

# WATCHET CONNECTS

January / February 2026



**Edition 41**

Sponsored and Published by  
**Watchet Coastal Community Team**  
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## In this Issue

For the first time, Watchet Connects has a **Features index!**

Yes, we are trying hard to make your favourite community magazine even more accessible, if indeed that's possible!

So, not only have we added page numbers (a lot more tricky to do than you'd imagine!) but now we have grouped articles not by how they can be crammed into available spaces but grouped by "category".

In this issue we have:

**Community Conservation & History Churches & Faith  
Fundraising Entertainment**

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*These pages are always in the middle of Watchet Connects, a sort of "Yellow Pages" section with important dates and numbers*

## Help Needed !

Interested in graphic design or typography and would like to gain some real-world experience? *Watchet Connects* is looking for a volunteer to assist with **page layout**. If you have a few hours every two months and a PC, Mac or laptop then we would love to hear from you. Training given. Contact the Editor at [editor@watchetcct.co.uk](mailto:editor@watchetcct.co.uk)

## Words in Watchet

**20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

Spring Half Term weekend in February there will be words of all kinds swirling around Watchet, and looking through the programme (which we are putting the finishing touches to as I write!) there is too much going on to tell you about here.

So, a tempting few morsels ....

We have a day of **children and family fun** on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Our first adult event is a **storytelling** on Friday night, with the brilliant **Hugh Lupton** telling a true story about his grand uncle **Arthur Ransome** and a risky escape from revolutionary Russia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Then, on Saturday we have lunch with **Martin Hesp** at The Spice Merchant or more storytelling during a delicious evening meal at **Chives**. **Damian Boyd** (fan favourite Detective novelist) is hosting a **Sunday lunch** at The West Somerset Hotel as well as Neil and Cath reading **Favourite Book Bits** together with afternoon tea at Chives. There is a full poetry programme over the two days, including workshops and a spoken word evening. We also have a lot planned for **Fantasy** fans, including a Dungeons and Dragons workshop which proved popular in 2025. We will hear speakers about The Golden Rule of Aging, the Truth about Stress, detective and crime stories, the Spice Ports. Quantock Nature, publishing and The History of Photography and more. Some of our speakers include Fiona Benson, Nick Nugent, Andrew Miller (recently short-listed for the Booker Prize), Martin Hesp, Chris Ewans, Damian Boyd, Jonathon Green, Lucy Pollock, and Angela Patmore and there will be local authors based in The Phoenix again, as well as books from Brendon Books.

We are excited to tell you we have two adult writing competitions running this year, both need entries to be submitted to us by Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January. There is an over-18 Poetry Competition (any theme, any style, up to 40 lines) and an over-18 Flash Fiction competition (100 words maximum). All details about entry fees, prizes and dates are on our website [wordsinwatchet.com](http://wordsinwatchet.com) or available from Watchet Visitor Centre or Library.

Look out for our Words in Watchet programme which should be coming through Watchet doors early January or available in town, libraries etc.

Come along, be entertained, be inspired and have fun!



## Watchet Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) Update

Following our last update, I am pleased to tell you that Somerset Council (SC) approved our request to designate Watchet parish as a Neighbourhood Area,

I quote: *'In accordance with the statute and guidance SC has considered that application and the Head of Planning has approved the Designation of the Neighbourhood Area for Watchet Neighbourhood Plan'*. The map opposite gives an indication of our parish area.

NPAC has met several times since and are right at the beginning of our Neighbourhood Plan journey. By the time you read this we hope to have a dedicated page on the Watchet Town Council (WTC) website and a contact email address so you can let us know your thoughts on the future of Watchet:

**What do you personally love about your town?**

**Which are the places you go, paths you take?**

**What is it that you want to protect and cherish in Watchet?**

You could also write a note and post into the WTC letter box – mark your message **'Watchet Neighbourhood Plan'**. We will have other consultation letter boxes around the town. As we mentioned in the last edition, we have placed a document box in the reference section of Watchet library containing some background papers about the Neighbourhood Planning process. These can be read in the library (please don't remove them).

We are starting to compile ideas. We recognise that we are **'Custodians of the past and Stewards for the future!!'**

This is the summary of aims we have compiled so far:

- To cherish and protect our distinctive 1000+ year Watchet Historic Heritage.
- To celebrate and maintain our Watchet Community Spirit
- To support and protect our natural environment, green spaces, footpaths and views acknowledging the coastal draw
- To tackle coastal erosion – we need to work with what we have and protect where we can
- To welcome visitors, tourism and innovation including the need for more accommodation provision for them



- To encourage economic development and employment, local industry and businesses, enabling employment opportunities to thrive
- To enhance the urban landscape for residents and visitors
- Secure our future for young people - succession planning
- To lobby to improve road infrastructure - securing access from all directions
- To build a community which thrives and is vibrant for all ages/diversity/abilities - access for all
- We aim to be a Self-sufficient self-sustaining community with adequate infrastructure using more renewable energy
- We want a High standard of Housing that reflects diverse needs of the community – housing should be social, affordable, sustainable, climate aware

Here is a link: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-production-and-made/> or scan the QR code above

Here you can see what others have done and what we are aiming toward.

Keep in touch and let us know your views - more next edition.

Bernice Scott-Field

WCCT Director and Chair of the Watchet NPAC

Map: Crown Copyright and database rights 2025 Ordnance Survey 060000661332  
Additional information: Somerset Council

## Watchet Bowling Club and Community Venue

Success for our Bowling Club Teams!

The 2025 outdoor bowling season has proved to be particularly successful.

Watchet Mens A team finished runners up in the Somerset County League Premier Two to gain promotion back to Premier One at the first attempt.

Watchet Men's B team finished runners up in said Somerset County League, South West Division Two, to gain promotion back to South West Division One, also at the first attempt.

These are both great achievements for the club considering the relatively small squad size. The promotions also earned the club a bit of prize money!

Jack Groves earned a recall to the Somerset Middleton Cup squad for 2025, playing in all three group matches and Corey Rendell continued to take part in the Somerset Under 25s. Great efforts and exposure for the club too!

A lovely end of season event was held at Weston-Super-Mare.

Watchet Bowling Club Ladies, Janet Groves, Sharon Bowden, Kay Knight and Kathy Warner won a trophy from Somerset Bowls Association for being Lady Senior Finalists.

The award was presented as part of a celebration luncheon.

Watchet Men's A team collected a certificate for their accomplished final position in the County league, mirroring the achievement of Watchet Men's B team in the South West Division 2.

Alongside the bowling efforts we continued to host club and private events in our Clipper Bar and Lounge including a "Tickled Pink Event" that raised over £550 shared by the Beacon Centre and the Breast Cancer Now Charity.

Why not join us in 2026? We offer the prospect of fun, friendship and even better fitness. It's currently only £16 for your first year's full membership. That will open the opportunity to bowl and even enjoy cheap beverages!





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**Jubilee Rooms,**  
Castle St., Stogursey

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5th & 19th Feb.  
5th & 19th Mar.  
2nd, 16th & 30th Apr.  
14th & 28th May.  
11th & 25th Jun.  
9th & 23rd Jul.  
13th & 27th Aug.  
3rd & 17th Sep.  
1st, 15th & 29th Oct.  
12th & 26th Nov.  
10th Dec.

**The Sanctuary,**  
Swain St., Watchet

15th & 29th Jan.  
12th & 26th Feb.  
12th & 26th Mar.  
9th & 23rd Apr.  
7th & 21st May.  
4th & 18th Jun.  
2nd, 16th & 30th Jul.  
No meetings in Aug.  
10th & 24th Sep.  
8th & 22nd Oct.  
5th & 19th Nov.  
17th Dec.

Caring & Sharing

## Knights Templar Community Church School and Nursery

Work at it with all your heart

Head Teacher: Mrs Laura Weaver, BA Hons QTS

What a busy start to the 2025/2026 school year, full of learning, laughter, and community spirit.

In September, we gave a big warm welcome to our brand-new Reception children, who settled into school life so confidently. We also launched our shiny new school website: [www.knightstemplarfirst.co.uk](http://www.knightstemplarfirst.co.uk) — have a look and see what you think!

Our KS1 children shook things up (literally!) with a milkshake fundraiser to raise money for their outdoor play area — what a creative way to support their space! And there was excitement ahead, with KS1 planning for some local geography adventures around town — visiting the Washford River and mineral line to bring their learning to life.

The school also came together for our Harvest Festival, collecting an amazing number of donations for the local food bank: thank you to everyone who gave so generously.

We're absolutely thrilled to share our brand-new **SEND Unit**, The Den, is now open! This has been a true labour of love and it means so much to finally see it come to life. Our drive to open this provision has always been about ensuring that children who cannot access learning in a busy mainstream classroom can learn and thrive right here in their local community at such an early stage in their education. Our classes also continue to support the children in school with SEND who are able to learn alongside their peers in the mainstream class — something we are incredibly proud of.

Our brilliant KTSCA — with new chair Jess James at the helm — has been buzzing with activity! In the autumn term they kicked off with a lively quiz night, raising a fantastic £485 towards the school pool, followed by the first school disco of the year and a clothing drive. And they did not stop there! Towards the end of term there were two wonderful community events: a cosy **Christmas Pudding and Throws Evening** and our much-loved **Christmas Fayre**.

During the second half of the autumn term our Head Boys and Girls represented the school beautifully at the town's Remembrance Service, reading a touching poem to honour those who served. Our KS1 and KS2 gymnasts limbered up for a big competition at Minehead First School — we cheered them on all the way!

A heartfelt thank you to all the parents and community members who have kindly donated toys, dressing-up clothes, and games to The Den and across the wider school. Your generosity makes such a difference to our children's learning and play.

From all of us at Knights Templar Community Church School, we wish you a Happy New Year — here's to more laughter, learning, and community togetherness in 2026!

01984 634 385 [office@KTCC.uk](mailto:office@KTCC.uk) [www.knightstemplarfirst.co.uk](http://www.knightstemplarfirst.co.uk)

Ofsted No: 123860 / EY 488355

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### Knights Templar Swimming Pool Committee

Despite unforeseen challenges with outdated pricing estimates, the project is moving forward with renewed clarity and precision. A full resurvey of the swimming pool maintenance upgrade is now underway and scheduled for completion shortly. This updated assessment will ensure that the figures accurately reflect current conditions and requirements, providing a reliable foundation for decision-making.

### Make Swimming Your New Year's Resolution

Swimming is more than just exercise — it's a full-body workout that strengthens muscles, improves cardiovascular health, and burns away those lingering Christmas treats. The soothing rhythm of the water helps reduce stress, sharpen focus, and lift your mood, making it one of the most effective ways to boost both physical and mental wellbeing. Whether you're aiming to get fit, find balance, or simply enjoy time with others, swimming offers the perfect start to a healthier, happier year.

### Unbeatable Value

- Up to 25 people can swim for just £25 per hour when you book a slot.
- That's only £1 per person — fitness and fun at a fraction of the cost!

### Join Today

Don't wait — secure your session now and make swimming the highlight of your New Year journey.

**Donate** [knightstemplarswimmingpool.uk/donate](http://knightstemplarswimmingpool.uk/donate)  
[gofundme.com/f/knights-templar-swimming-pool](https://gofundme.com/f/knights-templar-swimming-pool)

**Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb**

## New Events for 2026

### Watchet Open Gardens and Competitions

27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June

The general public can view 10+ gardens. Profit from ticket sales or donations will be shared between the Salvation Army (homeless project) and the Watchet Garden and Flower Show. Tickets with brochure to be sold from April at Visitors Centre £5.00 to view all the gardens.

Separate from the public viewing gardens there will be 5 other garden "Best" classes: Scarecrow in front garden, Front Garden, Rear Garden, Eco Garden, Vegetable Garden or allotment. Look out for the posters for these events and for the Flower Show on Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup> which will have more classes.

Contact [lorileeart001@gmail.com](mailto:lorileeart001@gmail.com) or 07935 318 022.

### Watchet Dog Show

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May

We are holding a fun dog show on the Memorial Ground. Events including small agility course (with practice ring). Look out for the posters and entry forms available from the Visitors Centre from March onwards.

Contact [lorileeart001@gmail.com](mailto:lorileeart001@gmail.com) or 07935 318 022.

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## Watchet Carers Group

Watchet Carers Group from Somerset Carers Service is a free, informal gathering for people offering a helping hand with daily tasks to a friend or family member. We socialise, share ideas and talk about our experiences. Professional speakers and service providers also visit to offer support and information.

We meet monthly every last Monday of the month, 2pm at the Sanctuary on Swain Street.

January 26<sup>th</sup> Visiting Speaker Mandy from **Healthwatch**

February 23<sup>rd</sup> Visiting speaker Mark from **Wessex Water**

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

For one-to-one support and information from Somerset Carers please use the contacts below.

The Somerset Carers Service Advice Line: 0800 316 8600

[carers@somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:carers@somersetccc.org.uk) [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org)

Cath Holloway - Carers Service Coordinator

Tel: 01823 331 222 Mob: 07535 279 359 Email: [cathh@Somersetccc.org.uk](mailto:cathh@Somersetccc.org.uk)

**pop-in for a cuppa**

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## What's Old in Watchet?

Watchet has a fascinating history, reflected in its old buildings, pack horse bridges and thatched cottages, but apart from pre-historic fossils, what is really old in Watchet? In terms of human history it must be St Decuman.

The story of Decuman (or as sometimes written Decumanus or Decombes) begins in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Voyaging from a monastery in Pembrokeshire, Decuman sailed in a curragh across the Channel, with his cow, to settle in West Somerset. His name is possibly of Latin origins meaning 'a smallholder who gave a tithe', which suggests that he or his family lived at the end of the Roman administration. A carving of Decuman on the west front of Wells Cathedral depicts him holding the top of his head, which may support the story that he was scalped and subsequently healed in the holy well adjacent to the current church. Other versions of the story have him completely beheaded. Either way a legend was created and passed down through the ages.



Whether or not Decuman was decapitated, the site of Decuman's well is undisputed and was accepted as a holy well from Saxon times. Story or legend, the site was cemented as a Christian site from then on.

St. Decuman's church now sits high on the hill overlooking the ancient harbour town of Watchet. Little is known about the original chapel, which was closer to the sea, possibly near Dawes Castle, but we do know (from early records dated 1412) that Decuman's tomb was removed to the current church because the date of the 'translation' (transfer) was celebrated as a feast day for many years.

Records at Wells Cathedral show that the church was given to the diocese in 1190 by the Brito family, although it is situated on land belonging to the FitzUrse family. Both the Brito and the FitzUrse families were disgraced when Simon Brito and Reginald FitzUrse were involved in the murder of Thomas Beckett in Canterbury in 1170, so maybe they were trying to make amends. Another great historic link in Watchet's history.



*continues on next page*

You can still clearly see the 12<sup>th</sup> century church in the chancel of the current building and a partly blocked doorway visible on the south wall reveals the probable original entrance.

The church was substantially enlarged in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The church appeared to be a transitional or Norman church with a central tower and transepts. Much of this is still visible today.

In the next edition of *Connects*, I will continue to describe some of the many changes made in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Meanwhile, if you can't wait, you can explore yourself with the aid of a guidebook available in the church or Visitor Centre or Market House Museum.

Happy exploring.

Alan Jones

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## Watchet Market House Museum

Our 2025 season closed on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, we plan to re-open for 2026 in late March.

Visitor numbers were down overall, with our busiest months, July and August, seeing heat waves that tend send folk to the beach, pub or under a tree instead of coming to us! The B3191 road closure has not helped. Our total footfall was 22157, 2519 down on 2024. Visitor numbers are important as we are free entry and rely on donations to survive. Whatever the weather our costs still go up!

During the closed season we will be busy as always, this time refreshing the art collection. We will be also changing our external south window to make a display to enlighten people about the Watchet Neighborhood Plan which is in the process of being drawn up. (Don't forget to make your input into this.)

This past year's highlights have been getting our accreditation renewed, the A and P Brown West Somerset Fossil Collection and the Iguanadon Theatre Show on the Esplanade.

Our winter talk series has resumed, with excellent speakers Rob Wilson-North and Jon England booked - details can be found in the diary, and as ever all are welcome. Any enquiries call Jim on 631 660 or Gill on 634 001. Jim Nicholas

**Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb**

## Watchet Conservation Society

Our **AGM** went very well on the 18<sup>th</sup> November with many members coming along to hear about our achievements over the past year and our plans for the coming year. Our three sub-committees told of their activities. The **Repair Café** explained that they hope to save things from being thrown into land fill, instead getting them repaired by qualified people.



Andrew Homer gave a short talk on **The Watchet Neighbourhood Plan**. This is encouraging locals interested in the future of our town to come together to decide local priorities in planning, housing, economy and environment etc. Details of what is happening are in the Library and from the Town Council, and we hope lots of residents of all ages will get involved in looking towards Watchet's future. Wine and nibbles were served at the end of a successful meeting. See also article.

In the New Year our first Open Meeting will involve a talk on Pine Martins (20th January in the Methodist Schoolroom at 7.30pm), which promises to be fascinating. Membership can be paid then £8.00 per person. Members free to all talks, friends £3.00.

A Very Happy New Year to You All. Molly and Team

## Friends of Watchet Station

The WSR will reopen at the end of March with celebrations marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reopening of the first section of the line between Minehead and Blue Anchor.

There's a lot of maintenance work going on at the Station. The entire Victorian-era station building has been painted inside and out and regular visitors will notice many small improvements when we reopen. The gardeners have been busy adding double raised beds at the Goviers end of the platform using old sleepers donated by the railway, which has improved one of our more untidy areas and slightly widens the pathway. We have had to seal our three outside litter bins as our big bin contract has ended and the new one won't start until March.

Our dear Brian Stainton's 50 years of service to the WSR was celebrated on 30<sup>th</sup> November with a ride on the Quantock Belle dining train with his own special headboard.



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## What's on in January

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>** 2pm registration, 3pm **New Years Day Dip** from Minehead Beach in aid of St Margaret's Hospice – see article for this and other ways of getting involved.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>** 3.30pm **The Great Baldini** at the Backyard Theatre. Magic and fun for all the family. Book online [backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/](http://backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/) or call the Ticket Source Box Office: 0333 666 3366

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>** 5.30 – 7.30pm **Folk Juice** at East Quay Kitchen. Free admission. Theme **Gardening Under the Moon**. A monthly gathering to remember our collective folk culture.

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup>** 6.30 for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, Watchet Community Cinema. Refreshments. **Downton Abbey – Grand Finale**. For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm **Film Night** at East Quay Kitchen. Admission £5 including popcorn. **Portrait of a Lady on Fire**. A French romantic drama written and directed by Celine Sciamma set in 18<sup>th</sup> Century France.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm Watchet Market House Museum Talk at the Methodist Schoolroom. Rob Wilson-North presents **Archaeology of Exmoor**.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>** Jan 7.30pm **The Spy Who Loved Me Tender** by Spitz & Co. After their last amazing appearance here, this is their awaited brand new show. Elvis is James Bond! Going by last time you need to book quick! Book online [backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/](http://backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/) or call the Ticket Source Box Office: 0333 666 3366

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm in The Methodist Schoolroom. **Watchet Conservation Society Talk, Pinemartins**. This will be our first open meeting of the year and members can take the opportunity to pay their membership fees (£8 annually). Talk £1 for members, £3 for friends. All welcome.

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>** 7.30pm **Spoken Word Evening** at East Quay Kitchen featuring poet Lily Redwood. Admission free, come along and share your work or just listen.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 10.30am – 4pm Studio 10 Project Space East Quay. Admission free, just come along. Check EQ website for film screening times. A screening of **From Ground Zero**. Palestine's official submission to the 2025 Academy Awards. A powerful film, amplifying the voices of dozens of emerging Palestinian artists offering an urgent cry for humanity from a people under siege. 22 remarkable stories told by 22 Palestinian filmmakers. Lived experiences, raw honesty and emotional depth.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>** 6.30 for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, Watchet Community Cinema. Refreshments. **Save the Cinema**.

For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>** 6.30- 7.30pm **Drink and Draw Explore Watercolours** at East Quay Kitchen. Admission free, just come along. Try out watercolours, looking at icy landscapes. Open to all abilities, a relaxed space to experiment with materials.

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>** 10am - noon **West Quantocks Repair Café** at Watchet Community Centre. The first of the year. Bring items that need repair! Come and meet our menders!

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> Jan – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May** Gallery 1 and 2 East Quay. Exhibition: **Earthly Spirits** by Pinkie Maclure. Free admission. A new solo exhibition by a Scottish stained glass artist and musician Pinkie Maclure which explores themes of environmentalism and marks Maclure's first solo show in England. **Opening Party** from 6pm including a live performance from Maclure in collaboration with sound artist John Wills. All Welcome

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## What's on in February

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>** 5.30 – 7.30pm. **Folk Juice** in East Quay Kitchen. Free event. Theme for the month is **Embroidery and Costume**. All welcome.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm **Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde** by Isosceles Theatre. Did you miss their Titanic show? Robert Louis Stevenson's classic gothic story is bought to life by this award winning company. Book online backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/ or call the Ticket Source Box Office: 0333 666 3366

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** 5pm onwards **Watchet Summertime Fundraiser** at The Spice Merchant. £20 head for set menu. Book in a slot for you and friends to enjoy. 07502 242 309

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm **Watchet Market House Museum Talk** at the Methodist Schoolroom. Jon England presents **What's Next!** (£3 non-members, £1 Members). All welcome.

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm **Film Night** at East Quay Kitchen. Admission £5 including popcorn. **Play Misty for Me**. Clint Eastwood's 1971 psychological thriller starring Golden Globe nominated Jessica Walter. A DJ's life is turned upside down after an encounter with an obsessed fan.

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>** 2.30pm. Hear more about the work of the **Mercy Ships**. Watchet Methodist Church. Refreshments on arrival. Everyone welcome

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup>** 6.30 for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, **Watchet Community Cinema**. Refreshments. **I Swear**. For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632445

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>** 7.30pm Monthly **Spoken Word Evening** at East Quay Kitchen (Guest speaker to be announced.). Admission free. Come along to listen or to share your work.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup>** Drop off your Teddy Bear before 6.30pm for the **Teddy Bears Sleepover**, pick up your adventuring bear Saturday Morning from 10.30am.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>** Three days of **Words in Watchet** (see programme available from January or [wordsinwatchet.com](http://wordsinwatchet.com)). A festival of literary talks and creative writing workshops, including: Storytelling for adults as well as children and families, and lots of booky talks about aging well, stress, nature and the environment, history, travel and food, fantasy, poetry and publishing. The town will be full of the wonder of words of all kinds. Venues all around town, from East Quay to The Salvation Army, The Backyard Theatre to Holy Cross Chapel, and many more. Some venues are smaller than others, so book early!

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup>** Feb 7.30pm **The Homing Stone** Words In Watchet Literary Festival. Launching Watchet's very own Literature Festival at The Backyard Theatre the talented storyteller, Hugh Lupton tells the epic tale of the perilous and extraordinary journey of his Great Uncle Arthur Ransome. Book online [wordsinwatchet.com](http://wordsinwatchet.com)

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>** 6.30 -7.30pm **Drink and Draw** at East Quay Kitchen. **Explore Charcoal and Chalk**. Free event, just come along. A chance to work with Charcoal and Chalk using bottles and glasses as the subject. For all abilities, a chance to try different drawing techniques.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup>** 6.30 for 7pm start at Knights Templar School, **Watchet Community Cinema**. Refreshments. **Four Mothers**. For info contact Anne Harrison 01984 632 445

**Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb**

### Advance Notice for Your Diaries

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March** 6pm start at the RBL for a **Summertime Safari Supper** then proceed to different venues for each course. £13 pp book 07502 242 309

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March** **Watchet Summertime St Patrick's Day Ceildh** and 2 course Irish supper (veg option available) £20 at Watchet Bowling Club Book 07502 242 309

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April** **Don's Watchet Summertime entertainment evening** at The Boat Museum £12 including Somerset cider and cake

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May** **Watchet Dog Show** - see article

**Weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June** **Watchet Open Gardens and Competitions** – see article

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](mailto: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.



## 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](mailto:editor@watchetcct.com)

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

**Weekly Mondays** 10 am **Chair Fit** exercises at The Bowling Club.

**Weekly Mondays** 7.30 - 9pm **Watchet Community Choir** meet at 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) 7 – 9pm **West Somerset Family History Group** meet at The Phoenix. £2 for members, £4 for non-members (inc refreshments). For info contact Alma Williams 01643 818 096

**Weekly Tuesdays** 8.50 – 9.45am **Yogolates** at The Bowling Club.

**Weekly Tuesdays** 10 – 11am **Yoga** at The Bowling Club.

**Weekly Tuesdays** 7 – 8pm **Yoga** at The Bowling Club.

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

**Weekly Tuesdays** 2.30pm **Flexercise** in The Methodist Schoolroom. Chair based exercise for over 55s with some cardio, stretches and balance. £5 a session.

**Weekly Tuesdays** 7.30 – 9pm **Watchet Town Band** rehearsals at The Bandroom, Market Street Carpark. All woodwind and Brass players welcome. Contact [watchettownband@gmail.com](mailto:watchettownband@gmail.com)

**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)

**Weekly Wednesdays** From 7pm **Ladies Darts Night** at The Bowling Club.

## Regular Weekly Classes and Events continued:

**Every other Wednesday** 10.30am **Forget-me-not Club** at The Sanctuary all enquiries to Margaret Tatham 07973 638 030 or [watchetdementia@gmail.com](mailto:watchetdementia@gmail.com) (Jan 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>, Feb 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>. Jan 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Indian Meal at The Spice Merchant 7.30pm Tickets £25 from Margaret, contacts above)

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

**Weekly Thursdays** 9.30 – 10.30am **Tai Chi** at The Bowling Club.

**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. Restarting for Spring on January 8<sup>th</sup>

**Weekly Thursdays** 6 - 7pm **Ceilidh Classes** at The Bowling Club. **Country Dancing**, beginners welcome. With Judy Mapledoram, £5 session. No need to bring a partner. Contact Judy if planning to come, 07474 601 497.

**Weekly Thursdays** 7pm onwards **Cribbage** for all in the Bowling Club bar.

**Thursdays Crime Fiction Book Club.** Jan 8<sup>th</sup> (different because of New Year) and Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

**Thursdays Arts And Crafts** Jan 8<sup>th</sup> (different because of New Year), Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

**Second Thursday** 2.30pm **Thursday Circle** at Methodist Schoolroom Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February a talk about **The Mercy Ships**

**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](mailto:harrisonanne@hotmail.com)

**Third Fridays** **Watchet Gardening Club** Jan 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>

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

Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

## Useful Contacts

**Watchet Town Council** 01984 633 344

**Watchet Visitor Centre** 01984 632 101 [info@lovewatchet.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:izzy@somersetccc.org.uk)

### **Watchet Drives and BickWatch Community Car Schemes**

Community Vehicle Co-ordinator Donna Stevens

07599 955 096 [coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk)

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

**Quantock Food Bank** [quantockfoodbank@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:watchetdementia@gmail.com) 07973 638 030

**Magna Housing** 0800 138 6107

**Age UK Somerset** Info / Advice 01823 345 613 [www.ageuksomerset.org.uk](http://www.ageuksomerset.org.uk)

**Somerset Sight** Info / advice 01923 333 818 [www.somersetsight.org.uk](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

## Churches

### Contacts and Regular Weekly Sunday Services

#### **Watchet Methodist Church**

Rev Andy Day 01643 705 175 [andy.day@westsomersetmethodist.org.uk](mailto:andy.day@westsomersetmethodist.org.uk)

Rev Jane Sperring [jane.sperring@btinternet.com](mailto:jane.sperring@btinternet.com)

Regular Sunday Service 10.30am.

#### **St Decuman's Church**

Revd Mark Phillips 01984 639 669 [revdmarkphillips@outlook.com](mailto:revdmarkphillips@outlook.com)

Regular Service (usually Holy Communion) is at 10.45am each week.

**Watchet Baptist Church** Minister Mike Sherburn 01984 633 755

[www.watchetbaptist.org.uk](http://www.watchetbaptist.org.uk) or [youtube.com/watchetbaptist](http://youtube.com/watchetbaptist)

Regular meetings: 'big church' on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays; 'little church' smaller groups various locations inc The Sanctuary on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays.

**Watchet Salvation Army** Samantha Searle 07979 575 453

[Samantha.Searle@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:Samantha.Searle@salvationarmy.org.uk)

Regular Sunday Meeting 10.30am

**Watchet Catholic Church** Deacon Vincent Woods 01984 634 681

Regular Service Catholic Mass at The Methodist Church weekly Friday morning 9.45am.

## 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 Mon to Thurs

[coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk](mailto:coordinator@watchetcct.co.uk) [www.watchettowncouncil.org](http://www.watchettowncouncil.org)



## Watchet Library

Happy New Year to all our library users.

If 2026 is the year that you're planning to start a new hobby or make some lifestyle changes then why not start by challenging yourself to read more – it's good for mental health and wellbeing, can help with better sleep and concentration and best of all it's **free**. Just call into the library with some form of ID and we can sign you up as a member there and then. You can borrow blood pressure monitors and iPads from us as well.

**Words in Watchet** is fast approaching and once again we will have books by the authors featured available in the library. This year we're having a **Teddy Bear Sleepover** in the library on Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. Drop your brave teddies (or other cuddly animals) off at the library on that Friday (we'll be open till 6.30 especially for the bears), read them a bedtime story or ask one of us to read to your bear for you, give us their breakfast order and come back and collect them on Saturday morning. We're not charging for this unique bear experience – it's free for teddies to take part in. However, please don't let your children bring down a teddy that they'll miss at bedtime as the library won't open till 10.30am on Saturday and we don't want any upset children! It is just the teddies and cuddly animals that will be sleeping over, we don't have enough room in our library for anyone else.

We're looking forward to meeting all Watchet's 'brave bears'.

Mich and Fiona

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## Watchet/Saint Renan Town Twinning

This Spring we are again expecting to entertain a group of French Twinners in Watchet. They are due to come here during May and will be accommodated at the homes of our members, who will take great pleasure in entertaining them and showing their hospitality, in reciprocation for the wonderful way we are received by them when we visit Saint Renan on alternate years. We have yet to devise a programme for the visit but will be showing them local places of interest and enjoying local food outlets.

Anyone who wishes to join in with us would be very welcome...you don't need to speak French, and we should also be pleased to have any suggestions about things to do and places to visit. Watch out for an update in the next edition.

Contacts are Cynthia [PWebb@outlook.com](mailto:PWebb@outlook.com) Marilyn [binding349@outlook.com](mailto:binding349@outlook.com)  
[watchettwinning@gmail.com](mailto:watchettwinning@gmail.com)

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## In your Garden with Alan Jones

### A New Year dawns, a year of hope and dreams of a better future

Perhaps in our gardens we could mark the passing of 2025 by joining the national effort to plant more trees across Britain, by putting a new tree in our gardens. It is estimated that between 80-90% of people in the UK have access to a private garden, an area totalling 10 million acres. Public gardens are working hard to increase the number of trees they plant and now we must join in to help boost the effect. In Watchet alone we could plant 1000 trees if we each added one to our gardens (this is nothing to do with 'rewilding', which is the very opposite of conservation and means doing nothing and letting nature take over and turning fertile land into a wilderness or desert. Creating new forests requires a lot of effort from humans to allow young sapling to survive, grow and mature, a process that might take 50 years).

Don't be tempted to plant an oak tree in a small garden. When we first moved to Hithe there was a magnificent copper beech tree in the garden within 6ft of the road and with a huge hole cut through the canopy to allow the power cables to pass through. Of course it was never meant to be a majestic tree, it was originally part of a hedge that grew too tall and somehow was left to do what came naturally. Eventually it became a danger to the houses either side and to pedestrians and had to be taken down, a magnificent tree in the wrong place. So what should we be looking to plant?

Fruit trees are just as valuable as beech trees and produce a crop for us or the wildlife in our gardens. Flowering trees like cherries bring joy in the spring with their beautiful blossoms and silver birch trees with their spring catkins and shiny white bark look great all through the year (Ellie and I have planted a silver birch in every one of the 6 gardens we have owned since the sixties). Hawthorns, hazel, field maple and blackthorn are natural hedgerow plants and all suitable for small gardens and very beneficial to wildlife.

So let's plant a tree to show our faith and hope for a brighter 2026.



Mild winters cause grass to grow 12 months of the year, the question I'm often asked is "can I cut the grass in the winter?" The short answer is "Yes but", there's always a but! Make sure the grass is dry, choose a sunny, windy day and don't cut it too short because if it's grass growing weather it's also moss growing weather and bare earth is just what moss needs.

If you didn't have the time or inclination to plant bulbs in October or November you can still buy pots of pre-planted bulbs from garden centres and supermarkets that will flower as soon as the weather warms up, keep them near to the house wall or cold conservatory but water sparingly if indoors. They may seem expensive but compared to a bunch of cut flowers that only last a week or two they are good value.

Happy gardening.



*Andy Hayes & Son*



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## St Margaret's Hospice Events

### Ways you can get involved

#### New Year's Day Dip Thursday

1<sup>st</sup> January Minehead Beach  
Registration from 2pm, dip at 3pm. Make a fresh start for 2026 with St Margaret's Hospice's annual New Year's Day Dip! The hospice is inviting brave fundraisers to throw on their fancy dress and take the plunge, all in the name in supporting local hospice care. If you'd prefer to stay warm and toasty but still want to help out – the hospice also needs volunteers to help make the event a success! Roles include registration, serving refreshments, and bucket collecting.



Information: [st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/new-years-day-dip/](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/new-years-day-dip/)

#### Walk 100 Miles With Your Dog

Throughout January. St Margaret's Hospice Care is calling on dog lovers to lace up their walking boots and take part in the **Walk 100 Miles With Your Dog Challenge** this January, a virtual event to raise funds to support patients and families across the county. Sign up for *free* and get a doggy bandana, a mileage tracker and sponsorship form.



Information:

[st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/walk-100-miles-with-your-dog/](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/walk-100-miles-with-your-dog/)

#### Christmas Tree Collection 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January

Dozens of postcodes throughout Somerset. Register your interest today!  
Information: [st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/christmas-tree-collection/](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/christmas-tree-collection/)  
St Margaret's Hospice's beloved Christmas Tree collection is back for its fifth year. This January, they are once again teaming up with Children's Hospice South West to offer a simple, eco-friendly way to recycle your real Christmas tree while raising vital funds to support people living with life-limiting illness.

**Run a Half Marathon** to support St Margaret's Hospice! Would you like to be involved in running a half marathon in aid of this worthwhile local charity?

There are opportunities to run in **Taunton** on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March  
Information: [st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/taunton-half-marathon](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/taunton-half-marathon)

In **Yeovil** on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March Information:

[st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/yeovil-half-marathon/](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/yeovil-half-marathon/)

Or in **The London Landmarks Half Marathon** on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Information: [st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/london-landmarks/](http://st-margarets-hospice.org.uk/event/london-landmarks/)



## Special Festive Offer



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## Knight's Tales

### Happy New Year to all

Isn't it wonderful to see the Corner House Café up and running? It brings me so many memories of the days when Molly Quint, the 'hostess with the mostess', was running it. Opening this café up again can only enhance the street scene! I recall when this building was John Norman's Bakery. Once a week my mother would purchase his delicious meat pies and deliver one to me for my lunch in the Westminster Bank just up the road. Other Watchet bakeries in the 1950s and 1960s included W. A. Besley who traded in Anchor Street and W. S. Tiley at Mount Pleasant (the area at the end of Almyr Terrace).

This 'memory train' has set me to thinking about the many little corner shops we used to have, one of the largest being Norton's (the reason why the corner of South Road and Doniford Road is always known as Norton's Corner). Others included MacMillan's (at the top of Gladstone Terrace), Watt's (the bottom of Causeway Terrace), Norbury's (Quantock Road),

*continues on next page*



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Baldwin's (Anchor Street), Pettifer's (Liddymore Road), and Ward's (Market Street). Watchet may not have had the population we have currently but we were served with Boot and Shoe Repairers, Bakeries, more than one Butcher, an Electrical Store, a Fishmonger, a Gentlemen's Outfitters, an Ironmonger, at least two Newsagents and a Jeweller and we could buy practically anything we needed here.

In the 1960s we had three banks in Watchet, with the Midland being further along Swain Street and Lloyds on the Esplanade. My bank, the Westminster, had its main base in Williton, but I was pleased when I was moved permanently to the two-man sub branch in Watchet, a busy little bank. I had great fun when the Van Heusen Shirt Factory was next door. The room supervisors would come in with their weekly Christmas Club monies, and they also purchased premium bonds for the room syndicates. In fact, Watchet issued many more bonds than the main Williton branch. It was sad when the factory closed in 1982. After Van Heusen, the building reverted back to being used for entertainment as a Night Club (Club 21). In the past, this had had different uses, at first The Assembly Rooms, but then also the Cosy Cinema. Watchet originally had two cinemas, with the Ritz on the Esplanade. Today, of course, it is our Doctors' Surgery.

In fact, looking at my old copy of the August 1982 St. Decuman's Church Magazine I count forty seven advertisements for local shops and businesses! I hope to write more about these shops and businesses in the months ahead and perhaps also of our three schools, St Decuman's, the County Primary plus the private school, 'Bucklands', in St. Decuman's Road. In those days Primary Schools took children until they were eleven, then they went on to either Grammar or Secondary Modern education.

Tony Knight

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

# WHEELS

Community Car Scheme

Serving Williton, Watchet and immediately surrounding areas

## Volunteer co-ordinators and drivers always wanted

To volunteer or for more information please ring  
07891 821 861

### Forget Me Not Café

We start the new year 2026 with usual meetings at the Sanctuary on Wednesdays, Jan 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> then in Feb 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

On Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Jan we hold our annual **Indian meal** at the Spice Merchant in Watchet at 7.30, tickets £25 per person from Margaret on 07973 638 030 or [watchetdementia@gmail.com](mailto:watchetdementia@gmail.com)

### Watchet Singers

Over the Christmas season we enjoyed our December concert, singing at Watchet's Late night shopping and our carol singing at Williton Hospital.

Rehearsals for the Watchet Singers will resume on January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm in the Methodist Schoolroom, continuing on Thursday evenings throughout the season. Our numbers are building up after the Covid blip but we still welcome new singers, no auditions required. Our **Spring Concert** will be held on April 16<sup>th</sup>... please make a note of it now.

Meanwhile, Happy New Year from us all, keep warm and well through the winter.

Contact: [thewatchetsingers@gmail.com](mailto:thewatchetsingers@gmail.com)

### Watchet Summertime Dates for your Diary

Yes I know it may not feel very 'summery' - however - we are planning toward **Summertime 2026** already. Thanks to those who attended the AGM in December, always fantastic to have the community support in planning our event - we cannot do it without you all!!

Date for 2026: Watchet Summertime event: 17<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2026

Meanwhile, we have a few fund raising events to whet your appetite for 2026:

1. **Spice Merchant Fundraising Evening** Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February.  
£20 pp Book in a slot from 5pm until 8pm that suits you and your companions - set menu available
2. **Watchet Summertime Safari Supper** Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March.  
Meet Bernice at the RBL club for 6pm and then follow me round the town for a multi course supper at venues where we purchase a drink at each venue to wash down the delicious offering - £13 pp for the entire multi course supper.
3. **St Patricks Day Ceilidh** Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March at Watchet Bowling Club.  
£20 pp for an evening of country style directed dancing with a band (Crazy Goat) and a 2 course Irish supper (veg option available)
4. **Don's Watchet Summertime Entertainment Evening**  
Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April at the Watchet Boat Museum £12 including somerset cider and cake.

### Watchet Community Choir

Our last couple of months have been extremely busy, with performances at Croft House, Dene Lodge, the Minehead Platform Christmas Fair, Late Night Shopping in Watchet, Watchet Salvation Army, Stogursey Dementia Café Christmas Lunch and East Quay. Phew!

We can now store away our Christmas songs for another year and look forward to singing and spreading joy in 2026. We wish you all the best for a Happy New 2026.

Ann Gedge – Watchet Community Choir

Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

# EAST QUAY

**LOADS TO DO AT EAST QUAY**  
EVENTS - WORKSHOPS - EXHIBITIONS  
RESTAURANT - COURSES - ACTIVITIES

➤ **GROUPS FOR ADULTS IN JANUARY / FEBRUARY**  
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SPOKEN WORD (3rd Weds) / DRINK & DRAW (4th Tues)

➤ **FOOD & DRINK**  
**KITCHEN & BAR:** Closed on Mondays.  
Open Tuesday – Sunday, 9am – 5pm, serving breakfast from 9 – 11am and lunch from 12 – 3pm.

➤ **EXHIBITIONS**  
**SHOWING IN GALLERY 1 & 2: EARTHLY SPIRITS** by Pinkie Maclure.  
A new exhibition by Scottish stained-glass artist and musician, Pinkie Maclure, exploring themes of environmentalism, and marks Maclure's first solo show in England. 31.01.2026 – 04.05.2026. Join us from 6pm on the 31st of January for the opening party.  
**SHOWING IN STUDIO 10: FILM SCREENING: FROM GROUND ZERO**  
Palestine's official submission to the 2025 Academy Awards. This powerful film amplifies the voices of dozens of emerging Palestinian artists, offering an urgent cry for humanity from a people under siege. 23.01.2026 – 25.01.2026.

➤ **FUN FOR FAMILIES: FEBRUARY HALF TERM**  
Join us on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 11am - 1pm for hands-on workshops for all the family. Plus, there will be a free drop-in activity in the foyer all week long.

➤ **WORDS IN WATCHET FESTIVAL**  
Visit East Quay as part of Watchet's town-wide literary festival from Friday 20th – Sunday 22nd February 2026.

➤ **EVENTS**  
Loads happening in January and February – from film nights and spoken word to the opening of a brand-new exhibition and live music. Check out the Watchet Connects event listings for full details.

[www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk](http://www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk) 01984 263103

f i t @eastquaywatchet

Onion Collective CIC, Company 08323538

## What's On at The Backyard?

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan** 3.30pm **The Great Baldini**. An amazing magician. If you missed the wonderful Baldini back in September, be sure to catch this show. Designed for everyone from 5-95 you won't fail to be impressed by this matinée, featuring the comedic marvellous maestro of magic that is *The Great Baldini*!

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Jan** 7.30pm **The Spy Who Loved Me Tender** by Spitz & Co. Back from launching our theatre and premiering their brand new show. Elvis immersing himself in his alter-ego James Bond with his much beleaguered tour manager Josephine holding things together. Be sure to book quick.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> Feb** 7.30pm **Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde** by Isosceles Theatre. Missed their *Titanic* show? Robert Louis Stevenson's classic gothic story is bought to life by this award winning company. A show that has enthralled audiences throughout Britain and Ireland since 2006.

For the above shows book online: <https://www.backyard-theatre-watchet.uk/> or call the Ticket Source Box Office: 0333 666 3366

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb** 7.30pm **The Homing Stone** Words In Watchet Literary Festival. Watchet's very own literary festival celebrates its launch at the BYT. Storyteller Hugh Lupton tells the epic tale of the perilous and extraordinary journey of his Great Uncle Arthur Ransome. Book online : <https://wordsinwatchet.com/>

## Backyard Theatre Triumph

**£448** Raised from **Ebenezer Scrooge** play. A heartwarming success for local arts and community spirit.

The Backyard Theatre is delighted to announce a fantastic achievement following the recent production of *Ebenezer Scrooge*. Thanks to the overwhelming support and enthusiasm of our local community, we have raised an impressive £448 through ticket sales and donations for the Quantock Food Bank.

This remarkable sum not only celebrates the hard work and dedication of our talented cast and crew but also highlights the power of theatre to bring people together for a good cause.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended, volunteered, or contributed in any way. Your support helps keep the spirit of creativity alive and makes the Backyard Theatre a welcoming hub for all.

Here's to many more uplifting performances and community successes!



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### 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 January we are raising money for **Water Aid** and in February for **Mercy Ships**.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 2.30pm. Come and hear all about the work undertaken by the **Mercy Ships**.

Everyone welcome to this free event held in the schoolroom.



Image: Dr Ramon Reyes MD

We read the Bible together and discuss the passages on Mondays January 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and February 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. We start at 2.30pm and have a cup of tea at 3.30pm.

Everyone is welcome to join us.

Our Sunday services, led by a variety of preachers, are at 10.30am and followed with refreshments.

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### Watchet Salvation Army

Thank you for all your support in 2025 and we all wish you a blessed and peaceful 2026. Goodness, how the years roll on so fast!

Our coffee mornings are every Friday from 9.30- 11.30am

Bible discussion follows on, every Friday 12-1pm.

Little Saints are on every Wednesday during term time 10 -11.30am.

And our Sunday services are every week at 10.30am.

The New Year is a great time to start afresh, may we open our eyes and ears to all that Jesus has to say to us in this New Year.

God Bless, Sam.

**Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb**

## St Decuman's Church

Happy New Year from everyone at St Decuman's Church.

The decorated Christmas trees from all the local organisations and charities who took part in our Christmas Tree Festival will still be in place for a few days in the New Year, so you have a final chance to pop in and see them, if you haven't done already. The church is usually open during daylight hours.

During the Autumn we have had our electrics updated, with energy efficient pew heating put in, so we should all be nice and warm now during services and events.

Our Sunday service each week is at 10.45am and is usually Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome.

In January and February we have a couple of special services:

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January at 11am all the local churches will come together for a **Churches Together in Watchet and Williton** service at Williton Pavilion.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 11am at Holy Cross Chapel (above the Market Street museum): **Ash Wednesday** service to mark the beginning of Lent, leading up to Easter.

**Tower Lighting** – the 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.

For up-to-date details about services and events, please see our website on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

Contacts: Revd Mark Phillips (Vicar) tel. 01984 639 669  
email: [revdmarkphillips@outlook.com](mailto:revdmarkphillips@outlook.com) or to receive our weekly news sheet, please contact Sarah Lander: [sclarkelander@gmail.com](mailto:sclarkelander@gmail.com)

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## Baptist message from Mike Sherburn

Occasionally, I find myself wondering when I'm going to fit in some of the things that I'd like to do but don't seem to get round to.

'Urgent' and 'important' things are not always the same and it's hard to get the balance right. Sometimes, important things miss out because of things that are urgent, and we end up putting more energy into things that don't matter so much to us.

How can I make 2026 more about the things that really matter? I find the bible a helpful reference point for what is important, plain guidance on how to live, and what God is looking for in men and women. Quite simply, "Do what is fair and just to the people around you, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don't take yourself too seriously – take God seriously" (Micah 6:8 Old Testament).

I hope lots of us would support the first two, "do what is fair and just" and "be compassionate and loyal". In everyday life, that might mean forgiving those who we feel hurt by and finding ways to get along with them. It might mean stepping outside our safe groups of people who think like us and reaching out to those who see the world differently.

With the third, "don't take yourself too seriously – take God seriously", it makes sense to take God seriously. I think he's able to make more of a difference than anyone else. We'll be providing some ways you can find out more about the bible, church and annoying Christians – as this year begins.

Look out for what we're up to, take care.

Mike Sherburn Pastor, Watchet Baptist Church, 07466 195 976  
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# REPAIR CAFE

## West Quantocks Repair Café

Following the success of our first two “cafés” our first Repair Café of 2026 will be on **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January**.

It will be at the Community Centre, and will be from 10.00 am. We are shortening the event to two hours for the convenience of our volunteers. We look forward to seeing you there with anything that needs some tender loving care! Free, though donations are welcomed to support our costs.

Teas, coffees, soft drinks and cakes etc will be available.

Paul Foreman



## Watchet War Memorial Ground and Pavilion Group

Our fund raising to restore the pavilion goes on, and we were delighted to receive a grant from the Harbour Community Bookshop to facilitate some repairs needed to the roof due to vandalism. We thank the Bookshop and their volunteers, it is a wonderful asset to the town and they have been great support to us over the years.

We have also been awarded a grant towards restoration by the **Thomas Laity Stoate Trust Fund**. The Stoate family have a long historical connection to the town, running the flour mill for many years. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the family made a gift of the old lifeboat house to the town to become our Library.

When we have sufficient funds we will be starting phase 1 of the necessary work to the pavilion as outlined by the building surveyor. There is still a way to go but extra events are planned to bring in more income. One of these was the Santa Run around the Memorial Ground on December 7<sup>th</sup>, which was supported by the **SALC** fund, through Watchet Town Council.

Lori Lee is our 'Event Co-ordinator', and can be contacted on 07935 318 022 should anyone be looking to organize an event on Watchet Memorial Ground.

Jim Nicholas



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## Events at The Regal, Minehead

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January – 11am – 1pm Coffee Morning in the bar

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January – 7.30pm **Storytelling**. Relax in the theatre bar with Alexandra taking you on a magical journey. Suitable for 10 – 100 year-olds!

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January – 7.30pm The Regal Film Society Screening. TBC

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January – 2pm The Royal Opera Encore from The Royal Opera House. **La Traviata**. Some of operas most famous melodies and a star vehicle for leading soprano Ermonela Jaho. Director Richard Eyre.

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January – 7pm **NT Live Hamlet**. With Olivier Award winner Hiran Abeysekera in a fearless contemporary take on Shakespeare's tragedy. NT deputy Artistic Director Robert Hastie. A sharp, fearless and darkly funny reimagining.

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January – 7.30pm The Regal Film Society Screening. TBC.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February – 7.30pm Minehead Amateur Dramatic School proudly present **Disney's Frozen Jr**. True love and acceptance between sisters. When Anna and Elsa are faced with danger, they discover their hidden potential and the powerful bond of sisterhood.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February – 11am – 1pm Coffee morning in the bar.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February – 7.15pm The Royal Ballet Live from The Royal Opera House **Wolf Works**. Virginia Woolf defied literary conventions to depict rich inner worlds. Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor leads a luminous artistic team to evoke Woolf's signature stream of consciousness writing style. Woolf Works is a collage of themes from Mrs Dalloway, Orlando, The Waves and Woolf's other writings. Created in 2015 for The Royal Ballet.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February – 7.30pm The Regal Film Society Screening. TBC.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February – 7.30pm **We're Waiting in the Wings**. Impakt is an inclusive and dynamic group dedicated to supporting individuals of all abilities. Helping children build their confidence and form lasting friendships and performance.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February – 7.30pm The Regal **Comedy Night**

Tickets for all events may be booked in advance online at [regaltheatre.co.uk/whatson](http://regaltheatre.co.uk/whatson) or from the Box Office (Tel 01643 706 430) between 9.30am and 12.00pm Monday - Saturday;



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Article and Ad deadline for the March/April edition is 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

# 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 [liz@solveitbookkeeping.co.uk](mailto:liz@solveitbookkeeping.co.uk)  
or [editor@watchetcct.co.uk](mailto:editor@watchetcct.co.uk)

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.

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## January / February Dates

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January 3.30pm

**Muddy Feet**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February 3pm

**The Relics**

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 3pm

**Dolly Parton**

*Other dates may be added so keep an eye on our Facebook Page  
Every first Tuesday of the month - the Legion Book Club*

The Watchet British Legion **Poppy Appeal** are pleased to announce that the total raised this year was **£2228.79**, although the final total with people using QR codes will not be known for several months.

I would like to thank all the kind people of Watchet, businesses, Knights Templar school and the two Poppy Volunteers Anita and Anton who helped to raise this amount.

Sara Long

### 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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