

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

Delivered free to 1,000+ homes

November 2025

Merriott Heritage Trust — 10-Year Anniversary

The Merriott Heritage Trust was formed in March 2015 with a bequest from our generous benefactor Cathy Harriman. Cathy had a great fondness for Merriott and wanted to help maintain the wonderful historic buildings within it, both in the community and those that are privately owned. This included the surrounding environment of foot paths and byways. As well as intensively researching during her years in Merriott, Cathy rescued many artefacts and obtained a large selection of books — after her death, these were temporarily stored in a private house. The prime purpose of the Trust is to help maintain properties by providing grants towards essential works. In order to continue Cathy's valuable work and to make items available to the public, new premises had to be found. On September 1st 2021 the Heritage Trust moved in to 10 Lower Street and the Trustees set about sorting out all of the artefacts, documents, and books. In 2023, they felt they could, at last, open to the public and this has proved very successful; complemented by the window displays. At the moment the Trust is open one morning a week, *Thursday: 10.00am - 12.00pm*, with the exception of one-off visits from various groups — the Open Group and a class of school children have spent a morning with us. We have also held an exhibition about gloving in the village, as well as joint exhibitions with the Camera Club. We hope to hold more of these events in the future and extend opening times.

If you are interested in the history of Merriott please come and see us. We also welcome donations of photos, deeds, and other items of interest. We are happy to copy items and return them should you wish to retain ownership.

Anyone interested in our work and/or perhaps joining as a volunteer will be very welcome. We look forward to seeing you at 10 Lower Street.

Email: merriottheritagetrust@gmail.com

Marion Biggs



Merriott Messenger Information

Your editorial team: John Bowman 74077, Paula Bateman 07856 559502, Peter Bryans 78182, Alyssa Maxwell-Healey 07804 678444, Eric Vose 351857, Dee Edwards and Dave Williams 76848, Alan Wiseman 74518

Email: merriottmessenger@gmail.com

The information and views in the Merriott Messenger are those provided by the named individual contributors and are not necessarily supported by the Editorial Team. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the information given is accurate, the Merriott Messenger cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Back issues of Merriott Messenger (February 2016 - September 2025) can be found on the Parish website: <https://merriottpc.org.uk/the-merriott-messenger>

Copy date for the December issue is **12th November**.

If You See SID — Watch Your Speed!

If your memory goes back to the 1980s and the mass privatisation of public utility companies, you may recall the slogan “If you see Sid ... tell him”, designed to encourage the public to buy shares in British Gas. Forty years on, Merriott has its very own ‘Sid’, but it’s nothing to do with investments or energy supplies. Our SID stands for a Speed Indication Device and you may already have seen the illuminated display board in operation outside the Village Hall.

These devices are becoming an increasingly common sight on roads through villages or near to schools and they act as a very visible warning to motorists who have let their speed exceed the statutory limit. With traffic levels increasing, the Parish Council in Merriott has invested in its own SID which, for two weeks at a time, will be located in various County Council authorised locations in the village.

As well as acting as a warning to speeding drivers, the device gathers statistical information about the volume of traffic that passes by it and, from this, will calculate the percentage of total vehicles that exceed the limit. This data will be further divided into speed bands so that it will be possible to see by how much the speed limit is broken; over 10, 20, 30 mph and so on.

The SID does not record individual vehicle details but where patterns of speeding occur, the police may set up their own periodic speed monitoring operations which will identify number plates and result in action being taken against offenders.

Residents often complain that speed limits in the village in general, and along Broadway in particular, are regularly disregarded. Early indications suggest that the Merriott SID is having a positive impact on reducing speed and the Messenger hopes to bring you more information in the coming months as the statistics build up.

Meanwhile, make sure you get a cheery ‘thank you’ from SID as you pass him by keeping to the speed limit.

The Merriott Volunteer SID Team



CHRISTMAS MARKET

Sunday 14 December 2025
11am - 3:30pm
Merriott Village Hall - TA16 5QH
Everyone Welcome

Local Craft Fair

Merriott Village Hall
Broadway
Merriott
TA16 5QH
9TH NOVEMBER
10-2PM

TABLES AVAILABLE £10 A TABLE
(MONEY GOES TO A CHOSEN CHARITY)
TO BOOK CONTACT
MONTHLYMARKETBOOKINGS@HOTMAIL.COM

News from All Saints Church

On Sunday 2nd November our churches will celebrate All Saints Day. This is when we recall the example of the saints, in particular those to whom our churches are dedicated (George, Michael, Martin, Nicholas and two dedicated to All Saints). The day before (1/11/2025), we will observe the festival of All Souls, with a special 'Service for the Bereaved' at 4pm — this is when we remember all the faithful departed. We have all lost someone close to us, whether family or friend, so this service is a chance to bring our grief and pain before our loving God in a safe and holy space. There will be prayers, hymns, and a chance to light a candle in memory of our loved ones. We invite the families of those we know have been bereaved during the last year, but anyone is very welcome to come along. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Remembrance Sunday is on November 9th. We will begin at the war memorial in the churchyard at 10.50am, as usual, and move into church after the act of Remembrance.

Rev Bob Hicks. 76406. — All Saints Church



Church Services in November

All of the following services are in Merriott:

Saturday 1st, Festival of All Souls

4pm *Service for the Bereaved*
Followed by tea and cake

Sunday 2nd, All Saints Day

6.30pm *Praise Service*, Tithe Barn
Supper at 5.30pm

Sunday 9th, Remembrance Sunday

10.50am *Remembrance Service* — starting outside at the War Memorial
5pm *Silent Prayer*

Sunday 16th, Safeguarding Sunday

10.30am *Morning Prayer*

Sunday 23rd, Christ the King

9am *Holy Communion*

Sunday 30th, Advent Sunday

10.30am *Benefice Communion for Advent*, Haselbury Plucknett
6pm *Advent Evening Service* with the Ad Hoc Choir, Dinnington

Dates for your diary:

Saturday 15th November, 7pm *Quiz and Puddings Night*, Tithe Barn

Monday 1st December, 6pm *Christingle Service* — Christingle making from 5.30pm

YOUR LOCAL COMPUTER EXPERTS

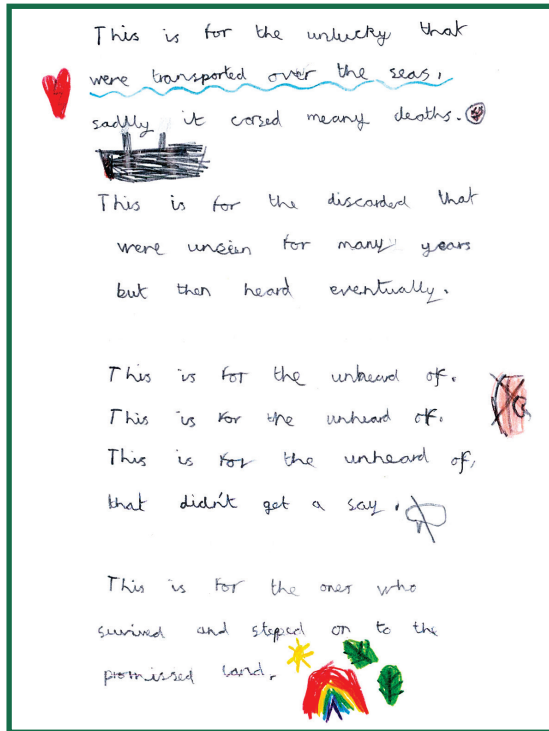


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Merriott Primary School



We've had a fantastic month at Merriott Primary, filled with exciting events and wonderful achievements.

Our Harvest Festival services were a real highlight, with excellent attendance from families and the wider community. Reception and Key Stage 1 delighted us with a charming performance that included a play, a song, and a glimpse into the daily life of a farmer. Meanwhile, Key Stage 2 took us on an engaging journey through the history of farming machinery, the process from farm to fork, and even shared ideas about the future of farming.

In sport, our pupils have shone brightly. We've seen growing participation in local cross-country events, and our Year 6 children did us proud at a recent rugby tournament, securing both first and third place finishes.

On Tuesday 7th October, we welcomed many prospective parents and carers to our school. It was a pleasure to showcase our vibrant learning environment and give visitors a chance to see our children immersed in their learning journeys.

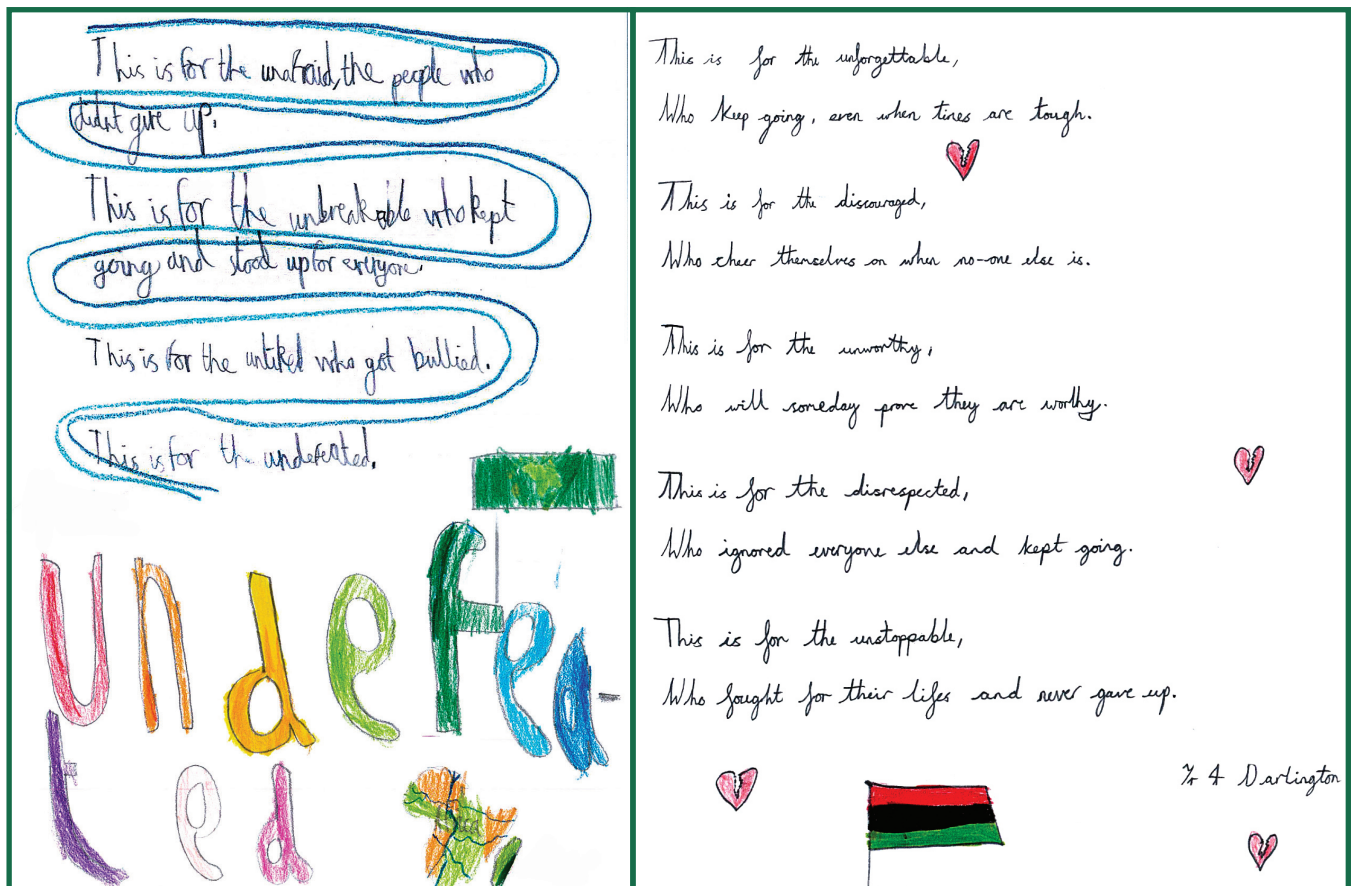
We're also thrilled to share that Merriott Primary was once again the top school in the area for participation in the Summer Library Reading Challenge. It's inspiring to see our children so enthusiastic about reading.

If any members of the village would like to support our school — whether by listening to children read or helping in other ways — we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact our school office via email at office@merriottprimaryschool.co.uk for more information.

Finally, we're proud to share some powerful poetry from our Year 4 class, inspired by the book *The Undefeated* by Kwame Alexander. Their work reflects deep thought and creativity, we hope you enjoy it.

Nicky Taylor, Senior Teacher — Merriott Primary School, Merriott and Haselbury Federation





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A Christmas brochure now available **01460 72900**

25 Market Street, Crewkerne
www.barrettbros.co.uk



Merriott Camera Club

Merriott Camera Club would like to thank all who attended our joint exhibition with the Heritage Trust at the end of September. We hope that you enjoyed our displays as much as we enjoyed creating them. It was lovely to meet with so many of you and we are delighted that some of you have since joined, or returned, to the club.

November's Programme:

Thursday 6th, Ham Hill (weather permitting)

Thursday 13th, TBC

Thursday 20th, AGM and Monthly Challenge (themes — motion and open)

Thursday 27th, How to: Filters

All are welcome; for more details, contact us via our *Friends of Merriott Camera Club* Facebook group or email us at Merriott_Camera_Club@yahoo.com

Jayne Scott — Merriott Camera Club



**SATURDAY 25TH
OCTOBER** **FANCY DRESS
PRIZES**



**HALLOWEEN
CIRCUS OF THIEVES**



Merriott Social Venue

Free
Entry
7pm

ELVIS
A TRIBUTE FIT FOR A KING



Merriott Social Venue

£5 Entry 7pm
Proceeds to
Air
Ambulance

News from Merriott Social Venue

A big thank you to everyone who attended our AGM in September. Paul Sherwood remains our chairman, Ray Candy as Treasurer, and Penny Gibbs as Secretary. We welcome three new members to the committee, and look forward to working with them in the coming months.

We also wish a big thanks to Brett Jacobs and Chris Brown for fixing some flooring at the venue — we very much appreciate your efforts, and for doing this work in your spare time, on a completely voluntary basis. You are true neighbourhood heroes!

We congratulate Brett, Beryl, and Suzie from the Karate Club for becoming local celebrities! Brett has trained Beryl and Suzie for the last 5 years, and they have attained the grading of black belt in their late seventies — what a fantastic achievement! They appeared on the local BBC news programme, *Points West*, and ITV's *This Morning*.



Dates for your diaries:

Saturday October 25th — Live music, with the band *Circus of Thieves*

The night will be Halloween themed, with prizes for best adult and child fancy dress.

Free entry, all welcome.

Saturday November 29th — Live music, we have the legendary *Barry Paull as Elvis* in the building

£5 entry per person (children are free), proceeds will go to the *Somerset Air Ambulance* and *MSV maintenance fund*.

All welcome, no membership required.

Don't forget our **Monday Weekly Cash Bingo**, eyes down at 8pm.

Open Mic Night is every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8pm.

If you are interested in any of the activities or events above, or wish to book our function room for a private party, please call in and see a member of staff, contact us on our Facebook page, email us at merriottsocialclub@hotmail.com, or phone **07471593040**.

Penny Gibbs, Secretary — Merriott Social Venue

Skool Beanz at Merriott Gardening Club

Lara Honnor from Skool Beanz is coming to talk to Merriott Gardening Club at the Tithe Barn on Tuesday 28th October, at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Lara runs Skool Beanz Gardening Club on an allotment in Chilthorne Damer to improve kids' well-being by connecting them with nature. She shows them how to grow delicious vegetables, beautiful flowers, and how to garden to help nature, as well as plenty of up-cycled art and fun. Her dream is to teach as many children, parents, and teachers the joys of gardening and what can be achieved on an allotment or in your own garden — with the best tips, advice, and ways to engage young people through all that she has learnt teaching gardening to children.

All are welcome!

Guests £3.

There will be a raffle and refreshments available.

Gillian Vines — Merriott Gardening Club



NEW DATE!

Merriott Village Hall presents

**An Evening With James Purefoy -
'Custard Pies and Curtain Calls.
A gentle meander through the
life of a Somerset actor.'**

**Friday 5th December 2025,
at Merriott Village Hall**

Doors open at 6.30pm, with refreshments.

Talk begins at 7.30pm

The evening will consist of listening to James talk
about his life and times. Followed by a Q&A session.



Tickets: £15. No concessions.

Buy tickets here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2ukztddb>

or by scanning the QR code

For queries contact merriottvhevents@gmail.com
All funds raised will go to support Merriott Village Hall.

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Past Times



This month, we step back in time well over a hundred years for a couple of views of Tail Mill. Now converted into residential accommodation, it was once a thriving centre for the manufacture of cloth, sacking, and canvas for sails, as well as rope. The mill employed around 80 people in the mid-nineteenth century who used the abundant supplies of flax and hemp, which were grown and gathered in this part of Somerset, to produce the goods. The manufacture of fabric at Tail Mill goes back further still; there are records of clothmaking there as long ago as 1575.

The picture (left) shows the Lower Street end of the Tail Mill track on a summer's day, with workers carefully posed to suggest they are returning home

from their day's work. The setting is relatively unchanged and readily identifiable today but the workers' attire suggests that the picture dates from around the late 1800s. The women all wore white aprons and bonnets (most probably starched) and the men wore clothes made from fustian, a thick, coarse cloth that must have been most uncomfortable to wear. They look somewhat awkward in their pose but it must be remembered that, at that time, the arrival of a photographer in the village was a most remarkable occasion, rather like a royal visit might be today. For many, it would perhaps be their first time before a camera and they would have been both excited and nervous of what to expect. It was clearly an eagerly anticipated event, probably arranged several weeks in advance, and the women in particular are looking their best in clean, pressed aprons. Would they really have looked so tidy on a normal day after a hard day's work? Only the children in the lower right foreground seem unimpressed by the proceedings, their youthful impatience preventing them from holding their pose long enough for the photographer to capture a sharp image.

The second picture, to the right, is also of the Tail Mill site. It is difficult to date the image precisely as there are no 'fashion' clues to go by, but it is certainly before 1930 because the chimney in the background had been demolished by then. The reason why this picture was taken is slightly mysterious. At the time it was made, photography was an expensive business and taking 'snapshots' for no obvious reason was rarely done. Yet, there is no activity going on and no people to be seen; no apparent reason for creating this pictorial record. Maybe there is a hidden story behind this view... does anyone have any ideas? We would love to know if you can help or can provide any background memories to add to the stories of these two pictures.

Alan Wiseman



With acknowledgements to *Keith Mullins* and *Sheila Bowman* whose excellent book, *Merriott, A Historical Snapshot* has been an invaluable source of information for this article. Thanks are also due to *Crewkerne Museum* for the original photographs.

Pilates in Merriott



The show must go on...

We welcome a new teacher to the village. *Kerry King* (*Be More Betty*) has recently moved from Cornwall, and has 30 years experience in Pilates, yin yoga, and personal training. She has now taken over Barbara's classes at the Village Hall on a Tuesday evening at 5.30pm.

To contact Kerry for classes, please visit her website www.bemorebetty.com, email bemorebetty@gmail.com, or phone **07588 220007**.

Kerry King — Be More Betty

Don't forget to send in your submissions for the December edition of the Merriott Messenger by November 12th!

We'd love to showcase your Christmas and New Year's content.

This is your last chance to be featured until our next issue in February 2026!

ARK at Egwood — Community Matters

ARK at Egwood have been selected as one of three Community Matters causes in Waitrose, Crewkerne!

Please consider placing your green token in ARK's box, supporting us in enabling our community to improve their health and wellbeing, confidence, and engagement through provision of land-based activities in a safe and nurturing outdoor environment.

Amanda Bell — Ark at Egwood CIC





PILATES

Tuesday 7.30am Symondsbur Estate
Tuesday 5.30pm Merriott Hall
Wednesday 6.15pm British Legion Bridport
Thursday 9am Public Hall Beaminster
Private and online lessons available

- ☑ Improve your strength & flexibility
- ☑ Fun and friendly environment
- ☑ Relieves body aches and pain
- ☑ Supports Injury prevention



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07588 220007
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CHRISTMAS MARKET

SANTA WILL BE ATTENDING
SANTA WILL BE IN HIS GROTTO FROM 2-4PM
IT'S £2.50 A CHILD- EACH CHILD WILL RECEIVE A GIFT.
A PHOTOGRAPHER WILL BE THERE TAKING PHOTOS AT AN ADDITIONAL COST (THIS IS OPTIONAL)

MERRIOTT VILLAGE HALL TA16 5QH
A BEAUTIFUL RANGE OF UNIQUE HANDCRAFTED ITEMS WILL BE ATTENDING THE CHRISTMAS MARKET, ALL AT REASONABLE PRICES!
REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE.

7TH DECEMBER
1-5PM
TABLES AVAILABLE £10 EACH
TO BOOK:
MONTHLYMARKETBOOKINGS [at] HOTMAIL.COM

Planning Applications

19 Lower Street: Notification of intent to prune 1 Magnolia tree and to fell 1 Holly tree within a Conservation Area.
25/02483/TCA Status: Awaiting decision.

Land off Shiremoor Hill: Non-material Amendment to approved application 24/01205/S73A to amend roof tile specification and gutter specification.
25/02431/NMA Status: Application permitted.

Land at Goldwell Farm, Crewkerne Road: Discharge of Conditions Numbers 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, 21, 21, 23, and 26 of planning application 20/03708/OUT.
25/02385/DOC1 Status: Awaiting decision.

Merriott House, Lower Street: S73 Application to vary Condition 02 (approved plans) to revise the siting of the approved swimming pool relating to planning consent 22/02885/HOU; Extension to outbuilding and construction of swimming pool.
25/02029/S73 Status: Approved.

10 Newchester Cross: Demolition of existing garage structure and erection of a two-storey side extension.
25/02028/HOU Status: Approved.

Mulberry Cottage, 30 Church Street: Notification of intent to carry out Tree Surgery Works to 2 Trees within a Conservation Area.
25/02095/TCA Status: Application Permitted.

For further information, go to [Somerset.gov.uk](https://www.somerset.gov.uk) and "Search for planning application".

Marion Biggs

Shoe-Box Appeal 2025

Once again, we are collecting Christmas shoe-boxes for Ukraine. They are greatly appreciated and warmly received by all age-groups.

As previously, you are invited to fill a shoe-box (medium size) with the items described on the leaflets, which will be available in both the Church and Merriott Pharmacy. They will provide all of the ideas and information needed.

Alternatively, we are very happy to receive donated items that can be used to make up more boxes. Empty, medium-sized shoe-boxes are also very much appreciated.

All donations can be dropped off at 12, Higher Beadon, Merriott any time before November 8th. They will then be taken to the Ilminster team for checking and dispatching in time for Christmas.

Thank you so much for your support and concern.

Beryl Virgin

Telephone: 07799 941332

Beryl Virgin

ARK at Egwood

Changing lives within our community

We have had another busy summer at ARK and we are now looking forward to our next chapter. Due to local requests, we are now putting on some new workshops, which should not only be great fun, but you can learn something new and help ARK to support people of all ages and needs from within the local community - What a great Christmas present for someone!

Thurs 6th Nov - Autumn Flower Arrangement £45

Sun 23rd Nov - Bread Making £45

Thurs 4th Dec - Christmas Willow Wreath £45

Sat 6th & Sun 7th Dec - Easy Entertaining £75

Thurs 11th Dec - Willow Angels £30

Fri 19th & Mon 22nd Dec - Festive Table Centrepiece £40

Sat 24th Jan - Pastry Making £55

Sat 31st Jan - Willow Basket £60

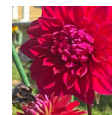
Sat 28th Feb - Patisserie £95

Fri 6th Mar - Easter Wreath 45

Sat 7th Mar - Willow Basket £60

and don't forget our regular Tai Chi classes Monday 9.30am-10.30am £5, our community lunches in Merriott Village Hall every other Tuesday 12 for 12.30pm £6 for two courses (bookable through office), and on the other Tuesday Soup and Social from 10.30am-1.30pm

For more details or to book online, please visit our website at www.arkategwood.com



01460 391974

Office email - office@arkategwood.com

Telephone - 01460 391974

ARK at Egwood CIC

Egwood House, Egwood, Merriott, Somerset TA16 5QN
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CREWKERNE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON



FRIDAY 28th NOVEMBER 2025

Come and start your Christmas season with us!

Dress as an Elf and join the fun!

Shops, cafés, pubs and businesses will be hosting festive events and special offers, including:

- Seasonal treats and refreshments
- Fun activities, craft fair and charity stalls
- Live entertainment
- Santa's parade and Christmas lights switch-on
- Santa's Grotto

Hosted by Radio Ninesprings' Drivetime presenter Ross Owen Williams



You can also view the Merriott Messenger (including archived issues) digitally at <https://merriottpc.org.uk/the-merriott-messenger>

Merriott Parish Council

Home Your Parish Council The Merriott Messenger

Please Join Us For
Merriott Majorettes

CHRISTMAS BINGO

Play Christmas bingo for festive fun
with family and friends.

**SUNDAY 7TH
DECEMBER**

Merriott Social Venue

Refreshments also available

Doors open 6.30
Eyes down 7.30

Thank you to our sponsors

Useful Contact Details

All Saints Church:

Rectors — *Rev Julia Hicks and Rev Bob Hicks*

Benefice Administrator (Office)

Churchwarden — *Mark Bunting*

PCC Secretary — *Caroline Reeves*

Merriott Allotment Association — *Chris Clark*

Baby Clinic — *Health Visitor*

Merriott Badminton Club — *Penny Harvey*

U3A Badminton Players — *Tony Barrett*

Bowling Club (Secretary) — *Roger Collins*

Breeze Dance (Toddlers) — *Jo Sivell*

Campanologists (Bell ringers) — *Robert Harvey*

Crewkerne Voluntary Transport

Cubs and Scouts — *Debra Cummings*

County Councillor — *Jo Roundell Greene*

Evergreen Club — *Mary Gilson and Debbie Stokes*

Floodline

Football Club (Secretary) — *Angie Rowsell*

Gardening Club — *Gayle Stokes*

Merriott Gun Club — *Nigel Whitcombe*

Marquetry Club — *Ken Smart*

Merriott Majorettes — *Sarah Foley*

Merriott Heritage Trust

Merriott Karate Club — *Brett Jacobs*

Merriott Pre-School — *Jenny Hayne*

Merriott Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides

Merriott Table Tennis Club — *Michael Fox*

MP — *Adam Dance*

Merriott Open Group — *Marion Biggs*

Minnows Parent and Todder Group — *Mary Gilson*

Parish Council:

Chairman — *Steve Ashton*

Clerk — *Harriet Baggs*

Police Community Support Officers (PCSO)

Pilates — *Belle Palmer*

Short Mat Bowls Club — *Frank Smith*

Merriott Social Venue

Merriott Squash Club:

Membership — *Matt Gentle*

The Kings Head

Tithe Barn Bookings — *Michelle Down*

Village Hall Bookings — *Martin and Michelle Rowsell*

Merriott Youth Football Club — *Monica Havden*

01460 76406

merriottchurch@hotmail.co.uk

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rogcollinsatparcroft@gmail.com

07841 913323

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07966 047953

01460 53438

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07515 483994

adam.dance.mp@parliament.uk

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07752 893891

07436 821809

steve.ashton@somerset.gov.uk

clerk@merriottpc.org.uk

101

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07471 593040

07718 664147

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01460 711500

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Residential Care Home built by the community

We are pleased to be able to offer respite stays again over the Christmas period and the New Year. Our large en-suite room is available with a flat screen TV, telephone, recliner chair and large adjustable bed. We can also guarantee a visit from Father Christmas!

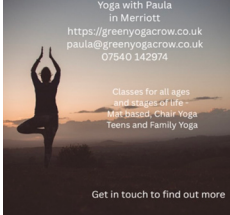
If you would like to know more about our home, our fees and what we can offer you please get in touch, we look forward to hearing from you.

**Vaughan Lee House,
Orchard Vale
Ilminster, Somerset,
TA19 0EX
01460 52077**

karen@vaughanleehouse.co.uk



Thank you to our sponsors for their support

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