

WATCHET CONNECTS

November/December 2025



Edition 40

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Editor's Page

Welcome to issue 40 of Watchet Connects

We may have lots to do in the run-up towards Christmas, but let's not forget it can be a difficult time for many people who are struggling to make ends meet in this period of excess, and tough for those who find themselves isolated in Christmas crowds. Two local charities, **V's Christmas Appeal** (P22) and the **Salvation Army Toy Appeal** (P39) are supporting those who are feeling the pinch this year, and would welcome your donations. Our local churches and groups are all looking to ameliorate loneliness over Christmas and wintery times. If you are experiencing loneliness, please reach out.

I do not think I will be running in **The Santa Fun Run** in aid of The Memorial Ground (P8) – if I were to, it would be more like a Santa Fun Hobble, but it sounds like fun to watch and I am definitely up for sponsoring someone (please form an orderly queue!)

Congratulations to Knights Templar opening their new SEND unit, The Den (P 20), a great facility for our local children.

Wishing you all the Best for A Merry Christmas and Happy New 2026 from all here at **Watchet Connects**. Rachel, Chris, Liz, Fiona and team

Thanks go again to everyone who helps make **Connects**, and to those who make sure you get it posted through your letterbox.

Rachel

Thanks to Liz Greenwood who has come on board to help us with organising Advertising for **Watchet Connects**. This is a very necessary role to help us to become self sustaining in future. Please see inside back cover for ad rates.

The deadline for **January/February** issue will be earlier to allow for compiling, editing and printing before Christmas: **24th October!**
Please send any copy or updates on adverts to editor@watchetct.co.uk

Contributors please note: to enable us to continue to make **Watchet Connects** free to all residents we accept free of charge editorial entries from local social and not-for-profit organisations up to **half a page maximum** (around 200 words, or fewer if including images). Beyond that we must ask contributors to support our printing costs by paying the standard advertising rates unless otherwise agreed: see inside back cover.

Cover photo: "Ebenezer Scrooge" at the Backyard Theatre - see article on page 22. Photo by Chris Williams. Thanks to Liz Elmont for Ed39 cover photo

Future Fundraisers and Events

organised by Watchet Carnival

This Autumn/Winter we have plenty to entertain you as we raise funds for Carnival 2026.

Saturday 15th November 2025 **Coffee Morning** at Watchet Phoenix Centre. Time: 9.30 -12.30. A Good Morning awaits with delicious cakes and bakes, homemade produce, crafts, raffle and time well spent over a cuppa with family and friends.

Saturday 29th November 2025 Watchet Carnival's **Black-Tie Christmas Ball** at Watchet Bowling Club. 7pm to midnight. Complementary welcome drinks on arrival (6.30 pm). A wonderful evening of music, food and dancing. Live Music, a DJ and delicious Buffet. £30.00 per person. Limited ticket availability - call Jen on 07786 511 405.

Watchet **Illuminations Competition** week commencing 15th December. Brighten up the town this festive season. Prizes given for the best decorated house, street and shop/business window - remember to plug in/switch on from 5pm onwards so the judges get to see your beautiful creations throughout the week.

Christmas Eve December 24th 2025 **Santa's Sleigh** annual tour of Watchet. Hooray! Santa Claus is coming to town. Santa will also be presenting a prize to the winners of the Watchet Illuminations Competition.

Watchet Carnival Committee

Watchet Conservation Society



Promoting, Conserving & Improving
Our Physical & Natural Environment

We have one very special meeting left in our Conservation calendar of events and that is our **AGM** on Tuesday 18th November in the Phoenix Centre at 7.30pm.

We currently have a good Committee who are all willing to stand again so business should be over fairly quickly, and will be followed by entertainment and refreshments. Do please come and join us, meet all the Committee and we can meet you which is always so necessary in a good organisation.

With Very Best Wishes,

Molly, Chair WCS

Watchet Street Fairs

(part of Coastal Community Team)

October 5th was to have been the last Street Fair of this season but the weather forecast prevented it. We are looking forward to next year's Fairs, the first one being the first Sunday in March 2026.

We do hope you have all enjoyed this year's Fairs - we have loved organising them. We need to say a huge Thank You this year to friends, who have given us wonderful help when we have been low in helpers. Also, as ever, thanks to the mixed and happy bunch of stall holders who feel like a big family. Please all come again next year!

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and an easy winter. Spring is just round the corner!

Molly and team.

Watchet's First Repair Café

Volunteers from across the West Quantocks area came together on the last Saturday of September at Watchet Community Centre to repair broken household items, making the launch of the West Quantocks Repair Café a great success. Clocks and table lamps that had ceased to function were safely fixed and tested. Broken furniture, ornaments and household gadgets were mended, and numerous kitchen knives, secateurs and scissors were sharpened.



Photo: Terry Walker

"Everybody has something in their house that would end up in landfill if it can't be repaired. Our aim is to reduce landfill, minimise waste, and fix small items and gadgets for the local community," said Paul Levy, Repair Café organiser. *"And if we can't fix it, we can advise on how to recycle it safely."*

Thirty locals brought their items for assessment and repair, some of which were taken home by volunteers for later repair and collection from Watchet Visitors' Centre. The Café element of the event was a great success, with coffee and cakes enjoyed by repair clients while they waited. The event launch was supported by the Fixy Van, Co-op Liddymore Road, Chives Café, East Quay Café, and Watchet Marina Café and Shop. The next Repair Café will be on November 29th. For more info, email repaircafe.watchet@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.

Watchet Neighbourhood Plan Summary

Hello Watchet Residents,

You might have read in a previous edition of **Watchet Connects** the beginnings of our neighbourhood plan for Watchet.

**A neighbourhood plan – (enshrined in the Localism Act 2011) is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, design, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only. *Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap – A step By Step Guide 2018 edition.*

I detailed our journey last time. We are awaiting Somerset Council to consider the request of Watchet Town Council (WTC) to designate the area of Watchet Parish as a 'Neighbourhood Area', if granted, then we proceed with our planning.

We are due to meet again in a few weeks time, to discuss our vision for this Advisory Committee, to prioritise the areas we love within the parish boundary and want to protect, and to plan what, ideally, Watchet will look like in years to come. We will agree some terms of reference for the committee and how we are going to consult and get the views of you as fellow Watchet residents. We are considering how we can best collect your views. So far, we have put a box file in the library which will contain papers detailing our tasks for you to look at and also there will be a few helpful pages and links on the Watchet Town Council website. Do have a look at what is going on.

We are all enthusiastic volunteers although we are currently at early stages, To quote Andrew Homer who lives in central Watchet. 'We are not only custodians of the past but stewards for the future.'

So, we are making progress, without being able to predict an ending - we will just keep moving forward to try to protect the parts of Watchet we as residents love. The ideal outcome will be to transform parts of Watchet so it can thrive economically, provide appropriate accommodation, meet the social needs of the population and protect our environment into the future.

Bernice Scott-Field WCCT
Director and Chair for Watchet Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee



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Santa Fun Run

Let's start a new annual Christmas Tradition!!

Get your Santa outfits and hats out and get involved in a fundraiser for our Watchet War Memorial Recreation Ground.

Come along and join in a Santa Fun Run (fancy dress if you can but not compulsory) to help us maintain the War Memorial Ground for the town. We hope to meet Sunday December 21st at the Memorial Ground early afternoon. Look out for posters around town and Facebook confirming date and time.

Run as many laps as you can in one hour to raise money. The entry fee of £5.00 (more if you wish) will go to the 'Watchet War Memorial Recreation Ground Committee' – see group page on Facebook which will have a Santa Run post.

There are three ways of entering

- 1 Through the FaceBook page. Your entry ticket is a £5 donation (add your name on). A sponsor form can be downloaded so you can raise more.
- 2 Pick up an entry form from The Visitor Centre, who will also be the point for leaving any sponsorship money not given in on the day.
- 3 Alternatively you can pay on the day for an entry ticket. Sponsorship money can also be donated on the day or collected later from family and friends and paid in through the FB page above or the Visitor Centre.

Everyone entering will be given a certificate stating how many laps they have achieved. We are giving Medals for the three people who do the most laps.

Teas, coffee and bottles of water will be available for purchase at The Pavilion, and The Football Club will be open for a festive drink or two to celebrate your achievements!

Even if you can't run, come along to support our Santa runners!

Contact lorileear001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022 for further information

Free, confidential and non-judgemental support with **Benefits, Housing, Debt, Employment** or other life complications, big and small.

If we can't help we may be able to advise someone who can!

Email: advice@citizensadvicewestsomerset.org.uk Phone: 0800 802 1808

Face to face: The Lane Centre, Market House Lane, Minehead 10am – 1.30pm. Locally, we regularly visit The Sanctuary in Watchet.



Santa's sleigh loves touring Watchet on Christmas Eve and aims to visit as many streets as possible but this depends on accessibility for his larger and longer sleigh to safely manoeuvre through roads. This can be an annual festive challenge, especially trying to pass through a narrow streets and lots of parked cars, so please bear this in mind for parking that evening.



Santa Sleigh photo:
Kate Williams

The route is planned to give as many residents as possible the opportunity to see Santa without having to travel too far.

Let's not forget that Santa's Little Helpers walk every street on this annual trip and love to see the waiting crowd, giving thanks and good wishes to all around town.

We thank you for your understanding and appreciate the marvellous support and welcome we always receive.

We all look forward to seeing you on Christmas Eve!

The logo for The Radio Museum, featuring a stylized radio tower icon and the text 'THE RADIO MUSEUM' in large, bold, green letters.

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www.radiomuseum.org.uk

The logo for Tony Brooke Carpets & Flooring, featuring a blue and white design with the company name and a small image of a carpet roll.

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Watchet's Lifesaving Triumph: New Defibrillator Installed at the Golden Bowl

In a heartening display of community spirit, Watchet residents have successfully installed a new public access defibrillator on the Golden Bowl takeaway along Liddymore Road, an achievement that's already proving its worth!



The fundraising effort was remarkable. Locals rallied together within 24 hours to raise the necessary funds, demonstrating the town's unwavering commitment to public safety. But while the money came quickly, finding a suitable location proved far more challenging. It took nearly a year to secure a host site, with many shops unable to accommodate the cabinet. Thankfully, the Golden Bowl stepped forward, and the defibrillator is now proudly in place and fully operational. And it hasn't taken long to make an impact. During one week in September alone, the 999 emergency operator issued the cabinet code three times in just three days—an astonishing reminder of how vital these devices can be.

Why Having a Defibrillator Nearby Matters

Public access defibrillators (PADs) are more than just yellow boxes on the wall—they're potential lifesavers. Here's why every community should celebrate having one close by:

- **Rapid Response Saves Lives:** In cases of sudden cardiac arrest, every minute counts. A defibrillator used within 3–5 minutes can increase survival rates by up to 70%.
- **Empowers Bystanders:** With clear instructions and automated technology, even untrained individuals can use a defib confidently.
- **Supports Emergency Services:** PADs bridge the critical gap between collapse and ambulance arrival, especially in rural or hard-to-reach areas.
- **Boosts Community Confidence:** Knowing help is nearby encourages people to act quickly and decisively in emergencies.
- **Raises Awareness:** Visible defibrillators remind us all of the importance of heart health and emergency preparedness.

Watchet's new defib is more than a piece of equipment—it's a symbol of what a determined community can achieve. From lightning-fast fundraising

to overcoming logistical hurdles, this installation is a testament to local resilience and care.

If you're passing the Golden Bowl, take a moment to spot the cabinet. You never know when it might make all the difference.

Funds raised include donations by Elliot's Touch, Goldilocks Hair & Beauty. Expertly fitted by Wayne at W.S. Electrical for free (07979 890957) supported by my lucky husband - Sam Shaw.

Lucy Corlett.

Other defibrillators in Watchet are placed outside The Esplanade Club, outside The Phoenix Centre and at The Henry Davy Playing Field.

Watchet Baptists

Every four years, the USA holds a Presidential election in November. This is often a rowdy time and happens on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Also in November, the USA celebrates Thanksgiving – on the fourth Thursday. And about a month later, it's Christmas.

I believe there is an important link between choosing and celebrating. Just as we need to know in an election what we are choosing between, there comes a point when celebrations, whether of Thanksgiving or Christmas, can become meaningless unless we know what we are celebrating.

Christmas is not too far away now. For me, at this time, there's a big mixture of activities and emotions involved. It's a time for work and joy, for tasks and festivity.

So:

- I will choose to be thankful – thankful that God sent Jesus (*John 1:14 and John 4:10*) as a helpless, dependent, human life so that God could experience being human and could stand with me,
- I will choose to be joyful – not just with a reality-ignoring, deluded manic grin, but a contentment because God is bigger than trouble and he wants good things for me (*Isaiah 41:10*)
- I will choose to be faithful – to recognise that Christmas, and God, are a big deal (*psalm 95:3*) in a spiritual way and I'm going to take that seriously.

Mike Sherburn Pastor, Watchet Baptist Church, 01984 633 755

continues on next page

Watchet Gardening Club

Join our light-hearted gardening quiz on Friday November 21st 2.00pm Phoenix Centre (parking free) and Friday December 12th 2.00pm wreath making/table arrangements (see Arts & Crafts). Cost £2.50 inc free raffle tickets and hot drink (we each try and bring a small raffle prize i.e a small plant cutting or chocolate etc).

Further info lorileear001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022.

Calling all Gardeners

Would you like your garden to be included in a new event – **Watchet Open Garden Weekend June 2026?**

Do you have a wonderful garden that you would like to be included in an 'Open Garden' weekend next June to raise money for the Salvation Army and the Garden and Flower Show? We are looking for up to 10 to be chosen around town.

Further info lorileear001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022.

Arts and Crafts Club

Christmas Crafts November and December at Phoenix Centre (parking free). December we are joining the gardening club doing our own wreaths/floral table arrangements. £3.00 a session inc. hot drink. If you wish to join the wreath making or table arrangement in December and need bases/oasis £1.00-£6.00 (you bring greenery, flowers, baubles, wire, pine cones etc).

Further info lorileear001@gmail.com or 07935318022.

Crime Fiction Book Club

In September we read Ian Rankin's *A Heart Full of Headstones* and in October Robert Goddard's *Fine Art of Invisible Detection*.

There is a waiting list for a monthly library book (additional £1.00 charge) but if you wish to join by purchasing a kindle book or second hand book each month we can still fit a few more in. 15 members attend. 1st Thursday of the month 1.00-2.30pm at the Phoenix centre. Parking free. Cost £1.00 inc. hot drink. Further info lorileear001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022.

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

New! Watchet Unpaid Carers Group

Watchet Carers Group, by Somerset Carers Service is a free, informal gathering for people offering a helping hand with daily tasks to a friend or family member who may not be able to cope alone due to illness, disability, older age or mental health and addiction. As a group we socialise, share ideas and talk about our experiences. Professional speakers and service providers also visit to offer support and information.

We meet monthly, on the last Monday of the month (not Bank Holidays) from 1:15pm to 2:45pm at the beautiful Sanctuary cafe on Swain Street. (thank you Watchet Baptist Church for kindly hosting us).

Call Cath on 07535 279 359 before attending for the first time in case of schedule changes.

The Somerset Carers Service Advice Line: 0800 3168 600
carers@somersetccc.org.uk www.somersetcarers.org

Cath Holloway - Carers Service Coordinator

Tel: 01823 331 222 Mobile: 07535 279 359 Email: cathh@Somersetccc.org.uk



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call Jess on 07772862329 for more details and bookings

Watchet Library News

Christmas is approaching fast and we have lots of lovely festive books here waiting to be borrowed. Everything from Winter Murders to Santa Jaws and Jingle Smells are available to borrow as well as cookbooks and craft books (if you've still got time to make anything before Christmas!) We'll have our usual Christmas Treasure Hunt around the library and we'll also have Christmas colouring sheets for children to do in the library or take home so please call in and see us during December.

November and December are traditionally quieter months in the library and often when we do our stock takes and swop any unborrowed books with other libraries throughout Somerset. If you've had your eye on a particular book, it may be your last chance to borrow it, alternatively, if you think you've read everything in our library it's worth popping in to see what 'new to us' books have arrived. We have two separate bookcases near the entrance with all the new arrivals on so they're always easy to find.

Don't forget we have Blood Pressure Monitors and iPads to borrow, for two weeks at a time. They are very easy to use but we only have limited supplies of these items, so please if you need them don't leave it to the last minute to arrange.

Both of us wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Wonderful 2026.

Mich and Fiona

Watchet Community Choir News and Dates

It has been a very busy time for the Choir during the Summer months with performances at Watchet Summertime, The Variety Show at the Regal, Minehead, the 40's weekend and during October at Williton Church.

On the 13th December at 6.30pm come and join us for a sing-a-long and refreshments at the Salvation Army Hall. We will also be at the East Quay on 23rd December from 4 pm so come along and join in for a fun afternoon.

Ann Gedge
Choir Chair

Currently, *Watchet Connects* is being sponsored by
Watchet Coastal Community Team
and **Watchet Community Choir**

To sponsor or advertise, please see the inside back page

Local War Graves in the Church Cemetery

Many readers will be familiar with the beautiful war memorial beside the library in Harbour Road and will have listened alongside as David Milton our Town Crier read out all 59 names inscribed on the memorial during the Remembrance Day service on 11th November. It's hard not to be moved on this solemn occasion by the loss of young lives to war.

You may not be so aware that 18 of these young men are buried and have a permanent memorial in the two churchyard cemeteries at St Decuman's church.

In 2017 The Commonwealth War Graves Commission asked if our Church would do a survey of the churchyard to locate and catalogue all the memorials of men who died during the two world wars. They gave us the names of 9 that they knew of but suggested that there could be more. Keran Speers, Sarah Summers, Janet Bremner, myself and my wife Ellie, traipsed around the churchyard reading all the inscriptions. We found the work was more than just physically tiring but also emotionally draining. Taking in the sad stories of young men, two of whom died in the last week of the 1st World War, left us all with mixed feelings.

We found 13 war graves in total and discussed with the CWGC about producing a booklet, they agreed and offered to pay for it. In January 2018 we published our first guide to the graves in St Decuman's churchyard, complete with aerial photos of the church showing their location.

Some parts of the churchyard were completely covered with brambles and weeds and hidden from view, but Janet thought these areas should be cleared and explored. Other parts of the churchyard were conspicuous by their absence of memorials and again Janet prodded into the grass to find fallen memorials that had been covered by decades of grass cuttings. One of these turned out to be a significant war grave, that of a Gunner Stanley Casson who served with the Australian Field Artillery! (His family lived in Williton). He died aged 21 in France in September 1918.

Families of those who died were sent a 'War Penny' by the government in recognition of their sacrifice. These bronze coins were about six inches wide and were treasured by their families, but this one was embedded into the now fallen headstone, complete with its inscription. Thanks to Janet's dedication this and three other graves were discovered and in 2024 a new edition was published. It was no sooner in print when I was asked by a local lady why her uncle wasn't included in the guide; she showed me the grave which was a family memorial with the name added to other family members. Janet found yet another grave and so a new larger version of the guide was

published in 2024. (I no longer believe this will be the definitive version because we know someone will find another war grave we have missed.)

Sadly the CWGC will no longer fund these guides but for the 2022 version the Harbour Community Bookshop gave us a grant and for the latest version, Watchet Town Council stepped in and provided a grant to cover the cost of printing.

If you would like to explore the war graves for yourself you can pick up a free book from the Visitor Centre, or there are dispensers on the gate to the churchyard or on the inside of the church outer door.

Should you find another gravestone or memorial that we have missed or indeed know of someone who should be recognised in our guide do let me know by email to alan@hithe.org

Alan Jones

A promotional advertisement for Torre Cider Farm Events Venue. It features a stone building on the left, a large yellow rose graphic on the right, and an interior view of a dining area at the bottom right. The text includes the venue name, a description, a list of services, and contact information.

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KITCHEN & BAR: Open daily for breakfast: (9 – 11am), lunch (12 – 3pm). Evening meals and drinks (from 5 – 8pm) on Thursdays – Saturdays. Need a space for your Xmas party? Enquire via kitchen@eastquaywatchet.co.uk

➤ EXHIBITIONS

SHOWING IN GALLERY 1 & 2: DOWN THE HATCH by Jo Lathwood, which explores British pub culture and the history of alewives. 13.09.2025 – 04.01.2026.

SHOWING IN STUDIO 10: PASSING THROUGH, a collaborative exhibition with STUDIO KIND in Barnstaple, featuring artists from across West Somerset and Northern/Mid Devon. 11.10.2025 – 16.11.2025.

SOUTH WEST ARTIST RESIDENCY: MAYA RONCHETTI, who will work across a variety of media to create sculptures and installations which explore our relationship with the natural environment. 22.11.2025 – 04.01.2026.

➤ LIGHT NIGHT

Join us on Saturday, 8th November for East Quay's Light Night extravaganza – an evening of dazzling projections, fire performance, and live music. We can't wait to see you there!


➤ XMAS SONGS IN THE COURTYARD

Come along on Tuesday, 23rd of December at 4pm for our annual festive sing-a-long with Watchet Community Choir.

➤ EVENTS

Loads happening in November and December – from film nights and supper clubs to spoken word and music. Check out the Watchet Connects event listings for full details.

www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk 01984 263103

   @eastquaywatchet

Onion Collective CIC, Company 08323538

Watchet / St Renan Town Twinning

In common with many other associations we are beginning to lose members. Our numbers are dwindling mainly because most of us are getting rather old. This is a strange feeling for those of us who were young and vigorous in the days when Twinning was at its peak, and the visits between our two towns were lively and boisterous, but we have to face the fact that Twinning is a generational occupation, and young families now have different interests and priorities. The same is happening throughout the country (I have written here before about the history and evolution of Twinning Societies.)

This is not a tale of woe! This is the celebratory fact that in three years we will be celebrating the 50th (GOLDEN) anniversary of the Twinning Society. We are hoping to do this in conjunction with our counterparts in Saint Renan, and we are very anxious to welcome some new members to enjoy these festivities. Why not interest yourselves in the liaison between Watchet and Saint Renan now; we should be delighted to involve more Watchet people with their fresh input, we really don't want the Watchet end of the Society to fold.

Twining may be dwindling throughout the country, but it has made some invaluable impressions, and indeed differences, to many people's lives, in particular those of young people. In my own case it meant that I was packed off to France for a year at the age of 17, well looked after, and I never looked back. My own 14-year-old grandson has recently been with his youth theatre group to their TwinTown in Germany, where they were wonderfully fêted, fed and watered, and able to put on performances to some very appreciative audiences. It would be tragic for Twinning locally and nationally to come to an end.

We enjoyed an excellent French Breakfast event in July, but this year we will not be running some of our usual winter events. We are currently looking forward to our Christmas dinner!

Please support your Twinning Society. It is unique and presents wonderful opportunities. Help us to invest in our Golden Anniversary Activities when the moment comes. And don't forget to admire our Christmas Tree at St Decuman's wonderful Christmas Tree Festival.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

watchettwinning@gmail.com

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

Knights Templar Community Church School Celebrates the Opening of New SEND Unit “The Den”

Knights Templar Community Church School is delighted to announce the official opening of The Den—a brand-new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) unit designed to provide tailored support for children with significant cognitive and learning delays, with a particular focus on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

The establishment of The Den marks an exciting milestone in the school's ongoing commitment to inclusive education. This specialist provision reduces the need for families to seek support outside the local area, ensuring that children can remain at the heart of their community while accessing high-quality, personalised education. It offers a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) can flourish both academically and socially.

The new unit includes a dedicated classroom designed for small-group teaching, a specially created outdoor learning space, and access to the school's swimming pool and extensive wildlife area. Every detail has been carefully considered to meet children's communication, sensory, social, and emotional needs, providing both the structure and flexibility that enable every learner to succeed.

Headteacher, Laura Weaver, said:

“Knights Templar’s inclusive ethos and provision for SEND were highlighted as a considerable strength during our most recent Ofsted inspection. We are therefore thrilled to officially open The Den, which stands as a reflection of our unwavering commitment to meeting the needs of all learners. This new provision strikes the right balance of support and challenge, allowing children to build confidence, grow in independence, and achieve their full potential—while remaining an integral part of their local community.”

continues on next page

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or text 07776 116391
westquaycottages.com



Special rates
for local residents

West Quay Cottage
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Chair of Governors, Linda Bulpin, added:

“We are incredibly proud to launch this much-needed provision at Knights Templar Community Church School. The Den represents more than just a specialist classroom—it is a place where children will feel understood, valued, and fully included in school life. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive in an environment where their unique strengths are recognised and nurtured. This unit will not only support children in developing essential life skills but also help them to discover joy in learning, build positive relationships, and take their next steps with confidence. It is a privilege to be part of a school community that continues to place inclusivity and care at the very heart of its vision.”

Developed in close partnership with Somerset Council and a team of specialist professionals, The Den will support children currently on roll at Knights Templar as well as others from across the local area who meet the criteria for specialist SEND provision.

This exciting new facility reflects the school's vision of inclusive education—ensuring that every child, regardless of background or ability, has access to the resources, expertise, and care they need to achieve their best.

For further information or to arrange a visit, please contact:

Laura Weaver Head Teacher Knights Templar Community Church School
office@ktcc.uk 01984 634 385

Watchet Methodist Church

Thank you for your generosity at our community coffee mornings every Saturday which start at 10am and finish when everyone has gone home!

In November we are raising money for “Journey to Bethlehem” when First school children visit a local farm to experience the nativity story with real animals and volunteers dressed up as the characters.

In December we have our annual **Crib Festival** with a display of over 100 nativity sets. There will also be an opportunity to do some Christmas crafts.

Friday 5th Dec 5pm to 8pm

Saturday 6th December 10am to 4pm

Sunday 7th December 12 to 4pm.

Saturday November 22nd Christmas Fayre and Table Top 10am to 12

Everyone is welcome to all of these free events and our services.

V's Christmas Appeal

Donations going towards local struggling families and homeless people, any help would be gratefully received.

Please can I ask you to check dates on food though.

I will be helping the local homeless people and struggling families again.

- 1 Non-perishable foods ie: canned items, cereals, biscuits, pasta, rice, flour, coffee etc.
- 2 New kids' toys, gift sets, age 0 to 16 yrs.
- 3 Medium size gift bags filled with shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush. Hair brush, body wash, soap, deodorant, shower sponge, sweet treats eg chocolate, biscuits, sweets etc

Here are some extra ideas for the gift bags, if you would like to put any in:

Puzzle books and a pen, hairbands, brush, comb, sanitary items, shaver and shaving foam, torch with batteries, writing pad with pen, socks.

Drop off until 12th November: 15 Quantock Road, Watchet.

If you would rather drop off in Williton I will give you that address.

Any help would be truly appreciated. Questions? Ring 07955 455 556.

Ebenezer Scrooge

A Festive Farce of Redemption, Revelry, and Ridiculousness

Slip on your silliest slippers, don your ugliest Christmas sweater, and prepare to participate in Backyard Theatre's **Ebenezer Scrooge**, a spoof on 'A Christmas Carol'.

This zany production performed by Backyard's very own Skittlepin Theatre Company, flips Charles Dickens' classic tale on its head, serving up a festive cocktail of slapstick, satire, and immense fun.

In the heart of frosty London, a misanthropic miser gets a rollicking rewrite — Ebenezer Scrooge, notorious penny-pincher, is about to be transformed by one ghost and three outrageous spirits, each with their own quirks and questionable credentials.

Join us at the Backyard Theatre for festive fun with this play about heartwarming redemption. Friday 28th and Saturday 29th November

Tickets £10 (includes £2 donation to the Quantock Food Bank)

BACKYARD THEATRE Anchor Street, Watchet TA23 0AZ

Tickets online: backyard-theatre-watchet.uk Box Office: 0333 666 3366



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What's on in November

Running until 11th January 10am – 5pm daily at East Quay. Galleries 1 and 2. **Down the Hatch** by artist Jo Lathwood. Exploring the history and role of women in British Pub culture from a queer perspective. The origins of brewing, pub names and signs and hidden narratives.

Saturday 1st 10am – 2pm **Salvation Army End of Season Sale**, lots of bargains and light lunches from 11.45 am. All Welcome.

Thursday 4th 5.30 – 7.30pm East Quay Kitchen. Free. **Folk Juice**. A new monthly gathering to remember our collective folk culture. Bring an offering of anything you understand as folk: a song, a story, a remedy, a recipe or just something your grandmother used to tell you.

Saturday 8th Check website for times, East Quay's **Light Night** performance. Free event. An evening of dazzling projections, fire performance and live music. See you there!

Sunday 9th Remembrance Sunday service at St Decuman's Church 10.45 am.

Wednesday 12th 7.30pm **Watchet Market House Museum Talk** in the Methodist Schoolroom. Helena Jaeschke presents **Museum Conservation in the South West**. All welcome Members £1, Non-members £3. (*Members subs due in November)

Friday 14th 6.30pm for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, **Watchet Community Cinema. The Ballad of Wallis Island**. A 2025 British Comedy Drama. For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445.

Saturday 15th 9.30am – 12.30pm **Watchet Carnival organise a Coffee Morning**, delicious cakes and bakes, home made produce and raffle with a welcoming cuppa. The Phoenix Centre.

Saturday 15th 7.30pm at East Quay Kitchen. **Maddie Morris** reworks traditional folk songs to highlight contemporary issues and offers a fresh perspective on today's world. £5 book online.

Tuesday 18th 7.30pm **Watchet Conservation Society AGM** in The Phoenix. Business first then refreshments and entertainment later. All Welcome.

Wednesday 19th 7pm **Spoken Word** at East Quay Kitchen with special guest speaker Sophie Dumont. Free event. Anyone can come, share their work and listen to others. Just come along!

Saturday 22nd – Sunday 4th January. 10am – 5pm. Studio 10 Project Space at East Quay. This year, East Quay's South West Artist Residency has been awarded to **Maya Ronchetti**, who works with a variety of media incorporating natural dyes, textiles and other found, natural materials to create sculptures and installations which explore our relationship with the natural environment.

Saturday 22nd 10am – 12noon **Methodist Christmas Fayre and Table Top Sale**.

Thursday 27th 7.30pm East Quay **Film Night. Rave on for the Avon**. Admission £5 inc popcorn. A feature length documentary which captures one community's love for the Avon, exploring the importance of rivers in modern life – set to a Bristol soundtrack. Drinks available all evening.

Friday 28th – Sunday 30th St Decumans **Christmas Tree Festival**. Display of decorated trees made by local groups, not to be missed! This year's theme is **Sounds of Christmas**. See article for details.

Friday 28th 6.30pm for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, Watchet **Community Cinema**. Film tbc. Info: contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445

Friday 28th and Saturday 29th at **The Backyard Theatre**, Skittlepin Theatre Company present **Ebenezer Scrooge** – a Festive Farce of Redemption, Revelry and Ridiculousness. Tickets £10 (inc donation to The Quantock Food Bank). Book backyard-theatre-watchet.uk

Saturday 29th 10 am – 1pm **West Quantocks Repair Café** at Watchet Community Centre.

Saturday 29th 10am – 1pm Watchet Harbour Community Bookshop **Annual Christmas Book Sale**. Come and buy some Christmas presents for booky friends. All welcome!

Saturday 29th 11am – 2pm **Christmas Fayre** at Knights Templar School. Games, stalls, raffles, refreshment, Bric-a-Brac. Santa's Grotto (places need booking). All welcome to join our festivities.

Saturday 29th 7pm til midnight **Watchet Carnival's Black-Tie Christmas Ball**. Watchet Bowling Club. A wonderful evening of music, food and dancing. Live Music, DJ, Buffet. Limited tickets, £30 per person, call Jen for availability 0786 511 405

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

continues on next page

What's on in December

Tuesday 2nd 7pm **Watchet Summertime AGM** at The Pheonix Centre. All welcome to come, celebrate Summertime 2025, and bring new ideas for next year. Get involved in making Summertime 2026 even better. Refreshments.

Thursday 4th 7pm at East Quay Kitchen **Indonesian Supper Club**. £35 Booking online. Celebrate the vibrant flavours and dishes of Indonesia with Nasi Goreng, Gado Gado and Rendang. Vegetarian option for all courses.

Friday 5th – Sunday 7th Times tbc **Nativity Escape Room** in The Methodist Church. All ages welcomed, teams of 4 – 6 recommended. Booking essential. Contact Jess for more details and booking 07772 862 329.

Friday 5th Late Night Shopping evening Singing, Street entertainment, sparkle and fun in Swain Street and surrounds – see info nearer time.

Wednesday 10th 7.30pm **Watchet Market House Museum Talk** in the Methodist Schoolroom. Amal Khreishah presents **The Chew Valley Hoard**. All welcome: Members £1, Non-members £3.

Thursday 11th 7.30pm **Watchet Singers Christmas Concert** at The Methodist Chapel. Departing collection for Local charity and refreshments afterwards.

Friday 12th 6.30pm for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, **Watchet Community Cinema**. **The Friend**. A 2024 film starring Bill Murray, Naomi Watts and a Great Dane! For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445

Saturday 13th 6.30pm Salvation Army **Christmas Night** with **Watchet Community Choir**. Refreshments, sing-along, fun and laughter!

Monday 15th the judging week for **Watchet Illuminations**. Prizes for best decorated house, street and business/shop window. Turn on from 5pm daily, so Judges can see your creativity!

Wednesday 17th 7pm at East Quay Kitchen. Free. Final **Spoken Word Evening** of the year. Guest Speaker to be announced. Come and share your work, or just listen to word magic.

Sunday 21st Early afternoon, time tbc Watchet War Memorial Ground **Santa Fun Run**. Come and get involved in a new Watchet Tradition! See article.

Tuesday 23rd from 4pm, Watchet Community Choir will be singing **Christmas Songs** in East Quay Courtyard. Free. Our annual festive sing-along. East Quay Kitchen will be open serving mince pies and hot drinks to keep you warm and merry.

Wednesday 24th Christmas Eve. **Santa** will be around Watchet in his sleigh and will give prizes to the winners of the **Illuminations Competition**. See Facebook and up to date local info for timings of his journeying around town.

Christmas Celebrations and Church Services

St Decuman's Church

Sunday 21st December at 4pm Carol Service

Wednesday 24th December at 4pm Christmas Eve Crib Service
11.30pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day at 10.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 28th No service at St Decuman's
(10.30am Benefice Service at St Peter's, Williton.)

Watchet Baptist Church

Carols by Candlelight service on Sunday 21st

Christmas Day at Watchet Methodist with our friends there.
Christmas Community Meal

Watchet Methodist Church

December 21st 10.30am Carol Service

Watchet Salvation Army

Sunday 14th 10.30 am Christmas Celebration.

Sunday 21st 10.30 am Christmas at the Stable.

Watchet Catholic Church - no info at time of printing

Shine Bright Watchet
ILLUMINATIONS
COMPETITION
JUDGING WEEK COMMENCING 15TH DECEMBER.
Tis the season to make Watchet sparkle bright
with festive light and bring some cheer.
Prizes given for the best house, street and best decorated business/shop window.
Watchet Illuminations

Diary – Regular Weekly Classes and Events

If you would like your regular class or club featured in this section, please let the editor know at editor@watchetcct.com

First and Third Mondays 10.30am **Knit and Natter** at The Phoenix

Weekly Mondays 7pm **Watchet Community Choir** The Bowling Club

Last Monday 1.15 – 2.45pm **Carers Group** meet at The Sanctuary. Call Cath on 07535 279 359 for info

Last Monday (February to November) **West Somerset Family History Group** meet at The Phoenix 7 – 9pm. £2 for members, £4 for non-members (inc refreshments). For info contact Alma Williams 01643 818 096

Weekly Tuesdays 10am – 11am at The Boxing Club, The Temple, South Road. **Watchet Warriors ladies boxercise**. First visit free, usually £2 session. Contact Craig for more info 07594 564 944

Weekly Tuesdays 2.30pm **Flexercise** in The Methodist Schoolroom. Balance and chair based exercise for over 55s £4 a session

First Tuesdays 7 – 8pm **The British Legion Book Group**

Weekly Wednesdays 10am – 12.30pm **Watchet Art Club** in The Methodist Schoolroom. Meet to paint and/or draw and have a cup of coffee. Occasional workshops. Contact Phyllis 07972 693 239

Weekly Wednesdays **Watchet Town Market** on The Esplanade, weather permitting 9.30am – 4pm (April - September)

Every other Wednesday 10.30am **Forget-Me-Not Club** at The Sanctuary. Enquiries: Margaret Tatham 07973 638 030 or watchetdementia@gmail.com

Last Wednesday 5 – 7pm at The Esplanade Club monthly **Folk Club** free to attend, welcomes new players

Weekly Thursdays 10.30 – 12.30pm **Digital Drop-in** at Watchet Library

Weekly Thursdays 6.30 – 7.30pm **Watchet Social Netball**. A fun, friendly, non-competitive group meeting at Watchet Community Centre MUGA weekly for all abilities 16+. £1 a session – first session free.

Weekly Thursdays 7.30pm. Eyes down for **Bingo** at The British Legion.

Weekly Thursdays 7.30pm **Watchet Singers** at Methodist Schoolroom.

Weekly Thursdays 6 – 7pm **Ceilidh Classes** at The Bowling Club with Judy Mapledorham £5

Regular Weekly Classes and Events continued:

First Thursday 1 – 2.30pm **Crime Fiction Book Club** at The Phoenix Centre £1.50 inc hot drink. Contact lorileeart001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022 for details and costs.

First Thursday 2.30 – 5pm **Watchet Art and Crafts Group** at The Phoenix Centre £3 inc hot drink. Contact Lori lorileeart001@gmail.com or 07935 318 022 or Ann 01984 634 203 for details and costs.

Second Thursday 2.30pm **Thursday Circle** at Methodist Schoolroom

Weekly Fridays 9.30 – 11.30am **Salvation Army Coffee Morning** All welcome.

Weekly Fridays 5 – 6.30pm **Community Meal** at The Sanctuary.

Second and fourth Friday 7pm **Watchet Community Cinema** at Knights Templar School, see local advertising for details. harrisonanne@hotmail.com

Third Friday 2.30pm **Gardening Club** at The Phoenix Centre £1 inc free raffle. Friday 21st November 2.00pm and Friday 12th December 2.00pm (different to usual date)

Weekly Saturdays from 10am **Methodist Coffee Morning**.

KTSCA
Knights Templar School Community Association
It takes a village to raise a child
imagine what a town could do!

**Knights Templar
Christmas Fayre**

Saturday 29th November 11am – 2pm
Knights Templar School
Come and join us for some festive fun in
the run up to Christmas;
Games, stalls, raffle, bric-a-brac,
refreshments and this year we have a very
exciting inflatable Santa's Grotto!
(Tickets available soon)

Cosy throws

We are welcoming Harriet from 'Cosy
Throws' on Friday 21st November, 7pm to
make hand knitted Christmas Puddings or a
Pudding Wreath! We will also have Mulled
Wine and other Christmassy refreshments
available. Prices £22 pp (pudding) Or £26
(wreath). To book your space message Jess
on 07772862329

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

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Useful Contacts

Watchet Town Council 01984 633 344

Watchet Visitor Centre 01984 632 101 info@lovewatchet.co.uk

GP Surgery Williton and Watchet 01984 632 701

Lighthouse Counselling Sally or Tracey on 07722 618 828

Village Agent Izzy Silvester 01823 331 222 / 07931 018 045
izzy@somersetccc.org.uk

Watchet Drives and BickWatch Community Car Schemes

Community Vehicle Co-ordinator Donna Stevens
07599 955 096 coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk

Working hours: Monday to Thursday, 9:00am-12:30pm

Quantock Food Bank quantockfoodbank@gmail.com or 07483 815 122

Wheels Journeys to hospital/clinic/health related/shopping/banking etc
For Bookings call 07891 821 861

Forget-me-not Cafe watchetdementia@gmail.com 07973 638 030

Magna Housing 0800 138 6107

Age UK Somerset Info / Advice 01823 345 613 www.ageuksomerset.org.uk

Somerset Sight Info / advice 01923 333 818 www.somersetsight.org.uk

Home-Start West Somerset 01643 707 304

Mind in Somerset Mindline Somerset 01823 276 892
Emotional Support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Harbour Community Bookshop Jeff and Mary Bird 01984 634 749

Watchet Chamber of Trade (WACET) 07836 239 932 visit-watchet.co.uk

Market House Museum

Gill Williams 01984 634 001 or Gay Chilcott 01984 631 411

West Somerset Citizen's Advice

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays 8am-6pm
Direct Line: 01643 802 442 (Ext408) or 0800 802 1808

Email: advice@citizensadvicewestsomerset.org.uk **Samaritans**

If you need someone to talk to, we will listen. We won't judge or tell you what to do. Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org

Churches

Watchet Methodist Church

Rev Andy Day 01643 705 175 andy.day@westsomersetmethodist.org.uk

Rev Jane Sperring jane.sperring@btinternet.com

St Decuman's Church

Revd Mark Phillips 01984 639 669 revdmarkphillips@outlook.com

Watchet Baptist Church Minister Mike Sherburn 01984 633 755

www.watchetbaptist.org.uk or find us on Facebook

Watchet Salvation Army Samantha Searle 07979 575 453

Samantha.Searle@salvationarmy.org.uk

Watchet Catholic Church Deacon Vincent Woods 01984 634 681

Watchet Area Community Cars

Watchet Drives

Electric Nissan Leaf car

Bickwatch

Electric Nissan 4-seater with
wheelchair accessibility

Volunteers drive for you

Volunteer drivers always needed

To join the car scheme and book your journey contact:

Donna Stevens Enquiries and Community Vehicle Co-ordinator

07599 955 096 / 01984 633344

9:00am – 12:30pm Monday to Thursday

coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk www.watchettowncouncil.org



Friends of Watchet Station

2025 marks the **200th anniversary** of the birth of passenger trains. Not just in this country but in the world! So you can imagine how proud we at Watchet Station are to be a part of this historic celebration.

The railway from Taunton to Watchet was designed by no other than the legendary Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the genius who designed the Clifton Suspension Bridge, the SS Great Britain and so many other Victorian-era engineering masterpieces. It was opened in 1862, shortly after his death. The Watchet station building is at right angles to the track, indicating that it was the terminus. 12 years later, a group of entrepreneurs funded and opened the extension to Minehead, hoping that they could build tourist attractions on the boggy marsh. Sadly, only Butlins remains to this day.

On a brighter note, this Christmas the West Somerset Railway has added some amazing treats to its calendar. Here is a taster of some of the offerings:

Christmas Market

“**Inspiration**” travelling 200 years exhibition

Santa Express

Bad Santa (adults only!)

Carol Train

Festive Spirit Train

For full information, visit www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/events

Most local people love the first sounds of spring. And most Watchet residents love even more the first “*tooooo*” that marks the start of the West Somerset Railway’s 7-month season.

This would not have been possible had it not been for the amazing vision of a small dedicated band of enthusiasts who in 1976 managed to salvage the remains of the old Taunton to Minehead line.

At Watchet, we are proud and deeply honoured to celebrate the 50th anniversary of one of the founder members who saved this incredible line from certain oblivion.

You have probably met this cheeky member of our platform staff. He is no other than Brian Stainton. What Brian and his fellow enthusiasts did will - we hope - be the subject of a future **Watchet Connects** article.



Special Festive Offer

*This Christmas,
Give Yourself the Gift of Change*

Rapid Hypnosis

3 x Sessions £222
(Regularly £297 - Save £48)
Free Initial Consultation

Hypno-Band Weight Loss
Drop a Dress Size for Christmas

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Only 10 Available Places Left
Book today!

07848980617
www.claritywithtania.com

Words in Watchet

Lots to enjoy in
February 2026!!



Clear your diaries for 20th – 22nd February, when Watchet will be buzzing with our *THIRD* (!) annual book Festival.

On Friday 20th we have a full programme for children and families, based in The Visitor Centre, The Library and around, storytelling, writing, exploring, spotting and the results of our Children's competitions.

On Friday evening we welcome an amazing adult storyteller, **Hugh Lupton** who will tell tales of his Great Uncle, **Arthur Ransome**, who collected folk tales from Russia after the first World War, and had some pretty amazing adventures of his own. If you came to see Katy Cawkwell, and Pomme Clayton storytelling in our first two festivals, you will not want to miss this one!

For Saturday and Sunday (21st and 22nd) we have some sensational authors lined up, **Damian Boyd** (a great fan favourite), **Chris Ewan**, **Lucy Pollack**, **Nigel Phillips**, **Tony James**, **Nick Nugent**, **Angela Patmore**, **Karen Minto**, **Hazel Prior**, not to mention *Booker Prize* short-listed **Andrew Miller**, and more! There will be spooky tales, talks about local nature and stories, murder mysteries, the Spice Ports, lessons in living with aging or stress, Dungeons and Dragons and other fantasies, and lots of Poetry. And we are planning Workshops for all abilities. Intrigued! You should be!

All the details of our competitions are already on the website – come on Watchet! Have a go at writing a poem or a Flash Fiction story. (this year we have a small extra prize for the best Poem written by a Watchet Resident!)

Look out for our full programme which will be out soon after Christmas, our FaceBook page and our website where you can book tickets (very necessary for some of our smaller venues). wordsinwatchet.com

See you there!

The Words in Watchet Team

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

A poster for a Ceilidh Class. It features a photograph of a group of people dancing in a circle. The text is as follows:

NO NEED TO BRING A PARTNER

CEILIDH CLASS

Country dancing - beginners welcome

Thursdays 6-7 pm
Watchet Bowling Club
TA23 0EW
Starting 25th September

with Judy Mapledoram

£5 per session

Please let Judy know you if you are planning to come

Contact Judy
Whatsapp or text
07474 601497
www.barnbuskers.co.uk/judy

A poster for 'Number Thirteen' art classes. It features a circular logo with a dog's face and the text 'NUMBER THIRTEEN'. The text is as follows:

NUMBER THIRTEEN

Paintings, prints, cards
picture books and gifts.

**13 Anchor Street
Watchet
TA23 0AZ**

Friday to Saturday: 12 -3, 5-7pm
Sunday: 12 to 3

www.jillnewton.co.uk
jillnewt@gmail.com

I am more than happy to take commissions for paintings. Please do contact me to discuss any ideas.

An advertisement for Somerset Farmhouse Ltd. It features a background image of a farm with a fence and a house. The text is as follows:

SOMERSET FARMHOUSE LTD

Traditional Family Butchers & Delicatessen

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY

ORDER VIA OUR WEBSITE OR BY PHONE FOR NEXT DAY DELIVERY

www.somersetfarmhouse.co.uk

01984 632450

1 North Street, Williton, TA4 4SL - Next to big Co-Op, 15 minute free parking nearby

St Decuman's Church

On 31st August we celebrated the Feast of St Decuman with a special service starting down at St Decuman's Well with the blessing of the clear spring waters. The garden at the Holy Well is a tranquil place and all are welcome to visit and feel the peace there.

On Sunday 14th September we marked Holy Cross Day with a service in Holy Cross Chapel. This date is important to Watchet because of the historic chapel in Market Street, with its wonderful view of the harbour below. After the service we were treated to special cross-shaped biscuits made by Revd Dr Andrew Tatham who conducted the service alongside our Vicar, Revd Mark Phillips. During the 1940s weekend we used the Chapel for our pop-up Tea Rooms.

St Decuman's church tower can be lit up in memory of a loved one or special event/birthday etc.

Dedications are posted on Watchet Facebook groups and in the church newsletter, with a copy in the church porch. For terms & bookings please contact Tony Knight on 07891 688 448.

Looking ahead, on 9th November we have our Remembrance Sunday service at 10.45am.

The Christmas season starts with our Christmas Tree Festival and Fayre on 28th, 29th, 30th November. Last year there were about 50 trees beautifully decorated by all the local groups, charities, schools, etc and it seems as if there will be just as many this year. We finish the weekend with Advent Sunday Holy Communion at 10.45am on 30th, and our Christingle Service at 4pm.

Other Christmas services – see listings in centre. For all of these the community trees will be lit up.

For up to date news please see our website: www.achurchnearyou.com

You can contact our vicar, Revd Mark Phillips on 639 669 or email: revdmarkphillips@outlook.com



St Decuman's Church Christmas Tree Festival

November 28th, 29th, 30th 2025
(Friday to Sunday)

This year's Theme

Sounds of Christmas

Friday 28th and Saturday 29th
10am – 4pm

Stalls, Raffles, Refreshments
Hot soups Midday until 2pm
Plus on Saturday Bacon Rolls etc

Sunday 30th 11.45am – 4pm

Church open

Followed by **Festival Christingle**

at 4pm

(Christingle provided for all)

The Space to be...
For parents of children with SEND
(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
Or Parents who would like space or support

Tuesdays: 9th & 23rd Sept, 14th Oct, 4th & 18th Nov, 9th Dec 9.30-11am
Thursdays: 25th Sept & 16th Oct, 13th Nov & 11th Dec 7- 8.30pm (upstairs!)

Watchet Methodist Church
Come along and chat with other parents
Free hot and cold drinks & Cake!
Just turn up, you'd be so welcome.

Contact Jess on 07772862329 for more info

Watchet Singers

We were thrilled to be invited to sing for Watchet Summertime this year, it was great fun to be able to take part.

We are now busy rehearsing for our **Christmas Concert** which will take place on December 11th at the Methodist Church at 7.30pm. Please join us there if you are able to. There will be well-known Carols for audience participation, as well as a new presentation of interesting and unusual Christmas songs which we hope you will enjoy hearing.

We also hope to be out and about on December 5th for the Watchet late-night shopping event; look out (and listen) for us there.

For St Decuman's **Christmas Tree Festival** we will be decorating a beautiful Tree for the Saint Decuman's Christmas Tree Festival, make sure that you see it. (The theme is quite relevant for us).

Why not decide to join us in January to brighten the dark nights?
We shall have spaces for new members.

Meanwhile, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mary Rhodes



All Aspects of.....

Alterations
Renovations, conversions
& new bathrooms

Plastering & Decorating
Internal & external plastering,
rendering, painting, new ceilings,
walls & over skimming

Roofing
Repairs, Renewals or cleaning.
Chimney repairs & rebuilds.
Guttering, cleaned, repaired or
replaced

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fencing etc.

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Watchet Harbour Community Bookshop

We have again come to the end of a very busy and successful season. We closed on November 2nd and will re-open at Easter 2026.

We have been very well supported by both old and new customers, and our Visitor Book has many glowing compliments.

The Bookshop has been able to give £10,000 to **The Cystic Fibrosis Trust** and a total of £7,000 in grants to local voluntary organisations. We are now able to give grants of up to £500 to local organisations, and up to £150 to individual requests.

Although we have closed the shop until next year, we are still able to answer enquiries and can be contacted on 01984 634 749 or through our website or Facebook page.

We end this year with our usual Christmas Book Sale at The Sanctuary on Saturday 29th November 10am – 1pm.

We hope to see you there.

Mary and Jeff Bird.

Salvation Army News

Is it November already? Now, all the car boot sales are behind us and here we are, nearer Christmas.

The Toy Appeal is in full swing if any-one has any NEW toys to donate, please drop them into:

Chives Café

Wilkie May and Tuckwood Estate Agents

or at The Salvation Army Hall on Friday (coffee) mornings.

Toys will be given to less fortunate children at Christmas.

Other dates

November 1st is our end of season sale, 10am to 2pm. There will be lots of bargains and light lunches from 11.45am.

December 13th 6.30pm is our Christmas night with the Watchet Community Choir. Come for fun and laughter

December 14th Christmas celebration 10.30am

December 21st Christmas at the stable. 10.30am

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support through this year and always. I wish you a Blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year

Sam

Knights Tales

Our Open Spaces and looking back at Christmas Past

Watchet has changed over the years. We are so lucky to still have such a well-maintained War Memorial Ground to-day. It was originally given as a memorial to those fallen in the First World War and was intended to uphold the sporting traditions for which Watchet was renowned. The Paper Mill had no sports ground so they originally

contributed the cost of the Groundsman to maintain it. (now The Town Council fulfils that role.) I remember a Putting Green where the Community and Football buildings are today. This was later moved to where the swings were and has become what is now



our children's play area. The adjoining Tennis Courts consisted of both a hard and a grass court. (And a small, rather falling-down hut where we used to play table tennis on wet days – editor). There were three entrances to the Memorial Ground and for Football Matches etc my father and others would stand in Sentry boxes and collect entrance monies from Supporters. I seem to remember this was 3d and later 5d (old money!). For events like Youth Club Fetes and Flower Shows these entrances were always manned to collect entrance fees but this had to change when houses adjacent to the field were allowed back gates.

Walking round Watchet now, as the trees have grown, we no longer have the panoramic views of fields from the Mineral Line walk towards Kentsford, and we cannot see the Orchids or children toboggan at The Mount (above Knights Templar) but we still have beloved West Street Beach, Longsands and Helwell Bay with just about enough of the Recreation Ground (cliff side of the railway line) to be able to walk from Lovers Leap to Splash Point, though this area has become very overgrown. Coastal erosion has made it difficult now for us to imagine my father's contemporaries playing football on 'the Rec'. In my younger days I can even remember 'the Rec' being used for Circus and Fair visits (maybe memories of the old Whitelegs Fairs on the Esplanade are for another day!).

Christmas getting closer reminds me of the 50s and 60s in Watchet, when the shops would start decorating their windows from December 1st. I used to live in the Westminster Bank (now Bank House) and in my mind I can still see Diane (Coggins) decorating her Wool Shop window opposite. During December the three bands, Watchet Town, The British Legion and the Salvation Army used to tour the streets, playing carols under the street-lights. Our Knight Family were first and foremost supporters of the Town Band as my Grandfather, Uncles Bill and Tom (Bulpin), Aunty Phyllis and cousin David Wilkins were all able players. When the knock on the door came Dad would support all three bands, but put that little extra in for the Town Band! Up at St Decuman's Church there was just one service on Christmas Eve. It started at midnight but to guarantee a seat you had to be up at the church by 11.30pm at the latest. If you decided to attend the Christmas Morning Service you would normally meet the British Legion Band out playing around the town. We were so lucky to be a musical town.

Happy memories and a Happy Christmas from all the Knights !

Thanks to Market House Museum for photo from their collection of the Watchet 1950s Reserve Football Team



Great news for Strictly fans!

Despite her hectic schedule, **StRictly**, the Patron Saint of Ballroom Dancing, has approved the reprinting of her high quality iconic greeting card.

Her *Tango* partner, Watchet cartoonist **Chiz**, has taken delivery of new stock, which is now available from the **Visitor Centre**.

So, if you want to impress any of your Strictly fans, send them this unique Watchet-created card.

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

Market House Museum

The great news is that after long delays, due to COVID, we have finally got our **Accreditation** renewed so the pressure is off for 5 years. Accreditation serves as a standard for Museums large or small and enables us to access grants, advice and training through the SW Heritage Centre.

The Museum will close for the season on Sunday 2nd November. After a good start in the spring, visitor numbers in July and August showed a significant drop, largely due to the glorious hot summer weather when the 'Great Outdoors' probably proved a more attractive proposition! I still have the feeling that the road closure does not help though.

Our winter talk program began on Wednesday 8th October, 7.30 pm at the Methodist Schoolroom and continues thereafter on every 2nd Wednesday of the month at the same time, through until and including March 2026.

All are welcome. Entry is £3 for non-members and £1 for members..

A reminder for members that subscriptions are due in November (£5)

J. Nicholas WMHM



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Parsonage Farm Action Group – Important update

We wanted to keep everyone informed on the current situation regarding the Parsonage Farm planning application.

On 23rd September, updated plans were submitted for planning application #3/37/23/029 – Parsonage Farm. If you're affected and, let's be honest, we all are, submit your objections through the official channels. Not sure how? Contact Lucy Corlett-Shaw on 07967 100 706 or LucyCorlett@yahoo.co.uk and she'll help you cut through the nonsense.

We thank all members of the community for their continued support and vigilance. Your efforts help strengthen our case and keep attention focused on protecting Parsonage Farm and the surrounding area.

Our position remains clear: we continue to oppose this development and will work to ensure that our voices are heard throughout the process. This isn't just bad planning, it's a blatant disregard for our town, our community, and everything we value. The Wyndham Estate and our elected councillors need to hear us loud and clear: we will not be steamrolled. We will not be silenced. And we will not let this go unchallenged!

Parsonage Farm Action Group



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Watchet Summertime 2025

WOW – what a brilliant time we all had this year – we are so grateful to you all for your support, it was hard work but definitely worth it and we have already started planning for next year!!

Next year’s dates: 3rd week of August with **Firework Finale** on Saturday 22nd August 2026.

Watchet Summertime Committee are super grateful to the following sponsors in 2025 who have generously donated to help us run our fab week:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Watchet Town Council | Warren Farm Holiday Park (Pam Bosley) |
| Warren Bay Holiday Village (The Prings) | The Esplanade Club |
| Watchet Boat Owners | Traders within Watchet Town |
| Watchet Methodist Church | Alex Raynard |
| The Onion Collective and Contains Art | The Spice Merchant |
| Co-Op Food Group | Western Marinas |
| Watchet Harbour Book Shop | Penny Tappy |

We are planning more fundraising events next year, so here's hoping for an even more fantastic event next year.

We are planning our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 2nd December at 7pm at The Pheonix Centre. Please come along, become a member supporter, or join our committee to bring new ideas, enthusiasm and variety to our vibrant team. We will have the formal meeting (the Minutes from last year, reports and finances) for 30 mins followed by a celebration of this year with refreshments.

Bernice Scott-Field – Watchet Summertime Secretary

Roger Ham – Chair, and all the committee who work so hard

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

Watchet War Memorial Ground Management Committee (WWMRGMC) Fund raising and more

Over the summer, to add to our woes, vandals managed to climb onto the roof of the pavilion, rip off two of the decorative finials on the gables and cause some damage to the tiling. Despite photographs being taken of the culprits in the act, nobody has been held responsible. It seems we are just victims of the country wide spate of anti-social behaviour.

For our Committee, this means extra cost which we can ill afford, at a time when we are already trying to raise money for a major restoration of the building, built in memory of those men from Watchet who died in the 'Great War'.

To aid our fund raising, we have reformed the Management Committee so that all it's members are now Trustees of the charity. A constitution has been written to support the original conveyance drawn up in May 1962.

In an effort to generate more funds to aid the running of the ground and pavilion an 'Events Co-ordinator' has been appointed. Lori Lee (07935 318 022) will assist with planning future events and she is already working on some ideas. Watch this space and please get involved in helping with new events!

Jim Nicholas - Chair WWMRGMC



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In Your Garden with Alan Jones

Some people treat gardening as a chore like housework, something that just needs to be done. Although not everyone considers gardening to be a loveable pastime or hobby, there are an increasing number of people who think that looking after your local wildlife is quite important and who will regularly put out food and water for the birds and hedgehogs throughout the winter.

If this kind of 'gardening' chimes with you, consider helping some of the smaller creatures that live in your patch. They won't want you to tidy up too much, your garden is their refuge from predators and the weather. One such creature is the Ivy bee which was first recorded in the UK in 2001, and has now been found in much of Southern England and Wales. As suggested by its common name, this bee uses Ivy as its main pollen plant. The Ivy bee is seen when ivy is in flower, from early September to early November. They nest in loose, light or sandy soil on southern-facing banks with ivy nearby for foraging. They are solitary bees, but when conditions are suitable, there may be thousands of nests in the same area. The Ivy bee is similar in looks to a honey bee; it has an orangey-brown, hairy thorax, and distinct black and yellow stripes on its abdomen. If you don't have mature ivy in your garden, you can see them in some numbers in the Anchor Street car park or indeed anywhere there is mature ivy in flower.



If you do have ivy, please don't tidy it up for the winter. Let some of it mature and provide flowers for new guests.

Dandelions will often flower throughout the winter, and may be the only flower at that time in your garden, so spare them as well. If you really want to help nature there are other low maintenance plants that can be grown, like heathers and winter flowering pansies, daisies, cyclamen, wallflowers and violas. In a mild winter like last year many of our summer bedding plants carried on flowering right into January.

So, the moral of the story is DON'T tidy up too soon. Even debris is a home for slow worms, frogs and toads, leave well alone, you might be surprised and delighted to find out who you are sharing your garden with.

Happy gardening.

Article and Ad deadline for the January/February edition is 24th Oct !!

Knights Templar Swimming Pool Committee

A Splash of Summer's Tale: A Poolside Carol Update

It was the best of summers, the brightest of days,
When laughter and splashes rang out in a daze.
The bookings came tumbling, a jubilant stream—
More than we'd dreamt, more than we'd deem!
The townsfolk did gather, the children did cheer,
And the pool, oh the pool, was the gem of the year.

Now hark! Let bells ring for Phase One is complete,
The refurbishments beckon with promise so sweet.
Tiles shall be polished, the ladders made new,
And the water shall shimmer in crystalline hue.
But lo! A shadow creeps in with a frown—
Inflation, that scoundrel, has come into town.

The costs have grown taller than Humpty's own wall,
And our budget, once sturdy, now teeters to fall.
Though our spirits are high and our plans are in motion,
We still need your kindness, your gifts, your devotion.
A guinea, a shilling, a penny or pound—
Each coin is a chorus, a jubilant sound.

So come one, come all, with generosity bright,
Let's keep the pool glowing by day and by night.
For every donation, no matter how small,
Will help us ensure it's a joy for us all.
Let this be the season of giving and cheer—
For the pool, for the people, for many a year!

God bless us, every one.
Have a wonderful Christmas.

Knights Templar Swimming Pool Committee
Donate : <https://www.knightstemplarswimmingpool.uk/donate>
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/knights-templar-swimming-pool>



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Watchet Connects Advertising

Watchet Coastal Community Team CIC

Watchet Connects is the **free not-for-profit newsletter** distributed to **everyone** who lives or works in Watchet. It is probably the most well-thumbed reference for the town's inhabitants, even in this digital age.

Generally, not-for-profit and charitable organisations can submit articles for free up to half a page (*for community entries - e.g. charities, social enterprises, churches etc - approx 200 words or less if images included. Please adhere to this limit to ensure we can continue to provide **Watchet Connects** free of charge*). **Watchet Connects** depends very much on the generosity of local organisations to support our cause via advertising and sponsorship.

Watchet Connects is published bi-monthly and is distributed to around **2,200 households** in Watchet by **volunteers**. The handy A5 booklet is usually around 48-52 pages and is available to outlying villages at cost.

Advertising and sponsorship rates are extremely affordable for even the smallest of shops, clubs, pubs, cafés, self-employed and other local businesses. We can design your advert for a very modest charge – or even free if you book a series of ads. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

Copy deadlines are before the start of the month preceding publication.

Interested?

If you want to promote your local organisation or business in this up-and-coming coastal community get in touch.

Contact Rachel: editor@watchetcct.co.uk
or Chris: williamsart@mac.com

Registered Office: Watchet Coastal Community Team CIC,
7 The Esplanade, Watchet TA23 0AJ

Watchet Connects Advertising Rates to April 2026

Size	H x W mm	1 issue	Annual 6 issues
Full page	186 x 128	£60	£320
Half page	91 x 128	£35	£190
Quarter page	45 x 128 [91 x 62*]	£18	£95
Inside Front or Outside Back (currently taken)			£400
Inside Back (currently taken)			£375

Annual advertisers starting mid-year will be charged proportionally for the number of ads to April 2026.

* Subject to approval

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November / December Dates

November

1st **Spooktacular Karaoke** for all
3-5pm - Fancy Dress Optional
2nd **Footloose** from 3pm
9th **Encore** from 3pm
15th **Barry Paull as Elvis**
from 8.30pm
23rd **Decades** from 3pm
25th **Christmas Day** times will be
announced on our Facebook Page
29th **Ooshka** from 8.30pm

December

6th **Pro Quo** (status quo tribute)
from 8.30pm
14th **Tournette Doone** from 3pm
31st **New Year's Eve Emma Cox**
DJ spinning vinyl popular sounds
of Motown/northern Soul/Ska
and party sounds to see in the
New Year from 8.30pm

Other dates may be added – such as our Xmas Bingo night and
Xmas Raffle Day – so keep an eye on our Facebook Page
Every first Tuesday of the month - the Legion Book Club

The Legion popular Boxing Day Skittles will be going on from 2pm
onwards the list will be going up shortly

May we take this opportunity to thank all our wonderful customers and
wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Opening Times:

Monday	5pm-11pm
Tuesday-Thursday	7pm-11pm
Friday	4pm-12am
Saturday	12pm-12am
Sunday	12pm-11pm

*More dates to follow:
keep an eye on our FB
page for any updates to
our entertainment nights*



Opening hours may be subject to change
on quieter nights (Bar Discretion)

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