

Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

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Annual Report
2024- 2025

1st February 2025



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Contents

- Chair Summary
- Tennis Tournament
- Festival in the Field
- Cricket Match
- Bonfire Night
- Children's Christmas Party
- Treasurer's Report
- Old School Field Pathway
- Forthcoming Events
- List of Committee Members

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Annual Report
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Chair Summary

It has been an absolute pleasure for the Abbots Leigh Civic Society to host many memorable events over the past year.

A new addition to the calendar this year was the Civic Society joining forces with the Abbots Leigh Cricket Club to co-host the village/club cricket match. It was a lovely, fun afternoon and therefore we are repeating it this year. The tennis tournament was again kindly hosted and arranged by Mark and Alex Woodington, with assistance from the Civic Society. A great afternoon was had by all who attended.

The Summer drinks event, usually held at Abbots Leigh Nursing Home curtesy of the Gillespie's, was sadly cancelled this year due to lack of ticket sales.

Unfortunately, due to the great British weather, the Festival in the Field became the Festival in the Pub - but we put on a great event under the circumstances and received much positive feedback. This year the Festival in the Field will be in June, to spread out the big events and the work involved.

The children's summer event at Abbots Pool (run by the Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group and supported by the Civic Society) was another success, with a kestrel display, snail racing, pond dipping and model boat racing. The plan is to run this event in alternate years, with the next event in 2026.

In April a fantastic evening was had in the Village Hall with the Quiz Night in aid of Pill Food Bank. Many volunteers outside of the Civic Society were involved with this entertaining evening, the Civic Society were delighted to donate the liquid refreshments to help with increasing the donation to this great cause.

Bonfire Night was a huge success. Many people said the fireworks were the best yet and both the hot dog stand and the hot cider stall were a sell-out. This event in particular requires a huge amount of work from the committee and other volunteers, so well done on all your hard work.

To end the year on a high the Children's Christmas Party was organised by a new team of helpers (with input from the old team) and funded by the Civic Society. As ever, the younger residents in the village had a fun afternoon.

The Civic Society has struggled this year to secure enough volunteers for the setting up and running of the two big events. The recruitment drive in November has brought some great results, but we can always do with more help! Please let us know if you can spare some time to help run these events, which really do help create our community.

On the back of the recent recruitment drive the Civic Society is delighted to announce that Rosie Gloyns, Eleni Franklin, and Andrew Manasseh have joined the Committee. Many of you may know Rosie and her family as she has lived in Abbots Leigh for many years, and has played a very active role in other local interest groups within the village. Eleni, mother of five, moved to the village in 2022 and somehow finds time to be a keen runner and gym goer, as well as enjoying the outdoors life! Since moving to the village Andrew has been actively involved in many village activities and has lots of ideas on how the Civic Society can play even more of an active role in the village and is keen to progress with projects which will enhance village life. Welcome to Rosie, Eleni, and Andrew!

Abbots Leigh Civic Society

Annual Report

1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

The Civic Society has decided to adopt a new structure for organising the events this year. We will fully host and coordinate two main events going forwards.

- **The Festival in the Field** **Sunday 8th June (moved from Sept to spread out the events)**
- **Bonfire Night** **Wednesday 5th November**

For other events going forwards the Civic Society will co-finance and/or help with logistics, with the events being hosted by different village interest groups. Smaller working groups will do most of the organisation. This approach has been tested over the past few months and has worked incredibly well. The Abbots Leigh Cricket Match, the Children's Christmas Party, and the Quiz Night all followed this formula. They were ultimately organised by groups of villagers outside of the Civic Society, but with finance and support from one or two Civic Society committee members where required. This new approach is a model we are going to continue as it has been proven to work and broadens the range and number of events in the village. If you would like to organise a village event and need some help, or some of the Civic Society equipment and some finances, please do get in touch.

*Email us on **abbotsleighcivicsociety@gmail.com** to see how we can help.*

Going forwards the committee would like to support other existing village interest groups, or new ones which you might be thinking of creating. (How about a Summer Boules Competition or an Easter Egg Hunt?) Please do let us know any ideas you have, and we will see if we can help.

Finally, the Civic Society Committee would like to thank Jane Gibbons, Ian Larthe de Langladure, Gabi Watson, and Mel King for all their incredible hard work over the years on the Committee. They are all moving on to pastures new and we wish them well.

Mel & Jon

Review of events held in the previous year

Abbots Leigh Tennis Tournament – Saturday 3rd August 2024

We were lucky enough to have a sunny afternoon for the village Tennis Tournament. The tournament was again graciously hosted by Mark and Alex Woodington and attended by both players and spectators from the village. 10 players (five women and five men) competed in a draw created by Drew Smith for the hotly contested best female and best male trophies. Just don't ask Drew about the engravings! During the afternoon the children were entertained with a treasure hunt created by Henry Woodington. After the tournament players and spectators enjoyed a buffet tea with celebratory Prosecco (provided by the Civic Society) and tennis cake. Winners Tracy Manasseh and Nick Wallum were both first time winners of the event.

Festival in the Field (Pub) - Sunday 8th September 2024

A huge amount of planning had gone into the Festival in the Field; however the weather was against us and on the morning of the event the heavens opened. After much debate the decision was made to move the Bake-Off competition, and all those who wished to get together in the 'spirit' of the festival, to The George Pub. The Bake-Off entries were prolific, and the winners well deserved, with Donna Butcher, our judge, having a very difficult job this year in all the categories. The event was a success and well attended with a great crowd of villagers in the back bar of the pub. There is no doubt that although the weather may have tried to dampen our spirits it didn't succeed. Our thanks go to the pub for hosting the event at such short notice.

Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Abbots Leigh Cricket Club match - Saturday 28th September 2024

The Civic Society are always looking for new ideas on how to support local community events which encourage activity and have a social aspect. The village cricket match was a perfect example of this. The Civic Society helped by sponsoring the refreshments after a game of Cricket (village v club) at the Abbots Leigh Cricket Club. The weather was kind and the cricket match attracted players and spectators across the ages. The result was Abbots Leigh CC won the closely fought match (although both teams were mixed) and everyone celebrated with a BBQ and liquid refreshments. It was a great success and enjoyed by all involved, so much so that the 2025 date has been already set. If you would like to play, or support, please put April 19th in your diaries.

Bonfire Night - Tuesday 5th November 2024

Remember, remember, the 5th of November!! No problem at all if you live in the village of Abbots Leigh! This fabulous event, laid on by the Civic Society and an army of volunteers, was enjoyed by hundreds. The firework display team excelled themselves, putting on a magnificent display, which lit up the night sky in perfect weather, generating lots of ooos and ahhs from the crowd. Many said it was the best display yet. The fantastic BBQed hotdogs were extremely popular and, as always, the bar did a cracking job of ensuring all were suitably hydrated. The hot cider team went to great efforts to ensure this year's cider was also the best it has been. It was lovely to see lots of new, young families joining in and enjoying a village tradition which has been running for over 30 years. An excellent family evening was had by all. If you were there, I think you'd agree.

Abbots Leigh Children's Christmas Party – Sunday 8th December 2024

The Abbots Leigh Children's Christmas Party took place on 8th December, and this year was arranged and hosted by a new team of village volunteers, on behalf of the Civic Society. This team of volunteers all gave their time and effort, to ensure this was a wonderful Christmas party for the children of the village, and yet another great event on the village social calendar. The Village Hall looked amazing and very festive. Lost it Lucy entertained the children with her marvellous magic and games. There were snacks and presents for the children, and of course Father Christmas paid a visit, to bring the Ho Ho Ho! AND there was even snow! It was a truly fabulous event, and the volunteer team really pulled out the stops to make this Christmas party one of the best we have ever had. A HUGE thank you to all those new volunteers involved, from the Civic Society.

Treasurer's Report

Although we had several events which were cancelled, the overall financial position of the Civic Society has improved, with the balance held across the accounts increasing from £8,287.04 (Dec 2023) to £8,998.38 (Dec 2024). The Quiz Night was a great success, raising £1,250 for the Pill Food Bank. We donated £200 to the Abbots Leigh Wildlife Group for their event, and £150 to the Cricket Club for the village match, and a further £824 to the Parish Council for the Old School Field. Finally, we purchased new gazebos for future events. I am stepping back from my role as treasurer, I hope that the village continues to support the Society and, with the help of the new Treasurer, Neil Hopkinson, that the Society goes from strength to strength.

Old School Field Pathway

During 2024 the Civic Society worked with the Parish Council to install a new footpath from the five-bar gate to the lower open green space. The Parish Council have undertaken the construction of the first phase, which terminates at the swings. The Civic Society will consider the possibilities of completing the project after the 2025 Festival in the Field and will make recommendations to the Parish Council. At the present time completion of the extended pathway for disabled access and young children remains a Civic Society priority.

Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Forthcoming Events

Festival in The Field - Sunday 8th June 2025

Bonfire Night - Wednesday 5th November 2025

Signatures

Co-Chair – Mel King (retiring)

Co-Chair - Jon Brewer

Treasurer – Ian Larthe de Langladure (retiring)

Acting Secretary – Gabi Watson (retiring)

Abbots Leigh Tennis Saturday 3rd August



Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Festival in the field (The George style!)



Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

**Abbots Leigh Cricket Club match
Saturday 28th September**



Bonfire night Tuesday 5th November 2024



Abbots Leigh Civic Society
Annual Report
1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Abbots Leigh Children's Christmas Party
8th December 2024



Abbots Leigh Civic Society

Annual Report

1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Abbots Leigh Civic Society

ACCOUNTS for the Year ended DECEMBER 31st 2024

	<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
<u>Events</u>		<u>Events</u>	
Quiz Night	£ 1,248.85	Quiz Night	£ 51.00
Bonfire Night	£ 6,138.45	Tennis Tournament	£ 90.00
Christmas Party	£ -	Easter Egg Hunt	£ 37.69
		Summer Party	£ -
<u>Income</u>	<u>£ 7,387.30</u>	Festival in the Field	£ 609.41
		Bonfire Night	£ 2,175.02
<u>Interest</u>	<u>£ 55.00</u>	Xmas Party	£ 180.00
		<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>£ 3,143.12</u>
		<u>Donations</u>	
		Pill Food Bank	£ 1,250.00
		Abbots Leigh Wildlife Club	£ 200.00
		Surf Turf Parish Council	£ 824.20
		<u>Admin</u>	
		Gazebos	£ 910.00
		Gifts for Former members	£ 219.98
		General Supplies & Admin	£ 178.99
<u>Total Income</u>	<u>£ 7,442.30</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>£ 6,726.29</u>
		<u>Surplus for 2024</u>	<u>£ 716.01</u>

CURRENT ASSETS

	<u>31.12.23</u>
Cash at Bank- Nat West	
Current A/C	£1,757.23
Deposit A/C	<u>£6,869.23</u>
Paypal Account	371.92
	<u>£8,998.38</u>

Ian Larthe de Langlature
Treasurer
31.12.2024

Abbots Leigh Civic Society
 Annual Report
 1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

01.02.24 - 31.01-2025 Committee Members	
Mel King Jon Brewer	Co-Chairs (Mel retiring)
Murray Stewart	Acting Caretaker Chair
Gabi Watson	Secretary (Retiring)
Ian Larthe de Langladure	Treasurer (Retiring)
Neil Hopkinson	Treasurer - Elect
Debbie Nelmes	Event organiser
Rachael Doherty	Event organiser
Paulina Gillespie	Event organiser
Henry Burnand	Event organiser
Adri Allan	Event organiser
Jane Gibbons	Event organiser – (Retiring)
12	

01.02.2025 - 31.01.2026 Committee Members	
Jon Brewer	Co-Chair
Murray Stewart	Acting Caretaker Chair
Neil Hopkinson	Treasurer
Debbie Nelmes	Event organiser
Rachael Doherty	Event organiser
Paulina Gillespie	Event organiser
Henry Burnand	Event organiser
Adri Allan	Event organiser
Rosie Gloyns	Event organiser
Eleni Franklin	Event organiser
Andrew Manasseh	Event organiser
11	
	Roles to be filled
	Co-Chair
	Festival in the field LEAD
	Fireworks Bonfire LEAD
	Link contributor
	Coordinator with other village interest groups. Wildlife, Heritage, Herb, Parish Council
	Coordinator with other village Sports events . Tennis Tournament, Cricket Match, Boule's tournament



ABBOTS LEIGH CIVIC SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

Adopted at inaugural meeting held in The Village Hall, Abbots Leigh on 25th September 1979 and amended at the Annual Meeting held on 9th January 2025

NAME:

The name of the Society shall be the **Abbots Leigh Civic Society**, an unincorporated association.

AIMS:

The Society exists to encourage a caring, considerate, sociable and inclusive community for everyone living in the parish of Abbots Leigh by:

- Cherishing our past present and future
- Running events for all ages
- Using any surplus funds for projects which improve the village
- Engendering a sense of community by encouraging people living in Abbots Leigh village to know their neighbours, to welcome new neighbours, to attend the Society's social events and participate in other village groups.

MEMBERSHIP:

Membership shall be open to everyone who lives in the parish of Abbots Leigh.

COMMITTEE & OFFICERS:

The Committee shall appoint a Chair(s) and Treasurer. Members of the Committee will be elected and appointed by the members of the Society at an Annual January Meeting.

POWERS:

The Committee shall have the following powers:

- To open and maintain bank accounts
- To work with the Parish Council and local organisations/ businesses to achieve its aims
- To support other village groups

RESPONSIBILITIES: The Committee shall:

- Keep proper financial records
- Issue an Annual Report available on ALCS Website
- The CS will organise and run two events per year:
 - The Festival in the Field – a Summer event held in June/July
 - The Bonfire Night – November 5th
- The Committee will only meet seven times per year –
 - Once in January – Annual Committee meeting from which annual report will be produced
 - Once 2 months before each event – planning of event + Required insurance and licences
 - Once 2 weeks before each event – ensure everything is in place + final planning
 - Once 1 week after each event – debrief of event, lessons learnt