

MAYORAL MUSINGS for January 2026

Happy New Year one and all. The past month (December 2025) was another 'special' one for our Town. Christmas is certainly a time when Bradninch (pardon the forthcoming pun) - quite literally 'sparkles'.

I'd like to commend two small groups - Ross (Lawson) and his team for their fabulous efforts in putting up - and then taking down - all the Christmas lights and to Sophie (West) and her team for their incredible efforts with the lantern making sessions held in the Guildhall prior to the Twelfth Night celebrations that are now a standard feature in the Bradninch year. It's the selfless work of the afore mentioned that make this Town of ours such a wonderful place to call home.

There were many other fabulous events held in the Town during December and a number of them centred on St Disen's Church where they hosted/staged some terrific events. I was honoured to be present at the Church for the Duchy School Christingle Service, an event that served to remind me, as if I needed reminding - that, in the Duchy Primary School, we have a serious 'jewel in the Bradninch crown'.

What also 'caught my eye' in December was the light shows staged by a number of residents. I live in Townlands where we had some brilliant Christmas Lights to marvel at and I must just mention Sean Radmore and his stunning Hele Road light display. Year-on-year Sean works his magic to serve us up a special display and his 2025 offering really was extra special! There was also a fabulous display to be seen in Westfield and I also marvelled at light shows in Hornbeam Gardens and Passmore Road.

December also saw a terrific Christmas Quiz Night held at the Cricket Club a venue that also hosted a Christmas Fayre – that one following on from the hugely successful Pre School Christmas Fayre held a couple of weeks before in the Guildhall. There was also a terrific turn out for a Festive Feast served up by Ady and his team at the Community Church.

A serious festive 'highlight' for yours truly was to be invited to be a guest of honour at the Parklands Care Home Christmas Party. I was also asked to do the 'Secret Santa' presentations to the wonderful team of staff they have at the home. I simply must commend the Parklands cook/chef – oh my, the 'feast' he served up at the party was of the very highest order. Twenty-seven years ago, this very month my dear mother breathed her last at the home and it is so wonderful to see Parklands still thriving to this day.

During the festive break I also had the pleasure of a mid-afternoon 'walk' through the Wetlands where three of my grandchildren – who joined me on the trek – marvelled at how clear the water was in the pond. If you have not yet experienced the delights the Wetlands (off Hele Road with the entrance close to the Townlands bus stop on the 'heading to Exeter side of the road', then I'd urge you to give the area a visit.

The recent cold (actually that ought to be 'freezing') spell caused an issue or three and it was a great chance to once again see the extreme value we get from Town Warden Jez who was very proactive in gritting various surfaces around the Town. Jez is now a prominent 'feature' in our community and I know he has a number of 2026 projects that are going to enhance our community life. We are very fortunate to have an individual such as Jez 'in our team'.

Between now and the end of my tenure as Mayor (early May) I shall be attempting to raise as much money as I can for the Duchy School Outdoor Learning Area. I plan a couple of Bingo sessions, there's also two Guildhall Saturday Coffee Mornings and look out for something special around Easter - please do support them as and when you can for, as the saying goes.....every little helps.....and I am so keen to give the School as much help as possible to enable them to complete the Outdoor Learning Area to as high a standard as possible. It is certainly a project that younger members of our Bradninch community will greatly benefit from.

So, there we have it, another monthly musings is done and same time, same place, for more in February.