



# MODBURY MESSENGER



illustration - Naomi Ainsley

For the People of Modbury & Brownston

Volume 26, Issue 323 - February 2026

## COUNTRY MUSIC NIGHT

More live music and dancing is coming your way in 2026.

This time it's Hipslinger, a country music band, who will get your feet moving with a great selection of music, including some line dancing, for which there will be an expert 'caller'.

Feel free to wear your cowboy/girl gear, though it's not compulsory! Did you know that the Stetson family lived in Modbury for several generations before migrating to USA in 1634, where they founded the legendary western hat company which still bears their name?

Proceeds will support Modbury Cubs and Scouts, run by volunteers, but needing extra financial support. Money raised will help towards camping equipment and experiences such as climbing, caving, kayaking and other outdoor pursuits, for which costs are ever increasing.



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**COUNTRY MUSIC NIGHT**

In the UK home of the Stetson Family.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026**  
@Modbury Memorial Hall. Bar / raffle.

Dust off your cowboy boots and hats and join us for line dancing (with expert tuition) then boogie the night away to live music from SW country music sensations 'Hipslinger'.

**In aid of Modbury Cubs & Scouts**  
Doors @ 7pm / Event starts at 7.45pm

Tickets £10 available from Modbury Post Office  
(event suitable for those over 12 yrs)



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## A Matter of Bat, Ball and Beneficial Briskness

It is a truth universally acknowledged (at least in Modbury and its immediate cricket-loving environs) that February is precisely the month when one's limbs begin to forget what they were designed for. To counteract this creeping stiffness - and to restore a sense of purpose to arm, leg and willow - Modbury Cricket Club is pleased as punch to announce the return of its **Winter Nets**.

These will take place **every Sunday at 10:00 am**, commencing **15th February** and galloping along in fine form until **6th April**, at the ever-welcoming **Ivybridge Leisure Centre**. There, amid the noble thwack of leather on bat and the occasional philosophical sigh from the bowler, players of all abilities may hone their craft, rediscover their timing, and convince themselves that this *will* be their season.

The **first session is entirely free**, allowing one to sample proceedings without fear or financial commitment. Thereafter, sessions are a modest **£10 each**, a small price to pay for improved footwork, sharper reflexes, and the quiet satisfaction of having done something admirable before lunchtime.

All members and prospective members are warmly encouraged to attend. Pads optional. Enthusiasm essential.

*Howard Williams*

## ModWAG Willow Workshop

We are arranging a willow weaving session 10:00 am -2:00 pm on Saturday, February 28th at Modbury Scout hut, Queen Elizabeth II Recreation Field.

Marina Auburn is kindly running the session, and participants will create a garden obelisk suitable for supporting plants. We will supply perennial sweet pea seeds donated by Life on the Edge, who are running and supporting projects which benefit pollinators in our area.

All materials will be provided, plus hot drinks and biscuits, but please bring your own packed lunch, sharp secateurs and gloves.

The cost is £25 and spaces are limited. Please contact Marina on [marina.auburn@gmail.com](mailto:marina.auburn@gmail.com) if you wish to attend.



*Caroline Bower  
on behalf of ModWAG*



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# MODBURY MAY FAIR 2026

30<sup>th</sup> April to 10<sup>th</sup> May

## PIRATES



Modbury May Fair Committee are pleased to confirm the dates of this year's May Fair.

As previously advised, our exciting theme this year is Pirates – giving much scope for this year's Carnival.

The key dates are as follows:

Our events kick off with the Modbury Players production of Pirates! A Music Hall from Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April for three nights.

The Royalty Crowning, Games, Duck Race and Modbury Mile will be on Bank Holiday Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May, and the Market, Carnival and Ceilidh will be held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May.

During our extended May Fair week we will be hosting our usual programme of events and maybe more!! Watch this space.

Volunteers are always needed, particularly on the road closure days of 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May. Your support would be much appreciated.

Bookings for the Market and any other enquiries can be made to [modburymayfaircommittee@gmail.com](mailto:modburymayfaircommittee@gmail.com)

or call Pip Ainsworth on 07772 946822

### Note from our Treasurer

*It's time for clubs and societies to think about applying for a grant from the May Fair funds. Rule 1 is that if you had a grant last year you won't get one this year, unless there's a very good reason why rule 1 should be ignored. Rule 2 is that we don't normally fund running expenses. Rule 3 is if you don't apply you won't get a grant. Applications or questions to our Treasurer Mark Lawrence at [mark.lawrence45@gmail.com](mailto:mark.lawrence45@gmail.com)*



## DEVON RURAL ARCHIVE LECTURE

Exeter's Waterwog and the Contested History of the Golly

by Dr Todd Gray

Thursday 5th February at 4pm.

Devon Rural Archive at Shilstone, near Modbury, PL21 0TW



The discovery of Exeter's waterwog, a Great War variant of the golly, prompted Dr Todd Gray MBE to investigate the broader history of the character. In this illustrated lecture, he will explain its origins and how it permeated British society in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Its history helps us understand how the figure can simultaneously be remembered by some as a much-loved toy and by others as a tool of racial denigration. While this history is surprising, it is also nuanced and was unknown until the publication of Gray's book *Waterwogs and the Contested History of the Golliwog*.

Gray has published more widely on Devon than any other historian, and his work is distinguished by the use of original sources and by it being rooted in place. He has introduced challenging topics to the study of Devon including looting in the 1940s, child abuse in 1624, the rise of fascism in the 1930s, and African enslavement and slave-owning. He was awarded an MBE in 2014 and was granted the Freedom of Exeter in 2018.

This event is part of the Devon Rural Archive's 2026 lecture series. Please follow the signs to the Cafe and Archive upon arrival.

Book tickets: <https://shilstonedevon.com/whats-on/>

**Amber Goldhahn**



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## PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

Hello, February, we are ready for you. I know that for a lot of us the shorter days, colder nights and the darkness of winter can bring about lower moods, but rest assured, February is a quiet turning point, even though winter is still very present, the natural world is preparing for spring. So, like we do each month, let's stop what we are doing, grab a warm drink and sit by a window to take a pause.

Big breath in, now sigh it out.

Have you noticed the days getting longer again? Can you spot any snowdrops beginning to emerge today? Have you thought about how you would like to spread love on the 14th this month? Have you spotted a shared smile between families as they enjoy extra time together again over the half term?

There is so much beauty to spot, we just need to give ourselves the time to notice, and with February being a pause between seasons, the muddy paths, damp air, but brighter skies give you hope that spring is knocking on the door, especially for those that have been struggling with the darkness of winter.

Lead with love this month,

Big Hugs,

*Becky Hickman and the Wellness Warriors Team*

### NOAH'S ARK

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### Modbury Tiddlers

### Playgroup

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**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  
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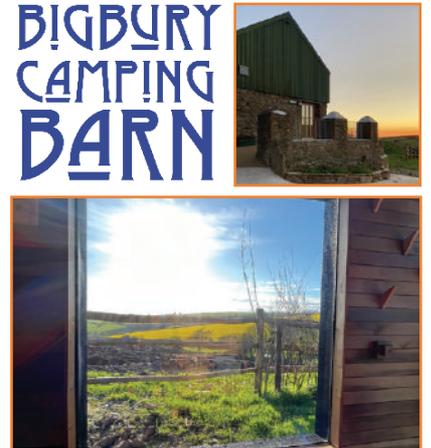
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**MODBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

Modbury Parish Council Office, 1 Modbury Court, PL21 0QR  
Tel: 07467134225 email [parishclerk@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Your Councillors are:**

Bill Cole	01548 830913	
Chris Field	07836 592854	<a href="mailto:chrisfield@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk">chrisfield@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Barbara Price (Chair)	07739752095	<a href="mailto:barbaraprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk">barbaraprice@modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
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**How can we help you?** Councillors run drop-in surgeries on Sat. 10:00 - 11:00 am in the Parish Office at 1 Modbury Court. The Parish Clerk is in the Parish Council office on Tues & Wed, 10:30 am – 5:00pm. Call into the office, phone, email or come along to our meetings at 7:00 pm in the Pavilion, QEII Recreation Ground on the first Tuesday of every month and speak in the public forum.

<b>Devon County Councillor (Salcombe Division):</b>	Louise Wainwright	Tel: 07908 525663 <a href="mailto:louise.wainwright@devon.gov.uk">louise.wainwright@devon.gov.uk</a>
<b>South Hams District Councillor (Charterlands Ward):</b>	Bernard Taylor	Tel: 01548 830844 <a href="mailto:Cllr.Bernard.Taylor@southhams.gov.uk">Cllr.Bernard.Taylor@southhams.gov.uk</a>

# Modbury Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 6<sup>h</sup> January 2026, 7.00 pm



**MODBURY**  
PARISH COUNCIL

Present were all eight councillors and Cllr Louise Wainwright (Devon CC). Apologies were received from Cllr Bernard Taylor (South Hams DC). No members of the public were present.

## Devon County Council Report by Louise Wainwright

- Louise gave an update on the gas emergency in Salcombe and surrounding areas. It has highlighted the necessity of keeping the Parish Emergency Plan up-to-date.
- Other parishes are interested in our parochial potholing team and would like to send volunteers to observe how we do it.
- Louise will be organising 'surgeries' in order to research SEND needs in the area and will be using the MPC Office.
- Louise was asked to speak to those DCC departments which have consistently failed to respond to MPC communications.

## Planning: To consider the following application:

The application for work on the land at SX 675 511 Modbury was discussed. MPC have objected and our response has been uploaded to the SHDC planning portal.

## Finance

- The budget for 2026-2027 was proposed by the FHR Committee. There is forecast of a £2,123 deficit which needs to be covered by reserves, as well as a 4.9% rise in the MPC Council Tax precept.
- Note that the annual charges for the MPC car park spaces will not increase, unlike those for SHDC car parks. There are still a few spaces (on the Palm Cross estate) available.
- There will be a tender process for MPC insurance requirements as we hope to extend the scope of our insurance to cover more activities than are currently covered.

## Health & Safety

Safety of the equipment in our play areas is of the highest priority and they are regularly inspected by SHDC.

## Maintenance

- MPC is examining the possibility of obtaining our own machine for clearing gullies and verges, whether that is just for us or by sharing with neighbouring parishes.
- Roadside grit boxes have had their levels checked and salt supplies distributed around the town.
- Volunteer work on minor road pothole repair continues; note that MPC cannot work on the main A roads.
- Meanwhile SHDC has sent round their big street cleaner twice to clear our gullies as requested by MPC.
- Minutes of the December Maintenance Committee are available for download from the MPC website.

## South West Water (SWW)

We still await details of the scheme of works to resolve surface water runoff in town; this is now unlikely to start until the autumn so as to avoid the summer season. There has been a contract awarded to update the sewage works, which will therefore be done in early 2027.

**Note that minutes of all MPC Committee meetings and much other information is available for download from the MPC website at [modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://modburyparishcouncil.gov.uk).**

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026 @ 7pm**

**Tony Price**

## walk&talk

Walks will be on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February.

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

Walk leader contact details:-

Sue Rogers 01548 831289

Jean Wright 01548 810029

**Sue Rogers**





## St George's Church, Modbury

**KIDS' CHURCH** - Kids' Church meets 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).

For St George's Parish enquiries contact Rev. Oli Long, Vicar 01548 732344

	Service	Service Leader
<b>February 1st</b>	Holy Communion and Kids' Church 9:30 am	Rev. Oli Long
<b>February 8th</b>	Holy Communion (BCP) 8.00 am All Age Service 9:30 am	Rev. Oli Long
<b>February 15th</b>	Holy Communion and Kids' Church 9:30 am	Rev. Oli Long
<b>February 18th</b>	Holy Communion 10:00 am	Rev. Oli Long
<b>February 22nd</b>	Sunday Worship 9:30 am	Gil Snook

### CHRISTIAN COMMENT: What are you giving up for Lent?

After Christmas and the wonderful time of celebration of the birth of Jesus, within just a few weeks, we find ourselves in the season of Lent. This year Ash Wednesday is on the 18th February.

Apparently, the title Lent is derived from an old English word for Spring and Lent lasts 40 days leading up to Easter. Traditionally it is a time of prayer and fasting, as we remember what it cost God, in the suffering and death of Jesus, to rescue us from our sins. If you give something up during Lent that you will miss, it acts as constant reminder to come closer to God.

Whatever you might give up, it is like nothing if you welcome Jesus into your life and celebrate that change of direction in baptism or confirmation. So, as we watch the land around us come back to life after the winter, will you allow God to release new life in you this year?

Do get in touch if you would like to know more.

**Gil Snook**

MODBURY MISSION COMMUNITY

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**St Austin's Priory Roman Catholic Church, Cadleigh**  
Mass weekly at 11:30 am on Sunday

Phone: 01752 895888  
Web: [staustinsivybridge.co.uk](http://staustinsivybridge.co.uk)



### BINGO NIGHT

**February 12th 5.45pm for 6 pm start  
Modbury Memorial Hall**

Join Modbury Cubs for some family fun and help us raise money for our adopted charity, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

All ages welcome.



## Fixing Potholes – Together We Can Make a Difference!

We all feel the frustration of driving on crumbling roads, damaging our vehicles while paying our taxes. Potholes aren't just an inconvenience—they're a warning sign of a deeper funding crisis in local government. Devon County Council (DCC) has a backlog of essential road repairs of around **£390 million**, needing roughly **£102 million annually** just to minimise deterioration. We have been forced to adopt a strict '**mend defects only**' policy. If the pothole meets the 'defect' definition – then it will be fixed by DCC when **reported**, but it may still just be a temporary fix with cold tar. To wait for national solutions isn't enough. **It's time to act locally.**



**Here's the good news:** We can make a real difference by working together - parish councils, volunteers, and local communities. Smaller, agile parish precepts and local knowledge can help us plug the gaps, while the big funding debate rumbles on.

As your representative for 16 parishes in the Salcombe Division, I'm committed to full transparency. I try to ensure councillors know what DCC can realistically fund, how long it will take, and what we can do in the meantime. With our Neighbourhood Highways Officer, I am asking parish councils to prioritise local issues which we consider on a site visit and feed back the realistic interventions and the possible timetable. Soon, I'll publish a **Parish Council Highways Handbook** which shares these insights. It will include an outline of the proposed **Parish Protocol** which allows parishes to 'queue jump' the waiting list for DCC-funded works if the parish agrees to raise their precept to pay for new zebra crossings, speed limits etc.

### Here's how we're taking action now:

- Volunteer parish **Road Wardens** and their teams are fixing local potholes that do not meet the DCC 'defect' criteria. This slows down deterioration and reduces damage to vehicles.
- DCC provides training, insurance, cold tar, and grants for equipment for Road Wardens.
- Modbury Parish leads the way - **funding extra materials** to improve the longevity of their pothole fixing until full resurfacing by DCC is possible.
- A **Pothole Masterclass**, offered by the Modbury Road Warden, is coming soon for all Road Wardens. Plus, a **WhatsApp** group to share resources and reduce waste.
- Some parishes share a **Lengthsman** to clear drains and gullies, reducing future damage because the DCC maintenance programme is sometimes not enough.

**This is community power in action.** No "pothole fairy" is coming to save us. Ultimately, it's your money—whether through council tax, income tax, or parish precepts. Let's make sure it's spent wisely and locally.

👉 **Find out more and get involved:** <http://www.louise4devon.com>

**Louise Wainwright**  
**Devon County Council**

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## Dice, Dragoons and Delight at the White Hart



Modbury is set for a touch of strategic mayhem on **Tuesday 10th February 2026**, when **Modbury Masters** host an **Open Night Wargaming Event** at the **White Hart Hotel**, starting at **7pm**.

The evening will feature a fine spread of **historic tabletop war games** - from disciplined ranks to bold cavalry charges - alongside **role-playing games and fantasy adventures**. Whether you favour the careful manoeuvring of history or the occasional dragon,

there will be something to tempt you to the table.

Entry is **free**, experience is not necessary, and newcomers are very much welcome. All rules will be explained, no one will be marched off at dawn.

Further details can be found at [modburymasters.co.uk](http://modburymasters.co.uk).

**Howard Williams**



## What is Meditational Circle dance?

Friedel Kloke-Eibl, the main choreographer, writes:

"Modern life has, among other things, achieved that our thinking, feeling and acting no longer form unity. Through the meditation of dance, we are addressed holistically; music, movement and silence exert, among other things, a harmonizing effect."

**Could it be for me?** Because of its simple steps and arm gestures and slower, contained energy, it is more suitable for the older person. However, if this dance description appeals to a younger person – that would be wonderful! It usually appeals to women, but men are equally welcome.

**What form does the class take?** We begin with a very simple grounding dance to bring our energies together and then learn 7 or 8 dances. We break for tea and a chat, and end with a very slow relaxing calming dance. The music is such an important part of our enjoyment – coming from Taize to Cuban Jazz, Estonian folk songs to classical Bach.

**What should I wear?** Loose comfortable flowing clothes – and soft-soled shoes.

**Who is the teacher?** I am Jenny Beavon and I have danced with a Meditations des Tanzes trained teacher in Tavistock for the past 23 years. I started this group just after I moved to Modbury in 2016. I have also trained with Friedel Kloke-Eibl and continue to attend dance workshops in the UK.

### When and Where and How much is the class?

Friday afternoons in the Mars Hall from 2:45 to 4:30 pm. £7 pay as you go

Call to book a place: 01548 830937 or 07787 786594. [jennybeavon@outlook.com](mailto:jennybeavon@outlook.com)

**A new beginners class starting in January!**

**Jenny Beavon**

## Meditational Circle Dance in Modbury

Friday afternoons 2:45 – 4:30 pm

At the MARS Pavillion,  
Queen Elizabeth II Recreation  
Ground

£7 pay as you go

Contact Jenny 07787786594

New beginners' classes starting in  
January!

## Ivybridge u3a General Meeting

**Monday 16th February 2026, 2:00pm at the Watermark Centre**

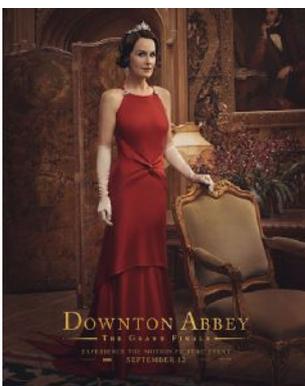
**Guest speaker, Rupert Kirkwood, will talk on...“A Kayak Safari around Devon”**

The talk will cover and draw on Rupert's 36,000 miles of kayaking around the coast of SW England over the past 20 years. It will be illustrated by photos and videos of all the amazing wildlife that Rupert encountered, from swimming squirrels to whales.

The event is open to members and to those no longer in full-time employment who wish to find out more of what u3a has to offer.

**Roy Little**

## Holbeton Film Club



February's film is **Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale** (certificate PG). Lady Mary Crawley navigates a public scandal and divorce in the 1930s, threatening Downton's reputation amidst financial woes. Robert hands over control to Mary as the family embraces change. A grand finale indeed!

This is screening on **Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026** in Holbeton Village Hall. **Please note that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday in the month.** Doors open 7:00 pm. The programme starts at 7:30 pm. Tickets on the door are £4 for adults and £2 for children under 12 (card or cash). Ice creams are on sale for £1.

Our programme continues with:

Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale\*, PG

Juror #2, 12A

Wicked, PG

Ocean with David Attenborough, PG

Friday **20<sup>th</sup> February** (***please note the day in the month***)

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May

**\*Also please note that this has replaced *The Penguin Lessons*, which has been deferred**

01752 830274, [harryluson@gmail.com](mailto:harryluson@gmail.com)

<https://holbetonfilmclub.com/>



**Harry Baumer**

# MODBURY BIRDWATCH

Firstly, thanks to everyone who sent their sightings, we had a total of 66 species in the year.



*Blackcap in the garden*

Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Long Tailed Tit, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Pied Wagtail, Robin, House Sparrow, Dunnock, Blackbird, Blackcap, Wren, Goldcrest, Firecrest, Song Thrush, Skylark, Starling, Black Redstart, Redwing, Siskin, Collared Dove, Woodpigeon, Pheasant, Lapwing, Chiff Chaff, Stonechat, Meadow Pipit, Garden Warbler, Willow Warbler, Yellowhammer, Buzzard, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Peregrine Falcon, Crow, Jackdaw, Rook, Magpie, Jay, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Tree Creeper, Mallard, Moorhen, Heron, Mute Swan, Kingfisher, Swallow, House Martin,

Sand Martin, Swift, Green Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Herring Gull, Black Headed Gull, Canada Geese, Egyptian Goose, White Fronted Goose, Barnacle Goose, Little Egret.

Previously, there have been over 10 other species seen, so perhaps on a good year we could spot over 80 different species. We're still waiting for the flying barn door, also known as the White-tailed Eagle, Osprey or the Stork to make a fly past, but I'm sure they will soon.

As you drive out of Modbury towards Flete, the flooded fields are proving to be a paradise for the birds (but not I expect for the landowner) and in the flock of geese there have been Canada, Barnacle,



*Three Brent Geese with Canada Geese in flooded field by Orcheton turnoff*



*White Stork at Beesands*

Egyptian and White Fronted Geese as well as Lapwings and Sandpipers.

So looking on to this year, we have already had sightings of Grey Wagtail, Woodcock and Common Snipe to get the year off with a bang.

We have also started a Whatsapp group Modbury Birds, if anyone wants to join send your name and phone number to [modburybirds@btinternet.com](mailto:modburybirds@btinternet.com) and we will add you. There you can find or add latest sightings in Modbury and a bit further afield, we've had some cracking photos already.

**Roger Price**

**Photographs copyright Richard Moore**

***If you spot any interesting wildlife around Modbury, send photographs of it to the Modbury Messenger. We would like to feature a "Modbury Creature" photograph in each issue of the magazine.***

***Photos need to be sent in jpg format, together with a short description of where and when the "Modbury Creature" was spotted to:***

***modburymessenger@gmail.com***

# Modbury and South Hams Creative Writing Group



We at The Modbury and South Hams Creative Writing Group meet every month to read and discuss our work. We are a small group of lively individuals who write for all sorts of different reasons. Each month we set ourselves a challenge or theme to hang our ideas on (although we have been known to digress completely).

We are keen to welcome new members, so if you enjoy creative writing, why not join us. We meet usually on the first Saturday of the month, at the Queen Elizabeth II Pavilion in Modbury at 10.00am.

[www.facebook.com/modburyc creativewritinggroup](http://www.facebook.com/modburyc creativewritinggroup) or 07767 393802

The task given for this particular piece was to include the words: **Black shoes and prawn sandwiches**

## The Invisible Generation

It was just a small paragraph in the local paper, later picked up by the Nationals as part of a wider story on the invisibility of the older generation.

### **Pensioner found frozen to death**

Tragically, the body of a man believed to be in his late eighties was found frozen to death outside of Mandy's Tea Rooms in the small town of Blake on the Water. Blake on the Water is a well-known tourist hot spot. Councillor Babcook, the current Mayor, said "We are very sad that this should happen in our town. We take pride in looking after our elderly and would like to reassure visitors to this beautiful spot that this is a very unusual occurrence. We pass on our condolences to the gentleman's family and friends".

Police have asked for the public's help at this time in naming the gentleman in question. It is not thought that the victim was a local man. Any information should be forwarded to the local police at Blake on the Water.

People were of course shocked at this turn of events, and it was the subject of much gossip at the time in the town. However, after a couple of weeks the story seemed to die and as nothing was known about the man in question, the incident was forgotten in the general hubbub of life.

The tea rooms had been closed at the time as it was winter and all the staff, including Mandy, had been on holiday. When they returned and started the process of re-opening quite a few people visited to let them know what had happened. However, it had all happened when they weren't there, and he had died outside and not in the tea rooms, so again the story, having had a brief resurgence, was soon forgotten.

The Nationals picked the story up about 2 months after it had happened. One of the lesser-known journalists had decided to do a longer article on the invisible generation, as she called them, namely anyone over 70. She had been looking after their elderly parents for some time, so it was a subject close to their heart. They also hoped it would get them noticed, especially as their editor was approaching 65.

The article entitled 'The Invisible Generation' made the Saturday supplements and there was quite a lot of interest from the readership, so much so that Channel 4 decided to do an hour long documentary on the subject, in which the story in Blake on the Water was referenced, if only briefly. The body of the man had still not been identified. It was assumed that having taken a late night stroll he had fallen and frozen to death on one of the coldest nights of the year.

Maisie from the Tea Rooms happened to see the document on TV and a small memory began to stir. She mentioned it to Mandy when she went in the next day and Mandy deciding, on balance, that no publicity was bad publicity (unless it was a case of food poisoning), recommended that she go straight to the police. Mandy herself went to the local paper. Another article appeared quite quickly after that.

### **Body identified by black shoes and prawn sandwiches**

The frozen body of an elderly gentleman found in Blake on the Water has now been named as local Mr. George Foster, thanks to the sharp observational skills of a local waitress in Mandy's Tea Rooms outside of which the body was found. The waitress Ms. Masie Roper told this reporter that she realised that since they had reopened after the winter break, they had not seen one of their regular customers. Ms. Roper said "He came in regular like. I remember because he always wore the same black shiny boots and had prawn sandwiches every time." Ms. Roper's description of the man helped police find that he was in fact a local who lived quite near to the Town centre. Neighbours did not realise that he had not been seen for some time but assumed he had gone to visit family. It was later discovered that Mr. Foster had no known relatives.

The paper went on to give its own version and thoughts on the invisible generation and how people really should keep an eye on older neighbours. Not everyone agreed with the thoughts and as they lost a few readers over it the local reporter was severely reprimanded by the owner. It was also on the agenda for the Town council meeting to see whether they should or could have done more. Having agreed this was a social service responsibility they took no further action.

**Continued on next**

## Modbury and South Hams Creative Writing Group (continued)

It was again picked up by the nationals, but more as follow up from the article on the invisible generation. It appeared that Mr. Foster had retired to Blake on the Water from a lifetime of teaching, but had failed to make any real connections in the town, even though he had been there for 10 years. It was perhaps regrettable that no one had noticed he was missing, until the waitress had remembered his black boots and prawn sandwiches, but the general consensus of opinion was that it had been his responsibility to make connections and so really he only had himself to blame.

Barbara Price

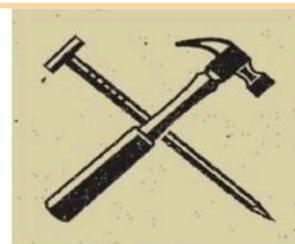
## Modbury Branch Royal British Legion



The next Meeting of the Modbury and District Branch of the Royal British Legion will be a Business Meeting in The Club on Wednesday 4th February at 7:30 pm.

All are welcome.

David Scott



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# History Corner

Modbury has been a significant settlement/village/town for a very long time. Herewith, a short piece on how the population has changed.

There are traces of Bronze Age (c.2,500 – c.500 BCE) settlement, and at the top of the town, just above the church, on the area now occupied by Benedict Way and The Priory, was an Iron Age hill fort. The Iron Age was the period after the Bronze Age until the Roman occupation, so c.500 BCE to 43 CE. Iron Age hillforts are a feature of this part of England, so it's no surprise that there was one at such a strategic location, overlooking the Erme valley.

Devon was frontier country between the Britons in Dumnonia and the Anglo-Saxons of Wessex, who slowly crept down the peninsula until King Athelstan declared the River Tamar to be the western boundary of his newly established 'England' in 927.

Now, we come to the first sure indication of population, William's Domesday Book of 1086, put this together so that he knew how much tax he could levy on his new realm. This named the town as Mootburgh, which is significant as it combines the Saxon words 'moot', meeting place, with 'burgh', fortified town. The system of fortified towns was introduced by Alfred the Great (burnt cakes etc) in his campaign to reclaim his kingdom from the marauding, rapacious Norsemen, and a burgh was therefore a serious settlement worth defending.

The Domesday Book recorded 53 households in Modbury (in the top 20% of English settlements, possibly the top 10%) with:

- 4 villagers, 2 smallholders, 1 slave
- 5 plough hands, 1 lord's plough team, 3 men's plough teams
- 6 cattle, 6 pigs, 60 sheep, 30 goats

A villager, often called a 'villein', was a type of peasant who formed a significant part of the population, typically owning around 30 acres of land and two plough oxen. They were considered part of the unfree peasantry, but in economic terms they were similar to freemen. A smallholder was a peasant who typically owned about 5 acres of land and might have shared in the village's plough teams.

Skipping some years, actually quite a lot, we next come to the national census, held every decade from 1801. Here are the definitive population numbers for the parish of Modbury:

1801	1813
1811	1890
1821	2194
1831	2116
1841	2048
1851	1858
1871	1751
1881	1543
1891	1406
1901	1242
1911	1203
1921	1103
1931	1110
1951	1085
1961	1077
1971	1131
2001	1454
2021	2113



Rural life in Norman England

So now, we are back to where we were 200 years ago, albeit then there were about 340 houses and now some 900, so rather less crowded today.

**Tony Price**



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## KINGSBRIDGE CHORAL WORKSHOP 2026

Kingsbridge Choral Workshop - 2026 - will be held on Saturday March 21st at Kingsbridge Methodist Church (100 Fore Street, Kingsbridge, TQ7 1AW). We shall be exploring selected choruses from Bach's B minor Mass.

The day's workshop is from 10.00am. to 5.00pm. and costs only £18 to include hire of music and refreshments through the day. Full details can be had from Alastair Durden at 07724 486584 or email [alastairdurden@gmail.com](mailto:alastairdurden@gmail.com).

*Alastair Durden*

## INTENDED MONTHLY FLAG HOIST AT PALM CROSS GREEN - February

<u>Date</u>	<u>Masthead</u>	<u>Starboard Yard (Plymouth) - West</u>	<u>Port Yard (Modbury) - East</u>	<u>Event</u>
05	SSAFA Flag	FOUND	05	SSAFA Flag
07	New Zealand Flag	WAIT2 <sup>nd</sup> subNG	07	New Zealand Flag
21	RS – Charles I	MODBURY FLAG	21	RS – Charles I
28	Union Flag	KUWAIT	28	Union Flag

1. Please note that if the wind is above 20 knots the intended flag hoists will not take place.
2. The intended flag hoists will not take place if the Modbury Chief Yeoman is absent.
3. All the signal hoists are done using the various Country/National Ensigns and the International Code of Signals Flags.
4. Starboard Yardarm (Plymouth)-West will have the event wording, (which sometimes is abbreviated – only 7 or 8 flags can be flown).
5. Port Yardarm (Modbury)-East will have the year. Answer Pennant (Ans) will indicate the start (when at the top) or end (when at the bottom).
6. 1<sup>st</sup> ,2<sup>nd</sup> ,3<sup>rd</sup> substitute flags will be used whenever a flag flown earlier/higher in the hoist is to be repeated. e.g. 2022 = 2,0,1<sup>st</sup>sub,3<sup>rd</sup>sub
7. If there is a significant event which does take place, additional signal flag hoists will be arranged, subject to the note 1 above.
8. However, all the above flag hoists are subject to change.

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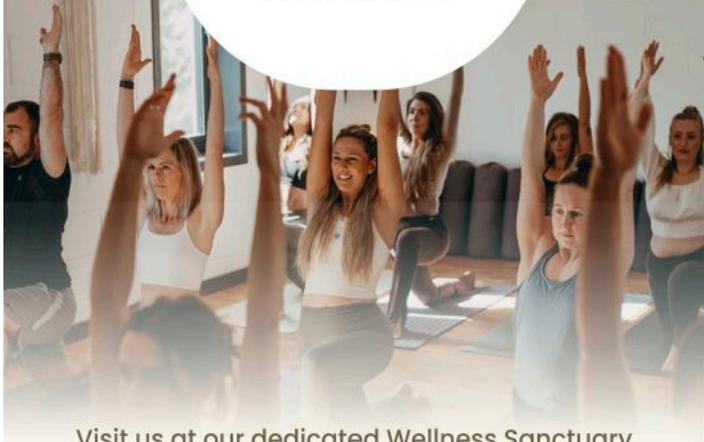
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Come From Away is a wonderful opportunity for KATS to spread the show's upbeat message of kindness, unity, and resilience by following the stories of the unlikely lifelong friendships forged by complete strangers during these 5 days and the incredible true backstories of the characters involved. Although there are moments of deep tear-jerking poignancy, we guarantee you will go home with a warm glow in your heart!

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# MODBURY MESSENGER

## COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES MODBURY MESSENGER 2026

SIZE	Size - can be portrait or landscape	1 month (per insertion)	3-11 months (per insertion)	12 months (per insertion)	12 months (Year total)
1/8 page	45mm x 65mm	£30	£26	£16	£192
1/4 page	90mm x 130mm	£60	£50	£30	£360
1/2 page	130mm x 180mm	£108	£86	£50	£600
1 page	180mm x 250mm	£192	£148	£80	£960

The Modbury Messenger is an all colour publication, no preferential rates for black & white advertisements.

To advertise in the Modbury Messenger, contact the Editor, Lynne Barnes, via email on [modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com) with details of the size of the advert and how many months you wish to advertise for.

### Modbury Messenger March 2026

The copy date for the March 2026 Modbury Messenger is **10th February** Please email all articles, notices of events and paid advertisements to [modburymessengercic@gmail.com](mailto:modburymessengercic@gmail.com).

The Modbury Messenger is published by Modbury Messenger CIC and is printed by ESP Print. The views expressed in the Messenger do not necessarily represent those of Modbury Messenger CIC.

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**Persons submitting entries with art or photographs not drawn or taken by themselves must confirm they have obtained copyright permission, or agree to pay any copyright fine which is subsequently raised**

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### MODBURY MESSENGER CIC

Modbury Messenger CIC is a Community Interest Company and as such is registered by the Registrar of Companies for England & Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland. A Community Interest Company is a special type of not-for-profit limited company which exists to benefit the community. The purpose of Modbury Messenger CIC is to disseminate information about events, notices and articles of interest to the people of Modbury and it does this by publishing the Modbury Messenger, a printed newsletter, every month with 1000 copies delivered to homes and businesses within the Parish of Modbury. An online copy of the Modbury Messenger is available to neighbouring communities, advertised via social media and on our website [modburymessengercic.co.uk](http://modburymessengercic.co.uk).

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 CIC:** Diana Lynne Barnes & Bernard Taylor.

**Company Secretary:** George Rosevear FCIS.

**Editorial Committee:** John Bower, Lynne Barnes, Ira Young.

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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