

December 2025/
January 2026

The

BRAMLEY

FOR BRAMLEY AND LITTLE LONDON

Magazine



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- Fireworks
- John Stubbs

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The Bramley Magazine

*for Bramley and
Little London*

**December 2025/
January 2026**

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*Produced and delivered by the Church
for the benefit of the community.*

Editorial

I'm sure there must be more traditions associated with Christmas than any other celebration. There are the usual ones such as decorating a Christmas tree, pulling crackers, drinking mulled wine and watching the King's speech, then there are the traditions that may only happen in your family – watching Home Alone on the first day of December perhaps, or going ice skating. Some of you may even brave an open water swim on Boxing Day and, believe it or not, there are park runs taking place on Christmas Day. What a shame I have to be at home to baste the turkey! More recently we have found naughty elves invading our home thanks to the increasing popularity of Elf on the Shelf, and some people don't believe Christmas has arrived until the John Lewis advert has been broadcast.

There was a minor rebellion at St James' church a few weeks ago when it was suggested that the Christingle service might take place in January rather than Advent! There was talk of a secret party being organised, where Christingles could be made and extra sweets eaten. Fortunately, order was restored and, as you will see from the enclosed Christmas card, the traditional Christingle service will take place at St James' on Sunday 7 December at 4pm. Do come along and re-live those childhood memories by making your own Christingle. Oranges, candles, sweets etc. will be provided. The format hasn't changed much since it was introduced to the UK in 1968, although I am pleased to say that sweets have replaced the healthy raisins I had to put on my cocktail sticks. I'm hoping for lots of liquorice allsorts this year and, be warned, I am quite prepared to fight small children for the round coconut ones! At St James' Church we stick with traditional candles, which are lit during the service, but some years ago Chelmsford Cathedral introduced glow sticks, due to concerns of children's hair catching on fire. There hasn't been any singed hair in Bramley as far as I am aware, and all those flames add to the excitement! If you would like to join us for other traditional services, such as the Nativity or Carol Service, you can find the times on page 7 and in the Christmas card.

It would usually be traditional to put a Christmas or winter photograph on the front page of the December magazine, so I hope you will forgive me for going off piste this month. It's not often we get so many of the young uniformed groups together, and they played an important part in the Remembrance service in November. You can read more about this on page 17 and then turn to the next page to see a selection of photos from our traditional fireworks display. There's lots more news this month, so I hope you have time to read it between Christmas shopping and clearing up after those elves.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a very happy New Year. We will be taking a break in January and will be back in February.

Rachel

Joint Editor

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.'"

The Bible: Luke Chapter 2, verses 10 and 11

Cover Photo: Remembrance by Elza Cooper

Material for the February issue to be sent (preferably by email) to the editor no later than 15 January 2026 please.

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Benefice Services

December...

7th	2nd Sunday of Advent
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.30	Family Service – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
5.30	Carol Service – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
14th	3rd Sunday of Advent CHRISTINGLE
10.00	Café Church – Sherfield Park Community Centre
5.00	Carol Service – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
21st	4th Sunday of Advent
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
5.00	Carol Service – St Leonard's, Sherfield
24th	Christmas Eve
4.00	Nativity Service – St Leonard's, Sherfield
11.30	Midnight Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
25th	Christmas Day
9.00	Holy Communion – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
10.00	Christmas Service – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.00	Holy Communion – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
28th	1st Sunday of Christmas
10.00	Family Service – St Leonard's, Sherfield

...and January into February

4th	2nd Sunday after Christmas
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
11th	1st Sunday of Epiphany
10.00	Café Church – St Leonard's, Sherfield
18th	2nd Sunday of Epiphany
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.30	Family Service – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
25th	3rd Sunday of Epiphany
10.00	Family Service – St Leonard's, Sherfield
1st Feb	4th Sunday of Epiphany
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.00	Family Service – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall

From the Registers

Marriage

Peter CROSS and Carmen CHAN

12th November 2025
St James Church

Church diary for December...

7th	2nd Sunday of Advent
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	BCP Matins – St James
4.00	Christingle – St James
14th	3rd Sunday of Advent
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion – St James
6.30	Carol Service – St James
21st	4th Sunday of Advent
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Morning Worship – St James
3.00	Light in the Darkness – St James
24th	Christmas Eve
4.00	Nativity Service – St James
11.30	Midnight Communion – St James
25th	Christmas Day
10.30	Holy Communion – St James
28th	1st Sunday of Christmas
10.30	Holy Communion – St James

...and January into February

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10.30	Morning Worship – St James
25th	3rd Sunday of Epiphany
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion – St James
1st Feb	4th Sunday of Epiphany
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	BCP Matins - St James

General Practice Community Understanding Type 2 Diabetes

Tuesday 27th January 2026
(11:00-15:00)



Whitewater Loddon Primary Care Network

Representing our three partner practices; Whitewater Health (Hook & Hartley Wintney), Chineham Medical Practice and Clift Surgery, we are delighted to invite our patients to our "Understanding Type 2 Diabetes Day", to talk to our healthcare professionals, GPs and support services:

Speak to our advisors

- ✓ Diabetes UK
- ✓ HIOW Healthcare Podiatry Team
- ✓ The Fit Coach
- ✓ Local GPs
- ✓ Diabetes Nurses
- ✓ Blood Pressure Checks
- ✓ Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council Wellbeing Team
- ✓ British Red Cross
- ✓ Clift Surgery Patient Participation Group (Friendship Walking Group)
- ✓ Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme
- ✓ Basingstoke Aquadrome
- ✓ Basingstoke Sports Centre

Tea & coffee served by
Clift Surgery Patient Participation Group

ALL WELCOME!!

Drop in
throughout the day!

Speak to our advisors in
The Pavilion!

Listen to our talks in
Brocas Hall!

11:00-12:00

*"Understanding
Type 2 Diabetes"*

12:30-13:30

*"The Importance of
Healthy Nutrition
& Movement"*

**Clift Meadows Hall,
Minchens Lane, Bramley
RG26 5BH**

There is a small carpark, but, if possible, please arrive on foot, car share or use public transport, (5-minute walk from Bramley railway station).

"Healthcare Connecting with the Wider Community to Empower Patients & Practices"

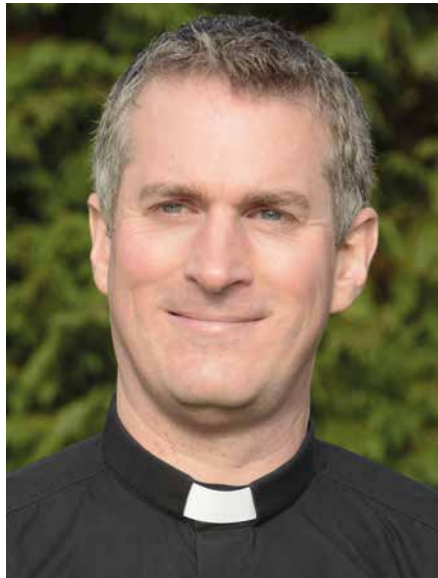
Are you ready?

We always seem to be getting ready. Ready for school/work; preparing for a meeting; preparing a meal; for a night out; packing for a holiday or even just getting ready for bed at the end of a long day we've spent getting ready for all these things.

In the season of Advent there are two ways we are getting ready. Advent calendars are opened day by day as we count down the days to Christmas. Supermarket delivery slots are booked, gifts lists are written and Black Friday tempts us to spend. This term I always feel I am getting ready: for the new academic year, for harvest, remembrance and then Christmas; and then there's Sunday morning services and everything else being a vicar involves week by week. We can all find ourselves busy with everything which has to be done in time for, whatever it is for you.

The time of Advent in the Church is a season of expectation and preparation, as we prepare to celebrate the coming (adventus) of Jesus Christ in his incarnation: God who was made man to show us the better way to live, to love, to relate to others so all may flourish.

In the busyness of this season, I'm trying to remember it's all about Jesus. In the storm, he brings stillness; in the stress, he offers us calm; in anxiety he invites us to receive his reassuring presence; when we are in despair, he gives us hope. When you see the nativity scene of Jesus's birth in Bethlehem, when you hear the carols sung, when you see the word 'Christmas', I encourage you to 'see Christ' in Christmas,



Rev'd Mark Anderson

to be thankful for his example, to know him and to be inspired to love others and serve others in the ways Jesus showed us.

The second aspect of Advent looks ahead to the final advent of Jesus at the end of time. He will judge all that is wrong with the world and make all things right. That's why Jesus lived and died and rose again with us and for us. His way makes things right again: forgiveness restores relationships; healing us of our hurts and the sacrificial love which leads us to give up something of ourselves for the love of another.

At this Christmas time, let us get ready to be generous, to love without condition, to give without expectation of repayment and when we do, we shine

a light (even the light of Christ) in this dark world. For, as the Christmas Bible readings tell us:

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.*
and

*In Jesus was life, and the life was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

May you have a very happy Christmas and new year.

Rev'd Mark Anderson

Vicar, St James Church, Bramley

**CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AT
ST. JAMES'S CHURCH**

OUR SERVICES

7th December - Christingle 4pm
 14th December - Carol Service 6.30pm
 21st December - Light in the Darkness 3pm
 24th December - Nativity Service 4pm
 24th December - Midnight Communion 11.30pm
 25th December - Christmas Day Communion 10.30am

ADMIN@STJAMESBRAMLEY.ORG.UK

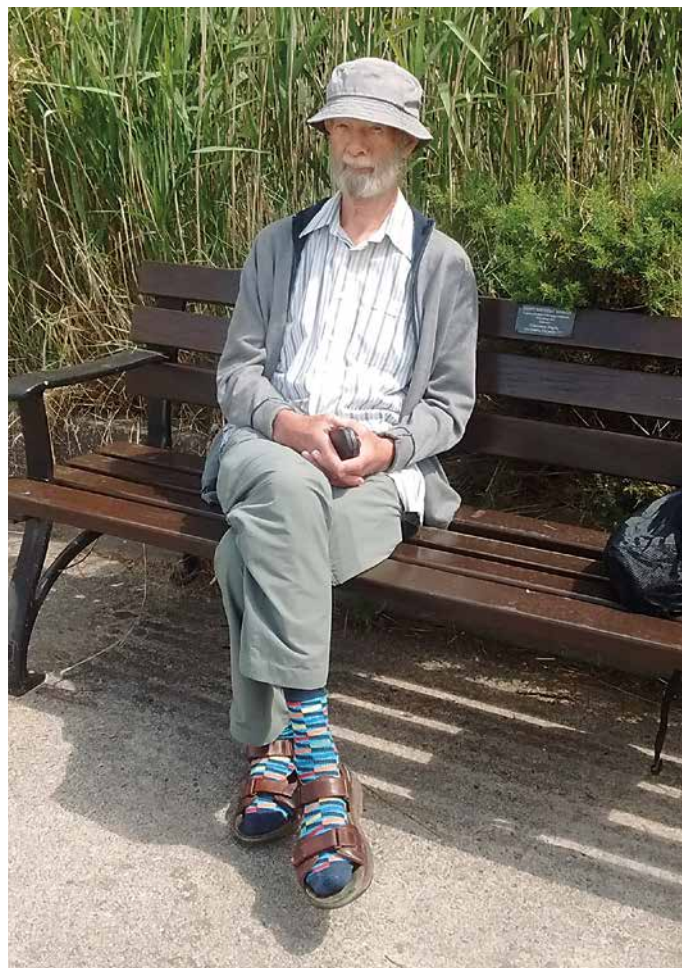
EVERYONE INVOLVED, LEARNING TOGETHER, GROWING COMMUNITY

I know a lot of readers will be disappointed to hear that **John Stubbs** is hanging up his pen, and his article on page 25 is his last. **Rachel Barclay Smith** looks back on his long association with the Bramley magazine.

It was back in December 2008 that John started writing articles for the Bramley magazine and during those 17 years he has written 162 articles, approximately 122,000 words: that's around 10 dissertations or four of Charles Dickens' book, *A Christmas Carol*. He has covered subjects as diverse as barley and sparrowhawks to toads and maybugs. He has also written about subjects unique to Bramley such as Beaurepaire windows, the level crossing and Lime Tree Cottage. John always tries to find something that tells a story and has a link to Bramley, and all the photos he uses to illustrate his articles are taken in or around Bramley. The photo on page 25 was taken in his garden.

All John's articles, written in his own unique style, have had a common theme – our local environment. It's obvious that John cares deeply about this subject: his first article was about recycling and he has never been afraid to alert us to the issues and consequences of climate change. Towards the end of his career at the AA, John was involved in shaping environmental and safety legislation and perhaps that whetted his appetite to explore the subject more deeply. The amount of detailed information he includes in his articles must involve hours of research and I have certainly learned a lot from reading them. (I don't use the term 'editing' as his articles rarely need any correction).

John and his wife, Sarah, moved to Bramley in 1971 and they have seen massive changes to the village over those 54 years – not least the increase in houses from just 500 in 1971 to 2000 and counting today. He is therefore well qualified to comment on beautiful and not so beautiful Bramley. So, thank you John for all your contributions to our magazine over the last 17 years; for sending them to me well in advance of the deadline, for including interesting (and, more importantly, high resolution) photos, for finding 162 different topics to write about and for educating me, and I'm sure many others, about the fascinating and



Hopefully John Stubbs will now have more time to relax

complex world around us. I hope you can now relax and enjoy your walks around Bramley without thinking about subjects and deadlines.

If you are going to miss John's articles, you will be pleased to know that he has published a book of his 90 favourite articles. See the opposite page for more details. And if you think robins are born with their red breasts, turn to page 25 to find out if you are right.

Some of John's recent photos





Having missed the last two breakfasts, **Grahame Mellor** was really looking forward to the **St. James' Church Men's breakfast** on 15 November, and he enjoyed it so much he went straight home and wrote this report.

On arrival, the kitchen looked very busy with that lovely smell of frying bacon drifting into Cross House. Our breakfast was being expertly cooked by Chef Simon, aided by Ian and Dave.

After a really tasty and satisfying meal of bacon, scrambled egg, sausage, hash

browns, mushrooms, beans, toast and plenty of coffee, we were treated to a talk by our own Rev. John Morley, speaking interestingly and amusingly about his wealth of experiences during his 56 years in the ministry.

This is always a lovely event, not only to enjoy a home cooked breakfast but to enjoy a good chat with fellow members of our church family.

Looking forward to the next one!



A busy kitchen!

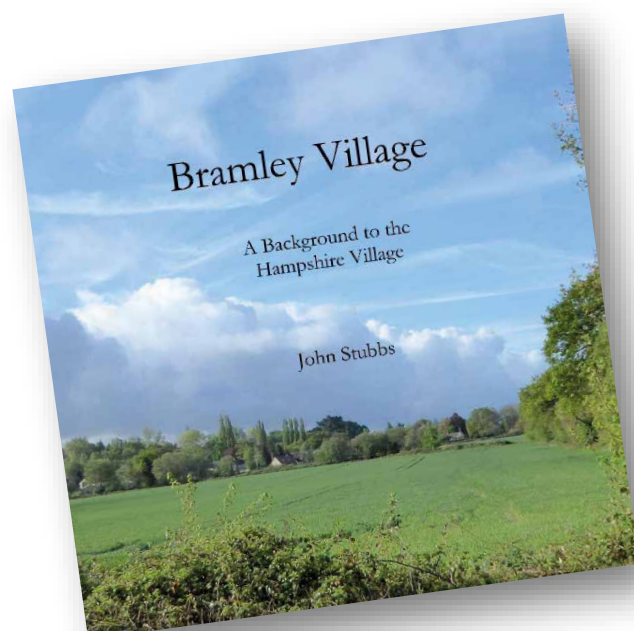


Ready at the pass!

John Morley



That's what I call a cooked breakfast!



The book comprises ninety separate articles, looking at different aspects of the environment in the village, from the fifteen odd years of my pieces appearing in the Bramley Magazine.

Some are trivial, some are major considerations: not too much technical stuff, hopefully in an understandable, if possibly not entirely serious manner, and entirely without input from AI.

*Now available for sale on **ebay***

Any profits to be donated to MSF

Thank you to Cllr Sue Howell for this month's update from Bramley Parish Council

When I moved to Bramley in 2018, it was exciting to say I was living in a village. The area was quiet, surrounded by fields, there was minimal light pollution, and included all the things needed to live comfortably, such as a doctor's surgery, village hall, a central green space, fete, bakery, and corner shop and post office plus a Produce Show and fete.

By its geographical nature, Bramley is a ribbon village with the Sherfield Road, Silchester Road and The Street running through the centre joining Bramley Green to Bramley Corner. Sometimes it is challenging to unite the different areas but no matter where you live, you are part of Bramley and we hope you will take part in all that the village offers.

But things are beginning to change. Over the past few years, we have seen a stealthy growth of housing just out of sight of the main road.

Progress is part of life. We need improved sustainable resources, reliable broadband, dependable transport links and employment opportunities. But this involves roads being dug up, the erection of solar farms, new housing developments. The lack of parking and minimal bus links don't make travel easy and so people rely on using their cars, which adds to pollution and traffic jams. To live in this lovely area, we have to accept these changes and the Parish Council does its best to defend our environment on behalf of the residents.

If you want to keep abreast with what developments are being proposed in our area, check the Basingstoke and Deane planning portal and register. You can choose to get notifications on the developments you are particularly interested in. The planning portal is here: <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/view-planning-applications>

This year has been challenging with regard to planning. If you want to make comments on a planning application it is very important to respond in a way that will be relevant and heard. Next month there will be a simple guide on how to respond to planning applications. Our Parish Council Planning Committee works exceptionally hard to help guide planners, and they can make a difference.

The Parish Green at Longbridge Road has been a real success and the new bridge has made it safe for all pedestrians. There have been bluebells and wildflower

seeds planted, and we look forward to seeing a splash of colour next year. An official opening is being planned in the Spring.

In spite of the growth in the village there is a community spirit in abundance. Last week I visited St James Park on Halloween (there were other local events happening too) and what a joyous event that was. Houses were decorated with all kinds of ghosts, skeletons, numerous carved and lit up pumpkins, dry ice and spooky music. Children and some adults were dressed in fantastic outfits which added to the excitement and created a great atmosphere. This really showed community spirit at its best. The next event is the Christmas lights at Clift Meadow from 5.30pm on Friday 5 December, and hopefully this will be well attended.

The Neighbourhood Plan is due for a revision, and the Parish Council is looking for volunteers who are passionate about living here and care about the environment. If you are interested in becoming part of this working group, please get in touch with the Parish Clerk on clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk for further details.

The December meetings of the Parish Council are as follows:

- Planning Committee – Tuesday 9th December, 8.00pm, Bramley Village Hall
- Full Council – Tuesday 16th December. Keep an eye on the Bramley PC website for venue and time for this meeting, as we are aware of the planned road closure that week.

Bramley Parish Council send Seasonal Greetings to everyone, with all good wishes for 2026.

Contacts

Bramley Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Maxta Thomas: clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk, 07810 692486

Bramley PC website: www.bramley-pc.gov.uk

Bramley PC Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BramleyPC

Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

www.basingstoke.gov.uk, 01256 844844. Good for reporting fly tipping issues and issues with local playgrounds.

Planning portal: <https://publicaccess.basingstoke.gov.uk/online-applications>

Hampshire County Council

www.hants.gov.uk. Good for reporting highways and footpaths issues (including potholes), broken street lights, parking issues and flooding issues.



News from Clift Surgery and the Patient Participation Group

Look after yourself

There has been an increase in the number of flu cases in Hampshire, so please consider having a flu vaccination if you are eligible. Ask at the surgery or a local pharmacy.

Christmas Information

- **Holiday opening hours.** The surgery will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. If you have a health emergency during this period, call 111.
- **Repeat prescriptions.** Please order in good time. The very last date for ordering medicines is 15 December. Please continue to allow 6-8 days for your request to be processed.
- **Our Pharmabox 24.** If you are eligible to collect your medicines from the dispensary, remember the Pharmabox is there for you to collect your medication 24 hours a day. No need to drive out of the village or worry about the post arriving in time. Just pop into the dispensary to sign up or find an application form on the surgery website www.cliftsurgery.co.uk/dispensary and follow the instructions.
- **Blister Pack recycling scheme.** Boots has a collection point for recycling tablet blister packs. Just put empty packs aside and drop them off next time you are passing.

A SMART phone is not just for telephone calls.

If you would like help to download the NHS app on your phone or get online to check your medical records, then get in touch with the PPG. We can show you how to download the App on your smart phone or access the NHS website. This is the quickest way to read your results, access letters and appointment information. For further support and information, please email ppgclift@gmail.com

Patient Panel

The Clift Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) is made up of volunteer patients of Clift Surgery who act as a communication link between the surgery and patients. All GP surgeries in England are required to have a PPG and it is important to ensure communication between Clift Surgery and patients is inclusive and accessible for all.

To assist with this, we are looking for patients of Clift Surgery who can represent different groups of patients. We envisage the representatives will be from the groups below:

- An unpaid carer
- A parent with young children
- A member of the community from an ethnic minority
- A young person (16-18)
- Someone with a long-term health condition
- An older person who does not use social media

These people should be willing to give a little of their time when needed. The task will not be onerous and will be undertaken remotely via email or paper.

If you are interested in taking part, please send an email to ppgclift@gmail.com saying why you would like to do this and explain which category you are applying under. Please enclose your name and contact details. You can also write to Patient Participation Group, c/o Patient Facing Services Manager, Clift Surgery, Minchens Lane, Bramley, Tadley RG26 5BH. Please mark the envelope "**PPG Patient Panel**". All data will be handled securely and never shared with anyone outside the Patient Participation Group. Any applications that are not accepted will be destroyed.

We send Seasons Greeting to everyone and wish you a peaceful and healthy 2026.

Thank you

The magazine team would also like to thank everyone who has helped us over the year: the contributors who have sent articles, puzzles and photographs, ensuring this is a truly local magazine; the proofreaders who have noticed all the grammatical errors and misspelt words; the deliverers who between them have distributed an amazing 25,000 magazines this year; everyone at Greenhouse Graphics who prints the magazine and puts up with our last minute changes; our advertisers, advertising manager and Bramley Parish Council who help keep the magazine afloat and last but definitely not least you, the readers. There wouldn't be much point producing the magazine if no-one read it!

The Meadow Garden

A group of volunteers has been tending the Meadow Garden for around 5 years and during that time they have brought to the Meadow a Christmas tree, a wealth of daffodils and tulips, sweet peas, poppies and sunflowers, plus a variety of vegetables such as courgettes, beans, tomatoes, strawberries and herbs. A big shout out of thanks to those who have enabled this to happen by providing plants, compost and muscle power.

The garden has now been transferred to the Bramley Scouting group and the Cubs will learn about growing food, pollination and wildlife. Hopefully we will see a new generation of gardeners emerge, and we look forward to seeing their progress.

The Friendship Walking Group

We have just celebrated our 4th birthday. Many thanks to Hazel for our delicious cake! The group continues to grow. Under the banner of Clift Surgery Patient Participation Group, the focus has always been on exercise, fresh air and companionship, and many friendships have formed in these four years. It is a great opportunity to walk with someone, and if you like a longer walk, this is also possible in our faster group.

We meet every Thursday between 10.30am and 12 at Clift Meadow, although occasionally we go further afield. The morning ends with refreshments at the Pavillion. If anyone is interested in knowing more, please email ppgclift@gmail.com or call or text 07990 807010

We are very grateful to have the support of the Bramley Parish Council which allows the continuation of this group.

NB. Due to the road works and Christmas and New Year bank holidays, we will resume properly on 8 January 2026.

1st Bramley Guides Autumn Term Update

Communication

A few weeks ago we split into groups. Some patrols did first aid and the others did communication. I chose communication and I am glad that is what I chose. The starting activity was all about listening. We set up tables and sat either side with one Guide at the head who chose one of the topics that we came up with earlier, and picked a side to speak for one minute about that subject. The Guides on the other side then had to repeat what they said. After, we moved round and repeated. During this activity, we learned to listen. But most importantly we had a great time.

Esme

Recently we went on a walk through the local woods. We went searching for fungi. It was very successful. We found plenty of mushrooms. We found red ones, white ones, translucent ones and many more. At the end, we each had a delicious hot chocolate with squirty cream and marshmallows.

Sophie

Many new Guides joined the Unit after the summer holidays. To help them settle in we played games such as human bingo. They have gelled as a group so well.

Hallowe'en was marked with a party organized by the Rangers, with lots of fun games including wrap the mummy and pin the stalk on the pumpkin. The girls' chosen costumes were very imaginative.

We had a meeting about Guides' activities in WW2. One group had to make an air-raid shelter, one group made a stretcher which they all bravely tried out, and then had to put out fires (very tiny ones - night lights – with water syringes!), and the last group had to bandage each other. There was great hilarity, but the Guides learnt important history at the same time.

On Remembrance Sunday, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers joined members of the Scout organisation to walk from the Village Hall to St James' Church to form the guard of honour along the path. The standard bearers, readers and wreath layer carried out their duties respectfully. We were immensely proud of the girls, all excellent representatives of Girlguiding.

Now we are looking towards Christmas.

Woodpecker

Turkey and Tinsel

Guides takes us to so many amazing places. I'm going to talk about one that we had the option to go to at the end of November. It's called Turkey and Tinsel. When we're there, we get to go to a village and do our Christmas shopping. We also get to have a hot chocolate and roast dinner before we hang up our stockings. If we're really good Santa comes and gives us presents. And to top it all off, we all get cosy and watch a Christmas film. As well as that we stay in a very nice place. I love being a Guide.

From a very happy Guide.

Lily

A Bright and Busy Year for Bramley Scout Group!

As we reach the end of another lively year, it's a perfect moment to look back at everything our young people have packed into their adventures. And what a year it's been!

They welcomed the Year of the Snake with colourful celebrations, tidied up the village with a litter pick, tried on real police gear during a visit from local officers, toured behind the scenes at Tesco, had sessions doing soft axe throwing, and even took a train ride from Bramley to Mortimer just for the fun of it. A proud moment was being asked by the Parish Council to plant bulbs on the newly refurbished Village Green. Look out for the bluebells and poppies next spring!

Beavers have been just as industrious. Their weeks have been filled with gardening, learning to read maps, uncovering the history of Bramley, and getting creative with a whole range of craft projects.

Not to be outdone, our Cubs helped out at the toad patrol in the early part of the year, learned about personal safety and, most importantly, railway safety. We had a visit to Go Outdoors and a visit from The Kites of Wessex; we also made fat balls to help the birds through the coming winter.

Our Scout group have also been busy with District activities, hikes, fishing, environmental and conservation work! They too visited Tesco where they chose food donations for the Food Bank.

But possibly the highlight of the year, and the proudest for the Group as a whole, was our first ever Remembrance Day Parade, where we joined forces with the Bramley Guiding

Group and walked from the Village Hall to St. James' Church, where we took up our traditional place as the Guard of Honour. We were so proud of our Group and, in particular, our Flag Bearers from all four Sections who carried our Section Flags with such honour.

And we're not finished yet! As the term draws to a close, there are still plenty of exciting activities on the calendar, with the biggest of all fast approaching: our group outing to the Panto. Seventy-two young people and adults will be heading to the Anvil on 18 December to see Aladdin and we are so excited! Oh yes, we are!!!

Of course, none of these activities would have been possible without the dedication of our adult volunteers. You may have heard that we had to cancel a few meetings this year due to a shortage of adult help, and sadly some of our volunteers are leaving the Group and the Village at the end of the year, so we're reaching out once again. A new year often inspires fresh starts, perhaps getting involved in the community or widening your social circle. If that sounds like you, we'd love to welcome you to Bramley Scout Group.

Whether you can offer regular support or just lend a hand now and then, every extra adult makes a difference. More helpers mean more adventures for our young people and of course, more fun for the grown-ups too.

If you'd like to know more, contact Jodie our Administrator at jodie.saunders@bramley-scout.org.uk so we can arrange for you to visit one of our Sections in action. You really can make a big difference.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from
Bramley Scout Group



Hallowe'en Fun



Using a makeshift stretcher



Squirrels making fat balls



Scout Flag bearer in church



Beavers space badge



Scouts fishing session



Cubs GoOutdoors visit



Cubs - Kites of Wessex visit

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BRAMLEY WI

Susan Essex was our speaker last month and she talked about her experience in India as a House Mother. It was a very interesting talk and slide show. She described how the children had to do chores such as cleaning the bedrooms, laying tables and washing up. They all had to get up at 6am and had a long day ahead, but they also had some leisure time and had quite a few festivals. One of the slides showed the children singing Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer, so their English was very much improved. It was a great credit to Susan, and she had a slide showing where the children are living now. They are all over world with great qualifications, and she still keeps in touch with most of them.

In October, the ladies did some craft with glass, and these came back from the kiln in November. Here are some of their creations.

Jane Matthews



Tub2Pub Recycling Scheme

Save those tubs!

Greene King are running 'Tub2Pub', a recycling campaign to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and to recycle plastics.

For the month of January 2026 they will accept clean and empty sweet tubs, biscuit tubs and cracker tubs. Look for the 5/PP grade logo on the tub.

I am happy to store / deliver tubs, so start saving!

Tubs can be left at Bramley Primary School from 3 November until 31 January 2026 during school opening hours, or contact me for local collection: beckykirby@btinternet.com - 07733 466210

Last year's total was 516; let's try and beat that this year.

Becky Kirby

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Royal British Legion

At the time of writing these notes, the main phase of the RBL Poppy Appeal 2025 is drawing to a close. Our branch has again had the pleasure of running the Poppy stall in the main reception of Basingstoke hospital. Many interesting conversations have been had with visitors to the stall and people have been extremely generous in their donations.

As Acting Poppy Appeal Organiser this year, I must record my profound gratitude to Natalie Lerner, PAO for Sherfield, for her tremendous support and to Michael Luck, our previous PAO, for his help and advice. Many people have taken a turn running the stall and I thank each one of them. We also had help this year from some staff from Network Rail who have given one of their chatty days to the appeal. Special thanks to Jill Mann who has been a constant support to all our volunteers, and to Chris Hayward, PA Manager for North Hampshire.

These are our Chairman Rhyddian Vaughan's thoughts on the hospital poppy stall:

The Bramley and District RBL branch has always been extremely lucky to be allowed our poppy stall at the hospital. This year we had more than 20 people helping us, organised by John Morley and Jill Mann.

This is one of the joys of remembrance-tide - the people who pass by and donate are generous, chatty, pleasant and supportive of what the Royal British Legion does and stands for. Wonderful times.

To date the sum raised on the stall for the Legion's welfare work with the serving and ex-service community family is over £10,000. We now have the task of collecting in and counting the donations from local schools and shops who have shared in the appeal. Gift Aid must also be added to many donations. A grand total will be given when all this is done.



We are still looking for a new Poppy Appeal Organiser for our little district - could this be YOU? The appeal is one of our country's major and most respected charities. Full training will be given. Contact our secretary (details below) for more information.

Branch Standard Bearer

We were sorry to receive the resignation of Luke Holdcroft due to a reassignment of his post with HIOW Fire & Rescue Service. Luke has been our Standard Bearer since 2023, parading our Standard with distinction at Remembrance and other events, including the RBL Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. We thank him sincerely for his service.

This does create a vacancy for a new Standard Bearer - could this be you? You need to be reasonably fit - the Standard is quite heavy - and over 18. Is there a young person in your family who might like to perform this vital role for us? Full training is given. If you would like more information about this role, contact Chris Woodward, our Branch Secretary, at Bramley.secretary@rbl.community.

This will be my final monthly contribution to our great village magazine. I hope you have enjoyed reading them as much as I have enjoyed sharing our news with you.

John Morley

revjohnmorley43@gmail.com



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Rhydian Vaughan looks back on another special Remembrance Service at St James's Church

Again, St James's Church echoed to the music, pathos and solemnity that marks this mourning of the year. Full to the gunnels, medals and poppies abounded.

Amongst our eight wreath layers we were honoured to welcome back Wing Commander Rebecca Gibson from RAF Odiham. The RAF once again provided a chinook to overfly the church as a salute to the Fallen.

It is welcoming to have the involvement of the Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Cubs, Rainbows, Beavers and Squirrels, who

looked resplendent in their uniforms and participated with such pride.

Our thanks to Richard Elphick for conducting the service with such aplomb, and to Luke Holdcroft, our Legion Standard bearer.

Lest we forget.



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Christine Delve and Jo Kemp Williams, organisers of the **Bramley Fireworks**, report on another successful evening.

Thank you to everyone that attended the Bramley Fireworks Night 2025. The rain stopped just in time for the gates to open and everyone that came had a wonderful time.

Lots of people enjoyed the delicious food and drink from local businesses: The Bramley Bakery, Journey World Eats, Gourmet Queens, Taryn's Cakery, Jamie's Popcorn and Candy Floss, Cafe 2 U and Tasty Sweet Bakes.

The bar was a success with many enjoying the warm mulled wine.

The playground was awash with colour from children running around with glow toys, glitter and face paints. Lots of families had their photos taken in the selfie stand. Many were dancing to the fun music and enjoying the laser display provided by local DJ, Leon Jones.

We had an exciting countdown from the raffle winner, Sophie, to start the fireworks. It was an absolutely dazzling display by the award winning Phase One Fireworks, which ended with a community spirited round of applause.

It was fantastic to see so many come together from our local community to enjoy the evening and support our event.

We would like to give a special thank you to the Bramley Solar Farm (Cero), Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council, White Hart Inn, Simmons and Sons, Mekanix, Ellie and Rose Photography, The Bramley Bakery, Sherfield on Loddon Shop and Morrisons for very generously supporting the event.

We are two local volunteers, who revived the fireworks display in 2017 and continue to do so. However, we can't run a successful evening without all of the amazing volunteers who gave up their time to ensure the evening ran smoothly and successfully, including the Clift Meadow Trust volunteers, Bramley School Association volunteers, Bramley CofE Primary School staff & parents and the Aldermaston 2403 Air Cadets.

We are pleased to have raised an incredible amount for the Bramley CofE Primary School and the Clift Meadow Trust village facilities.





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Wilder Bramley have been as busy as usual, as you can read in their monthly update

Wilder Bramley Bee Garden wins Outstanding award!

We are thrilled that the Wilder Bramley Bee Garden Team have won an Outstanding award from the RHS In Your Community gardens scheme! This is the third year running that we have received an award and this year we managed to push up into the top category, from Thriving to Outstanding! The RHS awards cover community gardens across the south east with the aim of recognising and inspiring community gardeners. Some of us enjoyed a great day out at RHS Wisley for the awards, where we also picked up more ideas to help our declining pollinators.

We have a lovely friendly team of volunteers who have achieved wonders in our monthly gardening sessions, despite the very hot summer. Special mention must go to Rick, who grows the famous sunflowers and borage from seed every year, and devotedly waters the area every week during dry weather. Also to Graham, who has this year installed two new recycled ponds, a living roof to the bug hotel and a stumpery – as well as helping with the watering. We all work hard nurturing pollinator friendly plants and habitats, and hopefully inspiring others as well.



Collecting our Outstanding award...



...at RHS Wisley

Restoring St Mark's pond

Recently we ran a coppicing work party in conjunction with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, to restore an old pond in the woodland area near St Mark's playground. Coppicing is a traditional method of woodland management where trees such as willow are carefully cut down near their base to encourage new shoots to grow. This age-old practice doesn't harm the tree, in fact, it helps it regenerate naturally and live much longer. Coppicing creates a mix of young and mature growth, which provides vital habitats for birds, insects, and wildflowers. Our volunteers had the chance to learn some hands-on skills, make new friends, enjoy the outdoors, and make a real difference by maintaining a thriving woodland for both wildlife and the local community. It was quite hard work but the satisfaction of calling out "TIMBER!" made all the effort worthwhile!



Coppicing to restore a lost pond



Creating a dead hedge from branches

Planning

As many of you have noticed, Wilder Bramley is aware of the increasing number of planned housing developments in our village. We are worried for nature and are looking to engage with developers to ensure an optimal outcome for the local wildlife, especially our toads, newts and frogs. Get in touch with us if you want to help!

December 12, Bramley Inn – Come to our Christmas social!

We will be holding an open house Christmas social event on Friday 12 December, from 7.30pm at the Bramley Inn. Get into the Christmas spirit with festive refreshments while meeting old friends and new who love nature just like you do. We'd love to see you!



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Bramley SpeedWatch

As I sit here writing this, I realise Christmas is fast approaching and my mind has just drifted back to when I was a child and my father came home from work one Christmas Eve. He came in looking rather shaken and told us that a good friend's daughter had just been killed in a vehicle accident; she was just 21 and had been given a sports car for Christmas. He was devastated and it really put a cloud over our Christmas. His friend never got over the accident, in which speed was a factor. This memory has stayed with me now for over 60 years and I often think how different their lives would have been, but for that act of speeding.



Don't spoil your Christmas or other people's Christmas - stick to those speed limits. Have

a great Christmas and remember, not only does Santa see you when you speed, Bramley Speedwatch sees you as well!

Recent Local SpeedWatch Activity:

Two manned deployments were undertaken during October. A total of 10 vehicles were reported to the police from the 200 vehicles checked - 5%.

Camera Data (October 2025):

Verified speeders (=>35mph)	Highest number of offences committed by one vehicle	Fastest hour	Illegal vehicles
1585	9	5pm	47

We need your help! If you're interested in becoming a member of the SpeedWatch Group and contributing to making Bramley roads safer, please reach out to Bramley SpeedWatch at bramleyspeedwatch@yahoo.com. Your support is crucial for the scheme to continue functioning. Don't worry, full training will be provided by Hampshire Police. Thank you for considering joining us!

If you have any questions/concerns regarding SpeedWatch please email:

bramleyspeedwatch@yahoo.com

speedwatch@hampshire.pnn.police.uk
or visit: www.hampshire.police.uk

Keep Safe and Watch Your Speed

**Graham White, Bramley
SpeedWatch Co-ordinator**

Speed Indicator Device (SID) Data (October):

SID Location	Days deployed	Traffic direction	% of vehicles exceeding 30 mph	No. vehicles exceeding 60 mph
The Forge*	31	Westbound	58%	0
Farriers	31	Westbound	41%	2
Bramley Corner	31	Eastbound	68%	25
The Street Beaurepaire	31	Eastbound	34%	0

* The data from the SID at the Forge is only using data from vehicles leaving the SID; vehicles will all be within the 30mph zone

Jordan Rollinson continues his Civil War series, and it is now 18 June 1644

Parliament's, and perhaps more specifically, Colonel Norton's, banners, flapped loosely atop the mossy roofing of Basingstoke's town. No banners were mounted at the site of Holy Ghost's Church. Nights ago, men had chiselled the lead from its roof tiles, hoping to cannibalise the metal for their bullets. Norton was wiser than to admit his troops were to blame.

Candlelight flickered between the panes of glass throughout Basingstoke's market square, the dreary and dilapidated living spaces housing new occupants under the barrel of a musket. All slept shallowly, dreaming of ways in which this siege might go wrong. Samuel meandered through Basing's streets, desperate to walk himself to exhaustion.

Robert Peake, a musketeer who had saved Paulet, fifth Marquess of Hampshire, from a Colonel Norton's cavalry assault a year prior was nervously teasing his facial hair. That same Norton, still cocksure and full of self-extravagance, had drummed

and trumpeted his way to the tallest hill on Basing House's outskirt. Words were projected. Peake had almost been able to taste the sourness of Norton's bruised ego from his failed attempt. Surrender was not even offered, as was tradition, and moreover, simply good manners. The musketeer brushed loose powder from his workbench, grains filtering between grains. Truthfully, even if the traitor *had* demanded a peaceful handover of Basing House, Paulet would surely have refused. Peake turned his gaze to the poured-full flasks of gunpowder.

Enough for a few bouts.

Samuel thanked God. He had begun to tire. A sombre chill had filtered down the streets behind him, a spectre that stole his warmth and left naught but the chill of the grave. Samuel prayed it was not a premonition. Cold starlight shone above, the new moon sucking what warmth remained from Basing's empty streets. Hunger had become a cruel acquaintance, and he was confident that it would not only be forced upon the denizens of Basing House, but the very boys and men ordered to tighten its noose. Men had talked.

"It's foolish to think it's only those

lofty aristocrats holed away in there."

"What else could there be?"

"Who else."

"Women, children, all sequestered within."

"We will give them an opportunity to escape this - Norton is cold but he is not cruel."

"Would *you* trust one whom you deem a traitor?"

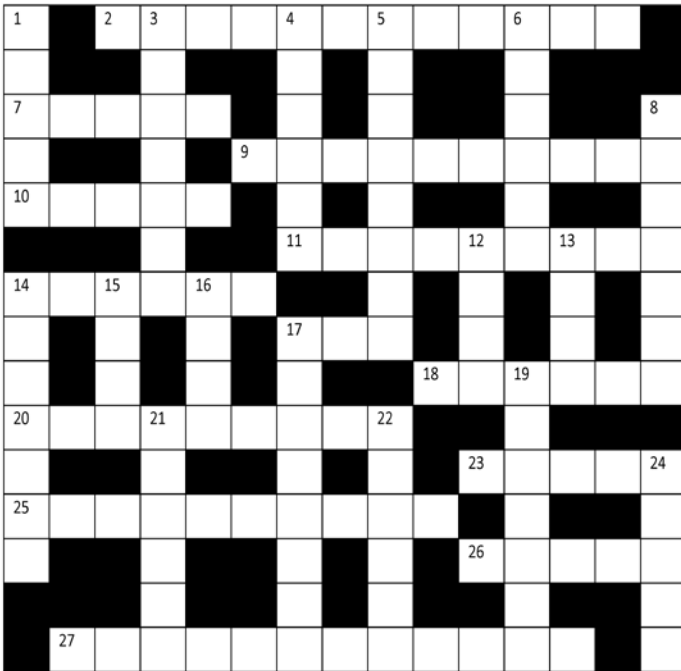
Those questions and theories had bounced back and forth like fledgeling sparrows; none held enough gusto to put flight to their words of worry. Samuel kicked a stone, a fragment of a house's decaying foundation that had come loose in the year's changing atmosphere. Suffering was an evil and inefficient tool to use, like using a fishhook to skin venison. But give siege they would. They would starve Basing House. They would deprive all within of sleep and shelter by a continuous and unending barrage of lead and powder's smoke. All because the men within refused to stand on the *right side*.

Samuel paused before opening the door to his borrowed residence.

Perhaps cruelty was a necessity.

Cryptic Crossword No: 94

See page 30 for the answers.



Across

- 2 Green card ten leads to place for ornaments and flowers. (6,6)
- 7 Give up initially and be on readiness to fill in this clue. (5)
- 9 Mix plain Ada and Co for drink. (10)
- 10 Fine and -----, comic book perhaps. (5)
- 11 Greeting hard substance as precipitation. (9)
- 14 A big beautiful example set something in mind for churchwoman. (6)
- 17 Expert card. (3)
- 18 Though tail be sorted. (6)
- 20 Diary or manager perhaps. (9)
- 23 Description of weight or sight. (5)
- 25 Did he miss Aries for agents. (10)
- 26 Crafty female animal. (5)
- 27 Artist's tool used in kitchen possibly. (7,5)

Down

- 1 Leads national or canal perhaps. (5)
- 3 Shorten, a game of cards. (7)

- 4 Impish, egotistical missing a pole. (6)
- 5 Main lace used for lotion. (8)
- 6 Computer that can be swallowed (6)
- 8 Fabled kingdom that was visited frequently on the radio. (7)
- 12 Sailors ailed inside for yachting equipment. (4)
- 13 Single occasion upon a time. (4)
- 14 We all owe debt within, its permitted. (7)
- 15 Stop or bribe. (4)
- 16 Bird that twitchers want to seek out. (4)
- 17 Academic abbreviation. (8)
- 19 Court agent, unwelcome visitor. (7)
- 21 Descent in Basel I arranged. (6)
- 22 Brand name shortly regarding tome with vowel missing. (6)
- 24 Note or opera singer. (5)

CodeWord No: 80

See page 30 for the answers.

14	16	25	23	25	26	8		4	8	16	13	24
16		19		9		22		2		8		8
25	24	20	12	25		12	8	25	23	21	1	14
15		8		16		25		11		14		7
8	25	16	1		20	24	25	26	21	1	7	19
24		8		25		8		18				8
	25	11	12	8	11		10	7	21	8	26	
17				16		5		24		24		17
16	8	11	12	25	20	8	23		8	25	17	12
7		17		26		20		3		11		25
1	2	16	6	21	17	12		21	2	26	25	11
17		7		2		8		6		21		8
12	7	19	25	1		16	25	21	24	17	25	16

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15			18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			R	C								

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News from Butter Daisy

We've been fully embracing the beauty of autumn here at Butter Daisy Nursery! The children have loved exploring the season through exciting activities and celebrations. Halloween was a highlight, with a fantastic dress-up day and plenty of autumn themed learning opportunities. Across the nursery, the children enjoyed carving pumpkins, exploring their textures through sensory trays, mixing up their own magical potions, freeing spiders from sticky webs and making their very own spooky skeleton pictures!

Following on from Halloween, the excitement continued with Bonfire Night. The children celebrated with a week bursting with colour and creativity, exploring fireworks through painting, printing, playdough, and even science experiments.

We also celebrated Diwali, the Festival of Light, with a wonderful range of bright and meaningful activities. The children used colourful loose parts to create Rangoli patterns, painted vibrant artwork, and our Pre-Schoolers decorated clay tea light holders.

Finally, we took time to reflect and commemorate Remembrance Day. We spoke gently about its importance, helping the children understand why we wear poppies and what they symbolise. Our Pre-Schoolers showed great empathy and gratitude as they shared their thoughts.



If you would like to hear more about Butter Daisy Nursery, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01256 882515 or email butter@mydaisynursery.com

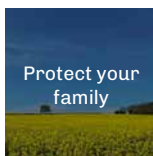
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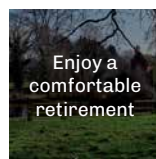
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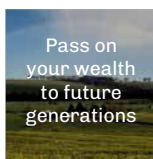
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John Stubbs' last article for the Bramley magazine - Robin Not Yet Redbreast

The chances are that at this time of year, you're going to see a fair bit of our national bird, the robin – if not in real life, then pictured posing cutely on the handle of an artfully positioned garden fork, with a bit of snow. Well, here's one I saw in July, posing very uncertainly. I guess when we think of the label juvenile, the associations tend to be with awkwardness, the process of finding who you are, what you should best wear, and where you may fit in. There's a wide range of folk-tales on the ugly-duckling theme: perhaps much informed by one H C Andersen, later set to music, and an evergreen. I'm not sure that Hans really got it quite right, though: a cygnet may be a bit wayward, water-shy and clumsy perhaps, but no, not ugly. No cuter than a duckling, perhaps, but neither of them would frighten the horses, or haunt a child's dreams, surely? Not boasting the pristine whiteness of the adult swan, but a perfectly presentable lightish tan, surely.

Of course, it does make good sense for any fledgling to dress in a bit of camouflage, and there's no harm in looking like a youngster for as long as you can get away with it – free lodging and both mum and dad serving fresh caterpillars can't be bad. Until a bit better at predator evasion, and stronger flight, keeping a low profile must be a priority.

There are both plusses and minuses to wearing feathers. It does seem they're the best for flight – for instance only a very few bats ever do long-distance migration – they're more likely stuck in caves than soaring the oceans, despite some bats having been found to have taken and eaten robins on the wing. A few nice long pinion feathers, however, can keep a body up in the air for months on end. The snag is, they're a bit high-maintenance, needing constant preening, waterproofing, and periodic moulting to replace breakages and wear. Moulting time is a hazard, as flight strength can be limited, and feather growth is energy intensive. The moult, however, does give a good opportunity to run an upgrade.

After the first moult, the red, or perhaps more accurately, the orange breast feathers of a robin start to appear, though the reasons for this colouration are probably not confined



to just a chance to show off. For a start, an adult can obviously recognise a juvenile for what it is – all animals will have a pretty good idea of the age and status of another of their ilk: these fluffy, awkward little youngsters won't be seen as any sort of challenge. Robins of both sexes look, to us, very similar, but to another robin there's not likely to be any confusion. Demonstration of a territory? Possibly a factor, but a flash of red on its own might not frighten many competitors, surely.

To me, the convincing reasons could be linked to showing a more general fitness. The bird's colours become stronger and more contrasting with age. Because such small birds have a very limited lifespan, the better the colours, the stronger must have been the bird's survival skills, such as foraging, nest crafting, and territory choices. If you last three years as a robin, you're a hardened veteran. And the particular pigments needed for this sort of bright bib are much less readily available from the normal diet than are the duller browns: perhaps like the vastly expensive purple that

was the prerogative of emperors of our species. So, to a potential mate, bright looks a good catch – I know the ropes, and I've done it all before. To a possible competitor, it could warn of an experienced warrior, just don't mess with me.

We have the word 'peacocking' that links amazing displays of colour and strutting about with a healthy individual – if I can waste resources and spend time on these trivialities, how very fine must I not be? So with our rather more modest Bramley birds – and the thing is, it's not something that can easily be fudged; it depends on good nutrition, sound health and good survival skills. Old age really doesn't come into it. Robins, one way or another, rarely suffer the decrepitations of ageing, having so many terminal hazards as their normal lot.

This little chap came up to where we were sitting in the garden, followed by a rather more circumspect parent. They hopped around us for a few minutes, I guess to see if we could spare a worm.

A Valediction

I've been writing a page on our environment for the Bramley Magazine since the end of 2008, and my score is 162 not out, as it were. At this I reckon I should declare. I've learnt an awful lot, and there's still so much to be said, but I now feel it's time to call it a day. If anyone finds they're still missing something, please see my advertisement on page 9.

I must thank the magazine staff, present and past, for their dedication to the continuing high quality of their work. The village benefits enormously from having such a professional-standard, reliable, wide-ranging, interesting publication. We owe them support and appreciation for their conscientious application, and I hope the future holds their continuing success.

Bramley and Romans Floral Society

Jennifer Thompson has demonstrated at our club on several occasions in the past and she never fails to please. It was our busiest meeting of the year and over 50 members came to watch her put together her thoughtful and precise arrangements. Her easy manner made her very enjoyable to watch. The theme of her demonstration on 6 November was 'Flowers in Rhyme' and she chose a few children's rhymes, old and more recent, upon which to base her designs.

'Ring a Ring of Roses' was her first design. Phormium leaves tinged with pink gave height to her arrangement from which flowed red roses in a circular pattern. Large white chrysanthemums referenced the handkerchiefs over a base of fatsia, ivy leaves and berries. 'Mary Mary Quite Contrary' was a delightful mix of sunflowers, eryngium, spray roses and astilbe, set off against lime green Thlipsis Green Bell foliage. 'I'm a Little Teapot', a more recent rhyme from 1939, was quite a contrast to the first two designs - a set of three similar arrangements staggered on metal stands of varying heights, with white veronica to represent steam and pinky orange gerbera, spray carnations and small white roses to portray milk and tea. The foliage for these arrangements was unusually taken from a houseplant, Asparagus Falcatus, which Jennifer said was quite prolific. To the delight of everyone she produced three more arrangements: 'Lavender's Blue', which included beautiful mauve carnations; 'The Wheels on the Bus' used Phoenix Palm, leucospermum and calla lilies; and her final design, 'Jack and Jill' featured a beautiful stem of green cymbidium orchids, ornithogalum and white campanula above a base of green foliage made up of phormium leaves, fern and cypressus. A great afternoon of beautiful arrangements, some unusual flowers and foliage.

Our meetings start again with our AGM on 5 February when Pip Bentley will be giving a talk on "Garden Snippets". For the rest of the year we meet on the first Thursday of the month in Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall at 1:30pm. If you'd like to spend an afternoon with friendly company, entertained by talented and interesting NAFAS qualified demonstrators do come along. For more details visit our Facebook page or contact Dusty on 01256 881420 or email: TayMab1@aol.com



I'm a Little Teapot



Mary, Mary



Jack and Jill



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Probus Learn About Local Hero

Sherfield-on-Loddon resident, Natalie Larner, spoke to the Probus Club of Basingstoke about Captain John Aidan Liddell VC MC, whose 1915 burial in South View cemetery, Basingstoke was attended by many dignitaries and public crowds.

Although he was born near Newcastle in 1888, during the early 1900s and after the First World War, the Liddell family lived at Sherfield Manor which is now Sherfield School. As a lasting connection, one of the buildings at Sherfield Village Hall bears the family name and on 11 November each year a special service is held in his memory.

Having obtained a first-class degree in Zoology at Balliol College, Oxford, John Aidan Liddell didn't want to be a 'slacker' and joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, following his maternal grandfather into a Scottish regiment.

When the first World War started, with the rank of Lieutenant, he commanded a Maxim machine gun section on the Western Front that remained unsupported for 43 days. For this action and for saving the Company Sergeant Major, he received the MC.

This long time at the front, spent either in action or the suboptimal conditions of front-line trenches (where he changed his socks only once) took a toll on his health and he was given leave.

Before the outbreak of the war, he had trained as a pilot, flying a Boxkite at the Vickers school at Brooklands, and following recuperation from his battlefield experiences he joined the Royal Flying Corps where he was promoted to Captain and stationed at Saint-Omer in northern France.

On 31 July 1915 he, together with an observer/gunner, was flying a two-seater RE 5 biplane at 5,000 feet near Bruges when they were fired on by enemy aircraft. Badly wounded with a shattered right thigh he lost consciousness and the plane nose-dived. Regaining consciousness, he was able to regain control at only 3,000 feet above enemy lines.

The plane was badly damaged and with the crew member, 2nd Lieutenant Roland Peck, also wounded, he managed to fly back to base saving not only the plane but also the life of his observer. Captain Liddell had his right leg amputated but died due to septicaemia a month later. He was 27 years old.

There had been much publicity in the British newspapers of this event and so when his body was brought back to England and a Catholic mass had taken place in London, the coffin travelled to Basingstoke by train where it was met with pipers from his regiment. The cortege passed through the town where crowds lined the streets and flags were flown at half mast. His observer was amongst many who attended the funeral.

The posthumous VC was presented to his father by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 17 November 1915. Only



Captain Liddell's burial place in Basingstoke

four such medals were awarded to members of the Royal Flying Corps.

Several commemorative plaques of Captain John Aidan Liddell VC MC are found around Britain, but Sherfield-on-Loddon has its own memorials. His name can be seen on the village war memorial, topping the list of other local men who lost their lives during this conflict. And in 2015, the century after his death, a commemorative engraved paving stone, atop a brick plinth, was positioned near the crossroad in the village. Sherfield-on-Loddon residents are justly proud of their local man who became a war hero.



Captain John Aidan
Liddell VC MC



In the trenches



The bearer party



Come and enjoy the Christmas spirit with the Kingsclere Singers

14 Dec - Yule Sing @ 4pm, St Mary's Church Kingsclere.

19 Dec - Community Singalong @ 7:30pm, Fieldgate Centre Kingsclere.

Looking forward to bringing in Christmas 2025 with fun, laughter and singing with you all.



Mondays

<i>Badminton</i>	Village Hall
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>NHS Health Visitor</i>	Village Hall
<i>Pregnancy Yoga with Sam 6pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Beavers 5-6pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Fitness Pilates 6pm (from 5 January 2026)</i>	Cross House
<i>Pilates for Sport 7pm (from 5 January 2026)</i>	Cross House
<i>Yoga with Sam 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Classical Pilates, 6.45-7.45pm</i>	Village Hall
<i>Cubs 6.30-8pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Trail Runners 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow car park

Tuesdays

<i>Parish Council Meetings 3rd Tuesday of the month</i>	Bramley Room, Village Hall
<i>Badminton</i>	Village Hall
<i>Bell Ringing 8pm</i>	St James's Church
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Short Mat Bowls</i>	Village Hall
<i>Body Control Pilates 9.30-10.30am</i>	Village Hall
<i>Bramley 0-5s 10am – 11.30 am</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Scouts 7-8.30pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates 7-9pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Table Tennis – 7pm</i>	St Stephen's Hall, Little London

Wednesdays

<i>Wednesday Club 10am to midday</i>	St Stephen's Hall
<i>1st Bramley Rainbows</i>	Village Hall
<i>1st Bramley Brownies</i>	Village Hall
<i>1st Bramley Guides</i>	Village Hall
<i>NHS Health Visitor</i>	Village Hall
<i>WG Pilates 9.15 – 10.15am and 12.30 – 1.30pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Bramley Tea and Coffee morning 10-11.30am</i>	Clift Meadow Community Cafe
<i>Squirrels 5-6pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Trail Runners 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow car park

Thursdays

<i>Bramley & Romans Floral Society 1st Thursday 1.30 - 4.00pm</i>	Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall
<i>Dance Club</i>	Primary School Hall
<i>Pilates</i>	St Stephen's Hall
<i>WI 2nd Thursday</i>	Village Hall
<i>Bath Babies 10.30 & 11.30</i>	Village Hall
<i>Friendship Walks, 10.30</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Dance Vibes - adult fitness class 5.30-6.15pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Perform 5.45pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Hatha Yoga 6.30-7.30pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Classical Pilates - 6.30-7.30pm</i>	Village Hall
<i>Walking 4 Fitness & Friendship 6.40 for 6.45pm (April-Sept)</i>	Clift Meadow car park
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates 7-8pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion

Fridays

<i>Meditation Circle session 10.15- 11.45 (from 9 January 2026)</i>	Cross House
<i>WG Pilates 12-1pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Hipp Pilates 1.30-2.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Perform 3.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Youth Club 5pm</i>	Brocas Hall

Saturdays

<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Tennis (age 7-13)</i>	Clift Meadow
<i>HIPP Pilates 9.30-10.30am</i>	Village Hall
<i>Karate 11.00-12.00pm</i>	Primary School Hall

Sundays

<i>See page 5 for Church services at St James's Bramley</i>

Do you have a listing on this page? If so, please can you check that the details are correct and let me have the timings if they are missing. Any corrections or additions can be emailed to editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk
THANK YOU

Contact Details for Village Clubs and Organisations

Organisation	Name	Tel No	Email	Remarks
Parish Council	Maxta Thomas	07810 692486	www.bramley-pc.gov.uk clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk	Not for bookings
Clift Meadow	Bookings Team	01256 260270	bookings@cliftmeadow.org.uk	Bookings
Cross House	Anne Smith	01256 880327	admin@stjamesbramley.org.uk	Bookings
Village Hall	Catriona Hayward	07464 749997	Bookings@bvht.org.uk	Bookings
School Hall	Alison Tarrant	881339		
Activ8 Youth Club	Ed Ives	07964 069390		
Badminton	Jane Matthews	881647		
Bath Babies	Katie Loosley	07921 158495	info@babyserenity.org	
Bell Ringers	Jonathan Barclay Smith	541251	rjbarclaysmith@gmail.com	
Bramley 0-5s	Jo Weineck	07717 340985		
Bramley and Romans Floral Society	Stephanie Cornell	07808 078188	s.cornell@aplin.plus.com	
Bramley Tea and Coffee morning	Jane Kettridge		jk.cmcc@btconnect.com	
Bramley United FC	Mick Walsh	07802 912615/ 01256 881241	michael.walsh59@outlook.com	
Bramley Volunteer Drivers		07787 166924	Visit us on Facebook	
Brownies	Katie Slater	07545 319342	bramley.brownies@gmail.com	
Classical Pilates	Naomi Baker		naomi@nbkpilates.co.uk	
Clift Meadow Youth Cricket (Old Basing CC)	John Huntingdon		John.Huntingdon@turbex.co.uk	
Clift Meadow Youth Football (Loddon Sports)			loddonfcsecretary@outlook.com https://www.loddonsportsfc.com	
Dance Vibes	Louise		misslouise74@gmail.com	
Friendship Walks			info@bramleyvillagehub.com	
Guides	Viv Salem		firstbramleyguides@yahoo.com	
Hipp Pilates	Jo Kemp Williams	07557 412400	jo.kemp-williams@outlook.com	
Little Apples	Jo Whatley & Sian Davies	07598 588460	manager@littleapples.org	
Meditation	Jennifer Duke	07764 293757	jennifer2duke@gmail.com linktr.ee/jennifer_duke	
Naturally Yoga with Sam	Samantha Webber	07713 349227	www.naturallyyoga.co.uk sam@naturalnook.co.uk	
NHS Health Visitor	Nicola Jones		Nicola.Jones@SouthernHealth.nhs.uk	
Perform	Gemma Payne	07825 916496	gemmapayne@perform.org.uk	
Petite Dance	Louise Pain	07877 890673	misslouise@petiteschoolofdancing.com	
Pure Performance Pilates	Hannah Travers	07711 206043	info@performanceuk.com www.performanceuk.com	
Body Control Pilates	Heather Lewis	07785 254313	hsfitnessuk@mac.com	
Pilates (WG Pilates)	Wendy Gill	07961 102535	wendygill44@yahoo.co.uk	
Rainbows	Christina Wilson		bramleyrainbows@gmail.com	
Royal British Legion	Rhydian Vaughan	07774 681516		
Short Mat Bowls	Judy Foyle	881821	stevefoyle@hotmail.co.uk	
Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Jodie Saunders	07818 280041	jodie@bramley-scouts.org.uk	
St Stephen's Hall	Doreen Quilter	850394	doreen.quilter@btinternet.com	Bookings
Tennis (Clift Meadow)	Simon	07904 340004		
Thula Mama	Rebecca Cooch	07971 798945	rebecca.cooch@gmail.com	
Trail Runners	Richard Perkins		richardperkins@yahoo.com	
Walking 4 Fitness & Friendship	Facebook		See Facebook: Walking 4 Fitness & Friendship	
WI	Pat Cole	881715	gpcole37@gmail.com	
Wilder Bramley		07503 155669	wilder.bramley@gmail.com www.wilderbramley.org or Facebook	
Yoga	Mark Golding	07969 890722	goldingyoga@gmail.com goldingyoga.com	

ROTARY CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX

THANK YOU FOR SPREADING JOY!

We're incredibly grateful to everyone who packed a shoebox for our annual appeal — your kindness and generosity makes a world of difference!

Thanks to our amazing Basingstoke community, nearly 900 shoeboxes from our club, filled with cosy hats, gloves, toys and other goodies, are now on their way to children in Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and, hopefully, to Ukraine via contacts in Poland— where many children have been displaced and are in need of comfort and care.

These Shoeboxes, along with thousands more collected across the Wessex region, are delivered in lorries accompanied by Rotarians from our district to trusted Rotary teams in each country, ensuring they reach the hands of children who may have very little, and giving much needed cheer.

In 2024, our Wessex Rotary District sent an incredible 20,455 shoeboxes and extra cartons of warm clothing, including beautifully hand-knitted items, and thanks to your continued support we have sent more this year.

Rustles in the leaves

As autumn brings misty mornings and crisp evenings, one of our most familiar garden visitors - the European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) - is preparing for its long winter sleep. These round, brown mammals, famously covered in around 7,000 yellow-tipped spines, are a much-loved feature of Britain's wildlife and an important part of our natural heritage.

Often called the gardener's best friend, hedgehogs are expert nocturnal foragers. They emerge at dusk to snuffle through long grass, flowerbeds, leaf litter and vegetable patches in search of worms, beetles, slugs, and other invertebrates, making them natural pest controllers. Hedgehogs have a keen sense of smell and a remarkable ability to remember the location of abundant food sources.

Mostly active from April to October, they thrive in a variety of habitats, including woodland edges, farmland, parks and suburban gardens, wherever shelter and food are plentiful. Solitary creatures for most of the year, they roam several miles each night in search of food and mates, coming together only during the breeding season in late spring and early summer.

By this time of year, hedgehogs are busy feeding as much as possible to build up fat reserves before hibernation begins. As temperatures drop in November, they retreat to sheltered spots such as under sheds, log piles, or dense shrubs, creating a nest of leaves and twigs known as a hibernaculum. Inside, their heartbeat slows dramatically and their body temperature drops, allowing them to survive for months without food.

Sadly, the familiar hedgehog is now facing real challenges. Once a common sight in gardens across the UK, numbers have declined sharply over recent decades. Habitat loss, pesticide use and busy roads have all taken their toll.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust recommends leaving areas of long grass, creating safe corridors between gardens and avoiding harmful chemicals; these all help provide the refuge hedgehogs need. With a bit of care and community effort, we can help ensure hedgehogs remain a welcome part of our gardens for generations to come.

Find out more on the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust website: hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-explorer/mammals/

Cryptic Crossword No: 94 Solution

24	TENOR	27	PALETTE KNIFE
22	REEBOK	26	VIXEN
21	ABSEIL	25	EMISSARIES
19	BAILIFF	23	LIGHT
17	ABSTRACT	20	ORGANISER
16	SWAN	18	ALBEIT
15	BUNG	17	ACE
14	ALLOWED	14	ABRESS
13	ONCE	11	HAILSTONE
12	SAIL	10	DANDY
8	CAMELOT	9	PINACOLADA
6	TABLET	7	ABORT
5	CALAMINE	2	GARDEN CENTRE
4	ELFISH		
3	ABRIDGE		
1	GRAND		

Down

Across

CodeWord No: 80 Solution

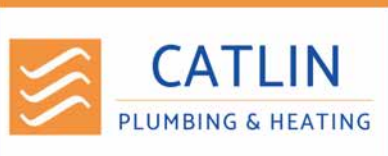
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We are looking for fosterers in the Basingstoke area, either indoor or in an outdoor enclosure which is provided by Cats Protection (approximate size 13ft x 4ft or 4m x 1.2m). Full training will be provided and all expenses are covered by Cats Protection – food, litter, bedding and electricity.



Fostering is an incredible experience guaranteed to give you an extreme sense of joy, achievement and pride. The days spent in a loving foster home make the world of difference for our cats and kittens, setting them up for a lifetime of happiness 🐱

PLEASE consider opening your home and heart to a cat in need; if you cannot foster, please spread the word to anyone who may be able to help us.

If you're interested in finding out more, please contact Lynne at welfareteamleader@basingstoke.cats.org.uk or call our enquiries line on 01256 584544.

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