Hatfield and the History of the Mersey Tunnels

The History Group Events Programme is on the Preston Brook website and you are most welcome to join us on the third Thursday of the month in the Lewis Carrol Centre, All Saints Church, Daresbury at 7.30pm All our evenings have tasty home-made refreshments from our Ladies. .

If you need any further information about our group, please contact our secretary Sue Potter on sukupot45@googlemail.com

Preston Brook Pre-School

Hello All

Well what a term we have had at Pre-School! We finally received the Ofsted phone call in late January and we underwent a full Ofsted Inspection.



I am delighted to report that we were awarded GOOD across all areas. The inspector was complimentary comments included:

"Staff skilfully question children during activities to help their learning"

"Children's emotional wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem are given high priority"

"The Management team is passionate and committed to providing a high-quality curriculum"

"Staff get to know families, work well with parents, all children make good progress"

"The Pre-School places high priority on supporting children's early mathematics and literacy skills"

"Children develop a good understanding of the wider world and their local community; they relish visits from people who teach them about festivals"

As you are aware, Pre-School has experienced some difficult months as we have had low numbers. However, I now have fantastic news that numbers are increasing daily and we have a waiting list for September 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support in making Pre-School such a success.

This term we have celebrated Pancake Day, making our own pancakes and choosing different toppings. We all dressed up for World Book Day as Superato / vegetables and made some lovely wooden stars for Mother's Day. Dispute current events and Pre-School being closed. We will still have our Easter Bonnet competition that hopefully will be judged virtually by Rev Felix. As we see what each day brings, please try to enjoy spending some time together. Chalk pictures in the garden, paint a picture, grow some flowers / vegetables or look at /read a book together.

Look forward to seeing everyone soon
Sarah
