

Preston Brook Village News

May 2019



Now the clocks have changed, moved forward, we are enjoying the lovely long evenings.

Another debate as to why we have to continue doing this procedure twice a year. Makes a pleasant change from discussing BREXIT !!

What about the Easter weekend then?? Out came the bar-b-ques and the sun tan oil and the lawn mowers of course. A welcome treat for everyone after the long cold winter.

Mind you as we write this, we have got our coats back on for the cold front, that is spreading down from Scandinavia.

Fear not as it will warm up again in the rest of the month, in time for you all to rush to our Plant Sale. We always time it just right for the bedding plants to miss the last of the frosts.

Help is at hand inside his issue with our regular gardening tips.

Hoping that you all enjoy the summer months, from our editorial team



Gardening tips

May has arrived and the days are getting warmer and longer. Summer is on its way and it's time to tidy up spring plants, plant out summer flowers and get planning for autumn. Start planting out summer bedding towards the end of this month but beware, the last frost recorded in Cheshire is may 24th!



Look after your finished spring bulbs for next year. Once they've gone over, resist the temptation to cut back the foliage. Instead, let it die and break down on its own and add liquid fertiliser all around the clumps. This will give you an even better display next spring. Remember to open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days. You can also damp down your greenhouse on hot days to increase humidity and deter red spider mites.

Optimise your watering regime - watering early and late to get the most out of your water - and start collecting and recycling water whenever possible. In the flower garden now is the time to thin out drifts of hardy annuals and harden off half-hardy plants by leaving them outside during the day and bringing them back under cover at night for 7 to 10 days before planting outdoors. Plant summer hanging baskets, adding good-quality compost, slow-release fertiliser and water-retaining crystals, to keep them in top condition. Protect them from late frost under cover.

Harden off dahlias and tender exotics such as canna for planting as soon as the risk of frost has passed. Continue dividing herbaceous perennials to improve vigour and create new plants. Divide hostas as they come into growth. Trim back spreading plants such as aubrieta, alyssum and candytuft after they've flowered, to encourage fresh new growth and more blooms. Lift forget-me-nots to prevent heavy self-seeding and reduce spreading. Prune penstemons now - cut all the old shoots back to the base, providing there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves.

Take cuttings of tender perennials, such as fuchsia, argyranthemum and pelargoniums (geraniums). The new shoots of hardy perennials can also be used for cuttings. Take softwood cuttings of shrubby herbs (such as sage and lemon verbena). Prune spring-flowering shrubs after flowering. Trim lavender plants, cutting off old flower heads and about 2.5 cm (1 inch) of the current year's growth. Don't forget to feed and water container plants and top-dress permanent pot plants to refresh the compost. Supplement container plants with balanced liquid feed every 2-4 weeks to promote healthy growth.

In the vegetable garden continue earthing up potatoes. Harvest asparagus spears when they are no more than 18 cm tall. Thin out direct-sown vegetables such as spinach, carrot and lettuce seedlings, then water the rows well. Harden off outdoor tomatoes, courgettes and pumpkins for planting early next month. Weed around your onions and garlic to reduce competition for nutrients and water. Apply an onion fertiliser to boost growth.

In the fruit garden, protect strawberries with straw (to control weeds and lift the berries off the ground) and netting (to keep birds off the fruit). Harvest rhubarb, picking only one-third of the total amount of stems. Regularly check the centre of gooseberry bushes for green gooseberry sawfly caterpillars - they will quickly skeletonise leaves if not removed.

Other jobs about the garden include feed pond fish little and often. Remove duckweed and blanket weed from ponds, and thin out submerged oxygenators. Lay any removed weed beside your pond overnight to allow insects, snails and other pondlife to escape back into the water.

Beetroot salad with walnuts and cumin

This is a delicious vegetarian salad originated with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. As beetroot are becoming available now, albeit baby ones, it is perfect for this time of year.

Serves four.

- 75g walnuts
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- About 400g beetroot, the younger the better
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- Juice of 1 small orange (or use a bit more lemon juice)
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- 2 tbsp rapeseed oil Sea salt and ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp plain yoghurt
- A pinch of hot smoked paprika



Heat a dry frying pan over a medium heat and add the walnuts. Toast gently for a few minutes, tossing often, until they smell toasted and are colouring in a few places, then tip into a mortar. Put the cumin seeds into the frying pan and toast gently for a minute or two, tossing a few times, just until they start to release their scent. Tip on to a plate to stop them cooking further.

Peel the beetroot, grate it coarsely and put it in a bowl. (If you have fresh baby beetroot, just slice it very thin.) Add the parsley, orange juice, a squeeze of lemon and a tablespoon of rapeseed oil, and season. Stir, adjust the seasoning to taste and, if possible, leave for 20 minutes or so, during which time the dressing will marinate and tenderise the beetroot.

Spread the beetroot in a dish. Roughly bash the walnuts with the pestle and scatter over. Give the cumin a rough bash in the mortar and scatter most of it over the beets. Finish with a final trickle of oil, dot with blobs of yogurt and sprinkle on the remaining cumin and the paprika.

Preston Brook & District History Group

We are now entering our summer programme which consists of organised visits to places of interest.

We shall return to the regular programme in September. We are growing friendly group who welcome new members, and indeed guests to come along and join us. We meet on the third Thursday of the month in the Lewis Carroll Centre in our Parish Church, All Saints Church Daresbury. From September to April.

We have a wide selection of speakers on various interesting topics which begin at 7:45pm. The talks are followed by light refreshments.

If you need any further information about our group, you can email Sue Potter on sukipot45@googlemail.com

Preston Brook Pre-School

Hello from Pre-School

We have had another busy term. We celebrated St David's Day by making daffodils and wearing something yellow to Pre-School. Mother's Day we made lovely cards, painted jewellery boxes and Nannie Winnie came in to make peppermint creams with us all.



The library lady has been to Pre-School and shared stories. We have enjoyed the good weather accessing our new equipment in the garden.

The Easter Bunny came and delivered eggs for our Easter egg hunt. I was delighted to see the fabulous Easter bonnets made by the children for the Easter Parade.

Rev Felix and Granny Sue had a hard job choosing the winners! I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sue Potter (Granny Sue) for her ongoing support of the Pre-School and to Rev Felix for attending all our events. We are looking forward to Sports Day and are Graduation Service for those children leaving us to transition to local big schools!



I still have some places available at Pre-School please feel free to come and have a look around.

Regards

Sarah Williams
Pre-School Manager

Litter pick Success

A big thanks go to our community litter pickers who took their time out on Sunday to collect various pieces of litter from across our village. A special thanks go to Jacky from Tannery Court and Mike, George, Joan and Simon from Parish Councillor Margaret Barber.

Whilst disappointing that volunteers have to pick up such large amounts of people's litter, it is also quite rewarding that we see what a difference it makes to the look and feel of our village.

Our next litter pick will be advertised on the parish council website and we hope that more people can join us next time.



Village Hall News and Events

Hi Everyone, the hall has had a busy few months.

Easter Bingo was a great success and we will run it again next year. The hall is now fully booked during the week with classes – have you joined any??

Our next event is our Friends and Neighbours Sunday on the 5th May.

We are asking everyone to knock on a neighbour's door, perhaps someone who lives alone, or a couple who cannot get out easily, and invite them, or even ask to pick them up and bring them to the hall from 1pm. We will be offering a free lunch, Soup, Sandwich and Cake, but more importantly an opportunity for everyone to meet and make some new friends. We are hoping to make this a regular event for our community but we do need your support. We will have games etc to play and may run a film. Please have a think and seize the opportunity to reach out in your community?

Litter Pick – Saturday 28th April – Meet at the hall at 10.30am. Bags and pickers supplied.

The annual **Plant sale** is on the 18th May. Starts at 11am until 2pm. Tea and cake too!. Lots of variety, bedding, shrubs, pots, hanging baskets, herbs and vegetables.

Events at the hall will be cancelled on the 2nd May and the 23rd May for Elections.

The committee are looking for some help with our paperwork. Someone to support the committee, specifically to achieve level 1 in a quality assurance scheme for Village Halls. The scheme includes Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Policies and Procedures that need to be in place to support the running of the hall. There is no end date to this, and no urgency. We are up to date with all of these but need someone to pull them all together and ensure we are doing the best we can.

Contact secretarys.prestonbrookvh@gmail.com or 07549655578

We also need some architects' drawings done for the new toilet refurbishment. Plans have changed since our last grant application attempt, we have simplified things and we need some new plans to reflect this. Do you know anyone who does this, we can pay?

And, we could do with some help project managing this refurb. Do you have Project Management experience, could you spare some time to help the committee? Please contact me for more information. 07549655578. Lisa

Next Pub Nights

Friday 24th May

Friday 28th Jun

Thank you



Want to relax, unwind and de-stress and learn how to meditate...

'Little Acre' invites you to a weekly meditation group (suitable for beginners to advanced) on Thursday evenings at Preston on the Hill from 7:30-9:30pm.

You'll learn meditation techniques to help you still the mind and turn off from the noise and busyness of everyday life allowing you to feel more relaxed, refreshed and enlightened.

Furthermore, it will enable you to learn techniques on dealing with stress, become less anxious and allow you to feel strong enough to deal with all that life throws at you. Whilst you'll benefit from a number of things including improved sleep, how to prepare to change and self-healing you'll walk away with the wanting of learning more.

Workshops will start on 9th May 2019 each Thursday and in the near future will extend to Mondays too. To book your place or for more information please contact me on 07753848382. £10 per session which includes light refreshments.

Thanks to residents and Amey

Iris, Tunnel End arranged a litter pick recently as part of the Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean Campaign and was contacted by Laura Nelson from company 'Amey' with an offer of help. She not only brought her family BUT she also organised a team from Amey to come too!

Laura works for Amey and is keen to get more involved in our community. They were brilliant and having all workers wearing the correct gear AND a truck made such a difference. Old tyres and mounds of carpet that had been dumped near the M56 bridge were removed and it's made a massive difference.

Laura and her team are keen to be involved in more litter picks to help improve the look of our area.

Overall, this demonstrates that when folk do pull together the massive difference it makes as well as that sense of achievement – thanks to all involved.

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Regular Activities at the Village Hall

Mondays	9am – 2:30pm – Pre-School 3pm – 4pm – Silver Circuits (Over 50's fitness) 4:30pm – 5:30pm –Yoga (Sue Hill) 6:30pm – 8:30pm - Karate
Tuesdays	9am – 3pm – Pre-School 4pm – 9pm – Hornby RCA 7:30pm - 10pm – Dutton WI (2 nd Tues only) 7:30pm – Parish Council (3 rd Tuesday only – except August)
Wednesdays	9am – 3pm – Pre-School 6:15pm – 7:30pm – Yin Yoga 7:45pm – 9:00pm – Hatha Yoga
Thursdays	9am – 3pm – Pre-School 7:30pm – 8:30pm – Yoga with Andrea
Fridays	9am – 1pm – Pre-School 4:00pm – 4:30pm – Children's ballet with the Dyas Lishman Dance Academy 5pm – 6:15pm – Yin Yoga with Jane 7:45pm – 10pm – Military Whist (1 st Fri only)

Private Hire

The hall is fully licensed and available for meetings, classes, parties, christenings at all other times.

Please contact the bookings secretary on 07549655578 for more information or email

secretary.prestonbrookvh@gmail.com

Would you like to support your local community and become a Parish Councillor?

We now have two positions to fill – we'd very much like to welcome residents to join from the **Dutton** area. If you are looking to help in improving the Village and its amenities, and would consider being co-opted on to the Parish Council then please contact the Clerk or any Parish Councillor. There are a range of topics that are discussed at the council including local projects, planning applications, funding opportunities and much more.

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month except August. Visit our website www.prestonbrookparishcouncil.gov.uk for more information.

Of course, whilst most of the information will be made available for viewing, we'd also encourage residents to attend our meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Newsletter Distributors

As you know the quarterly newsletter is produced and printed by the Parish Council. What keeps it going is the support from residents – from the contributions and continual feedback for new information.

We do however, require the support of residents to help distribute – once a quarter for an hour or so if all that's needed. If you can spare some time, please contact the Clerk. Many thanks