



# MODBURY MESSENGER



Illustration - Ter Allen

For the People of Modbury & Brownston

Volume 25, Issue 310 - January 2025

## MODBURY MAY FAIR WEEK 2025 - Saturday 3rd to Sunday 11th May

Market and Carnival - Saturday 3rd

Crowning events and Modbury Mile - Monday 5th

Our theme is SPACE

Details of all events will be published in future editions of the Modbury Messenger and on social media.

Please contact Pip Ainsworth for further details, market stall applications and with any offers of help.

**May Fair 2025 Urgently Needs New Chair Person**



A new Chair is needed for May Fair 2025 as, unfortunately, I no longer have the time to devote to steer this excellent event.

The role is very much a co-ordinating one as many of the activities are organised individually by our loyal, long term helpers.

There will be support from the existing Committee Members who each have a role to play, but an overall co-ordinator is imperative.

I really can't stress strongly enough how important a replacement is, and I sincerely hope that someone will come forward by contacting me on [pipainsworth@btinternet.com](mailto:pipainsworth@btinternet.com)

**Pip Ainsworth**



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# THE UNRAVELLING WILBURYS

**Sat 8<sup>th</sup> February Modbury Memorial Hall Doors 7:30**

This top tribute show is more than just a tribute - they are the complete package! With their perfect combination of brilliant musicianship and tongue in cheek humour, they have had rave reviews throughout the UK. Playing the country-rock songs of the 1980s supergroup 'The Traveling Wilburys', the band also steal some choice numbers from the back catalogue of each of its five iconic members; Roy Orbison, Tom Petty, George Harrison, Bob Dylan and Jeff Lynne.

Born out of the ashes of the popular Beatles tribute band Sgt Pepper's Only Dart Board Band, the fabulous UNRAVELLING WILBURYS are made up of Sticky Willy, Walter, Thumper, Blind Melon and Honky Tonk Wilbury, the "real" Wilbury brothers, who present their own unique slant on what it means to be a tribute band. The show tells the story of the fateful night in Nashville's Tootsies Bar in 1987, when their songs were (allegedly) stolen by Messrs Orbison & Co. and the hard road they had to tread to get 'em back.

Songs such as 'End of the Line', 'Handle with Care', 'The Devil's Been Busy', and 'Tweeter and The Monkey Man' form the basis of the set, which also features additional choice cuts including 'Pretty Woman' (Orbison), 'Mr Blue Sky' (Lynne), 'American Girl' (Petty), 'While My Guitar Gently Weeps' (Harrison), and 'A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall' (Dylan).

With music for everyone to enjoy, this is an evening not to be missed. A fabulous night out for lovers of great music.

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**MODBURY PLAYERS PRESENT**

**The Pantomime 2025**

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**Modbury Memorial Hall**

**Thurs Jan 23rd 7.30pm**

**Fri Jan 24th 7.30pm**

**Sat Jan 25th 2.30 & 7.30pm**

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# St George's Churchyard, Modbury - Citizen Science Ecological Surveys - Summer 2024

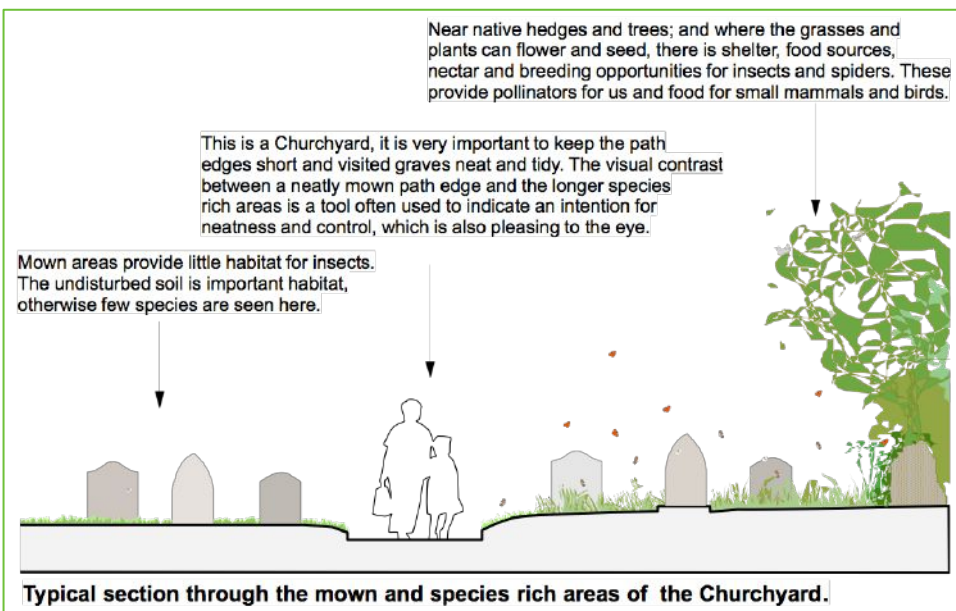


## Mini Bioblitz of Invertebrates July 28th 2024 in St George's, Modbury, Churchyard.

After surveys of plants, birds and a few insects in previous years, and inspired by the need for knowledge and conservation of insects, we focused on these in the summer of 2024. A survey was carried out with sweep nets, bug pots, lenses and a very detailed Invertebrate ID book, by citizen scientists who are learning, year on year, a little more about the complexity of identifying insects. We focused on insects, due to the very worrying decline in their numbers over recent years. Insects (butterflies, moths, bees, flies, wasps and many other species) pollinate our plants. Without them, there will be no fruit, vegetables or cereals for us to eat, as we depend on them for our food. Bats, birds and moths depend on insects to eat too.

Invertebrates include all living things, including insects, that do not have a spine or backbone. Insects have 6 legs and there are over 25,000 species in the UK, accounting for 80% of all living creatures! Insects live on, in, feed and breed on many different plants. The wider the diversity of plant species, forms and conditions where they grow, the larger the variety and number of different invertebrates they will support. This has been borne out in our mini survey this summer (see the churchyard map on the next page) with:

- 20 species of insect identified in the 2021 survey area (amongst the pollarded ash trees in the SE corner of the churchyard),
- 16 species identified in the 2022 survey area (amongst the Rowan trees in the SW corner of the churchyard)
- 4 species of insect identified to the north of the Church in the mown area.
- 4 Species of butterfly were seen flying around the boundary of the Churchyard, near the northern hedge.



With its theme of invertebrates, ModWAG organised our first moth identification in the churchyard on Friday 16th August 2024. This was thanks to Richard Moore who has an amazing knowledge of moths and insects, and fantastic photography skills too. He brought along a friend from Dartmouth, so we had two moth traps. We stopped a little earlier than we had hoped due to a family of hornets that are nesting (very beautifully) in Churchgate's barn and who decided the moth trap lights were very inviting. They hunt moths and other insects to feed their young. They eat plants and only sting humans if they feel under threat.

Despite this, Richard has photographed and identified all the moths seen. Hornets hunt moths and the long grass had been cut, so the odds were against us finding many. A few images are on the next page. We caught around 10 different species, many that rely on long grasses, oak, hawthorn and blackthorn for food and shelter.

Moths found on the evening 16th August 2024, along the hedged easterly boundary after a long-grass cut, with a finish at 10.00pm due to hornets:

**Orange Swift** - feeds on roots of dandelion and other plants

**Light brown apple moth** - originally from Australia

**Rosy Footman** - feeds on lichen on oak trees

**Straw dot** - feeds on a variety of grasses

**Brimstone** - (a butterfly) feeds on hawthorn and blackthorn

**Common marbled Carpet** - feeds on low growing plants/ bedstraws/ cleavers

**Grass veneer** - feeds on grasses over 15cm from the ground

**Iron prominent** - feeds on birches, hazel, oaks and alder

**Oak Eggar** - feeds on blackthorn, hazel, bramble and hawthorn

**Jersey tiger** - Seen mainly in S Devon, day-time moth, feeding on nettles and other flowering plants **cont. over**





Rosy Footman



Oak Eggar



Straw Dot



Grass Veneer



Brimstone



Orange Swift



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# Modbury Parish Council Meeting

## Tuesday 3rd December 2024, 7pm

### Public Forum

Three members of the public attended our December meeting. We had been expecting a visit from the producer of the proposed South Hams Festival, but the festival has been postponed.

We thank Sally (the outgoing parish clerk) for her work and are pleased to welcome our new Parish Clerk, Bleddyn Griffiths (Griff).



Griff will be in the office between 10am and 5.30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting 17<sup>th</sup> December.

### Modbury Flood Alleviation

Rob West gave an update on the effectiveness of the Modbury flood alleviation scheme. The recent storms have activated the scheme for the first time since its installation in 2018 and it has been very effective in slowing the water run-off – ultimately stopping Modbury from flooding. We are very pleased that there is spare capacity of 70% to cope should we be unlucky enough to experience even more rainfall than the recent storms have delivered!

We are very disappointed to have had our grant application of 25% towards the cost of road ploughing to help alleviate flooding problems turned down by Devon County Council recently and DCC Cllr Rufus Gilbert is going to follow this up.

We will be reviewing our response to the recent weather before meeting with DCC in January to review the joint working arrangement.

Many thanks to Rob West as Road Warden and Cllr Bill Cole as Lengthsman and their teams for their hard work to date in repairing the potholes and clearing the drains.

See Cllr Phil Smith's reports – "Road Warden Update" (p11) and "Storm Bert - Learning the Lessons" (p15) for further information.

### Report from DCC Cllr Rufus Gilbert

- DCC are likely to be introducing a 5% increase in their precept for 2025/26.
- Repairs to the A379 adjacent to the Industrial estate will be undertaken soon in response to public complaints and a more permanent repair will take place in February 2025.
- Rufus Gilbert wished the outgoing Clerk best wishes for the future and thanked her for all her hard work for Modbury Parish Council.

### Cllr Bernard Taylor (SHDC) sent apologies

#### Matters arising from previous meetings

- **Flooding at Orcheton** – Cllr Ann Turner is arranging a meeting in January with all interested parties.
- **Grass verge A379** – SHDC have accepted they are responsible for the maintenance of this verge and have now included it in their grass cutting schedule. Cllr Bill Cole will liaise with SHDC for work to be done on the trees obscuring the light.
- We have submitted a strong objection to the proposed increase in parking charges for visitors to the area. We understand that a paper on this was considered by SHDC Executive on 4<sup>th</sup> December and Full Council on 5<sup>th</sup> December. We are very disappointed not to have been consulted on this alongside other towns in the South Hams and will be monitoring progress with the proposal.

### Memorial Hall Play Area

We have received three tenders for the replacement of the condemned Memorial Hall Play Park equipment. All are for recycled plastic and one offers a 30 year warranty. We will make a final decision at a special Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> December and, subject to approval, we hope the work will start soon afterwards and be completed by early March.

**Date of next main meeting Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

## NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

**Modbury Parish Council now has a new phone number:**

**07467134225**



**Ivybridge u3a General Meeting - Monday 20th January  
at the Watermark Centre, 2.00pm**

**Life on the Licence Fee:** Alex Leger will recall his experiences working in a changing and challenging BBC, notably on Blue Peter - including the episode when baby elephant, Lulu, ran amok.

The event is open to members and those no longer in full-time employment who wish to find out more of what's on offer.

**Roy Little**



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# Modbury Mission Community

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## St George's Church, Modbury



**KIDS' CHURCH** - Kids' Church meet in Modbury Primary School. Parents, please drop off your Explorers (age 9+) and Discoverers (age 6-8) at the school from 9.15 am where they will be met by one of the leaders. After Kids' Church, the youngsters will be taken to St. George's to be with their parents at the end of the service. Climbers (age 0-5) will remain in St. George's, meeting their leader to be taken to the Lower Vestry. If you have any questions regarding Kids' Church please contact Sara Chapman on [s.chapman@modburyteam.org](mailto:s.chapman@modburyteam.org).

Rev. Matt Rowland

01548 830260

[matt.rowland@modburyteam.org](mailto:matt.rowland@modburyteam.org)

January	Service	Service Leader
January 5th	Holy Communion 9.30 am	Rev. Matt Rowland
January 12th	Holy Communion BCP 8.00 am	Rev. Matt Rowland
	All-Age Service 9.30 am	Rev. Oli Long and Helen Pickard
January 19th	Holy Communion and Kids' Church 9.30 am	Rev. Matt Rowland
January 26th	Sunday Worship 9.30 am	Joyce Howitt
	Rooted - A service of contemporary worship 6.00 pm	Rev. Oli Long

## CHRISTIAN COMMENT: Worry Worry Worry

It's a new year and what are we worrying about now? Actually, there are so many things that could be getting us down. For Modbury Mission Community, it could be the fact that the Rev. Matt Rowland is moving to St Leonard's Church in Exeter. This will be their gain and our sad loss; he has been so good for us. How should we face our worries?

I recently read in Premier Christian News that the favourite scripture at the moment is from Philippians 4:6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God." The writer goes on to say, "And the peace of God that transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus".

In light of this scripture, my advice for 2025 is to try praying. In fact, there is a very helpful website that can help you with this. Have a look at [www.trypraying.org](http://www.trypraying.org).

Happy New Year everyone, look forward to seeing you in church this year.

**Gilbert Snook**

**MODBURY WI** Modbury WI meets at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of the month at the QEII Pavilion in Chatwell Lane, Modbury PL21 0FS excluding December, January and September when we meet up during the day for other activities such as coffee, lunch or tea out. Visitors are most welcome to attend a meeting for a fee of £5.



If you would like to find out more about what talks and activities are planned, then please email [modbury@devonwi.org.uk](mailto:modbury@devonwi.org.uk)

**Rosemary Parker**

### St Monica's Roman Catholic Church, Modbury

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### St Austin's Priory Roman Catholic Church, Cadleigh

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## Successful Flooding Solution in Modbury!

Devon County Council (DCC) has informed us that the Flood Alleviation scheme that serves the town has operated twice in the recent severe weather. The scheme consists of three earth embankments (bunds) as well as other drainage improvements in the town and is monitored by DCC. They were filling on Sunday 23rd November, mid-morning and in the early hours of Tuesday 26th November. As a result it's estimated that 4,000 cubic metres of water was captured and stored, rather than making its way down into the town which would have likely resulted in a significant flood event, impacting both residential and commercial properties.

This is the first time the scheme has been tested in earnest since its completion in 2018 and we are delighted with the outcome. DCC have thanked us, our local flood group, local landowners and Wakehams of Modbury for their vigilance and efforts during the storm in order to ensure that the best outcome possible was achieved.

In the New Year, we will be meeting with DCC to ensure that this coordinated response to extreme weather continues into the future.

**Sally Smale**

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## MODBURY PARISH COUNCIL

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Tel: 07467134225 email [parishclerk@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### Your Councillors are:

Bill Cole	01548 830913	
Richard Foss	01548 721420	<a href="mailto:richardfoss@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk">richardfoss@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Barbara Price (Chair)	07739752095	<a href="mailto:barbaraprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk">barbaraprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Tony Price	07801837129	<a href="mailto:tonyprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk">tonyprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
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**How can we help you?** Councillors run drop-in surgeries on Sat. 10–11am in the Parish Office at 1 Modbury Court. The Parish Clerk is in the Parish Council office on Tues & Thurs, 10am – 5:30pm. Call into the office, phone, email or come along to our meetings at 7pm in the Pavilion, QEII Recreation Ground on the first Tuesday of every month and speak in the public forum.

### Devon County Councillor (Salcombe Division):

Rufus Gilbert Tel: 01548 856659  
[rufus.gilbert@devon.gov.uk](mailto:rufus.gilbert@devon.gov.uk)

### South Hams District Councillor Charterlands Ward:

Bernard Taylor Tel: 01548 830844  
[Cllr.Bernard.Taylor@southhams.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Bernard.Taylor@southhams.gov.uk)



# Road Warden Scheme Update

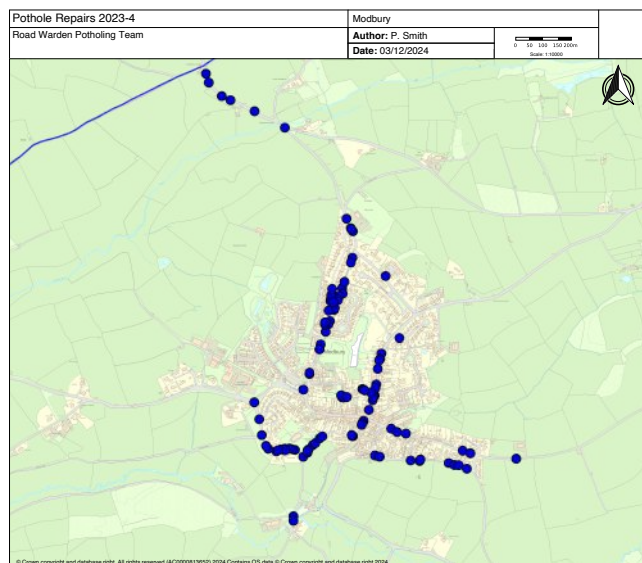
As Modbury Parish Council's volunteer road warden, Rob West leads a small team dedicated to repairing many of the smaller potholes throughout the parish and ensuring that all our salt bins are kept topped up in preparation for the icy winter conditions on our minor roads. They are not permitted to work on the A379, though. A separate team under the leadership of Councillor Bill Cole deals with some of the less serious road drainage problems, clearing gullies and buddle holes for instance. Buddle holes are holes or pipes that carry water through a hedge or bank as part of road drainage.

During the last year or so, the potholing team has repaired well over 150 potholes and the accompanying map shows the location of most of them. To do this, they have used over 100 packs of special repair compound which are delivered on a periodic basis to our store by Devon County Council.

After the pothole is cleaned out, the compound is shovelled in and then rammed down with a mobile petrol-driven compactor before being sealed with liquid bitumen. Although this can never be as good as a job undertaken by Devon Highways or their contractors using pneumatic drills and diggers with hot tarmac, it has meant that we have been able to prevent the smaller holes (which DCC won't touch) from getting bigger, saving DCC money and improving driving conditions and road safety for local people.

The Parish Council would like to thank Rob, Neil Tooley, Oliver Francis and Harry Sleeman on the potholing team and Bill, Tom Vidler and Chris Lambart on the drainage team for their sterling work on behalf of our community.

**Phil Smith, Modbury Parish Council**



## Modbury May Fair -Where the money comes from and where it goes

Recent editions of the Modbury Messenger have carried stories from some of Modbury's wonderful organisations that received a grant from the May Fair last year. It occurred to me that some accounting of how the money is raised and distributed might be of interest to more than just the May Fair Committee, so below is a summary showing the key numbers.

Last year, there was a Ceilidh on the first weekend, which was hard work for our volunteers, but was enjoyed by all and hopefully will be repeated this year. It raised £250. The traditional Market Stalls on Saturday morning made £270 and the good folk of the "allotmenters" added a further £120 from their takings. The Carnival on the theme of "Modbury goes to the Olympics" was fun and collected £300, down on the year before and much less than a few years ago, when we all had coins in our pockets to toss into the buckets or the Fire Brigade's tarpaulin. *(Perhaps everyone should put out a jar to collect coins during the year in readiness for next year's fair, Ed)*

The Treasure Hunt is always challenging and although the entrance fee goes on the prize money, the treasure hunt ends at the Church in time for their delicious teas – which contributed a magnificent £360. Monday brings the crowning and associated games (£300), the duck race (£450!!) and the Mile. The Twinners' creperie donated £60 and Art on Broad Street, £70. During the week the Dog Show, run by the South Moor Vets, raised a lot of barks and £40; the Exeter Inn events, a generous £250; the Cubs beetled out a tenner and the Gospel Singers chimed in with £230. On the Friday, the Brownies Bingo made £320.

We must remember, that it isn't all about making money, it's about having a good time socialising in our wonderful community. To that end, we held a Picnic in the Park on the second Saturday with free entrance, music and games sponsored and organised by Bombers. In addition, we get very generous contributions from Luscombe Maye (sponsoring the Modbury Mile) and Marchand Petit (sponsoring the Carnival).

In total, we received £3,900 and spent £1,488 (insurance, publicity, road and car park closures, carnival bands, replacement equipment etc) a surplus of £2,412.

We donated funds totalling £2,860 to nine organisations; the Scouts and Cubs for some compasses and tents; Modbury Vixens for some training gear; MODWAG for some monitoring kit; the Brownies for some equipment for their kitchen; the litter pickers for some safety signs and bigger tongs; Marvellous Modbury for some flags to decorate the centre of the Town; the Messenger and Modbury Caring for essential computer equipment and finally St George's for refurbishment of important services in part of the building!

Thanks have to go to all the organisations, businesses and individuals that work so hard to make the May Fair a success every year, and to all of you who attend events and participate so enthusiastically in them. For this year we could do with some more volunteers to help run events, so don't be shy!

**Mark Lawrence, Treasurer, Modbury May Fair Committee**

## Modbury Parish Council – Meet the Councillors

**Modbury Parish Council is short of four Parish Councillors, and especially of those who represent young families' needs, so perhaps a volunteer or two from the new Palm Cross estate could be persuaded to join the Council.**

But first, a bit about our Council. Modbury Parish Council is composed of residents of the parish of Modbury and Brownston who really care about the parish, its activities, its people and its structure. The Council should be made up of 12 members but currently it is four members short. I have to admit that I find this surprising and worrying, especially as Modbury has expanded enormously over the last decade and now has a huge new and lovely estate full of young families. There is only one meeting of Councillors a month in the evening, when issues are discussed and resolved for the benefit of the whole community. So I have been in touch with several councillors to find out what sort of people they are, and to try and encourage four more Modbury Parish residents to step up to fill the available four slots. It really is important to have a full and active Parish Council.

Secondly, what is OUR Council's view or strategy as to what the future holds for Modbury? This is of paramount importance so here is their vision, and their values for the future of Modbury:

- Work to improve the quality of life for present and future generations;
- Maintain and improve the public spaces and the aesthetic appearance of Modbury for residents and visitors;
- Protect our environment and ensure the sustainability of our natural resources now and in the future;
- Support the continuing viability of businesses based in and around Modbury.
- To conduct our business with integrity, impartiality and transparency;
- To be a listening council, treating all views with courtesy and respect;
- To represent, and be an advocate and campaigning voice for, the residents of Modbury;
- To encourage engagement and involvement in the work of the Council;
- To work in partnership with other organisations to improve our services and deliver value for money.

Work that our Council is committed and/or contracted to undertake include:

- Management and maintenance of our play parks;
- Repair of potholes on minor routes within the parish;
- Grass cutting;
- Maintenance of public rights of way (P3);
- Drain and buddle hole clearing (buddle holes are holes or pipes that carry water through a hedge or bank as part of road drainage);
- Tree husbandry;
- Maintenance of our green spaces;
- Maintenance of council assets, which include car parking spaces at Palm Cross, benches and sports facilities.

In Modbury, we are fortunate to have willing volunteers who undertake much of the practical work involved in these and other activities, and we thank them for their continued Involvement. Where volunteers are unavailable, or the specific role requires more regulated skills, the council contracts with external companies to provide the services required.

Here are three of the 8 current Councillors who have communicated their thoughts, aims and wishes for us.



### **Barbara Price**

Barbara feels that living in Modbury has to be one of the best places to live in Britain and is the main reason why she and Tony, now also a Modbury councillor, moved here from Surrey after many holidays over the years in and around the area. After what seemed to have been a lifetime in the National Health Service and the Charity Sector, she looked forward to a lazy retirement in a peaceful and pleasant place. She loves walking and swimming at Bigbury with their dog, Alfie, but as she is passionate about the community, and particularly about social care, social housing, supporting a fair deal for all, accessibility, carers' support, and environmental issues, Barbara got involved to make things happen. She

currently chairs the Parish Council and represents the Council as a Trustee on the Modbury Sick Poor Fund. Alongside the volunteering, she has also been involved with the May Fair, having organised the Modbury Mile Run for the past three years, with her husband, and as a member of the Modbury Twinning Society hosting their French guests. Outside of Modbury, she is a Trustee of South Hams Community Action, which supports a range of charitable organisations as well as providing Social Prescribing Services in partnership with Health Centres and GP practices. Her hobbies include swimming, both in the pool and the sea, reading (she is a member of one of the many book clubs in Modbury), wine appreciation, cooking/baking, very amateur gardening and walking the dog. What's left of her time is taken up with frequent trips to London to see both of their boys who still live there, and to catch up with their growing grandson.





### Sarah Wyatt

As a Parish Councillor Sarah wants to be part of the future of Modbury and the parish, helping it thrive and flourish with sustainability and environmental issues in mind. She wants it to retain its amazing community feel as a welcoming, friendly and safe parish, and says it is just the most amazing place to live, explore, shop and eat. Sarah is also an Independent Celebrant which involves writing and officiating at weddings, funerals, memorials, baby naming ceremonies and vow renewals. Among her many interests, she loves being outdoors, come rain or shine, including wild swimming, nature, wildlife, beautiful scenery and views, travelling, amateur dramatics, singing and listening to live music and going to the theatre. She's creative and enjoys making things, such as a lot of the beanies on the Modbury bollards, and loves everything

arty. Above all she is interested in people and wants to do her very best for the community of Modbury where she and her husband Rob, a retired GP, have lived since 1985 and have brought their children up in the town.



### Phil Smith

Phil has been a Parish Councillor since April 2022 and is currently Vice Chair of the Council, Chair of Maintenance and was previously councillor lead for the parish's Homes for Ukraine Support Team. He has lived in Modbury for the last 39 years and has spent most of his working career in social housing, with Plymouth City Council from 1985, with Ocean Housing Group – a registered housing association in Cornwall – from 1999 and latterly as a consultant with Ark Consultancy Ltd. His hobbies include most sports and he is a former Chairman of Ivybridge Rugby Club and current Secretary of Modbury Cricket Club. He is passionate about environmental and housing issues and wishes to see more affordable,

and particularly social, housing in the parish to provide housing opportunities for younger and less well-off parishioners. He was a co-opted member of Modbury's Neighbourhood Plan Group from 2016 to 2021, is committed to caring for our public spaces and is involved on an annual basis with Modbury's Christmas Lights. He intends, as a councillor, to help create a vibrant and sustainable future for the town and parish.

To re-emphasise - Modbury Parish Council would welcome another 4 Parish Councillors to complete the Council, and especially including some who represent young families' needs, so are really hoping some volunteers from the new Palm Cross estate could join the Council.

**John Bower**

## Memorial Hall Adventure Trail - Latest

As we reported in the last edition of the Messenger, we have been seeking alternative proposals for the replacement of the adventure trail at the Memorial Hall.

We have now received the quotations and designs for a recycled plastic replacement project and have been consulting with residents and their families over the favoured proposal.

We have also sought grant support to cover a proportion of the cost and hope to be able to make a decision at a special Council meeting on 19th December. It is intended to place an order immediately afterwards so work can start as soon as possible.



**Phil Smith,  
Modbury Parish Council**



OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ - LISTEN TO OUR FARMERS

I was asked, as Modbury Town Crier, to introduce the Marching for Farmers event at Burgh Island on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November. This was filmed by Spotlight and as you can read, did involve the Modbury Gospel Singers. Some would have seen that in the sand between Bigbury and Burgh Island were the words written by John Tucker of Folly Farm – “LISTEN TO US”. Several farmers with their tractors were there to support this event.



This is what I said "Bigbury and all local farmers, Country-side connoisseurs, Gospel Singers, Musical Director & Choir members, Climate Change Campaigners, Environmental evangelists, Green Issue Supporters, Nature lovers, my Lords, Ladies & Gentlemen. It is good to see you all here at the Pilchard Inn on Burgh Island for this event on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2M, 2X & 4I,(MMXXIV) in the year of Our Lord - 2024.

As Modbury Town Crier, it is an honour and privilege for me to be here to welcome one and all, as it was in Modbury Town in 2007, that was the first town in Britain to ban the use of plastic bags. This year in July, this country elected a new Government and in a recent budget brought in some new legislation, which is affecting many of our wonderful local farmers. We are here today to firstly show our support for these farmers and to further make a point that the new Government does need to listen to their and our views, in order that they can continue to produce food so that all can be fed. I now request silence as I invite Louise Wainwright, who with others, planned this gathering to highlight why it is so very important that local farmers are supported and that this present Government does really need to listen with both ears open, with mind engaged and really does hear what the folks here in this wonderful part of God's World here in Devon do proclaim – LISTEN TO US."

OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ

Thank you, Louise Wainwright.

OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ

Now I introduce a local farmer, Kathy Case, who is the deputy Chair of Devon National Farmers Union.

OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ

Now I call upon the Gospel Singers Musical Director, Jo Highley, to teach us how to sing that wonderful song, "Oh What a Wonderful World", and do we not need to look after this world, including supporting local farmers – LISTEN TO US! Please pray silence for Jo Highley.

Thank you, Jo.

OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ

Now Jo is going to teach us to sing the chant, "Put Your Roots Down – Are You Listening" and then sing it again when we are all standing on the sands where "LISTEN TO US" is marked. Do be careful.

GOD SAVE THE KING

OYEZ OYEZ OYEZ



David Scott, Modbury Town Crier

INTENDED MONTHLY FLAG HOIST AT PALM CROSS GREEN - January

Date	Masthead	Starboard Yard (Plymouth) - West	Port Yard (Modbury) - East	Event
16	Army	CORUNA	1809	Battle of Corunna 1809
25	Scottish Saltire	BURNS	Scottish Lion	Burns Night
26	Australia Flag	AUS3 <sup>rd</sup> subIE	1782 <sup>nd</sup> sub	Australia Day 1787
27	Poppy Flag	HOL2 <sup>nd</sup> subCAST	1945	Holocaust Day 1945

David Scott, Modbury Chief Yeoman





# An Apothecral Tail

## Hiems - Saturnalia



**Mistletoe (*Viscum album*)** is not uncommon around Modbury, though rarer than in many other parts of the UK. It is one of 1500 species of mistletoe, but the only one native to the British Isles. Mistletoe is, famously, a parasitic plant. Strictly, it is a partial parasite as it photosynthesises.

Mistletoe has evolved alongside other species. In this country, the mistle thrush plays a major role in the spreading of mistletoe to new sites. The sticky contents of mistletoe berries adhere to the beak of the thrush which then wipes its beak on branches of trees thus spreading the seeds. Mistletoe grows on more than 200 tree species, but in this country is generally associated with apple and ash trees.

Medicinally mistletoe has historically been used for treating arthritis, high blood pressure, epilepsy and infertility. In the first century AD, Dioscorides found that mistletoe cured external tumours. It is still used for treating cancer but without evidence to support this.

Our mistletoe is poisonous, causing symptoms such as nausea and vomiting, as well as diarrhoea and blurred vision. It is not usually fatal.



The ancient Greeks called mistletoe "Oak Sperm", but in this country there are probably less than a dozen examples of mistletoe growing on oak trees. The Romans associated mistletoe with **peace, love and understanding**.

They hung it over doorways to protect the household. In Christian times, this led to the tradition of lovers kissing under the mistletoe to protect from witches and demons.

In early Christian times, however, mistletoe was banned due to its association with paganism. This seems to have stemmed from a belief that mistletoe was used in a Druid ceremony which involved sacrifice of bulls. At this time, the Romans had banned human sacrifice, but continued to sacrifice animals. Christians, of course, preferred self sacrifice. Pliny the elder (1st century AD), in his "Natural History", records that Druid priests climbed oak trees and cut down mistletoe with golden sickles. Two white bulls were then sacrificed. However, this is the only record of this practice though it has since been commemorated in artworks. In this country, mistletoe is rarely seen on oak trees. Pliny's main interest was in the Spanish and German area, and I don't believe he ever came to Britain. What little evidence there is suggests that the Druids confined their use of mistletoe to medicinal.

*Fiat cum secundum artem*

**Edward Holt**

## Storm Bert – Learning the Lessons

If ever we needed reminding about the potential for damaging weather events affecting our area, Storm Bert, which hit the UK on 22 November last, provided it.



In under 48 hours, parts of Dartmoor received over 175mm of rainfall, coupled with high winds, and parts of South Wales and other areas of southern and central England experienced major flooding. Whilst rainfall totals in and around Modbury were much lower, they were still high enough to trigger the flood defences built around the town in 2018, as an article elsewhere in this edition confirms.

**Modbury Tiddlers**  
Playgroup

**Come and say hello!**  
For families with children 0-4 years

**Fridays – 9.15-11.15 at Modbury Memorial Hall**  
Last Friday of the month – out and about day  
Term time only

Sensory play, crafts and a dedicated baby area  
Dress up, ride ons, toys and more!  
Refreshments provided for adults and a healthy snack provided for children



Find us on facebook and instagram for up to date info each week  
f Modbury Tiddlers @modbury\_tiddlers  
mail@modburytiddlers.org.uk

Fortunately, whilst our parish emergency response was readied, it was not needed. In Modbury itself, flooding was limited to areas of Dark Lane, Back St and Church St, mostly caused by leaves and other debris blocking gullies and drains. Thanks to the efforts of local residents, damage to properties was limited and we would like to thank all those who were involved. Outside Modbury, the impact was more serious with landslips affecting the Sheephams road and many other roads being impassable to all but four-wheel drive vehicles with higher ground clearances. Devon Highways had their work cut out to restore the network over the following week.

Since the storm, the Parish Council has successfully asked for the worst of roads to receive a street sweep by South Hams DC to remove leaves and debris and Devon Highways will be arranging for the gully sucker to attend to the most problematic drains.

The Parish Council will be reviewing its emergency plan in the light of this event and will hopefully be prepared for further extreme weather events in the future.

**Phil Smith,**  
**Modbury Parish Council**



*'To engage the community to improve the environment so that all life thrives'*



## SOCIAL EVENING WITH BRING & SHARE SUPPER

Followed by:-

**THE FILM: 'SIX INCHES OF SOIL' (2024)**

(Running time 1hr 36m)

**THURS 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 7PM**

**MARS Recreation Hall, Modbury**

The film 'Six Inches of Soil' tells the story of remarkable farmers, communities, small businesses, chefs and entrepreneurs who are leading the way to transform how our food is produced and consumed. It is a story of courage, vision and hope.

It follows three new farmers on the first year of their regenerative journey to heal the soil and help transform the food system - Anna Jackson, a Lincolnshire 11th generation arable and sheep farmer; Adrienne Gordon, a Cambridgeshire small-scale vegetable farmer; and Ben Thomas, who rears pasture fed beef cattle in Cornwall. They are joined by other experts providing wisdom and solutions from a growing movement of people who are dedicated to changing the trajectory for food, farming and the planet.

Director Colin Ramsay and Producer Claire Mackenzie have made the film with a small committed team around them and vast amounts of input and help from individuals and organisations around the world.

**ALL ARE WELCOME -DONATION OF £5 APPRECIATED**

Contact Ellen Hill 07761 495033



## NOAH'S ARK

For 0-4 year olds

Wednesday Mornings

Term Time 9.30-11.00 am

The QE11 Recreation Ground  
Chatwell Lane, PL21 0FS

Hot drinks • Home baked cakes • Baby weighing scales  
Songs • Musical instruments • Bible story • Craft  
Baking activity • Parachute games

Contact: [louise\\_rowland@hotmail.com](mailto:louise_rowland@hotmail.com) | 01548 830260



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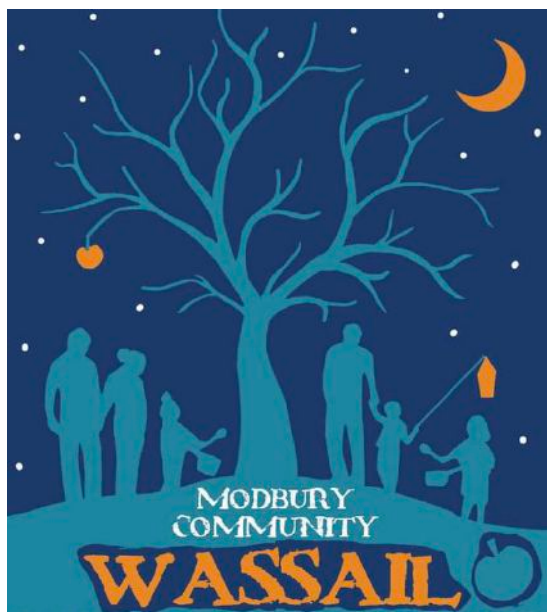
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## MODBURY COMMUNITY WASSAIL

**This year's Wassail is on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January at 6:00pm**

If you have not attended Modbury's Wassail before, you have missed a treat and a now well-established Modbury tradition.

There has been a big resurgence in Wassail ceremonies in villages and towns all over Devon, where its history goes back hundreds of years. The Community Orchard Group now has three community orchards in Millennium Meadow, Galpin Street and Palm Cross.

The Wassail takes place in the Millennium Meadow and Wassailers (not a reggae group) gather by the Co-op in Burns Lane at 6:00pm to rehearse some ancient Wassail carols and chants before processing along Fuller's Ope to a candle-lit orchard. Here they are welcomed by our town crier.

Along the way, there is much banging of pots and pans to scare off evil sprites and spirits from the orchard, before the trees are blessed for a bumper crop of apples in the autumn.

A Lord and Lady of Misrule will have been chosen from pupils at the school and they will undertake the traditions of placing a piece of bread on a stick and dipping it in our hand-turned oak Wassail bowl, which contains apple juice from last year's harvest. The bread is then placed in a branch of a selected tree and the apple juice poured at its base, symbolising the orchard's cycle of life.

In past times, the apple crop would have been a source of income, so anything that might help provide a good crop was encouraged. Wassail carols and chants reflect this wish for a bountiful harvest. A typical one refers to: *"Hats full, caps full, Good bushel sacks full, My pockets too. Hoorah!"*

The term Wassail is from Anglo Saxon times and means "be of good health" to which the traditional reply is "drink hael". You can expect an enthusiastic response from Wassailers every time they hear the word Wassail in the ceremony.

Once the traditions have been observed the Wassail concludes with everyone being offered mulled apple juice and hot dogs. Maybe that's what entices so many people out on a dark winter's night in mid-January. But perhaps it's because it is a fun event for all the family that kicks off Modbury's annual calendar of community get togethers.

So grab torches, lanterns, old pots, pans and a stick to bang them with. Pull on your boots or wellies and a warm coat. If you want to feel like a seasoned Wassailer, take a hat and adorn it with whatever you think suitable for a country celebration. You really cannot be too outrageous – the more eclectic the better.

Wassail!

**See you outside the Co-op in Burns Lane at 6:00pm on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Colin Whybrow**  
**Modbury Community Orchard Group**

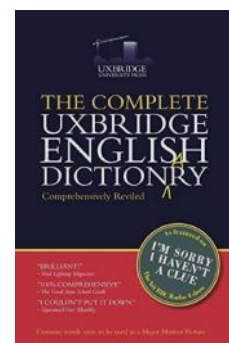
## Further Additions to the Uxbridge English Dictionary

With apologies to "I'm Sorry, I Haven't a Clue", the originator of the Uxbridge English Dictionary. So many people liked last month's article, I thought I'd send some more.

Here are some of my suggestions for new entries to the Uxbridge English dictionary:-

rambling.. jewelry for sheep  
deliver.. a very serious operation  
cubicle.. like an icicle but square  
normalise.. no need for spectacles  
morbid.. increased offer  
internet.. Goal! (by Sheffield Wednesday)  
champagne.. hypochondria  
broadcast.. overweight actors  
comatose.. my foot's gone to sleep.

universe.. a short poem  
arrival.. the opposition  
guilty.. gold coloured  
exacting.. retired thespian  
juggernaut.. empty jug  
succeed.. how birds eat  
bicycle.. instruction to buy garden equipment  
decade.. Dec's assistant



**John Curry**

If you have some suggestions for Modbury's own version of the Uxbridge English Dictionary, please send them to [modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com)

## Holbeton Film Club



January's film is **Baltimore** (certificate 15). Have you ever wondered about the heiress and debutante Rose Dugdale, who enjoyed a life of privilege and whose rebellious nature led her down a militant path? Her sympathy towards the IRA culminated in an armed raid on an Irish estate.

This is showing on **Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2025** in Holbeton Village Hall. Doors open 7pm. The programme starts at 7:30pm. Tickets on the door still only £4 (cash only). Ice creams will be on sale for £1.

Our forward programme for 2025 continues with:

Wilding, PG	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February
Hard Miles, 12A	Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> March
Radical, 12A	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> April



Harry Baumer 01752 830274

[harryluson@gmail.com](mailto:harryluson@gmail.com)

**Harry Baumer**



### Modbury Branch Royal British Legion

The next Meeting of the Modbury and District Branch of the Royal British Legion will be a Social Gathering in The Royal Gurkha Spice on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January, starting at 7.30pm. Names to our Social Secretary Duncan Squires (07889 825986) by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January, in order to know the numbers. New members are always most welcome.

**David Scott**

## walk&talk

Our January walk dates are on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January.

Please note there will be no walk on New Year's Eve.

The venue and travel arrangements for each of the walks will be discussed and decided at the previous week's walk.

Walk Leader contact details:

Sue Rogers	01548 831289
Jean Wright	01548 810029
Catherine Speight	01548 830195

**Sue Rogers**



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# Coastguards Beach is Poor Quality Bathing Water

**Only three bathing waters in Devon and Cornwall are classified as poor; disappointingly, Coastguards is one of them.**

The Environment Agency (EA) released the 2024 classifications for bathing water in England on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November. Of the 155 bathing waters in Devon and Cornwall, where the Environment Agency takes weekly tests for water quality from May to September, only three achieved a 'Poor' rating. Disappointingly Coastguards Beach at the mouth of the River Erme was one of them; neighbouring Mothecombe Beach was classified as 'Good'.

Wild About The Erme River (WATER) is an environmental charity focused on restoring water quality and habitat throughout the catchment of the Erme, from source to sea. It has been monitoring the Environment Agency's data as well as conducting its own testing as part of a Citizen Science project.

This was the first year of Bathing Water designation for Coastguards Beach. It followed a long campaign led by Emily Woodley on behalf of WATER and supported by over a thousand members of the local community and Surfers Against Sewage.



WATER is very much a fact-based, science-led charity hence the emphasis on data and testing.

Bathing Water classifications are based on the level of Faecal Indicator Organisms e.g. E coli, found in the water. Elevated levels of these organisms were found in a number of the EA tests at Coastguards resulting in the 'Poor' classification. They were also found at testing points further upstream, one on the Erme at Ermington and the other on the Ayleston Brook at Modbury that feeds into the Erme. Both test points were downstream of waste water treatment works.

In 2022, South West Water's own investigation into water quality in the vicinity of the Erme Estuary proposed Ultra Violet Biological Treatment be installed at both the Ermington and Modbury Treatment Works. WATER understands that these upgrades are in the current SWW asset improvement plan but have not yet started.

Commenting on the Environment Agency's announcement, Lizzie Cresswell, Community Water Quality Officer at Surfers Against Sewage said: *"With sites that are designated as 'Poor', regulators are obliged to prevent, reduce, and eliminate sources of pollution. This is a critical lever for driving change and investment – but we need to keep holding polluters and regulators to account. Currently, a site that gets 'Poor' for five years risks being de-designated and simply swept under the rug. That's unacceptable for the wild waters we love to swim, surf and paddle in."*

Emily Woodley, who led the Coastguards Beach Bathing Water campaign said:

*"The categorisation of Coastguards Beach as 'Poor' is disappointing, but sadly not a surprise. However, a single word can hide the complexities of how Bathing Water quality is calculated and what this actually means for water users."*

Coastguards Beach is at the mouth of a tidal estuary. Pollution levels in fresh water from upstream will impact on the water quality at the estuary but this varies. The proportion of fresh water is greater at low tide but as the tide comes in the fresh water is somewhat overwhelmed by the volume of salt water.

Charlotte Grezo, WATER's Chair commented: *"Achieving bathing water status for Coastguards meant the Environment Agency were independently monitoring water quality. Their findings require them to investigate further to trace pollution sources, which may be multiple, and ensure remedial action is taken. We welcome their engagement in this process of continual improvement."*

For further information contact:

Colin Whybrow, Marketing and Communications Lead, [colinw@ermeriver.org](mailto:colinw@ermeriver.org).

[www.ermeriver.org](http://www.ermeriver.org)

**Colin Whybrow**

## MODURY HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS 2025

10 <sup>TH</sup> MARCH 25	JOHN BELL	STAIRWAY TO THE STARS - THE HISTORY OF CINEMA IN DEVON IN THE GOLDEN AGE
14 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	HENRY WAINWRIGHT	SHIPWRECKS IN BIGBURY BAY
12 <sup>TH</sup> MAY	BERNARD MILLS	RAILWAYS IN THE SOUTH HAMS
9 <sup>TH</sup> JUNE	PAMELA VASS	SUFFRAGETTES IN DEVON

## Modbury Christmas Lights

The Lights Committee wishes to give a huge vote of thanks to all those who helped ensure that Modbury had a wonderful Christmas Lights Night on 29th November. The crowds in the town centre on a wet night demonstrated how appreciated this event is. On the night, Pre-School organised a very wonderful Grotto for Father Christmas at The Curator. Many thanks to Father Christmas for travelling all the way to Modbury for the event. This evening could not take place without the help of amazing people. There are 10+ regulars who help put the lights up, directed for safety by Phil Smith and by Phil Ainsley, who ensures all lighting strings and electrical connections are safe. (Did you spot Phil A's repair to the banner?). The event could not happen without the direction of these two people. In addition, there are those who climb ladders, weight-test fittings, foot ladders and stop traffic.



The banners across the road could not go up without the help of Richard Thorns and his telehandler. He also brings the big Christmas tree into the town on his trailer. Colin Campbell donated the big Christmas tree; at his plantation, a group choose one which was then cut. Colin selects little trees for the shop-keepers shop-top trees.

So, we come to the Lights-on evening. We could not close the road without application to Devon County Council, which needs to be done three months in advance...yes, we have to plan Christmas lights before the end of August! David Scott completed the application and ensured the event had insurance (quite a cost!). It is essential that road signs about the road closure go out early, and are put out by someone who has completed the appropriate safety course. This year Nick Owen amended the date on the signs, and Rob West with Paul Romney's help put out the signs, some of which were moved by unsupportive people and the team had to go back to re-instate them. On the night, Paul Romney co-ordinated the marshalls, all 20 of them, with the aid of MPC radios. We cannot name all the marshalls here, but many have marshalled at the same road junction for years and have had no opportunity to view the parade or join in the festivities. Very sincere thanks go to them.

The PTA and the school organised the children's lanterns, Pauline Ryder ensured the Royalty were elected, royally dressed, and had transport from Mike Oakins. The evening was co-ordinated by Peter Lowe, and Sarah Hart helped with the instruction to the children.

From the above, you will appreciate that this Evening comes to you, courtesy of over 50 volunteers with support on the night from our shop-keepers, who decorate their shops and who all need your support.

*Ira Young,  
on behalf of Lights Committee*



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## JANUARY 2008

So, 17 years ago, the Modbury Messenger was into volume 11, it was still not in colour, and this issue was 12 pages with only one photograph – black and white! Today's Messenger is 24 pages long and in full colour.

There was an invite on page 1 to attend the Modbury Fair 2008 Meeting at The Modbury Inn as helpers were still needed, it was submitted by Pauline Ryder, Fair Co-ordinator.

On page 4, there was a thank you column, with three entries, the first from Heather Winstanley for financial help with the cost of a Music Theatre course, the second from MSF (Medicins sans Frontieres) for £406 raised at a Kingsbridge Market and thirdly, a thanks to those who attended a soup and roll lunch in the Church which raised £705.34, a donation being made to the Pavilion Project.

Jeff Booth wrote "The Green Corner" questioning the waste of food bought commercially (estimated at £424 per year per household) and urging people to grow as much as they could themselves and buy locally.

The school report mentioned year 2 pupils had been interviewed by Westcountry Television about their New Year's Resolutions. *(If anyone reading this remembers that event, do tell the Messenger about it.)*

The highlight of the issue was on the front page, where a letter to the people of Modbury from the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, was replicated.

### 10 Downing Street



I want to pay tribute to the people of Modbury for leading the way in the campaign to reduce the environmental impact of plastic bags. It is the campaigns in Modbury and across the country which convince me that we can eliminate single-use disposable bags altogether in favour of long-lasting and more sustainable alternatives.

In partnership with government, the supermarkets have already committed to reduce the environmental impact of plastic bags by 25% over the next year. And now we will convene a forum of the supermarkets, the British Retail Consortium and other interested groups to assess urgently together, how we can do even better.

I am determined that the government will meet its responsibilities and maintain what I believe is our global leadership on the environment. But all of us - government, business, civil society and individuals - all have an important part to play in improving our environment and tackling climate change. The people of Modbury can be proud of the leadership they have shown.

Gordon Brown  
November 2007

Ira Young



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# MODBURY MESSENGER

## COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES MODBURY MESSENGER JANUARY 2025

SIZE	1 INSERTION		3 – 10 INSERTIONS (Per insertion)		12 INSERTIONS (Per insertion)		12 INSERTIONS (Year Total)	
	Black	Colour	Black	Colour	Black	Colour	Black	Colour
1/8 page	£15.00	£30.00	£13.00	£26.00	£8.00	£16.00	£96.00	£192.00
1/4 page	£30.00	£60.00	£25.00	£50.00	£15.00	£30.00	£180.00	£360.00
1/2 page	£54.00	£108.00	£43.00	£86.00	£25.00	£50.00	£300.00	£600.00
1 page	£96.00	£192.00	£74.00	£148.00	£40.00	£80.00	£480.00	£960.00

### Advertisement Sizes:

**One eighth page**

**One quarter page**

**One half page**

**Full page**

**Portrait or Landscape 1.75" x 2.5" (45mm by 65mm)**

**Portrait 3.5" x 5" (90mm x 130mm) Landscape 7" x 2.5"**

**Landscape 7" x 5" (180mm x 130mm) Portrait 10" x 3.5"**

**Portrait 7" x 10" (180mm x 250mm)**

**To advertise in the Modbury Messenger, contact the Editor, Lynne Barnes via email on**

[modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com)

## Modbury Messenger February 2025

The copy date for the February 2025 Modbury Messenger is **10th January**. Please email all articles, notices of events and paid advertisements to [modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com).

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Advertisers are charged a fee for advertising in the Modbury Messenger and this covers the cost of producing the Modbury Messenger. The Board of Directors, Company Secretary, Editor, Proofreaders and Distributors are all volunteers.

**Directors of Modbury Messenger:** Diana Lynne Barnes & Bernard Taylor.

**Company Secretary:** George Rosevear FCIS.

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Modbury Messenger CIC has produced the Modbury Messenger as an independent CIC since September 2018. Previously, it was published by Modbury Parish Council





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