

May 2026

The

BRAMLEY

FOR BRAMLEY AND LITTLE LONDON

Magazine

- **Students head to STEM Finals**
- **The Nature of Bramley**
- **Updates from our schools**

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The Bramley Magazine

for Bramley and
Little London

May 2026

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

Editorial

Welcome to the May edition of the Bramley Magazine!

Recently, it's been a pleasure to hear the sounds of people getting outside and enjoying the (finally) warmer weather. As someone who is always listening to music or putting on background noise, it's sometimes nice to just sit and listen; to ground yourself for just a moment. From the hum of lawnmowers trimming grasses, to children playing out in the street, it's certainly sounding like we are starting to move our lives outside. But listening can only go so far.

With the air's warmth growing and the chill of winter in recession, we can now all look forward to setting our paces out amongst the burgeoning wildlife of a Bramley waking up for its late Spring, and incoming Summer. If you are after inspiration for some winding rambles of your own, check out The Nature of Bramley on page 18 and perhaps see how much of it you can recognise out there for yourselves.

Bramley isn't all cuckoos and crows though; you will have noted the growing prism of floral colours that our little village is becoming, from daisies to the reedy petals of our sturdy oaks. Just as a prism refracts a white light into its many shades, the coming of Easter was celebrated at St. James' Church with a cluster of colours of their own, each eager pair of hands awakening their inner florist to create beautiful arts of colour. You can read more about the Easter celebration in the article on page 15.

Where I wouldn't hasten many of us to race through the summer, you will find some speedsters of our own on page 9: Team Atomic, who have constructed their own mini Formula 1 car and are looking to compete with it in Singapore. They are raising a fund to make that very journey, and it will be astonishing if we can see students from Bramley competing for the title.

Key dates for your diary this month include not one, but two bank holidays - Monday 4th and Monday 25th. Hopefully the sun also has these dates in its calendar.

Have a great month!

Holly

Joint Editor

"The earth has music for those who will listen, its bright variations forever abound."

Reginald Holmes

Cover Photo: Deer in the Bluebells – Rose Aslett, age 11

Material for the June issue to be sent (preferably by email) to the editor no later than 15 May please.

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Benefice Services

May...

3rd	5th Sunday of Easter	3rd	5th Sunday of Easter
10.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St James	10.00	Family Service – St Mary’s, Stratfield Saye
		18.30	BCP Evensong - St Mary’s, Hartley Wespall
10th	6th Sunday of Easter	10th	6th Sunday of Easter
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	10.00	Café Church – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	Holy Communion – St James		
17th	7th Sunday of Easter	17th	7th Sunday of Easter
9.00	NO Sunday@9	10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	Songs of Praise open-air service on Clift Meadow	10.30	Family Service – St Mary’s, Hartley Wespall
24th	Pentecost Sunday	24th	Pentecost Sunday
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	Holy Communion – St James	10.30	Family Service – St Mary’s, Hartley Wespall
31st	Trinity Sunday	31st	Trinity Sunday
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House		No other services
10.30	Benefice Communion – St James		

...and into June

7th	1st Sunday after Trinity	7th	1st Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St James	10.00	Family Service – St Mary’s, Stratfield Saye
		18.30	BCP Evensong - St Mary’s, Hartley Wespall
14th	2nd Sunday after Trinity	14th	2nd Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	11.00	Songs of Praise – White Hart, Sherfield
10.30	Holy Communion – St James		
21st	3rd Sunday after Trinity	21st	3rd Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House	10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard’s, Sherfield
10.30	Morning Worship – St James	10.30	Family Service – St Mary’s, Hartley Wespall

Church diary for May...

3rd	5th Sunday of Easter
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
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10.30	Morning Worship – St James

From the Registers

Baptism

Flora Litchfield	29th March 2026
	St James Church
Charlie Rowland	5th April 2026
	St James Church

Latest update from the Bramley Show

It's time to be thinking about your entries into the Bramley Show being held on Sunday September 13th at the Village Hall. Below are the Adult Craft classes. Taking part and showing another generation the joy of creating allows this long-standing tradition within Bramley to continue – plus, it is so good for our wellbeing! Also listed are the children's classes. Encourage children to enter to distract from screen time, develop creativity and improve motor skills. These classes can be done in advance or saved for summer holiday projects.

The full and final schedule will be ready soon.

ADULT Classes

- An item of Jewellery – using any material
- An item made from yarn/fibre, including knitting, crochet or felt.
- Sewing – an apron
- An item made from hard material (glass, clay, metal, beads etc)
- An embroidered picture.
- Men's class – an item made for the garden

CHILDREN'S Classes

- A Lego model (not a kit) – maximum base 40 x 40 cm
- 4 decorated cupcakes
- A wooden spoon, decorated as a character
- Robot made from recycled item (max height 40cms)
- A superhero mask

Junior Art

- Age 10 years and under
- An animal that doesn't exist yet!
- Aged 11 – 16 years
- A multimedia picture (e.g. using paint, paper string, buttons, wool, sand etc)

For further information email thebramleyshow@gmail.com

Bramley WI

This month we had a speaker - a lovely lady called Debbie - who is involved with the Heritage Society in Basingstoke.

She did a slide and talk presentation about the Holy Ghost church in Basingstoke and how it was involved with The Vyne. The first chapel was built in the 13th century, and in 1524, Lord Sandys of The Vyne added a beautiful side chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity as a burial place for his family.

She also told us about different stories, for example, about a lady who was buried alive. It was only that the boys from the nearby school kept saying there was a noise that she was exhumed, but too late.

She then went on to tell us about the many wealthy and famous people who were involved with Basingstoke - a very interesting talk.

We ended the evening with the usual refreshments and raffle.

Jane Matthews

News from Clift Surgery and the Patient Participation Group

Clift Surgery is updating how it communicates with patients

Our communication system has recently been improved. Reception, GPs, nurses and the dispensary team can now send updates by email. Please remember to check both your email inbox and your NHS App if you are expecting a message from the surgery, including notifications when your prescription is ready to collect. It is important to switch on notifications for the NHS App so you don't miss anything. From now on, email will be our main method of contacting you via Accurx. If you have a preferred way of receiving messages, please let a member of staff know.

If you would prefer to continue receiving text messages when your medication is ready, please speak to a member of staff about signing up for the Pharmabox. This provides a quick and convenient way to collect your medication during and outside of surgery hours.

The NHS App

The NHS App is an important tool for patients. It allows you to: request repeat prescriptions, view your medical records, and read letters and documents from the surgery. The app can be used on a smartphone, tablet or computer. It is simple to set up and easy to use.

If you would like help getting started, the PPG offers support. Our recent open morning was very successful, and more sessions are planned. If you would like assistance, please email ppgclift@gmail.com.

Dispensary News

The dispensary remains an essential service for patients who live within the NHS defined distance of 1.6km from a pharmacy. Please remember:

- The dispensary is linked directly to your medical records
- You can speak to someone in person during opening hours
- Urgent medication can be dispensed following a consultation
- There is no reliance on postal services
- The **Pharmabox** allows 24hour collection once you are signed up

New Website

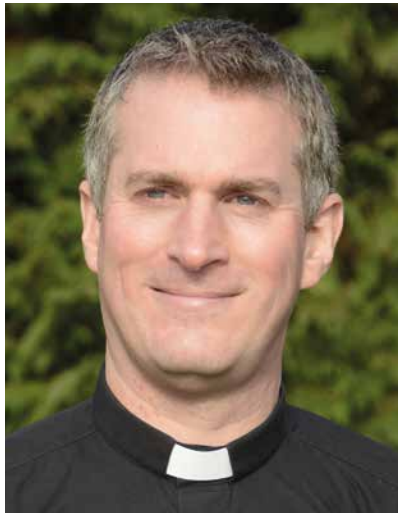
The PPG is trialling a new website to widen communication, especially for those who do not use social media. A downloadable newsletter is also available on the site. Printed copies can be collected from Clift Surgery reception for anyone without internet access. Visit: www.ppgclift.org.uk

Living within boundaries

We live in a bounded world, but sometimes we want to be set free from them; for good or for evil. We sometimes hear complaints of, "Don't get in my way, get out of my personal space, no trespassing here, I don't want you near me." We put up fences around our property and perhaps even our hearts. Wars often start because one nation (or person) crosses a boundary, invading another country. We all like a certain amount of privacy and security but we also like freedom. There's a nuanced balance to be had.

The ancient tradition of 'beating the bounds' has its origins in medieval times. Every year around this time, people in many rural parishes would walk around the boundaries of their parish, literally beating the boundaries with branches, asserting to those of the neighbouring parishes, where the boundary lay.

It brought the village community together, even if it meant they were identifying themselves apart from those from 'over there' in the next parish: natural, spiritual and social strands were closely interwoven. It would help keep the peace, should the boundary be agreed, but as is often the case, when a dispute arose, a fight would ensue: fist fights and ale-gatherings mixed with hymn singing and the reciting of Psalms. Before the invention of accurate mapping techniques, it was an equally vital means of 'knowing your place': the practice of beating key landscape markers with sticks, imprinting the limits of community upon each member. They also prayed for God's blessing upon the crops, seeking the



Rev'd Mark Anderson

well-being of the village and sharing in the hope of God's goodness to nourish every endeavour of each person.

When we cross a boundary, we should do so carefully, and with peaceful intentions, seeking the benefit of those we meet. We can open our hearts to 'love our neighbour' however different they may be to us. Perhaps if we take down those fences around our hearts, and invite God in, we may discover there is much to receive from the God who wants to nourish us with faith, hope and love. He offers us a peace that is not of this world: a peace often needed along the borders of nations and the boundaries we put up between ourselves and others.

So, we follow a Rogation tradition of beating the bounds. We seek God's blessing for our community and its flourishing. Rogation means "to ask", and as we ask God to bless our villages, we ask you to join us on a walk on Monday 4 May, whether to you it's simply a walk or perhaps something more.

St James Church is part of a Benefice (a group of churches) of 5 parishes: Sherfield on Loddon, Hartley Wespall, Stratfield Saye, Stratfield Turgis and Bramley. We are walking 12 miles, visiting each church. Starting at St Leonard's, Sherfield (9am for bacon rolls, walking at 10am), ending at St James for a drink and some more food.

Rev'd Mark Anderson
Vicar, St James Church, Bramley

We would love to invite you to our first

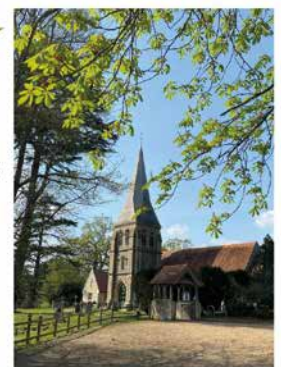
QUIET DAY

From 9.30am - 3.30pm

or

9.30am - 1pm or 12pm - 3.30pm

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Saturday 9th May

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This Bank Holiday Monday (4th May), come and undertake the tradition of beating our parish boundaries. A cross-country group walk around Sherfield-on-Loddon, Bramley, Hartley Wespall and Stratfield Saye.

Starting with breakfast (09:00-09:30) at St Leonards church (on A33 between Sherfield village and Sherfield Park), we will depart at 10:00 for a 12 mile route finishing with a BBQ at St James, Bramley at about 16:00.

All are welcome, for all or just part of it, and at the events at either end. We should be at The Wellington Arms (on the A33), the halfway point, at around 12:30.

The route uses scenic rural footpaths and quiet roads. It aims to avoid overly soft ground, but please consider your abilities and wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Dogs are welcome but leads are needed.

Please share any queries and your intention to attend with admin@stjamesbramley.org, or in the comments of related social media posts.

Bramley SpeedWatch

SpeedWatch attended a very well supported Police and Crime Commissioners Road Safety Summit in March. Some of the key points from the summit:

SpeedWatch is well supported.

Bramley Community SpeedWatch received a further grant for the purchase of equipment and 30mph wheelie bin stickers.

The police have 4, soon to be 5, road safety issues they will be concentrating on - the Fatal Five - and have set up a new roads policing task force. These are: speeding, drink/drug driving, mobile phone use, seatbelt use, and careless driving.

Older drivers: Make sure you can read a number plate at 20m. If, as an older driver, you are stopped you are likely to be asked to show that you can pass the eye test. Of interest the oldest holder of a driving license is a 109yo male.

Hants SNAP: A police initiative looking at public submitted dash cam/ phone footage. From what they said, if you have incidences recorded, send them in. If suitable, they can prosecute from the recordings - 497 last year. www.hampshire.police.uk/police-forces/hampshire-constabulary/areas/hants-snap/hantsnap/hants-snap---report-an-incident/

Safety of horses – they are treating this issue seriously. Follow the highway guide when passing horses, the police get a lot of horse-cam footage submitted and do follow up where necessary.

Illegal car meets are becoming an issue and there is a lot more to this than just kids wanting to show their cars off.

Young drivers – good to see a proactive approach being taken with education and training given, which is free. www.hampshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rs/road-safety/young-inexperienced-drivers/

E Scooters – Hampshire is the only County with a seize and destroy policy. If you ride one (other than from an official scheme) and are caught, it is likely to be destroyed.

A push to introduce **Graduated Driving Licenses** for young drivers, like in Australia and other countries, where they have been shown to reduce young driver deaths. It is being rolled out in Northern Ireland in October 2026 and will include a mandatory learning period, structured training, extended R plate periods, and passenger, night-time driving and motorway restrictions.

If you hit a Deer or animal with your vehicle on the road, phone the non-

Camera Data March 2026:

Verified speeders (=>35mph)	Highest number of offences committed by one vehicle	Fastest hour	Illegal vehicles
	6	4pm	29



Thanking the PCC for our SpeedWatch Grant.

emergency police line on 101. They are set up to deal with it.

During the summit, I got to thank the PCC for the grant that enabled SpeedWatch to purchase the new SIDs and Laser Speed Gun which are now being deployed in the village.

Recent Local SpeedWatch

Activity:

5 manned deployments were undertaken during March. A total of 30 vehicles were reported to the police from the 711 vehicles checked - hit rate 4%. Top speed recorded: 42mph.

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



SID Data – March 2026:

SID location	Days deployed	Traffic direction	% of vehicles exceeding 30 mph
Bramley Corner	28	East	70%
Farriers	28	West	31%
The Street	28	East	31%
The Forge	28	West	56%

Fixing the Potholes

Any of you who use the Cross House car park will have noticed how bad the potholes have become over winter - they give the ones along Vyne Road a run for their money! The work that Malcolm Knowles, Dave Knights and Liam did two years ago has held up well, but new potholes keep on appearing each winter.

There are no records to show who owns the land so some volunteers from the church got together to see what could be done to improve things. Stage 1 involved cleaning out the potholes to find something solid and then filling them with concrete up to an inch below the surface. Stage 2, planned for May, will involve topping off the potholes with tarmac. Hopefully this will make the car park much safer for those visiting Cross House, the burial ground and the church. A big thank you to the team of volunteers.



Dave Knights and Andy Pinnock



Phil Cripps on mixer duties



One hole nearly done



Liam giving a helping hand

Team Atomic to represent the UK in Singapore after STEM racing success

I'm Helena and I live in Bramley. I am part of a 5-member team of Year 11 students from Robert Mays School who love F1! Our passion has led us to become involved in STEM Racing.

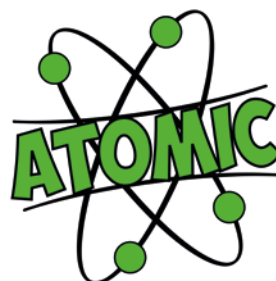
STEM Racing challenges students aged 11-19 to design, build, and race their own miniature F1 cars which are powered by canisters of compressed air. Teams are also tasked with creating their own pit displays and portfolios, which they present to judges.

Our team, Atomic, won the regional STEM Racing competition that took place at RAF Benson in November and, at the end of March, spent 2 amazing days competing in the National Finals in Rotherham. Over 70 teams took part in the National Finals and the atmosphere was electric! We made loads of friends during the competition and had the most incredible time. At the end of a tense last day competing, we were thrilled to take first place! We have now been given the chance to compete at the World Finals in Singapore this October representing the UK!

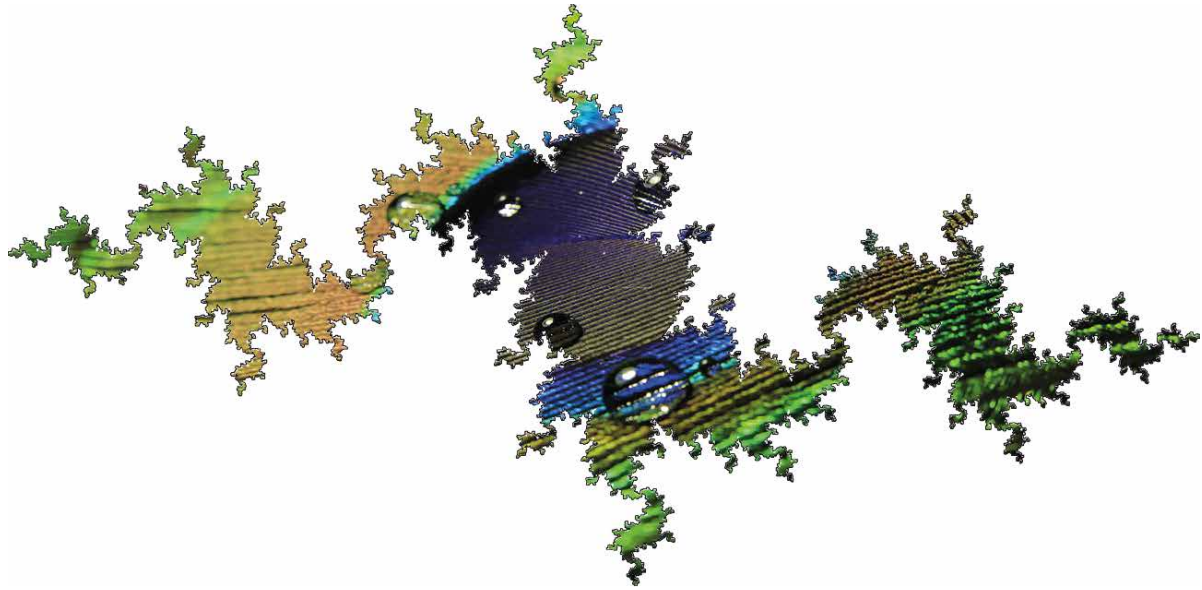
As part of our prize for winning, we have been invited to a paddock and garage tour at the Silverstone Grand Prix this July - an experience we are all incredibly excited about.

We want to encourage others to share in the excitement, challenges and rewards that STEM Racing brings and (as soon as our GCSEs have finished this summer!) hope to be able to visit our local schools to spread the word!

In order to compete successfully in Singapore on our World title mission, we are seeking sponsorship and support. If you or your company would be interested in sponsoring us, we would be delighted to hear from you. Equally, we would be hugely grateful for any donations to our GoFundMe. Any messages of support would also be gratefully received!



Contact us at: atomicf1team@gmail.com
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An update from Cllr Chris Flooks from Bramley Parish Council

What a strange late winter and early spring we're having. From cool and constant rain, to dry with summery temperatures and then back again. Luckily this seems to suit flowers and grasses. The daffodils on Bramley Green (thanks to Cllr Malcolm Bell and the Scouts) did very well, although the display has now faded. The spring bulbs around the Clift Memorial Tree were also a delight, please take time to read the poem. Nature, not to be outdone, has given us a fabulous display of bluebells in the Frith and Bullsdown Copse. The recent dry conditions have allowed the first cut and collect on Bramley Green (sounds like online shopping) and is looking much better. Hopefully the flora and fauna will prosper in their newly groomed environment.

Please note that native bluebells, such as those in Bramley Firth and Bullsdown Copse, are a protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). Please respect this and do not pick the flowers, and try to avoid trampling the plants in general.

The drier weather has also allowed the local roads to be kept somewhat cleaner around the various development sites. The constant and seemingly haphazard road closures to the west of the village have forced the developers to route their traffic across the level crossing from the A33. Although not ideal this is considered acceptable by the local authorities despite the conditions imposed during the planning appeal process. We are keeping an eye on when the roads are fully open, and we will expect all development traffic to route in from the A340.

The work to the path on Clift Meadow is now complete and tarmac aprons have been added to the front of the buildings. Hopefully events such as the Christmas Light Switch On will have better conditions underfoot. Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council are set to improve the children's play area which will include all-weather surfacing. This is expected in the next month or so.

A special mention to Graham White and the SpeedWatch team. Their perseverance is being rewarded as the numbers of speeding motorists appears to be falling slightly. Graham is also very successful in getting grant monies for new or replacement equipment.

It was noted that a recent headstone inspection by Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (BDBC) included headstones in the Parish Burial Ground. This should only have been on headstones in the closed churchyard around the church, and not the Parish Burial Ground. A total of 17 headstones have been deemed dangerous and laid flat. BDBC has said that it has little budget to correct this but may be able to pay for a small number to be repaired. The headstones concerned are all on older burial plots, and tracing the plot owners may be difficult. Bramley Parish Council voted to pay for any plots that cannot be repaired by BDBC.

Finally, dates for the diary:

- Saturday 16th May - Bramley Fete on the Clift Meadow from 12:00. Any children interested in a fun run, just turn up at 11:45am.
- Tuesday 12th May - Bramley PC Planning Committee meeting, Bramley Room, Bramley Village Hall. 8.00pm start time.
- Tuesday 19th May – Bramley Parish Council full council meeting, Bramley Room, Bramley Village Hall. 7.00pm start time.

Contacts

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

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



Sandham Memorial Chapel - Walking in Stanley Spencer's Footsteps

Join us at Sandham Memorial chapel on this free guided circular walk through the village of Burghclere - a place that deeply shaped the life and work of Stanley Spencer.

Follow in Spencer's footsteps as we explore the landscapes, paths, and quiet corners that inspired his work. Along the way, your guide will bring his story vividly to life - sharing the moments, memories, and local scenes that found their way into his paintings.

This relaxed, 90-minute walk is more than just a walk, it's an opportunity to immerse yourself in nature, improve your mental health and uncover hidden stories. Gain fresh insights into Spencer's creative vision and see Burghclere through the eyes of the artist himself. There's plenty of opportunity to ask questions, making it an engaging and interactive experience for all.

After the walk, you'll have the option to visit Sandham Memorial Chapel, where Spencer's remarkable paintings can be seen in their full glory (standard admission applies).

When: 5th May, 5th June, or 20th September. Meet on the steps of Sandham Memorial Chapel, Burghclere RG20 9JT at 10.30am.

Spaces are limited, so be sure to book in advance:

Call: 01635 278394

Email: sandhamevents@nationaltrust.org.uk



Basingstoke Ladies' Probus hears about The Elegant Avian Scavenger

If it wasn't for the fact that this area is so used to seeing this giant bird in our skies these days, the title 'Return of the Red Kite' might reference some miscreant in a spy service; however, it was the title of the talk given to the Basingstoke Ladies Probus Club by Keith Bretton - writer, lecturer, occasional broadcaster and an absolute authority on the life and times of the Red Kite.

In medieval times, the bird was very common over London, but by 1875 – 1900 it was extinct in many countries other than Wales and the north of Scotland. Its proliferation in Hampshire has been relatively recent but dramatic, given that in 1990 there were just 5, but by 2020 this had increased to 4,031 and by 2025 a staggering 6,500.

This magnificently graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail and is said to symbolise freedom and resurrection, while also representing successful ecological conservation and resilience. Notwithstanding its 1.5m wingspan it is remarkably light at just 1-1.5kg, with the female - who can breed from 2 years old - being heavier than the male. Both are highly manoeuvrable and can live up to 29 years of age if, as sadly happens, they have not been poisoned or shot.

Despite negative and inaccurate publicity, the kite is physically incapable of lifting heavy prey, including lambs or small children as has been suggested, as they cannot lift much more than a small rabbit or squirrel. What they are proficient in, however, is removing small items of clothing from a washing line with which to furnish the nest to add to the more commonly used material of sheep's wool. And that nest might have been previously the dwelling of another, as the kite will steal the nest of, for example, the crow or sparrowhawk. For food, they will swoop down to grab food from both ground and water and have smartly learnt to follow tractors during harvesting, which can reap much upturned sustenance.

Keith, who started lecturing at age 15, is a keen world birder having seen nearly 9000 species in 123 countries. He has a particular passion for Africa and is chair of the African Bird Club. In the UK he is heavily involved in bird monitoring in Hampshire, where he is chair of the Hampshire Ornithological Society. He has been a council member of both the RSPB and British Trust for Ornithology.

The Club was delighted to host such an expert – in the words of one member who gave the Vote of Thanks, 'In these days of political misery, the talk had been wonderfully entertaining' – and she had stayed awake!

If you are interested to know more about BLPC membership and the upcoming programme, contact:

The Admin Secretary, reverendjane@hotmail.co.uk or 07754 296994.

See photographs on page13.

Jordan Rollinson resumes his historical fiction series in the trenches around Basing

Cold had begun to bite at the beseiger's heels. Samuel's breath trailed out like the smoke of the big guns, but it was all misery and no destruction. Their pay, when it came, was infrequent and minuscule in comparison to their suffering. It was supposed to be the garrison whose teeth were snapping at scraps, not them! And yet, Norton's ideas on the house had them scavenging through the detritus of the spent market in Basing's centre, or worse, outright theft. None of them were living in the way of the devout or the good. But they all told themselves, told each other, that it was for the greater good and that they would see the change of God erected in the land of the sinful.

It was a worthy aspiration. But to thief was to sin. To kill was to sin. To rage and to lust for the coming of a new nation was to sin. But Samuel told himself it was fine, it

was alright, as long as his end goals met those of God's. In Samuel's heart swam a conflux of contrast, good and ill warring with ball and blade; neither side truly winning over the other. Samuel's eyes descended to the house. That theocratic battle was much like this. Trenches curled about the house's walls, many filled with swamp water and a blistering tirade of mosquitos that were thriving off the heat of so many men in one cramped vicinity. To them, it must have felt like summer.

There went the *cracks* and *pops* of spent powder again. Sour vapour trailed past men's nostrils, greying their vision. A number stayed down, a number more writhed and bled into the dirt. Samuel kept firing, bearing them little mind. How injured to the sorrows of suffering he had become. Salty, a tear streaked down his cheek. He couldn't be sure why he was crying, in truth. Casualties abound around him, but none that he had cared for in life or good health. Perhaps sorrow had caught

up with him - the tragedies of so many brothers killing brothers or the hopelessness of how they might hope to repair the nation's injuries, even under their banners of victory. More gunfire, his own too. Samuel's heart was beating and paining in spite of his brain, which was calculating and rationalising in spite of his body's muscle memories. Hands shaking, he lowered the musket. Men above, the garrison, had ceased their firing too. It was time to sort through the damaged goods and quantify what might be kept. Such had been the pattern for months, and was looking like it may continue to be for months more. A dead man here, screaming mouth there. Infection would no doubt return the injured to God's graceful arms after days - or for the unlucky, weeks - of agony. Come tomorrow they would load their pieces and loose death again, halt, count the dead, sleep and return again. Samuel could feel the frayed cord straining - much more of this, and they would all be walking corpses, in manner, if not fact.



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Easter at St James' Church

As usual, there was a lot happening at St James' Church over Easter. On Maundy Thursday we held our traditional community supper: a simple meal of soup and bread that takes place before our evening service. I say simple, but there were four types of soup, with second and third helpings available, so no-one went hungry! On Good Friday we welcomed children to Cross House to take part in Easter Crafts, help build an Easter garden, listen to the Easter story and, of course, eat Hot Cross Buns.

On Good Friday we commemorated the death of Jesus on the cross. It's a poignant day and the church reflects this – there are no flowers and even



the altar is stripped bare. This makes Easter Sunday all the more joyful as you arrive to the sound of bells and the perfume of hundreds of flowers. The flower team excelled themselves with their stunning arrangements. The service that morning was particularly special as we not only celebrated Jesus' resurrection but also welcomed Charlie, who was being baptised. Over 120 people were in church for this lovely occasion.



Bramley School - School is not just about learning, it is also about experiences.

We take pride at Bramley C of E Primary School in enriching our curriculum as much as possible. We work hard within school to make each topic and lesson as relevant to the children as we can using a range of videos, images and discussion to help the children understand ideas. However, having hands on and real-world experiences can truly bring the learning to life! They are also moments that the children will hopefully remember forever.

Each year, we look for experts, locations or events that will enrich the work we do in school.

Earlier in the year, our children in Key Stage 1 had a fantastic time visiting SeaCity in Southampton to enhance their Titanic learning. This is a wonderful opportunity for the children to see what life was like on board the fateful ship and see a range of artefacts from the time. They also got to dress up in clothes and 're-enact' parts of the story.

In February, the children in Years 3 and 4 used VR headsets to help them explore their new topics! The Year 3 children were able to be immersed in the life of the Ancient Egyptians, with a guided tour and view of life back them. The Year 4 children explored the world of the Ancient Maya, helping them to fully understand what the world looked like to them. This was a fantastic way to kick start their term and bring learning to life!

Our Year 3 children have also visited the Winchester Museum to learn all about the Angle-Saxons. This was a new visit for us this year. One of our teachers had been inspired by what they heard the museum had to offer, and it did not disappoint, helping the children to understand abstract concepts about life in different points in history.

A highlight of their time at Bramley School for many children is getting to Year 5 and going on the trip to Warner Bros Studios. As well as exploring the amazing tour, the children take part in a lesson explaining the steps required to turn stories into playscripts then into films. They are given sneak peeks at real props used in the films and a behind the scenes look at how some of the special effects are achieved.

As part of their studies into WWII, our oldest children visited the Imperial War Museum in London earlier in the year. This is an amazing and captivating trip for the children, where they can experience so much about life during the war. There are so many huge displays to develop their understanding of Britain at war.

Sometimes, we go 'off-curriculum' as an opportunity arises that we think will be just amazing for our children! Later this year, we will have a falconry expert visit our school. The children will learn about a range of birds of prey and have the awesome experience of seeing them fly over our school grounds.

We are always adapting our visits to enhance our curriculum but also best meet the needs of each group of children. Each year, we may change where we visit, adapt the focus or lessons we have or find new experts who can come into school to bring the learning alive.

Our aim is to give our children a broad range of extra experiences to make learning life-long and fun!



Royal British Legion

Bramley & District Branch RBL welcome all to a Battle of Waterloo Lunch

1230-3pm Thursday 25th June
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Buffet lunch followed by an illuminating talk on the Battle of Waterloo by Battlefield Tour Guide, Rhydian Vaughan



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Butter Daisy

It has been an exciting and joyous month as we continue to support some of the youngest members of our community with their learning and development. We have celebrated many achievements and successes throughout the nursery, and what a privilege it has been to observe these moments unfold. Watching the children beam with pride as they accomplish their goals is truly rewarding. From first steps to drawing hearts for Grandma, we continue to be incredibly proud of all our Butter Daisy children. These milestones reflect growing confidence and independence, key aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), as they develop a strong sense of self and belonging within our setting.

Tied closely to each child's individual learning goals, we have been celebrating and exploring a variety of national and international events and awareness days. Through these experiences, the children have engaged in activities that support all areas of the EYFS. For British Science Week, they put their creative and critical thinking skills to the test, exploring, predicting and problem-solving. During our celebration of English Literature, the children developed communication and language skills, building vocabulary and a love of stories.



These opportunities encourage curiosity and a lifelong enthusiasm for learning.

We have also enjoyed a range of physical and well-being activities. The children hopped like rabbits and used their detective skills during Easter hunts, supporting physical development and understanding of the world. For World Health Day, we focused on well-being, including healthy eating and the importance of rest and relaxation. Activities such as yoga and our Baby Foot Spa provided calming sensory experiences, helping children regulate their emotions and build positive habits for a healthy lifestyle.

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



Little Apples

Welcome to the summer term at Little Apples. We can't believe how fast this academic year is whizzing by and we will soon be planning for transitioning our older children to primary school, to begin their reception year.

The move to big school can be daunting for parents. There is a lot of information about what constitutes school readiness and parents worry that the young children might not be ready. Helping children feel ready for school is a team effort – everything parents do at home alongside the care and learning they receive in nursery or preschool and their early education play a big part. From chatting and reading together at home, to encouraging independent skills like dressing or tidying up, all the little things parents do each day help children grow in confidence and curiosity. These simple moments build the foundation they need for starting reception.

The Best Start-In-Life website offers lots of ideas to support families in helping their young children at this key stage. 90% of children's brain growth happens before the age of five years old, so right from the start, all interactions children have are helping them learn and develop. The Best Start-In-Life free booklet, "chat play read", is available to download from the National Literacy Trust.

This recommends practical tips and encourages early reading habits, as well as promoting routines and communication which will help children feel secure, develop listening skills and break down events or processes into simple steps and a logical order.

More information can be found here: beststartinlife.gov.uk/school-readiness/ www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/early-learning-development/

In the meantime, we still have one more term before we have to say goodbye to our oldest children and that will be full of fun and friendship as we hopefully enjoy some summer weather.

We are now allocating sessions for next academic year September 2026 to July 2027. If you are interested in registering a child and would like to visit Little Apples, please email Jo on manager@littleapples.org or call (07598) 588460. More information is available on our website www.littleapples.org



On Hearing the First Cuckoo of Spring by Paul Sterry

Few sounds evoke the notion of spring more than the onomatopoeic song of a Cuckoo, the subject of a poem by Wordsworth, a tone poem by Delius and bygone-era-letters to the Times newspaper.

In terms of natural history, the Cuckoo is an intriguing species. Most people are familiar with its lifestyle as a nest parasite of songbirds, with key hosts being Reed Warblers in wetlands and Meadow Pipits in grassland and on heathland and moors. Neither host species breed in the Bramley area and here potential hosts include Dunnock, Pied Wagtail and Robin. All British Cuckoos winter in the Congo rainforests of central Africa and GPS tagging by the British Trust for Ornithology has shown that our birds migrate via two main routes – down the spine of Italy and across the Mediterranean and Sahara, or more circuitously by hugging the west coasts of Europe and Africa.

Although we think of Cuckoos as being British, they are only with us for a short period - males arrive in mid- to late-April and often leave by the first week in June: they are migrant visitors and spend the greater part of their lives in Africa. Cuckoo navigational prowess is a source of wonder and like many other spring and summer visitors they are solitary nocturnal migrants.

It is remarkable enough that adult Cuckoos can navigate to and from the same wintering grounds each year in Africa and are often site-faithful when they return to our shores. However, what's more remarkable is the migration undertaken by juveniles. Bear in mind that by the time juveniles fledge, leave our shores and migrate to Africa (July and August) adult birds will be long gone, having left a month

or more before. So, young Cuckoos are entirely on their own. On a more profound level, one has to wonder how a juvenile Cuckoo even knows it's a Cuckoo because it will not have encountered another of its kind by the time it leaves our shores; its only avian encounters will have been with its hosts.

Once upon a time the springtime song of the Cuckoo would have been a common sound in and around Bramley. Today, however, it is increasingly rare, the result of urbanisation and biodiversity degradation of the landscape. Across Britain as a whole, numbers have dropped by around 30% over the last 30 years or so but in our part of the world the decline has been more profound: around 70% when numbers today are compared to 1995.

The decline applies mainly to breeding in farmland and open countryside and Cuckoos fare better on the heaths of the New Forest, in extensive reedbeds and on moors in upland and northern Britain. Some of the reasons for their decline are intuitively obvious to anyone with an understanding of ecology and the natural world. During their brief stay in Britain, adult Cuckoos need to find host species to parasitise, and they also need to eat. Sterile fields and hedgerows that do not support their songbird hosts and fail to



A Drinker Moth caterpillar, favourite food of Cuckoos but a declining insect of what little remains of species-rich undisturbed grassland. Photo ©Paul Sterry.



A Cuckoo in flight. Photo ©Paul Sterry.



A male Cuckoo calling. Photo ©Paul Sterry.

provide sufficient food (mainly large, hairy caterpillars) to feed adult birds are an obvious problem. But climate change also rears its ugly head and has a role to play – increasingly unpredictable, unseasonal and extreme adverse weather conditions (most notably on the African leg of their journey) are affecting migration routes resulting in increased mortality. The climate is changing more rapidly than the Cuckoo population's ability to adapt.

Wilder Bramley

Spring means it's time to start looking after our meadows and starting up surveys!

Wilder Bramley wasted no time in holding a work party at St James' Churchyard mini meadow. We decided to change the cutting regime this Spring; we cut half of the area through scything and raking and left the other half. The rationale is that, after several years of looking after the space, the fertility is a bit more under control so leaving some longer grass creates a vital food source for spring caterpillars to feed. For instance, the local populations of Meadow Brown and Speckled Wood butterflies rely on Cock's Foot grass as a primary food source for their caterpillars. We also found an anthill in the corner of the mini meadow, a good sign of soil health. The green woodpeckers will certainly love to feast on the ants!

A few of us attended a training organised by Natural Basingstoke called "Site Management for Biodiversity" targeted at conservation group leaders conserving Basingstoke & Deane Council land. We reviewed

basic aspects of a site management plan (what is a habitat, what do we want to achieve over time, which species do we want to protect?) and how do we measure it (what surveys?). Building on our activities last year, Wilder Bramley will continue to survey the St Mark's Close area, looking for butterflies, moths, bats and reptiles. You may have already seen the reptile mats laid out.

Save the date: 24th May 2026 for a river walk!

Do you enjoy exploring the local area? Following the success of last August's guided walk along the Loddon, we are preparing to host a second river walk travelling a different route along the Loddon and catching a glimpse of the Lyde. Why not join us to discover this beautiful countryside walk? The route is a hidden gem with plenty of opportunities to see the local wildlife. Keep your eyes open for birds such as Red Kites, Goosander, Whitethroats, Cuckoo, Woodpeckers, Partridge; and if lucky, a Peregrine Falcon. Follow our socials and website for more information coming soon.



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Sunday 14 June 2026

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Half marathon (10.30am start)
10K (11am start)
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Marathon competitors must be 18 years or over on race day, Half Marathon 17 years or older on race day, 10K 16 years or older on race day.

Trail Running Association Permit TRA7634 (Marathon), TRA7633 (Half Marathon) and TRA7632 (10K). The event will be held under UK Athletics Rules.



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Anvil Arts Events

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Thu 14 May, 7.30pm, The Anvil

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HAIRCUT 100

Sat 16 May, 7.30pm, The Anvil

Last year an unexpected second chapter in the Haircut 100 story gathered pace when their irresistible first single in forever, *The Unloving Plum*, became Radio 2's Record of the Week. It was a track which showed the magic that inspired their '80s hits - *Favourite Shirts (Boy Meets Girl)*, *Love Plus One*, *Fantastic Day* and *Nobody's Fool*. Now that comeback steps up a gear as they announce their new album *Boxing The Compass!*

BASSEKOU KOUYATE & AMY SACKOU

Tue 19 May, 7.45pm The Forge

From Mali, musician and ngoni master Bassekou Kouyate tours the UK for the first time as a duo with his wife, griot singer and exceptional vocalist Amy Sacko. Connecting past and present, this will be an intimate opportunity to experience a performance that reaches to the very heart of Mali – deeply personal, expressive, chamber-style that promises a rare closeness between artists and audience, a space where each note and lyric resonates deeply.

TONY CHRISTIE

The Great Farewell

Thu 28 May, 7.30pm, The Haymarket

The beloved crooner Tony performs tracks from across his career, from the trademark mega hit *Is This The Way To Amarillo* through to other songs including *Avenues & Alleyways*, *Walk Like A Panther*, *Las Vegas*, *I Did What I Did For Maria*, *Happy Birthday Baby*, *Thank You For Being A Friend*, through to some show stopping covers from the late greats that helped shape the career of the humble veteran from Yorkshire.

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE

Science Saved The World

Sat 30 May, 1pm & 4.30pm
The Haymarket

Join the show's presenters as they dive deep into the world of science and look at how it shapes modern day life with a few loud bangs along the way! They'll take an anarchic approach to science communication whilst looking at the scientists, engineers and inventors who have shaped the world that we live in. Expect 20ft liquid nitrogen clouds, exploding oxygen and hydrogen balloons, fire tornados, hydrogen bottle rockets, ignited methane and even a self-built hovercraft!

FIREMAN SAM LIVE!

The Lost Pirate Treasure

Sun 31 May, 12.30pm, The Haymarket

Norman Price is determined to win the Pontypandy Treasure Hunt, but when he discovers clues to a real pirate treasure, he goes exploring deep into the caves. It's up to Fireman Sam, Elvis and Ellie to save the day and find the treasure. With clues, pirate songs and plenty of swashbuckling adventure, Fireman Sam's new live show is perfect for all budding pirates!

Rotary Roundup

Our Fundraising Focus: Hampshire Hospitals Charity at the Festival of Transport for CTG Monitoring Machines.

We launched our fundraising focus for this Rotary year in January. This important project is also the heart of our fundraising at the Festival of Transport. Partnering with Hampshire Hospitals Charity to buy one or more, if possible, new **Cardio Tomography machines (CTG) for the Maternity department at Basingstoke Hospital**. They play a vital role in monitoring pregnant women and women in labour and the health of their unborn child. The current machines are outdated and can't be upgraded, so replacing them with modern, data-rich, fully updatable equipment will make a real difference. These state-of-the-art machines will help make childbirth safer for local families. We will also continue to support other local and some international charities.

Become a Friend of Rotary

Have fun volunteering with us and help our local community. We need your help on the day - please volunteer!

FESTIVAL of TRANSPORT 2026

May 10th 11.00 - 4.00pm

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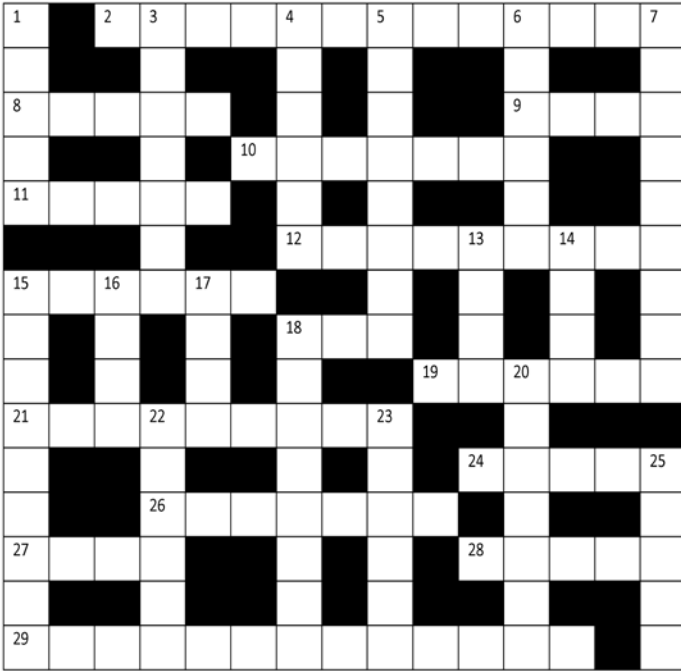
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Cryptic Crossword No: 98

See page 30 for the answers.



Across

- 2 Mnemonic, bound to remind you which way to set the time. (6,7)
- 8 Being in right company helps to find this tree. (5)
- 9 He made a fearful noise inside, but pointless when one cannot hear. (4)
- 10 Effect of clue 9 on one who can hear. (7)
- 11 Worthless as food but ideal for fooling radar. (5)
- 12 She sells a mixture of these. (9)
- 15 American indian or helicopter. (6)
- 18 Expert card. (3)
- 19 Cough he adopted on the radio for beverage. (6)
- 21 Choose particles for appointments. (9)
- 24 One can be acute, obtuse or right depending on ones approach. (5)
- 26 Lean gas adapted for dish. (7)
- 27 It emphasised how to obscure an object. (4)
- 28 Manage to provide food perhaps. (5)
- 29 Can renders get to these places of plants. (6,7)

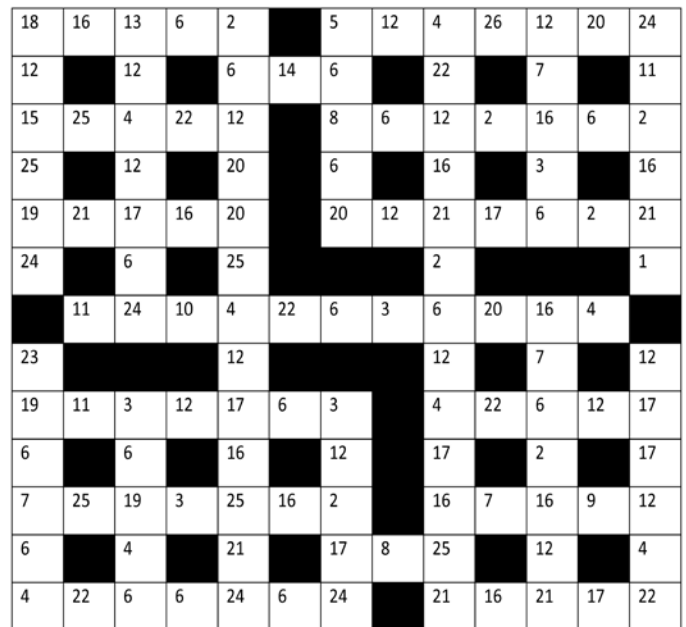
Down

- 1 Axe beckons disguising vessel. (5)

- 3 Ocean, calm it seems. (7)
- 4 City to see, then die. (6)
- 5 Just match. (4,4)
- 6 Let show add levity demonstrating shuffle. (6)
- 7 Apologetic or cautious. (9)
- 13 Her officer hid one to admire. (4)
- 14 Able afterwards to find part of tree. (4)
- 15 Coursing down building sounds like muscular yachting. (9)
- 16 A cheat managed to hide the feeling. (4)
- 17 Form of energy found in clue 16. (4)
- 18 Actor am I, adopted to be balmy. (8)
- 20 Noisy announcement of something to come. (7)
- 22 Settled in logical meditation. (6)
- 23 Outdoor natural colouring. (6)
- 25 Home to every human being. (5)

CodeWord No: 84

See page 30 for the answers.



Each number represents a unique letter from the alphabet and all 26 letters are used. Two letters are given to make a start.



A moment in chime

In a previous issue of this magazine, I wrote about the history of the clock on the tower of St. James' church in Bramley and how it's well looked after and kept wound by Dave Knights on a

regular basis. In the article I mentioned the following:

“The clock can strike the hour but has never for some time so as not to annoy the neighbours Dave thinks!”

No sooner had the magazine been distributed, than an email arrived from John Stubbs on behalf of his neighbours, saying that now would be a good time for the chiming to be resumed and this would add to the charm and ambience of the church and village! It was time to strike!!

Now that our bells have been refurbished and re-hung, Dave has been busy resetting the mechanism to enable the clock to strike on the hour

throughout the day when the church is open.

Grahame Mellor



Dave checking the required adjustments to enable the Tenor Bell to strike loud and proud on the hour each day, a special moment in our history!?

BRAMLEY & ROMANS FLORAL SOCIETY

This month's meeting, held on Thursday 2 April, was a very entertaining and informative demonstration by Sandie Draper, a talented NAFAS area demonstrator, entitled 'An African Adventure'.

Her first arrangement depicted Egypt and represented a snake charmer. A woven basket container supported a cool white and green display of white roses and eustoma with two huge amaryllis and some viburnum opulus (snowball tree).

Secondly to represent the Cape Verdi Islands, Sandie used a very tall terracotta amphora as a container, with dried strelitzia leaves and orange crocosmia, with yellow, peach and orange germinis.

To represent South Africa, Sandie had made a frame decorated with dried plant material, within which she created a green and red display of proteas and choisya.

After a break for tea, homemade cakes and a chat, Sandie continued with a depiction of Morocco. Her intricate mechanics of crescent shapes wrapped in wool, supported an arrangement of red roses and gerberas, lightened with viburnum opulus & euonymus 'Siver Queen'.

Her final 'piece de resistance', depicting Kenya, was a large piece of driftwood, rescued from a forest fire, and mounted vertically, supporting two placements of exotic pink cymbidium orchids, pink tulips and pink hypericum berries.

Not forgetting that it was Easter, a bunny, holding a container filled with chocolate eggs was added to her display, and we were all invited to help ourselves. Sandie accompanied her arrangements with useful hints on conditioning flowers and foliage, and manipulating leaves, as well as interesting information on the countries she had chosen.

We meet every first Thursday of the month at 1.30pm in Sherfield-on-Loddon Village Hall. Do come and join us. Our next meeting is on May 14 (to avoid local elections) and is a workshop. For more details, please contact our chairman Stephanie Cornell on 07808 078188.





Your Local Cats Protection Branch Needs You!!

Basingstoke Cats Protection is currently inundated with cats on our waiting list who we so desperately want to help... but with all our current foster homes full of felines there is little we can do.

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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Black Broadcasting – The Secret Weapon of WWII

Members of the Probus Club of Basingstoke were treated to a fascinating slice of little known wartime history when speaker Guy Caplin explored the covert world of “black broadcasting” during the Second World War.



Most people recognise the chilling call sign “Germany calling, Germany calling,” made infamous by William Joyce—better known as Lord Haw-Haw—who broadcasted Nazi propaganda in English from Germany. Joseph Goebbels, one of the most senior figures in the Nazi Party, understood the power of radio, and his propaganda machine was relentless. In response, Winston Churchill authorised Britain to develop its own clandestine broadcasting operation.



The BBC already produced German-language programmes but refused to engage in subversive work. As a result, a secret unit was formed under the leadership of Dennis Sefton Delmer. Born in Berlin to an Australian professor, Delmer was fluent in German and had worked as the Daily Express newspaper’s foreign correspondent. His close contact with rising Nazi figures—including a 1931 interview with Hitler—made him simultaneously suspected by the Germans of being a British spy and by the British of being a German one.

Delmer’s acquaintance with Commander Ian Fleming, then deputy head of Naval Intelligence and later creator of James Bond, likely helped secure his role. Delmer’s mission was to broadcast in German, blending accurate news with carefully crafted misinformation designed to sow doubt and anxiety within the German military.

A Network of Deception

The first of several covert radio stations was established at Wavendon Towers near Bletchley Park. These stations

mimicked genuine German broadcasters with remarkable skill, using up-to-the-minute news, recordings of Hitler’s speeches, and snippets of local detail supplied by agents to create an air of authenticity.

At Fleming’s request, a dedicated station was created to target the German navy and Uboat crews operating in the North Atlantic. Styled after pre-war commercial stations like Radio Luxembourg, it played popular German songs, British orchestras performing German music, and American dance band tracks—much to the irritation of German authorities but to the delight of listeners. Interspersed among the entertainment were subtle pieces of misinformation.

One of the British operation’s greatest advantages was speed. German broadcasts were slowed by layers of internal checks, while British stations could leap ahead, airing news before the enemy could. Agents even supplied local football results, and a popular presenter known as “Vicki” took music requests, further enhancing the illusion of legitimacy.

Influencing the Axis

Fleming also oversaw the creation of Radio Livorno, an English-run but Italian-language station. Its propaganda proved so persuasive that, fearing the British advance through southern Italy, the Italian navy surrendered its fleet to the British in Malta.

Another major asset was the Aspidistra transmitter at Crowborough in Sussex. Named after the Gracie Fields song, it was the most powerful medium-wave transmitter in the world at 500 kW. Its ability to switch frequencies instantly allowed it to replace German stations knocked off the air, convincing listeners they were still tuned to their local broadcaster.

Unusual Tactics

The British also experimented with more unconventional methods. The RAF dropped boxes containing homing pigeons and questionnaires, encouraging civilians to send back information—though many pigeons, sadly, ended up as food during shortages.

A daily newspaper summarising the previous day’s broadcasts was also printed and dropped over Germany, reinforcing the disinformation campaign and gradually eroding public confidence.

After the War

Following Germany’s defeat, Sefton Delmer was sent to help rebuild the German newspaper industry. With little support, he eventually returned to the Daily Express. In recognition of his wartime service, he was awarded the OBE in 1945, being described as a section head in the Foreign Office.

For more information about the Probus Club of Basingstoke, visit www.probusbasingstoke.club or contact their secretary on 07814 937202 for an informal chat.



Bramley 0-5s

There were lots of smiles at our last meeting. We made yummy chocolate Easter nests (a few made it home!), decorated hanging paper eggs, went on an Easter egg hunt, as well as our usual range of activities.

We're a friendly group welcoming babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their carers, mums, dads, grans and grandpas. We meet on Tuesdays 10-11.30am at The Pavilion, Clift Meadow.

We have a small group of lovely volunteers who help but we could do with more. Come along and meet us if you're interested.

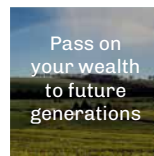
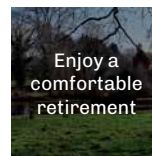
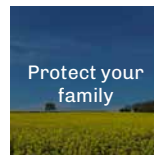
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Check if you can save money on Oil, LPG, Coal or Wood to Heat Your Home



Citizens Advice Basingstoke is an independent local charity providing free, confidential and impartial advice for local people. If you use oil, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or coal or wood to

heat your home, check below to see if you can save money.

If you use oil

It's worth getting at least 3 quotes from different suppliers, to compare prices and choose the best option for you. Get quotes from suppliers who are members of the UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association (UKIFDA). Member suppliers have to act professionally and treat you fairly. If they don't, you can complain: <https://ukifda.org/find-a-distributor/>

It's best to order when oil prices are cheaper, usually in summer and early autumn. It's usually also cheaper to get oil delivered in a few weeks' time instead of an urgent delivery. Before you order, check for extra fees or service charges. You could put some money aside each month in a savings account to help spread the cost over a year. Make sure you have enough oil in the tank while you wait for deliveries, at least quarter of a tank. If the oil level gets too low, the system could get damaged and need expensive repairs. It might be cheaper to order a larger amount of oil, instead of several smaller orders. Check your tank to make sure you've got enough space for a larger amount of oil.

You might be able to save on oil costs by joining an 'oil club'. This means you buy your heating oil at the same time with other people in the area. You can search for an oil club online, on social media or on community notice boards. You can also check with your local council. If there's not already an oil club in your area, you can set up one yourself.

If you're 75 years old or over, and your supplier is a member of the UKIFDA, they should prioritise deliveries to you. This is

called the 'Cold Weather Priority Initiative'. You, or someone you live with, must be aged 75 or over. Your supplier should automatically add you to the 'Cold Weather Priority Initiative', but you should check you're on it. If you use more than one supplier, you'll need to check with each supplier. You might have to ask them to add you. You don't have to pay for this. Check if your supplier is a UKIFDA member on the UKIFDA website: <https://ukifda.org/find-a-distributor/>

If you use liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)

If you have a storage tank, you'll usually be tied into a 2-year contract. Ask your supplier when your contract ends. You might be able to find a better deal with another supplier. Most suppliers will let you keep your old tank. If they want to fit their own tank, they must pay for this - you can't be charged for the removal of the old tank.

If you use coal or wood

It's usually cheaper to buy your coal and wood in bulk. You might be able to find a better deal with another supplier - make sure you look around for deals regularly. You might also want to look into using different types of coal or wood. Some might be more energy efficient than others, which could save you money. You can check how to use your solid fuel heating system efficiently on the Solid Fuel Association website: <https://solidfuel.co.uk/solid-fuel-energy-efficiency/>

If you use alternative fuels such as oil, coal or wood to keep your home warm, you might be able to get extra help if you can't afford to buy fuel, please see more details on: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-help-paying-your-bills/help-with-bills-if-you-use-alternative-fuels/

Anyone in need of help, whatever their enquiry involves, should call Advice Line free on 0808 2787829. For details of the weekly drop-in advice sessions across Basingstoke or if you would like to send in your enquiry online, please go to: www.cabasingstoke.org.uk

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Basingstoke Choral Society presents an evening of light and hope

When: **Saturday 18th July 2026**

Concert starts **7:00 pm**

Where: **All Saints Church Odiham**

Conductor: **Jordan Theis**

Accompanied by piano and organ

We present an evening of inspirational music celebrating the hope and joy of community, featuring the radiant lyricism of Samuel Barber's *Sure on This Shining Night*, the heartfelt beauty of Mark Wilberg's *Amazing Grace*, selections from Aaron Copland's *Old American Songs*, the luminous serenity of Morten Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*, and the folk-inspired charm of Jacob Narverud's *Wild Mountain Thyme*, all part of a programme of works written or arranged by American composers.

Tickets: £20 under 18's free

A glass of wine or soft drink included in ticket price available from 6pm

To book: <https://www.basingstoke-choral.org.uk/summer26>

Whitchurch Silk Mill News

Flower Festival at the Mill: Call for Displays

Building on the success of our Open Gardens events, Whitchurch Silk Mill is delighted to announce its first Flower Festival, running 19–21 June 2026, 10.30am–5pm daily. The festival will celebrate creativity, nature and our local community, and we invite gardeners, garden groups, makers and creative individuals to take part. We're looking for floral installations or flower-inspired arrangements for display inside the Mill or in the grounds. These can be fresh, crafted, stitched, recycled, sculpted, anything imaginative and floral. Alongside the displays, there will be demonstrations and family activities throughout the weekend. To get involved, please contact Jess or Sue at info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk.

To stay up to date, follow us on social media or subscribe to our newsletter.

Contact: info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk
www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk | 01256 892065

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>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- 11.30 (from 9 January 2026)</i>	Cross House
<i>WG Pilates 12-1pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Craft Group (4th Friday) 1pm-4pm</i>	Bramley Room, Village Hall
<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 9.30-10.30m</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 Craft Group	Anne-Marie Jones	07922 528155	anajonesuk@yahoo.co.uk	4th Friday of each month
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	
Guides	Viv Salem		1stbramleyguides@gmail.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	Carol Ellis	07960 049189		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			wilder.bramley@gmail.com www.wilderbramley.org or Facebook	
Yoga	Mark Golding	07969 890722	goldingyoga@gmail.com goldingyoga.com	

Basingstoke Veterans Club

A New Chapter for Basingstoke’s Veterans: Join Our Growing Community

There is a unique bond shared by those who have served—a sense of camaraderie that transcends specific branches, ranks, or eras of service.

We are a friendly and welcoming club of veterans from a diverse range of service backgrounds, and we are excited to announce that our community is entering a vibrant new chapter.

Our New Home at Carnival Hall

We are thrilled to share that our club has recently moved to Carnival Hall. This venture represents a significant step forward for us, and as a club, we couldn’t be happier with the transition. Carnival Hall is a fantastic venue that provides the space and facilities we need to thrive. We believe this move will allow us to grow our membership within the Basingstoke area and beyond, ensuring that every local veteran has a place to call home.

Join Us for Coffee and Breakfast

Whether you are looking for a casual chat or a hearty meal, we have two regular meetups that we would love for you to attend:

- Coffee Mornings: Join us every Monday morning from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM at Carnival Hall for coffee and conversation.

- Monthly Breakfast: On the third Sunday of each month, we gather at the Spruce Goose from 09:30 AM onwards for a traditional breakfast.

We understand the importance of accessibility; therefore, both venues are disability friendly. We also maintain a strictly inclusive environment where service dogs are always welcome.

A Band of Brothers and Sisters

They say that veterans are a “happy band of brothers and sisters from different mothers,” and that sentiment sits at the very heart of our club. We pride ourselves on being a supportive, light-hearted, and inclusive group where the shared language of service creates instant friendships.

If you have been looking for a way to reconnect with the veteran community, please come along and see for yourself the spirit of our club. You don’t need an invitation—just show up. We are ready to welcome you with open arms.

Hope to see you soon!

The BV Committee

Cryptic Crossword No: 98 Solution

25	EARTH	29	GARDEN CENTRES
23	SUNTAN	28	CATER
22	CALMED	27	ITEM
20	FANFARE	26	LASAGNE
18	AROMATIC	24	ANGLE
17	HEAT	21	ELECTIONS
16	ACHE	19	COFFEE
15	ABSEILING	18	ACE
14	LEAF	15	APACHE
13	HERO	12	SEASHELLS
7	DEFENSIVE	11	CHAFF
6	WADDLE	10	ALARMED
5	FAIR GAME	9	DEAF
4	NAPLES	8	BIRCH
3	PACIFIC	2	SPRING FORWARD
1	XEBEC		

Down

CodeWord No: 84 Solution

H	T	N	I	N		S	E	S	E	E	H	C
C		A		O	W	T		N		C		E
A	Z	I	B	I		R	O	I	D	O	U	B
T		R		T		A		I		E		E
T	A	E	H	C		D	E	T	A	D	A	U
A		B		A				A				Q
	C	I	L	E	D	E	H	C	Y	S	P	
G				R				O		E		S
N	R	E	T	N	A	L		L	I	L	N	U
I		D		I		E		L		A		O
R	E	R	I	E	W		A	H	C	O	C	M
P		B		H		E	X	E		A		A
S	A	L	K	A	C	J		R	E	V	I	F

CLASSIFIED ADVERTS

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 bram.mag.adverts@gmail.com

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We're open throughout the bank holiday weekends



Sherfield-on-Loddon

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