



# Holmes Chapel Partnership Community Newsletter Issue 126 JANUARY 2025

**WELCOME TO THE JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER**



## Welcome to 2025!



Looking back, last year was a busy one for Holmes Chapel Partnership - apart from organising the annual Christmas Market, there was a lot of activity generated by the international interest in Harry Styles. What will the coming year bring?

Looking forward: there are lots of opportunities for you to get involved in your community with the Partnership, the Churches, the u3a, Bridge the Gap and more. The Parish Council has events up its sleeve for 2025 as well.



Looking back: Santa tells us about his sleigh experience at the Christmas Market

And looking forward: keep your eye on the station this year - you are pretty sure to find Graham, the Station Manager, but who else?



Want to get out in the fresh air? Take a winter stroll in the Dane Meadow.

Or check out the local birdlife with the South East Cheshire Ornithological Society (SECOS) on one of their outings - see inside for details.



Or maybe even join our Speedwatch team!



And if you developed a taste for singing over Christmas - go along to the Methodist Church on January 11th. See inside for details.



*Best Wishes from your Partnership Team*  
**For more information visit [www.hcpartnership.org.uk](http://www.hcpartnership.org.uk)**

## Chairman's News January 2025



Well, it's time to think about that diet again, but what are we going to do with all those little treats that are still left over from Christmas. My own plans are to save a treat for when I have done something positive in the new year, like going for a walk and getting some fresh air, even if it is a bit cold and windy, the much-needed exercise gets the blood flowing and always makes me feel so much better. If you are new to the village and are looking for safe walks or cycle routes that you can do with friends and family, then take a look at our website page <https://www.hcpartnership.org.uk/walkingandcyclingroutes>

that features several walks both in and around the village.

As we move into 2025, I have reflected upon how long I have lived in Holmes Chapel, and why we have made it our home for the last 36+ years. In 1988 our family lives changed, with me swapping, a commute by train from Chelmsford to work in the city, to a 15-minute drive to Knutsford through the Cheshire countryside. But perhaps the biggest change for me was to be asked by a new work colleague if I would like to join him at an evening with a few friends at the Holmes Chapel Round Table. Within a few months I went from knowing nobody in this village, to having a group of around 20 new friends who were all members of the Holmes Chapel Round Table. Sadly, our Round Table and Rotary club closed many years ago, but many new clubs have appeared and are always looking for new members. So, if you find yourself thinking what am I going to do differently in 2025, think about joining a club and getting to know a few more people locally.

If you don't want the commitment of joining a club, another option is to simply volunteer to help the Partnership. We are a small friendly group that is involved in a diverse range of activities throughout the year, which last year included, our Safe Walking Routes to School Initiative, launching and running the Harry's Home Village Tours where we reached an audience of 1.9 billion people worldwide, running the Holmes Chapel Christmas Market and organising the Santa Sleigh runs over 15 evenings in December which raises much needed funds for 10 local groups and causes who help us to bring Santa to your doors each year. You can find a link to what volunteer positions we have here <https://www.hcpartnership.org.uk/jobs>

And finally, may I wish you all a healthy and prosperous New Year!

*Peter Whiers, Chairman  
Holmes Chapel Partnership*

## Ho Ho Ho, Holmes Chapel !



Once again, it was a delight to be a part of your Christmas Market in Holmes Chapel. I'm thinking of recruiting some of your organisers as elves next year: they did a wonderful job in creating the market and all that goes on around it – including a nice smooth landing for my sleigh.

We try hard to make Christmas a magical time for our children, but it's your children who make this a magical time for me. Each year, with wonder in their eyes, they tell of their hopes for Christmas morning. Mostly they are modest requests (though I did balk at the Lamborghini that made one list) with assurances of good behaviour and kindness to others: which brings me to the tricky subject of elves. They have proliferated over recent years and are causing differences of opinion in many family homes. On the one hand, many Mums and Dads welcome them as a non-subscription surveillance service: keeping a watchful eye on excitable youngsters. Clearly, they are well suited to this work as the message from one such elf to the children of the house, was passed to me with "Plees take it bak" added. Mum and Dad were less keen to have their elf withdrawn from duty. On the other hand, tales of mischievous telekinesis are plentiful. I know from year-round experience that they need handling with care. Firm but fair is my approach, but even I don't always get it right:

This year my senior elf  
Who has always looked after himself  
Announced with a shout  
"Enough, I'm off out  
I'm not going to be left on the shelf !"

At least he'd handed in the bucket with your generous donations to the Holmes Chapel Partnership so, hopefully, I'll see you again next year. (Now, where are my glasses?! Ah, there they are. I'm sure I didn't put them on Rudolph ...)  
With my warm wishes to you all.

*Santa*

## Speedwatch



When you are doing Speedwatch on Macclesfield Road during school run time it can feel like the Wild West! Cars speed down the railway bridge towards the centre of the village even though the limit is 30mph.

**IN THE LAST 3 SESSIONS ALONE WE HAVE RECORDED ONE VEHICLE AT 48MPH, ONE AT 42MPH, FIVE AT 38MPH AND ANOTHER DOZEN OVER 35MPH.**

At the same time vehicles regularly speed in the opposite direction, but we can't record those as well. There are cars exiting and entering the Victoria Mills estate often nipping into spaces between the speeding cars. Then there are the residents on the north side of Macclesfield Road who are trying to get their cars in and out of their drives.

**People who live on Saltersford Gardens and the Victoria Mills estate and who walk with their children to school need to cross this road to get to the Hermitage Primary School. They are regularly dodging in between the vehicles to get across.**

Three members of the Speedwatch team generally go out in a morning between 8.30am and 9am when the children are on the way to school. The volunteers wear hi-viz, have a speedgun to monitor speeds and an official form to record the details of speeding cars.

They send a list of offenders to the PCSO who sends out a warning letter to the owners. We regularly get thanked by pedestrians who all have their story to tell about the nightmare of walking along Macclesfield Road. They even say the traffic slows down at the sight of hi-viz and a speed gun, so that is another satisfying plus. What we want to demonstrate is that there is a need for another crossing on Macclesfield Road or at least traffic calming measures. We go out as often as we can but each Speedwatch team has to have three people, so ....

**COULD YOU SPARE HALF AN HOUR A WEEK?  
WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS TO REMIND DRIVERS THAT THE SPEED LIMIT IS**



Contact us via [info@hcpartnership.org.uk](mailto:info@hcpartnership.org.uk)

## Health Centre Parking Update



This was how it looked on December 10<sup>th</sup> when the new car parking charges came in! On the left a crammed Health Centre car park. On the right an empty Cheshire East Council car park.



The latest missive from the Health Centre tells us that **surveillance cameras are being installed in the run up to Christmas**. Beware the potential for a £60 fine from the parking company if you park there at all - even if the Health Centre itself is closed. Happy Christmas one and all!

Cheshire East Council has been remarkably speedy about installing the payment infrastructure in their car parks.

## Parish Council News



The Parish Council wishes our residents a very Happy New Year and we look forward to working with you over 2025!

Looking forward, here are some Key Dates for 2025:

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm** Holmes Chapel Community Centre - Annual Parish Meeting

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May** – VE Day 80. Keep an eye out for what we will be doing to celebrate 80 years since VE Day.

**4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> July** – Summer Celebration Weekend! Lots of great events are being planned.

### **New Robo-Machine in Action!**

We were excited to discover this robo-machine which can help cut back overgrowing vegetation. It was recently used in the Dane Meadow to cut back overgrowth and create a new path! It munched through loads of brambles on the top path so it feels much more open which we hope will be nice for walkers. It has also opened up the orchard area which looks fantastic! (see also Dane Meadow update)

### **Bus Shelters Cleaned!**

The Parish Council recently funded the cleaning of two bus shelters on either side of London Road, which had become very dirty. We hope this will help improve the experience of waiting for a bus in the village.

### **Cheshire East Car Parks**

Car parking charges are now in force at the two Cheshire East owned car parks in the village. Please go to the Cheshire East Website [Car park charges and tickets](#) for details on the charging costs. Please note that the London Road car park, by the library, will be free to use after 3pm.

## Thank You Celeste



Holmes Chapel Partnership would like to thank Celeste for their support during the Christmas Market.

They provided us with vital electricity when the lights went out! So check out all the delicious things they have on offer at <https://celestesolci.co.uk/> and pay them a visit.

## A Christmas Outing for Memory Café



A dancing Rudolph to the sound of Christmas songs was just one of the many sights which brought smiles to the faces of over thirty people from Memory Café who were invited for their Christmas outing to the home of local couple, Sue and Derek.



The decorations adorning every room in Sue and Derek's home were just amazing leading to interesting conversations of Christmas times past and present.



Sue and Derek's invitation was for a cup of tea and mince pie but the heavily laden dining table offered far more delights – cake, sausage rolls, chocolates to name just a few.



Sue had organised a Christmas raffle with beautifully wrapped gifts, the photograph showing one of the lucky winners.

Probably the real Christmas highlight of the afternoon was when the light began to fade and the garden looked absolutely magical. The idea was to try and take a photograph outside the front door of the whole group but that didn't work, there was no waiting around for all to gather, some were off to take a closer look at Santa in his sleigh, along with the colourful lights and the many Christmassy dressed model animals positioned around the garden.



A lovely start to the Christmas celebrations for our friends from Memory café and we look forward to seeing them and others who may like to join us at our meetings in January – 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Memory Café meets 10.00am – 12.00pm at Holmes Chapel Methodist Church.

More details: [dedavidson1@aol.com](mailto:dedavidson1@aol.com) Tel: 01477 537679.

## Dane Meadow Update

After all the rain it is inevitably muddy around the Dane Meadow but as reported in the Parish Council News some of the brambles and other vegetation have been cleared from the paths so they are very accessible. This “robo-machine” is obviously very effective! The orchard (right) is more visible. There is still plenty of cover elsewhere for the birds and small animals.



The steps get clogged with dead leaves so during their December session the Friends of Dane Meadow raked the Moreton Drive steps. (left) **before** (right) **after**

There is more raking to be done, so we would welcome some help at our next session on **Tuesday January 14th**. Meet at the picnic tables at 10am.



The frog sculpture has been re-instated in a more prominent position. Concerns that the pond wouldn't fill up without some help appear to have been groundless - it is full to the brim! The pile of soil excavated during the restoration of the pond is greening up nicely from the wildflower seeds we sowed in October.



## Discover the Joy of Birdwatching with SECOS



Are you curious about the natural world around you? Looking for a way to explore it while meeting like-minded people? **South East Cheshire Ornithological Society (SECOS)** could be just what you're looking for! Founded in 1964, SECOS is a welcoming community for bird enthusiasts of all ages and experience levels.

Spending time in green spaces has been shown to improve mood, reduce stress, and increase overall life satisfaction. Being out in nature gives us a chance to slow down and reconnect, and birdwatching with SECOS makes it easy to do just that, all while discovering the wonderful diversity of bird species.

**SECOS is active year-round, with a programme that has something for everyone.**

Indoor meetings are held monthly from September to April at Ettiley Heath near Sandbach, featuring presentations by experienced birders, photographers, and conservationists. Topics range from local species to global birdwatching destinations, as well as broader issues related to conservation.

From September to May, SECOS organises outings that cater to birdwatchers of all levels. Local excursions take place on the first Tuesday of each month, exploring nature reserves and bird hotspots nearby. We also venture farther afield with a monthly Sunday trip, visiting prime birdwatching locations in different regions. For those seeking even more adventure, we have annual short and long weekend trips, providing a truly immersive birdwatching experience.



Birdwatching provides benefits for physical and mental well-being, especially when done in the company of others. Joining SECOS allows you to share your passion for birds and nature, make new friends, and learn from more experienced birders. There's always someone ready to help you identify a new species or understand its behaviour.

SECOS is open to everyone with an interest in birds and nature, and we're always excited to welcome new members. By joining, you'll receive a monthly email with updates on upcoming events, along with an e-Newsletter to keep you informed about the latest sightings and trip reports. Members also have access to two WhatsApp groups: one for sharing bird sightings and another for those who attend outings. All this for a £12 single or £21 joint annual membership fee! Visitors are warmly invited to attend our indoor meetings for just £3 per session - come along and experience what we offer!

Whether you're interested in learning more about local birds, exploring new birdwatching locations, or simply enjoying a day out in nature, SECOS offers something for everyone. Visit our website at <https://www.secos.org.uk/>, [follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SECOS1964](https://www.facebook.com/SECOS1964) or email our Membership Secretary, Lydia Taylor [ianlydiataylor@btinternet.com](mailto:ianlydiataylor@btinternet.com) for more details.

## u3a

On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December Kathryn Davies brought her Knutsford Rock Choir group to entertain us with their 'Christmas with Rock Choir' at the Holmes Chapel u3a Monthly meeting.

They sang their Christmas repertoire including The First Noel/ Silent Night and Stevie Wonder's 'What Christmas means to Me'. They did a rendition of Lily Alan's John Lewis Christmas song from 10 years ago, 'Somewhere Only We Know' and finished with Wizzard's 'I Wish it Could be Christmas every Day', for everyone to join in. However a lot of audience participation was needed for 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'.

It was good fun, and many people did turn up in their Christmas jumpers. Kathryn and some of the Rock Choir did stay afterwards for coffee and mince pies and received a lot of very favourable feedback from members.



Next month on Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup> Peter Cotton will come and tell us about **'Two local heroes and an Everest Obsession'**. Some very interesting stories and some mystery surrounding two local men who attempted to climb Everest in 1924. Join us at **10am at Holmes Chapel Methodist Church on Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup>**.



so let's

**Keep Singing!**

**Saturday 11 January 2025**

**10.00am in the Methodist Church**

A live band, Phoenix Boys, will be playing for us to sing along to this month  
No musical talent necessary, just come and enjoy!  
18+ years only please.

**We sing for about an hour followed by chatting over coffee/tea and biscuits.**

**Keep Singing** -2nd Saturday of every month – please make a note in diaries for the next few months.  
**8 February : 8 March : 12 April**

## Holmes Chapel Railway Station Corner

by Tony Wright - January 2025



**Happy New Year to you from the Volunteers and Friends of Holmes Chapel Railway Station and Viaduct!**

The Stationmaster, Graham Blake can be seen posting his last minute new year correspondence in the letter box set into the wall to the right of the station steps heading down towards the booking office and the Crewe-bound platform.

On the letter box can be seen 'POST OFFICE' and the royal cypher GR and just legible W T Allen and Company on the base.

The royal cypher on letterboxes dates back to the earliest road side boxes from the reign of Queen Victoria. Our station letter box is from the reign of George V. He became King in 1910 and reigned until 1936. This letter box is therefore between 89 and 115 years old. W T Allen and Co., who manufactured the box, were architectural iron founders, based in Lambeth Hill in London and in business from 1881 to 1955.

Also this month, from January 1st, **Railway 200** has been launched which runs throughout 2025. These national celebrations honour the remarkable past of our railways and their role today and importance for the future. There are four themes; celebrating railway people; heritage, culture and tourism; skills and education; innovation technology and environment. I will keep you posted! In the meantime 'Aspects of the History of the Manchester & Birmingham Railway Company (1837-1846)' is for sale in the booking office, at a special CRP price. This is the company that originally constructed the railway through Holmes Chapel.



## Barnabus - For the Journey off the Streets



Sporting his bright sweatshirt bearing a Barnabus logo, Steve Best will be recognisable to many, one of his roles in the community being, 'the man who delivers the donations to Barnabus', Barnabus being the charity for the homeless living in Manchester where Steve is a trustee and also one of many hard-working volunteers.

Both the Methodist and St Luke's Churches in Holmes Chapel have collecting boxes which are regularly filled with suitable

donations of food, toiletries and warm clothing which Steve usually takes on a weekly basis into Manchester. Steve being on crutches and unable to drive since November initially caused a concern for the support for Barnabus however, an appeal was made for a 'Christmas special' and Steve arranged for the Barnabus van to collect from Holmes Chapel. Thanks to the generosity of many in Holmes Chapel, the van was packed with bags of Christmas food treats, new socks, boxers, T shirts and hats along with some preloved but in good condition warm clothing and sleeping bags. A special touch to accompany these gifts were gift tags with messages from many of the children from our primary schools; during Advent they had visited the Methodist Church and enjoyed a number of activities based around the Christmas story and the part of 'no room at the inn' led to thinking of people today who are homeless, some of the children's messages were quite moving eg 'I hope you will be warm'. 'I hope you find love'.

Steve thanks all, not only who donated to Barnabus for Christmas but those who support the charity throughout the year and also those who had an enjoyable evening with the music of the Phoenix Boys band in December at the George and Dragon; this annual event raises much needed funds for Barnabus.

Hopefully, by the time you read this, Steve will have dispensed of his crutches, the boxes for collecting donations will be back in the Churches and Steve will be looking forward to being able to drive and deliver the donations from our Community to Barnabus.

If you would like to find out more of the work of Barnabus, please look on their website [www.barnabus.org](http://www.barnabus.org) or have a word with Steve on 07875 765411

## Can You Help - In any way- at Goosfest 2025?

Thinking ahead to Goosfest 2025, we're keen to find more people who might be willing to help in the running of Goosfest. To that end, we've identified a range of specific roles/tasks that we need help with. At this stage, we're looking for indications of help, and we'll be happy to hear from anyone with a particular skill, such as people-facing experience for helping on front of house or the bars, or ushering at our larger venue, Clonter Theatre. We promise to respond to any offers of help and will explore with you how you might best fit our various tasks before and during the festival.



Goosfest is a not-for-profit organisation, run by local people for local people. Everyone involved is a volunteer, and whilst the Goosfest committee plans the festival, we also need plenty of other volunteers to ensure it runs smoothly during the actual festival itself.

So, if you think you might be able to take on any of the roles below, or help with the following, please drop a line to [info@goosfest.com](mailto:info@goosfest.com) and we'll be in touch.

### **Festival flyers**

A distribution co-ordinator, plus volunteers to deliver the leaflets, would improve our reach. If you can help, please let us know.

### **Banners**

We need somebody to take charge of erecting and re-locating banners and boards at events, as venues change per day.

### **Artiste / performer hospitality**

We need volunteers who can help us look after performers.

### **Pre-show set-up**

We need volunteers who can come on a rota to help set up a venue before an event, We have an expert lighting and sound person but anyone with knowledge or eagerness to learn these skills would be very welcome.

### **Box office support**

Might there be anyone interested in helping with the box office on a rota , which requires up to a couple of hours per day?

### **Bar rota**

We run a bar rota during Goosfest, and it's great fun helping out for an evening.

**If you can contribute to any of the above, it would be much appreciated. Please let us know via [info@goosfest.com](mailto:info@goosfest.com), and we'll keep a note of your details, and be in touch to plan your role with you, then contact you again nearer the festival to see if you're still able to help.**

## More Good News from Friends of Goostrey Station!

Recently our photo with the caption Keeping Up Appearances was shortlisted for another award. The theme of the Community Rail photo competition was Capturing the Essence of Community Rail. The winner will be chosen through a public vote.

This link will take you to the voting page of Community Rail  
<https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-awards-2025-photography-competition/?status=success>.

**Voting closes at 5pm on 22nd January.** The result will be announced in March. Previously our supporters helped FoGS to be successful in this competition. We've won twice and came second on another occasion!

### Have you visited Stockport station recently?

A painting by Debbie Goldsmith (whose studio is in the restored building at Goostrey station) has helped to transform the dominating wall along the pavement at the Edgeley approach. The project was led by two Community Rail Partnerships - South East Manchester and Crewe to Manchester.

The theme was a View from a Train Window. Those leading the project were inspired by the recesses in the wall which resemble both train windows and picture frames. This fitted with wanting to promote train travel as well as brightening up the entrance to the station.

Many groups and individuals were involved including college students, primary school pupils, a mental health charity and professional artists, like Debbie Goldsmith. This ensured that a wide variety of artwork was included. It also gave as many people as possible a sense of involvement and ownership of the project. The artists used a number of different techniques including watercolours, acrylic paints and collage. In order to be displayed, all the artwork was digitised and printed onto composite panels.

There have been lots of positive comments about the difference it has made to the station approach. The proud organisers hope the 50 pieces of artwork will start conversations, evoke memories of previous train journeys and encourage people to plan more travel by train. A short video can be watched on the Stockport Tourism Facebook page. In the photos you can see the Edgeley approach to Stockport Station and Debbie Goldsmith with one of her artworks.



# What's On

## Bridge the Gap



**Monthly Community Event:**  
All ages welcome as we Bridge the Gap - from the young to the young at heart - babies and toddlers to grandparents and the wider community

## Bridge the Gap at Hermitage

Monthly 10am to 11am

You are invited to join us for refreshments and to join in or watch some activities with the staff and children

Month	Date	Planned activity (subject to change)
December	Friday 6th December	Infant nativity performance
January	Friday 10th January	Board games
February	Friday 14th February	Mindfulness crafts and activities – Mental Health
March	Friday 7th March	Shared play – Lego, construction, jigsaws
April	No Bridge the Gap this month – Easter holiday	
May	Friday 9th May	Craft
June	Friday 13th June	Shared play – Lego, drawing, construction
July	Friday 11th July	Junior End of Year Show

- All ages welcome as we Bridge the Gap - from the young to the young at heart - babies and toddlers to parents, grandparents and the wider community
- No need to book just come along

your Library



## Holmes Chapel Library Adult Events

### Cookery & Gardening Group

Thursdays Monthly at 230pm



Join us for chat, hints and sharing tips over refreshments



### Family History

Thursdays Monthly at 2.30pm

Learn & share tips tracing your ancestors with our friendly group



### Home Library Service

Do you, or someone you know, struggle to get to the library due to health or mobility issues?



If you live in the Holmes Chapel area, our volunteers can deliver books to your home FREE of charge

Call us for further details

### Craft Tea & Chat

Thursdays weekly at 11am

Bring your own craft & enjoy a cuppa with like minded folk



### Make Friends with a Book

Every Friday at 2pm

A shared reading group, where we read a book aloud & discuss it over refreshments



### Barclays Bank

at Holmes Chapel Library: Monday, Thursday & Friday 930am to 1230pm 1pm to 4pm

Book appointments on [events.uk.barclays/local](http://events.uk.barclays/local) or call 0345 734 5345

### Opening hours

Monday	10am - 5pm
Tuesday	10am - 5pm
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	10am - 6pm
Friday	10am - 5pm
Saturday	930am - 1pm
Sunday	Closed

Ask library staff for more information or call us on 01477 689550



## 'Tuesday Friends'

Do you need a change from sitting at home?  
Is Tuesday Friends for you?

An opportunity to come on your own, with a family member or a friend for a chat, cup of tea / coffee and cake.



A quiz on the tables if you fancy a challenge, live music and laughter are always part of the afternoon.

We look forward to seeing you on  
**14 January**  
at  
**Holmes Chapel Methodist Church**  
**2.00 – 4.00pm**

No set charge but, if you are able, please pop a donation in the pot.

Should you require more details, please telephone 01477 537679

## Breakaway Dance Club

Sequence Dancing to live electric organ music at 7.30 pm each Saturday evening.

Open to all.

None dancers welcome. Just enjoy the music.

Help given if you wish to learn to dance.

Bring your own Drinks

£5 admission fee

Interval with bingo and a raffle



Programme for January 2025

Saturday January 4th - Byley Village Hall. Organist: Philip Randles

Saturday January 11th - Lach Dennis Village Hall. Organist: Tim Walker

Saturday January 18th - Byley Village Hall. Organist: Phil Brown

Saturday January 25th - Lach Dennis Village Hall. Organist: Martin Atterbury

For more information please contact David Monks on 01477 532935

# Our Patron Sponsors

## OUR PATRON SPONSORS

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE ORGANISATIONS BELOW FOR THEIR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE HOLMES CHAPEL PARTNERSHIP

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 <p><b>MASSEY FEEDS</b> Focused on nutrition</p>	<p>MASSEY FEEDS</p>	<p><a href="http://www.masseyfeeds.co.uk">www.masseyfeeds.co.uk</a> Massey Feeds, Holmes Chapel Mill Holmes Chapel Cheshire CW4 8EE Tel 01477 536300</p>
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[www.hcpartnership.org.uk/patronsponsors](http://www.hcpartnership.org.uk/patronsponsors)

Holmes Chapel Partnership – Working with the whole community