



September 2026

The

BRAMLEY

FOR BRAMLEY AND LITTLE LONDON

Magazine

- Last call for the Bramley Show
- Petite Dance storms the West End
- News from the Village Hall

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The Bramley Magazine

*for Bramley and
Little London*

September 2026

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

Editorial

Well, that was a scorcher! Five heatwaves, temperatures regularly in the high 30s, numerous amber weather warnings and the driest July for 190 years. This summer is on course to be the UK's hottest since records began, one when umbrellas were only used for shade and our green and pleasant land turned brown and dusty. It's been challenging for everyone and for once I actually missed working in an air-conditioned office. Both Wilder Bramley and Paul Sterry address the issues caused by the drought on pages 24 and 25 respectively, and we can probably expect more of these hot, dry summers in the future.

I took the cover picture of the wildflower area in Bramley Green at the beginning of July, when nature was still bathed in green and we weren't having to carry heavy watering cans around the garden. My plants don't take too long to water, but keeping the border and pots at Bramley station healthy has been quite time-consuming, mainly because I invariably get stuck at the barriers when I need to refill the watering cans! Fortunately, the winners of the Bramley in Bloom competition weren't put off by the weather, and you can see the winning entries on page 9.

I am old enough to remember the summer of 1976 when Parliament passed the Drought Act to ration water; I recall my dad setting up a system to syphon off our grey water into an old bath outside, so we could water the garden. 50 years later and social media is showing other unusual ways of collecting our discarded water, including showering in plastic gardening trugs. I hope whoever came up with that idea got dressed before using the water on their garden! Luckily, even if your fruit and vegetables haven't survived the drought, there are still lots of other items you can enter into the Bramley Show on 13 September, including crafts and cakes. While you are there you can see the cups E.W.B. Clift won for his swedes. See page 20 for the full story.

Of course, by the time you read this, the school term will have started and it will probably have been raining non-stop for days. The children will be catching up with friends they haven't seen for a while and parents will be breathing a sigh of relief. We send good luck to all those children starting new schools, colleges and universities this month. Some of them may even feature in this magazine as we have articles about Petite Dance's trip to the West End (page 17), a busy few months for the Scout group (page 15) and the kids' takeover of Sunday@nine (page 13). We have some very talented and confident children in our community, and big thanks should go to the many volunteers who run the clubs and organisations that allow them to thrive.

Have a good month, everyone.

Rachel

Joint Editor

"Children are more than we think they are; they can do more than we think they can do. All they need is a vote of confidence from grownups, whom they will ultimately replace anyway. Their dream today will become the realities of tomorrow."

**Wess Stafford, former president and CEO of
Compassion International.**

Cover Photo: Wildflower Meadow

Material for the October issue to be sent (preferably by email) to the editor no later than 14 September 2026. (PLEASE NOTE EARLIER DATE)

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Church diary for September...

6th	14th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St James
13th	15th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion – St James
20th	16th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Morning Worship – St James
27th	17th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion – St James

... and into October

4th	18th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	BCP Morning Prayer – St James
11th	19th Sunday after Trinity
9.00	Sunday@9 – Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion – St James

Benefice Services

September...

6th	14th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.00	Family Service – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
18.30	BCP Evensong – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
13th	15th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Café Church – St Leonard's, Sherfield
20th	16th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.30	Harvest Festival – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
27th	17th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Harvest Festival – St Leonard's, Sherfield

...and into October

4th	18th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Holy Communion – St Leonard's, Sherfield
10.00	Family Service – St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
18.30	BCP Evensong – St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
11th	19th Sunday after Trinity
10.00	Café Church – St Leonard's, Sherfield

From the Registers

Baptism

Emily Florence Sara Jennifer CHRISTMAS
26th July 2026
St James Church

Funeral

Jean PARISH 22nd June 2026
St James Church
Joan MAY 5th August 2026
St James Church

BRAMLEY WI

Our meeting in May was our AGM which went well.

For the other part of the meeting, we had a talk from Millie Anderson (who is the wife of the Vicar of St James') about Community and her life before she was married. Millie went to university and studied Art and then completed a teacher training course; she still teaches to this day. We had some lovely pictures of when she was looking after children after she left university, and then when she was in Uganda supporting women and their children. She also brought with her a national costume and some handmade dolls which were lovely. Millie has had a busy life as a primary school teacher and has also worked for the Riverbank Trust and built up a playgroup from nothing. In the second year in Uganda, she met Mark and when they got back into this country they dated and eventually got married.

Thank you, Millie, for such a lovely evening.

At our Meeting in June we had a picnic at Clift Meadow but unfortunately the weather was not kind so we ate our picnic indoors at the Pavilion. It was a special birthday for one of our members, so everyone raised their glasses to Anne.

For our meeting in July, we celebrated our birthday with strawberries and cream, prosecco and, of course, a birthday cake which went down very well. The weather was hot but we had a supply of fans etc. We also had a speaker, Pilar, who is a WI member and originates from Guatemala, which is next to Mexico. She gave us a brief history of the country, and then went on to display some wonderful works of art that had been produced by different families and different villages.

The workmanship was superb and the colours were so vibrant. The woven material was often what we would call a 'poncho' but locally they are known as Huipil. Thank you, Pilar, for a very interesting talk and display.

Jane Matthews

Basingstoke and Deane Rotary

Christmas Shoebox Scheme

We will be in Festival Place on Saturday 12 September, (new date) handing out shoeboxes ready for you to fill with presents for disadvantaged & displaced children in Romania, Montenegro, and Moldova and, hopefully, Ukraine.

A Reminder of what you can put in your shoebox

Playing - ball, skipping rope, small games, cards, dominoes, harmonicas/recorders, cars, small toys, cuddly toy

Washing - soap, toothbrush, flannel, sponge

Writing - pens, pencils, sharpener, notebook, colouring book, puzzle book

Wearing - hat, gloves, scarf, socks, hair accessories, jewellery (Items need to be new or in good/as new condition)

PLEASE NO: liquids, war toys or books, battery-operated items, sharp items, broken items, food or sweets. NO large toys, clothes or shoes. Nothing religious, political or racial

Fill a box for either:-

Boys or Girls, ages 1-3, 4-7, 8-11, 12-15.

We ask for a £2.00 donation towards transport costs; please attach £2.00 to each box with Sellotape.

You can also pick up your new boxes and drop off your filled boxes at the venues below:

Eden Mazda Basingstoke, London Road, Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 7JD

Oakley Carpets, Andover Rd, Basingstoke RG23 7HA

Parnell, Jordy & Harvey, Estate Agent, 5 Winchester Street, Overton, RG25 3HR

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Unit 17A Festival Place, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 7BE

Whitchurch Silk Mill, RG28 7AL

Home Library Service available from Hampshire Libraries

Did you know that Hampshire County Council Libraries offer a free monthly service to anyone who finds it difficult to access a library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities? The Home Library Service provides an opportunity for individuals to enjoy the pleasure of reading, even if they find it difficult to leave their homes.

The service can deliver a variety of library materials including books in standard and large print, audio books in various formats, and specialist items such as those from our Reminiscence Collection.

Specially recruited volunteers are matched to customers in their own communities and visit their homes each month.

This service can be a lifeline which enables access to reading, despite physical or other limitations, plus regular contact with a friendly volunteer. The daughter of a customer recently told us *"The HLS service .. is about so much more than reading...giving my elderly Mum much appreciated companionship."*

Applying for the service is easy. If you or someone you know would benefit from this service, you can enquire at your local library or online via the Hampshire Library website by selecting 'Access for All', then 'Home Library Service' and completing a short form. Applicants then receive a phone call to discuss their needs and preferences.

The service is adapted for each individual and ensures everyone has access to the library materials they enjoy.

| Home library service
| Leisure and culture
| Hampshire County Council



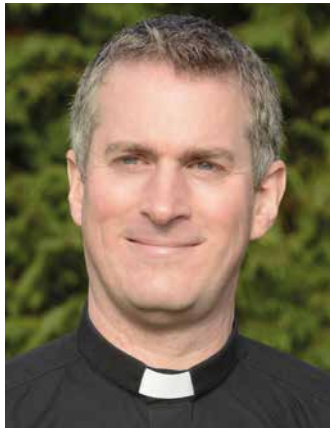
The refreshing water of life

I've recently returned from our annual holiday and this year we went to North Wales - near Lake Bala (or in Welsh: Llyn Tegid). It's the largest natural lake in Wales, measuring about 3.7 miles long and 1 mile wide. I even managed to navigate a kayak on it and many others enjoyed other water sports. It's located within the Eryri (Snowdonia) National Park, and we also climbed to the summit of the mountain, which gave us a great sense of achievement.

Me walking up a mountain however was not in the same league as Mary Jones. As a 15-year-old in 1800, after saving money for six years, she walked 26 miles from her home to Bala to buy a Bible, a book she'd been longing to own for years. Her journey inspired the establishment of a charity, now called the Bible Society, which is committed to offering the Bible to every man, woman and child in the world. They translate the Bible and make it accessible in people's heart languages, telling its stories and encouraging people to explore it for themselves.

Spending time on lakes, up mountains and surrounded by fields in which sheep graze, made me very aware of God's gift of creation, and as we enter the season of Creationtide (1st September to 4th October) we are invited to renew our commitment to caring for our one planet home. In the church we also give thanks to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life.

Whether you are a believer or not, we can be inspired by others from the past who have done great things. 4th October is the day we remember St Francis, a saint who died 800 years ago (3 October 1226) and is well known for



Rev'd Mark Anderson

giving up a rich life to live in total poverty, founding the Franciscan religious order, and showing a deep love for nature and animals. The theme for the Season of Creation 2026 is living water, based on a passage in the Bible: Ezekiel 47.1-12. God's life-giving water flows from the temple of God, growing deeper, restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems.

Paddling on a lake (and experiencing some North Wales rain) can make it easy for me to forget we are in a drought, which for us is unusual, but for others in our world is a common occurrence. As Christians (and others who share the same values)

we are called to do what we can do to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. As Christians, we are inspired and empowered by Jesus, who described himself (in the Bible, John 4) as one who can give us 'living water'. He was speaking about when we are spiritually dry, with souls in need of refreshing and promised "whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

So when the rains return to Hampshire, be reminded that not only does the rain quench the dry land, the living water of Jesus Christ can refresh our souls and inspire us to take better care of ourselves and the planet on which we live.

Rev'd Mark Anderson

Vicar, St James Church, Bramley

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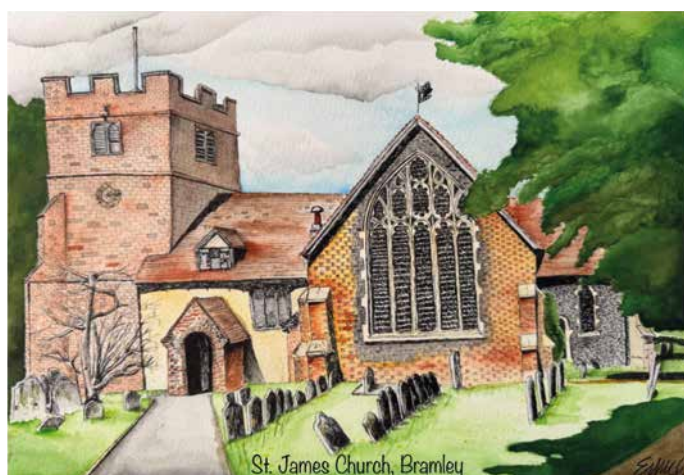
Emma O'Leary recently painted this beautiful picture of St James' Church, Bramley. We asked her how she came to be an artist and what inspires her.

Emma: At 18 I was faced with a crossroads: a career in science or art. I chose science but was able to retire early. I took the opportunity to move from my love of science to my love of making art, my new purpose being to develop my art skills and become an artist. So a whole new life chapter begun... No new journey is easy and the biggest challenge is working out who am I as an artist, what is it I want to make, how do I identify what to create ...? I have not decided that yet, but I know it's not commissions.

What inspired you to paint St James' Church?

Emma: On this journey of discovery, I met Grahame and Deirdre Mellor, at an art class in Basingstoke. Liam Kelleher, a wonderful local artist and teacher, runs Azure Art, and I learned a huge amount from him. Usually I focus on painting and drawing animals but in the past few years I have expanded genres to establish my fit in the art world.

Grahame and Deirdre introduced me to their love of St. James Church, and I decided to paint the church for them as a gift. They had the idea of turning the painting into postcards and prints to sell on behalf of the church funds. These have now been printed and will be on sale at the back of the church.



What materials do you use when painting?

Emma: The picture of the church is ink and watercolour, however I work in a whole range of media. Oils are my favourite, it's like painting with soft butter; the chemicals involved are quite toxic and can't be washed down a sink. Watercolours are easier whilst acrylics are more akin to oils, although acrylics are a form of plastic and so also need sensible disposal. Each media needs a different approach and a different style in application. Watercolours work from light to dark, and need a looser touch, acrylics you can work from dark to light, reapplying with layers. I also love practicing sculpting and pottery. Make, based in Hartley Witney, is a great place to learn these skills if you want to develop into this area.

Where are you based?

Emma: After 16 years living a great life in Bramley, as a scientist and with a now adult son, we recently made the decision to move to the seaside in South Devon, a place renowned for its artists and music. I am creating my own art studio at home and intend to expand my skills with new techniques and influences.



Emma enjoying life by the sea



One of Emma's other paintings

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News from Clift Surgery and the PPG

Summer is heading towards autumn and for some patients that means one thing: COVID and FLU vaccinations are not far away.

Clift Surgery will be sending out invitations to those eligible for these vaccinations shortly. Pregnant women and children will receive theirs in September and those eligible for free vaccinations will receive theirs in October.

By having your vaccinations at the surgery, you can be assured of your records being updated immediately.

Dispensary news

The dispensary is such a useful facility for patients living in Bramley. The rules about who can use a dispensary are set by the NHS which specifies you must live further than 1 mile from a pharmacy. Dispensaries are generally located in a rural area, attached to a GP Surgery. Using Clift Surgery's dispensary is a green option as you can save money on fuel and there's free parking. If you are unable to get to the dispensary during opening hours, you can collect your prescription from the Pharmabox 24/7. Just make sure you sign up to use this service.

Did you know?

The total prescription items in Hampshire last year was 36.5 million (an increase of 1.8% on the previous year).

There will more about medicines next month.

Know Your Numbers Week 2026 (7–13 September)

Know Your Numbers Week is the UK's biggest free blood pressure testing and awareness campaign. Its aim is simple: find the "Missing Millions" — the estimated 4.2 million adults living with high blood pressure without knowing it.

Why it matters

High blood pressure is the *biggest preventable cause of death* in the UK. It's often silent, with no symptoms until something serious happens.

Recent Blood Pressure UK findings show:

43% of adults don't know their current reading

31% don't check regularly

49% wrongly believe high blood pressure has clear symptoms

Only **26%** know it can damage the kidneys

High blood pressure raises the risk of *heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, vascular dementia and early death*.

What blood pressure is

It's the force of blood pushing against your blood vessel walls. If it's too high, it can cause serious health problems.

Getting checked

If you're **40 or over** and live in England, you can get a *free blood pressure check* at many pharmacies — you don't need to see a GP.

You *cannot* get a free pharmacy check if:

- You already have high blood pressure
- You've had a professional check in the last 6 months

What happens at the pharmacy

A trained member of staff will place a cuff on your arm and take a reading. Depending on the result, they may:

- Offer healthy living advice
- Lend you a monitor to take home
- Advise you to see your GP

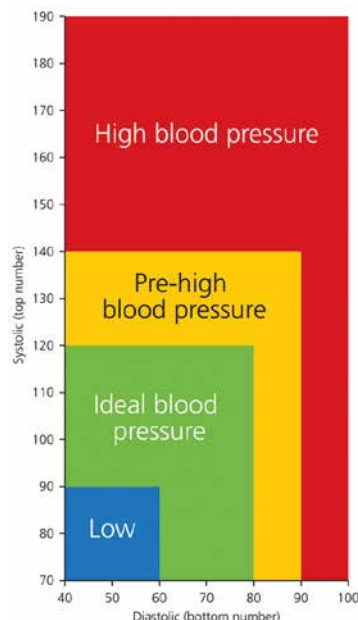
If you're registered with a GP, your reading will be added to your health record. It's not shared unless your reading is dangerously high or low.

Easy local option for Hampshire residents

You can *borrow a home blood pressure monitor for free* from any Hampshire library (you need to be signed up to the library to use this facility). With three devices available at each of the 40 branches, checking your blood pressure at home has never been easier.

Looking ahead

2025 showed what's possible when communities work together. In 2026, the campaign is expanding — more places to check, more conversations, and more people taking control of their numbers.



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9

Bramley in Bloom – the results are in!

The judges of Bramley in Bloom have visited lots of front gardens within Bramley. There are many shrubs and bedding plants offering a welcome splash of colour to those who pass by. Some have pots, some have beds with annuals and others with well trimmed shrubs that give structure and greenery all year round.

When it comes to judging we take into consideration the care of the plants, the use of colour and the actual design of the garden.

There were two gardens that were in the running for the title of Bramley In Bloom this year. Last year's winner, Tracey Turlin has worked so hard on the design of her little garden which is a picture of beds crammed with colourful plants, water features, hanging baskets, garden ornaments and lights. The use of pebbles has defined the borders and the hanging ornaments make this garden quite magical.

A very different garden is the one in St James Park. The way the miniature shrubs have been clipped into cones, the wonderful mauve buddleia and the movement created by the abundant verberna interspersed with purple lavender creates a wonderful scent. In addition the small pots next to the wall give a contrasting splash of colour and a door wreath completes this lovely front garden.

These two gardens are so different but have been so well cared for and show real pride in their gardening skills. Therefore, this year we are awarding a joint first prize.

Congratulation to Tracey and Rick.



Tracey's garden



Rick's garden

BRAMLEY VOLUNTEER SHOWCASE

Bigger and better than ever

Following the success of our first showcase earlier this year, **Bramley Parish Council** is bringing it back on a bigger scale.

Open to every volunteer organisation, community group and local initiative in the village
NO MATTER HOW BIG OR SMALL

COME ALONG TO:

- Meet other volunteers
- Share what you do
- Promote volunteering opportunities
- Find new supporters and helpers
- Celebrate the contribution volunteers make to village life

If your group helps the community, we'd love you to be there.

Please save the date and help spread the word.

To register or for more information contact Jan Wright at cllrjan.wright@bramley-pc.gov.uk

Organised by **Bramley Parish Council**

Saturday 3 October

Clift Meadow

Thank you to Cllr Tony Durrant for this month's update from **Bramley Parish Council**.

Another scorching day in Bramley as I pen the summer article.

Things have been fairly quiet, however there have been issues and a number of persistent happenings in our Parish.

Site traffic & roadworks – Contractors' vehicles are not always following the traffic management plan laid down in the planning permissions. I have continued to point this out to the CERO site manager, and other Councillors and our Clerk have chased Redrow at Stocks Farm. I have attempted to engage the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's enforcement team but other than speaking with the contractors, there has been little resource available to do much more at this time.

Traffic lights across the parish continue to disrupt traffic flow, with essential ditch clearance east of Campbell Road being the latest.

Anyone seen a transformer?

Grant funding – Bramley Parish Council has lawfully used CIL funds to support Bramley School's outdoor facilities for its SEND pupils, and also works at Bramley Village Hall. Projects to refurbish and improve facilities at Clift Meadow are underway.

Drought – The hot dry weather continues, therefore we echo the advice to conserve as much water as possible and avoid any activity that could cause fires in fields and gardens. Please take care of yourselves and if you know of any "vulnerable" people, please keep an eye out for them.

Bus service – By the time you read this the changes to the number 14 bus service may have been finalised.

For now, Hampshire County Council are "supporting" a reduction in the service west of the railway line by stopping the service and turning back at Longbridge Road. I have challenged this and I am awaiting a response.

Future news – In the coming months we will be talking to your Councillors so that we can let you know what makes them tick regarding the commitment they have given to our community.

Upcoming Parish Council meetings – the next Bramley PC Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 8 September at 8.00pm. Full Council will be the following week on Tuesday 15 September at 7.00pm. Both meetings will be in the Bramley Room at Bramley Village Hall and, as always, you are welcome to attend.

We hope that you had a great summer break and are looking forward to a cooler and a little wetter autumn.

Useful 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 planning issues, reporting fly tipping issues, issues with local playgrounds

Hampshire County Council

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

Bramley Volunteer Showcase Returns – Bigger and Better

Following the success of the first Bramley Volunteer Showcase in February, Bramley Parish Council is delighted to announce that the event will return on Saturday 3 October at Clift Meadow (time to be confirmed).

The first Showcase brought together representatives from local organisations that had received funding from the Parish Council. It gave them an opportunity to explain their work, make connections with other groups and speak directly to members of the community. It also highlighted just how much valuable work is being carried out by volunteers throughout Bramley.

Feedback from those who attended was extremely positive, but we also received some helpful suggestions, and we have listened. One of the clearest messages was that the first event was rather crowded. This time, we are planning a much larger Showcase using both halls at Clift Meadow. If the weather is kind to us, we also hope to make use of the field, providing more room for tables, displays, activities and conversations.

We were also told that other groups would have liked to participate but had not previously received a Parish Council grant. For the second Showcase, we are opening it up to every voluntary organisation, community group and local initiative operating in Bramley, regardless of its size or whether it has received Parish Council funding.

Some organisations may be run by a large team of volunteers, while others may depend on just one or two people. A local initiative may even be organised entirely by one individual. All are equally welcome, we want the Showcase to reflect the full range of voluntary activity taking place across the village.

This could include groups and individuals involved with children and young people, sports, playgroups, social support, health and wellbeing, animal welfare and rescue, conservation and the environment, village events, community facilities, fundraising, churches, clubs and societies—or any other activity that benefits Bramley and its residents.

Each participating organisation or initiative will have the opportunity to promote its work, explain how people can become involved and perhaps attract new members, volunteers or supporters. The event will also allow representatives to meet one another, exchange ideas and identify opportunities to work together.

Importantly, this will be a public event. We want residents to come along, discover more about what happens in the village and meet the people behind these activities. Many local groups rely on volunteers, but residents may not always know what they do, what support they need or how easy it can be to become involved.

Parish councillors will be present throughout the event to talk informally with group representatives and visitors. They will also be able to offer guidance about possible sources of funding for local organisations and initiatives.

We will be increasing publicity in the weeks leading up to the Showcase, with regular updates and outdoor banners encouraging the community to attend. The Community Café ladies will also be returning to provide the coffee, refreshments and biscuits that were so popular at our first event.

If you run or help to represent a voluntary organisation, community group or local initiative in Bramley, we would love it to be part of the Showcase. Reserve a table, bring along information or a display, and help us demonstrate the enormous contribution that voluntary activity makes to village life.

To register your group or initiative, or to request further information, please contact Jan Wright at cllrjan.wright@bramley-pc.gov.uk.

News from the Village Hall

Despite the heat this summer, we've kept busy at the Village Hall. The next round of repairs and replacement of part of the roof was completed by our contractors, CTC Roofing, in June. This work involved repairs to some damaged areas and an upgrade to the flat roof over the Frith Room, with an increased gradient to improve run-off as recommended by our surveyor. This work was funded by a grant from Bramley Parish Council, for which we are very grateful. As part of its lifetime maintenance cycle, the floor in the Main Hall underwent a deep clean and re-wax at the end of May. This work will ensure its resilience through to its next major refurbishment in four years' time.

Earlier in the spring we commissioned a specialist company to conduct a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for the Village Hall. While we have invested in modernising our alarm systems and maintained regular inspections of fire extinguishers, we need to ensure that we are fully compliant with fire regulations and that any risks have been identified and mitigated to ensure that users operate in a safe environment. Inevitably, the FRA revealed that while we scored well in some areas, there were others where some changes were necessary. We have written to all of our regular users to let them know about the key changes:

- the existing 'No Smoking' policy within the Hall buildings has been extended to all external areas;
- regular user groups will be required to conduct a fire evacuation drill, at least annually, and we have recommended free on-line training for this provided by the Borough Council;
- a new briefing document listing all of our fire safety arrangements will be produced for use by our Caretaker, who will brief all regular users once a year to ensure they are reminded of the arrangements in force at the Hall, and one-off hirers will be briefed prior to their event commencing;
- and a new policy document has been published on our website setting out the responsibilities of Hall users with regards to fire safety.

The FRA Inspector also recommended the replacement of the stage curtains as they had no fire safety markings; this was undertaken quickly with the support of the Parish Council, who also funded replacement curtains in the Bramley Room.

The Hall remains busy and we have seen a steady increase in the number of people using our facilities. We recently participated in a survey carried out by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council of all of the community facilities in the Borough. We were able to report our usage rates as follows (based on a 0700-2300 availability, seven days a week): the Main Hall was occupied 52% per week annually but rising to 74% during term time; the Bramley Room was occupied 23% per week annually but rising to 31% during term time; and the Frith Room was in use 7% per week annually but rising to 8% during term time.

This analysis underpins our assessment that we have sufficient capacity to cope with demand over the next few years, even with the current level of house building underway in the village. But the increased usage does come at a cost. We are aware of a growing number of areas in some rooms which are increasingly affected by scuff marks and minor paint damage as a consequence of user activity. Please bear with us while our team of volunteers get round to dealing with some of these tasks; if you would like to help with some small painting projects, please get in touch.

Finally, at our Annual General Meeting in early July, most of our Trustees were reappointed to serve another year but two stood down at their own request: Tony Walton and Mark Lund. Tony spent nearly a decade as a Trustee and for many years was responsible for access to the hall and for much of its maintenance. The contribution made by Tony and Mark is greatly appreciated by their fellow Trustees and by the Village Hall community. In August we sought new volunteers to become Trustees via the Bramley Community Facebook page. If you missed this and would like to volunteer, please get in touch by phone or e-mail. The commitment is to attend a monthly meeting at the hall (usually about one to two hours) and to support one of our activity streams, working alongside one of our existing Trustees (perhaps a few hours per month).

Gareth Jones

Chairman, Bramley Village Hall Trustees
Chairman@bvht.org.uk
Mobile: 07471 897810

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Sunday@Nine take over

We all need a day off occasionally, but if you were a vicar would you let a group of children take over a service? That's exactly what Rev. Mark Anderson did when he sat back and let members of St James' Shell Club and JAM take over Sunday@Nine. Their subject was a passage in Paul's letter to the Ephesians which talks about the armour of God. We learnt about the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. As well as prayers, readings and a talk all put together by the children, we watched a video and even had a fashion show, with the participants dressed up in their home-made armour.

This is what some of the children said about their experience.

"I love it because we get to stand up at the front all together"

"The 'Take Over' is about having the chance to show our different personalities and who we really are to everyone else."

"I like that we get to explore the Biblical themes and stories which interest us, and share our thoughts on them with the congregation."

The next Sunday@Nine takeover will be for Harvest Festival





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Bramley Scout Group keeps busy - from Summer Adventures to Santa Hats!

Most people in Bramley will be familiar with the sight and sound of the Loddon Lions Santa Float making its way around the village each December. Covering the whole of Bramley takes three evenings, and it has become something of a tradition for adult volunteers from Bramley Scout Group to wrap up warm, don the Santa hats and help with the collections.

Our relationship with Loddon Lions doesn't end at Christmas. They also organise the annual Tadley Treacle Fair and, for the past few years, Bramley Scouts have been asked to help distribute Treacle Fair leaflets throughout the village. This year was no exception, with 16 volunteers delivering more than 1,800 leaflets to homes across Bramley.

We were therefore delighted to be invited to the Loddon Lions AGM, where, for the second-year running, Bramley Scout Group was presented with a very generous cheque for £500 in recognition of our support.

We certainly can't take all the credit, though. Without the generosity of everyone who donates when the Santa Float comes through Bramley, and the help of our parents and Leaders who give up their time to distribute leaflets, none of this would be possible. So, a huge thank you to everyone who supports us.

We'll be back alongside the Santa Float again in December, complete with flashing earrings, Santa hats and plenty of Christmas cheer. Admittedly, while we are currently basking in the fourth heatwave of the summer, cold December evenings are rather difficult to imagine, but they really are just around the corner!

Meanwhile, before breaking up for the summer, all our sections managed to squeeze in a few more adventures.

Our Squirrels enjoyed a visit to Mortimer Alpacas, getting up close and personal with these wonderfully gentle animals, although when you're only five years old, an alpaca suddenly seems VERY tall!

Cubs took to the water at Basingstoke & Deane Canoe Club, where they went kayaking as part of the first stage of their Paddle Sports badge, while our Scouts and Beavers rounded off the



The Cubs enjoyed Kayaking as part of their Paddle Sports badge



One of the Squirrels meeting an alpaca

term with energetic end-of-term sports sessions.

And now, attention is already turning to the winter programme. The planning has begun, with plenty of ideas for getting outside as much as

possible before the darker evenings arrive, and knowing Bramley Scouts, even when they do, we'll still find somewhere to explore!

We currently have only very short waiting lists for Squirrels and Beavers, and have vacancies in Cubs and Scouts, so, if your child would enjoy having adventures, learning new skills, making friends and helping their local community, why not find out more? Contact our Administrator, Jodie, at Jodie.Saunders@bramley-scouts.org.uk and she will be happy to answer any questions.

And, of course, our usual plea for more adult volunteers still applies! The more adults we have helping us, the more activities and opportunities we can offer our young people. You don't need to have been a Scout yourself, and you don't have to commit to helping every week – there are lots of ways to get involved.

If you fancy joining the adventure, Jodie is once again the person to contact. We'd love to hear from you.

Bramley Scout Group



Bramley Scout Group leaders receive a cheque from Loddon Lions

Sue Howell looks forward to the Bramley Show on 13 September and remembers traditions old and new.

I had the pleasure of meeting the last of the Clift Family when they came to plant the memorial tree at the corner of Minchens Lane. They brought with them mementos of Bramley that they had stored for many years and felt that it was time to return some to Bramley for its archives.

As the representative of the Bramley Show, I am delighted to be the custodian of two cups, won by E W B Clift for the best ten acres of swedes and the other for the best acreage of swedes and kale. This drove me to research the origins of these cups, which were issued in 1907, long before the Bramley Show was started.



The inscription on these cups is the Basingstoke Root and Stock Show.

Agricultural shows in Basingstoke and North Hampshire have deep roots:

- Basingstoke was historically a major market town, serving surrounding villages and farms.
- The region hosted long-running fairs focused on livestock, crops, and rural trade, such as the Overton Sheep Fair (dating back to 1218) and the Michaelmas Fair.
- Many Hampshire villages held root shows from the late 1800s onwards, where growers competed in categories like turnips, swedes, mangolds, carrots, and potatoes.

The Basingstoke Root and Stock Show almost certainly emerged from local farming societies wanting to showcase produce, maintain seasonal harvest traditions, trade livestock and judge events. These community gatherings were linked to rural life and would have been part of the same tradition as other Hampshire agricultural shows — practical, competitive, and social.

The earliest record I found was from 1846, and the last show was recorded in 1939, at the start of the second world war. There are many newspaper records of these Shows, naming the Clift brothers as active members, but sadly the quality of these articles is not good enough to reproduce here.

If you would like to see these cups, they will be on show at the Bramley Show on Sunday 13 September at the Village Hall from 1-3.30pm

Keeping traditions going

Today the Bramley Show is very different. It has had to change over the years to continue the oldest tradition in the village. The reasons are many. Fewer people are involved in growing vegetables and flowers, previous participants are no longer here, new houses have small gardens and those who work don't seem to find the time to grow things. We are lucky that Bramley has 48 allotments but now we are in the hands of the extreme weather. Traditional Shows have always been held at the end of the summer. There are two similar village shows within a few miles and as we share resources, we don't hold our show on the same weekend. As the newest of these shows, we have chosen the last show of the season to avoid the school holidays, but this can affect the amount of produce available. Therefore, the emphasis is more on crafts, cookery, photography, art and children's competitions.

This is an event for the whole community and without the support of the community in helping to run it, taking part and visiting it on the day, it will fade into the archives.

Be part of our community and support in any way you can. There is still time to enter any of the classes except photography. Details can be found on www.bramleyshow.org.uk and if you would like further information, please email a member of the team on thebramleyshow@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you there.



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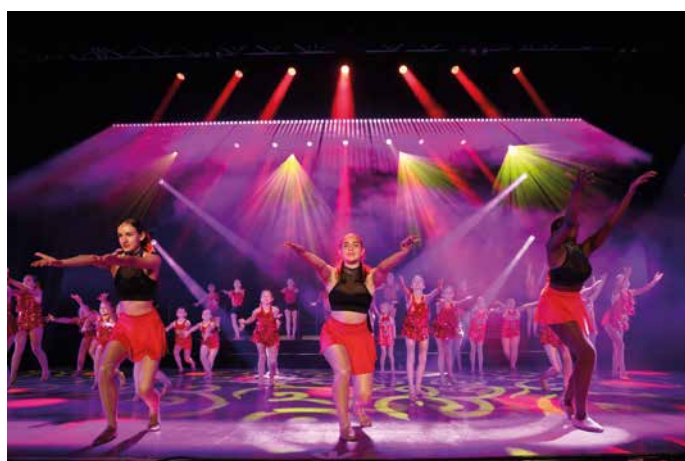



Forty talented students from **Petite School of Dancing** recently had the incredible opportunity to perform on a **West End** stage in London.

The dancers performed two exciting numbers, showcasing very different styles. They opened with a lively tap routine to "42nd Street", a classic Theatreland favourite that perfectly captured the magic and glamour of the West End. They then brought plenty of energy and enthusiasm to the stage with a fun "High School Musical" number.

For many of the students, performing in the West End was a dream come true and a fantastic opportunity to experience what it is like to perform in a professional theatre. We had the privilege of performing on the iconic Shaftsbury Theatre stage, currently home to 'Avenue Q'. A memorable experience for the students and their families, and a wonderful achievement that they can be incredibly proud of. It was the result of lots of rehearsals, hard work and dedication from the dancers, who gave their all on the day.

It was a fantastic opportunity for our students to celebrate their love of dance, build confidence and create memories that will last a lifetime.



BRAMLEY WALKERS

Bramley has a new friendly walking group that meets every Thursday from 10am until 12pm at the Pavillion in Clift Meadow. Everyone is welcome so come and join us for a walk – whether you are a slow or fast walker – and for a chat and drinks.

Just turn up or contact Anne-Marie at anajonesuk@yahoo.co.uk or 07922 528155

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VOLUNTEER for the POPPY APPEAL

- Volunteer at Basingstoke/North Hants Hospital
- Volunteer in our villages



Colonel JSK Swanston and Jill Mann

Planning for this year's Bramley & District Poppy Appeal, 22nd October to 11th November, is underway and we are looking to welcome new people to join our friendly team.

No military connections are needed to volunteer during the Poppy Appeal.

Raising Funds and Awareness at Basingstoke Hospital

Can you offer a couple of hours to help man our pop-up Poppy Stand at the hospital? Support is provided and the Appeal team is looking for helpers from Bramley and the local area.

Poppy Appeal in the villages where we live

Can you offer a couple of hours to help man a pop-up Poppy Stall in Bramley? Or can you help in our villages with poppy box deliveries, or collections or admin?

To find out more about volunteering for our local Poppy Appeal, please contact

Natalie: natalie@larner.net I'll be pleased to get back to you with information and a chat. Natalie Larner, Poppy Appeal Organiser 2026 for Bramley & District and Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Bramley RBL Branch News



Some Poppy Appeal volunteers are members of our Royal British Legion Bramley Branch, which holds talks and events and arranges trips to places of interest. Recently, we attended Bramley and Sherfield fetes and we've conducted trips to

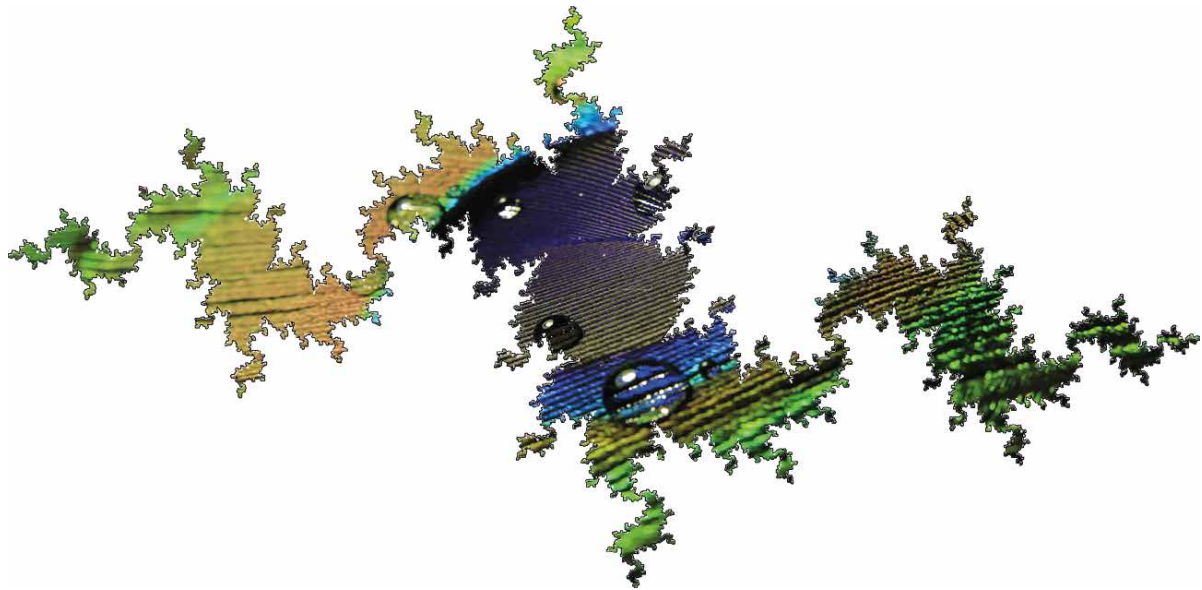
the National Memorial Arboretum and to RAF Cosford. We've held 'lunch and learn war talks' and are about to depart on a battlefield tour to Waterloo. You'll always receive a warm welcome at meetings and events.

For Branch News and membership:

Contact: bramley.secretary@rbl.community



The National Memorial Arboretum



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Bramley and Romans Floral Society

Our demonstrator for August was Angela Edmonds, a NAFAS qualified Area Demonstrator, whose presentation was entitled "Gardens from Afar". Her first arrangement depicted her own garden and was a low arrangement with beautiful dahlias, gerberas and astilbe in various shades of pink. From her various holidays, she then gave us an interpretation of a Spanish garden in the vibrant yellows and oranges of gerberas, crocosmia, kniphofia and hypericum berries; this was an upright arrangement in a rectangular rustic container. Angela explained that her daughter and family live in Thailand and they visit often. Her next arrangement was her idea of a Thai garden and was placed in a brass barbecue with suitably exotic ferns, palm fronds, aspidistra leaves and orange strelitzia. We then had a break for tea/coffee and cake and chats.

Afterwards, Angela demonstrated an upright arrangement in a round dish as a tribute to Calaway's, a firm that has been exhibiting at Chelsea for many years. She explained that the firm was started in the late 1800's by



A tribute to Calaway's

a Mr Calaway who bought 20 acres and specialised in delphiniums. This gradually increased to 200 acres and he decided to specialise in peonies as well. The arrangement Angela created in white was very elegant and included molucella, larkspur, white astilbe and the commercial version of cow parsley. Her final arrangement depicted a



Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas

small garden at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas which was the hotel next door to where she and her husband got married. The arrangement was suitably glamorous, in a large champagne coupe which Angela had decorated with burgundy silk and beads and pearls. Her flowers were equally stunning – anthuriums in a beautiful mid-pink,

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Spanish Garden

cream dahlias with pink rims, molucella and ferns. Angela kept us entertained with stories relating to the gardens throughout. A very enjoyable afternoon.

Our next Meeting is on Thursday, 3 September when our demonstrator is Mrs Brenda Bull whose demonstration is entitled "Ancient Routes". Please come and join us – everyone is welcome. For information contact Ilene Iles 01256 880559.

Ilene Iles

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Bramley SpeedWatch

Recent Local SpeedWatch

Activity:

Four manned deployments were undertaken during July. A total of 31 vehicles were reported to the police from the 527 vehicles checked by Bramley SpeedWatch - 6%. The top speed recorded was 49 mph.



Camera Data July 2026:

Verified speeders (=>35mph)	Highest number of offences committed by one vehicle*	Fastest hour	Illegal vehicles
2791	21	5am	72

* **Persistent offenders:** The police are continuing to visit persistent offenders. Don't want a knock on the door - don't speed.

30mph Wheelie Bin Stickers

The Parish Council has funded some 30mph Wheelie Bin Stickers. A number of these have been distributed in the Kirby Road area. If you would also like one (especially



if you live along the Street, Silchester Road or Sherfield Road) please drop me an email: bramleyspeedwatch@yahoo.com with your address and I will drop one off. First come first served.

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 – July 2026:

SID location	Days deployed	Traffic direction	% of vehicles exceeding 30 mph
Bramley Corner	31	East	74%
Farriers	31	West	30%
The Street	31	East	39%
The Forge	31	West	57%

Things are coming to a head in **Jordan Rollinson's** historical fiction series as Cromwell arrives at Basing House

Cromwell's Arrival

Many months had passed since the first siege's fire had dwindled, but the embers of rebellion still burned in Samuel's heart. Fate had pulled him across the country, enlisted his name in the ledgers of the true Roundheads - the New Model Army - and had him training as if his soul depended upon it. Samuel looked down at his forearms, exposed by rolled-up sleeves. He couldn't remember a time when his elbows had not been red-raw, or his flesh had been unblemished by bruising.

But by the *Lord*, it was a worthwhile suffering.

Men to the fore of the march halted, and Samuel locked his step with them.

"Our paired forces have marched from Leicester, but it is here we divert. I bid you well, my friend." The voice came from ahead, slightly raised as if

on horseback, and went unanswered but for the hammering of hooves as they rode away. Samuel was unlike many of the existing Newly Modelled - he was raw, fresh and new, having joined them mere days after Leicester had fallen to Parliament's vice-grip. Either side of the infantry's flanks, Cromwell's *Ironsides* cantered along, casting a judgmental gaze upon their footslogging peers. They had been the first to be converted by Cromwell, so sure in their purity and readiness to do the Lord's bidding that it had practically become a competition for them. Once again, Cromwell led his men to diverge from their fellows, though this time such a manoeuvre was for the sake of conquest, rather than religion.

Basing House was to be felled.

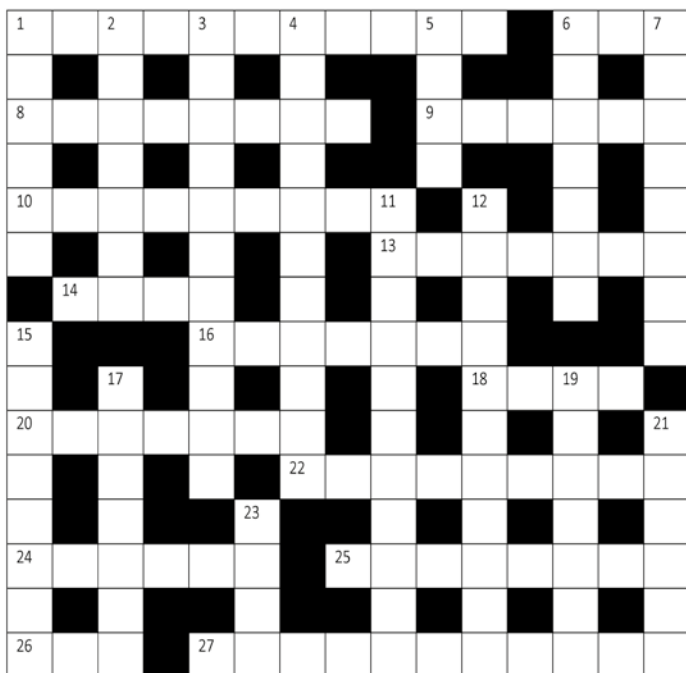
Ugly, harshly-angled cannons lay levelled at Basing House, concentrated upon a crumbled rend in its walling on its more newly-built side. Samuel could taste the tang of powder in the air: it was sour. Doubtless; they had been firing shortly before their arrival. A plainly dressed cavalrman, Cromwell

himself, rode to greet the officer in charge of the attack, and left his men to mingle with their new comrades. Samuel began to greet them, but his attempt was rebuffed; Puritans evidently still took people some time to get used to. Choosing not to waste time on conversation, Samuel cast his gaze to the house ahead. It had not changed much in his time away, it was still by-and-large the same silhouette that had blotted the horizon in all his years growing up. Though now, if stone could bleed, its wall would have a hard time clotting its wound. Every so often, one of Parliament's cannons belched forth a cannonball; it cracked apart whatever desperate repair work that those inside Basing House had erected. Above it all, the sun still moved across the sky, as if a thousand sins were not being acted beneath its light. Across the green, new trenches had been overlaid across the old; the deep gouges carved out anew with fresh fervour and readiness to kill.

Samuel took a seat in one of the few remaining spots of unsullied grass and appreciated the view. It would not remain long.

Cryptic Crossword No: 101

See page 30 for the answers.



- 3 Effectively deny plex tie arrangement. (11)
- 4 Person paid by items made, sounds like someone who brings order to the world. (11)
- 5 Accident or journey. (4)
- 6 Handout at rich unknown design. (7)
- 7 Deep cred brought about by what went before. (8)
- 11 Risk Pa as far as possible for animal viewing areas. (6,5)
- 12 Monastery or liqueur. (11)
- 15 Leaves a band on sensitive beginnings. (8)
- 17 Normally, sounds like W split by pole followed by friend. (7)
- 19 Climbing is clang in disguise. (7)
- 21 Germed a way to be brought together. (6)
- 23 Ear lobe erased to hide ale. (4)

CodeWord No: 87

See page 30 for the answers.

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

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

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

Across

- 1 Outside do managed by grant per day. (6,5)
- 6 Limit on one's head perhaps. (3)
- 8 Got or admitted. (8)
- 9 Cage that is briefly to become a cold period. (3,3)
- 10 No chance of rain under these conditions. (9)
- 13 Helped quite often unlawfully. (7)
- 14 Dark needle in a haystack masking joint. (4)
- 16 Tell a story by subs sonar rate. (7)
- 18 Do I sense calm to start this object. (4)
- 20 Forgive sailor to work out. (7)
- 22 Bundle up again regarding parcel. (9)
- 24 Boil eg for help. (6)
- 25 Turning up at one's destination perhaps. (8)
- 26 Sauce so oily yet beginning to make sense. (3)
- 27 Angry limbed position when needing a convenience. (5,6)

Down

- 1 Gravity and weapon creating a look. (6)
- 2 Cocoa arranged in the Royal Navy for an animal. (7)

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Butter Daisy

Summer of Fun is here at Butter Daisy, and we have been venturing through a remarkable programme of activities for our nursery children. This year's theme is all about celebrating national treasure Sir David Attenborough in his 100th birthday year, and the wonderful world he has shown us through his broadcasting work. A personal highlight has been watching the children bravely handle all kinds of insects with a visit from Bug Fest.

We dug into dinosaurs and prehistoric worlds week with our palaeontologist hats on. The children carefully extracted bones from Earth's icy time capsule, dusting off others buried within the soil. They replicated their findings using salt dough and clay to create fossils. Sensory experiences included small-world dinosaurs parading through a chocolatey, gloopy swamp and a volcano made of beans and potato.

Then, we dived into week two for an oceans and underwater life theme. Above water, we welcomed a parent visitor who shared his love of fishing with the children, bringing live fish for them to see and handle, along with fishing equipment to explore.

As we waded through rainforests and jungles for week three, we welcomed another special parent guest. Through an immersive sensory experience, she took the children on an imaginary journey through the rainforest, learning about animals, habitats and climates.



For our final week, we cooled off as we entered ice worlds and Arctic adventures, learning about creatures who prefer cooler habitats and how they keep warm on the ice. Of course, this brought a fantastic opportunity for the children to belt out Frozen songs throughout the week!

We finished our summer term with our annual Leavers' Festival, celebrating our oldest children as they prepared for new adventures at school. We wish them all the best and couldn't be prouder of the amazing individuals they have grown to be.

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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email: beckyhall@bramleyosteopaths.com
www.bramleyosteopaths.com
phone: 01256 884139

Wilder Bramley

Wilder Bramley are continuing their dedication to making our village greener, wilder and more sustainable, but this summer has been tough! The temperature has soared and rain is a distant memory. Our green areas are now a warm shade of brown! And any ponds, streams or rivers are either completely dried up or very reduced. The heat waves have not been helpful for many of us; until the (almost) universal hosepipe ban we were out there in the evenings trying to water the plants in our gardens or on our window sills and now it is even harder. Many crops are maturing too fast but not filling out as they should, resulting in farmers harvesting early but with a reduced yield. Other crops are just not growing at all. The ground is baked hard.

If you did do a no-mow May and a let it bloom June, you may still have a few green blades of grass at the base. It can be lost amongst the dried-out straw looking seed heads above, but it did protect the soil for a lot longer than if the grass had been cut really short.

If you do try a 'no mow May' to encourage insect pollinators, please remember that many of those that fly in May will be laying eggs on or among the longer stems, so if you cut them on 1 June, all of the next generation of insects could be lost.

The longer growth on the Village green has encouraged a number of butterflies, crickets and grasshoppers and a Clouded Yellow Butterfly, a migrant butterfly from Southern Europe, has been seen on Bramley Green. It likes open spaces - rich grassland - and breeds on clover, so keep an eye out for this fast-flying butterfly. Its ability to fly from



Clouded Yellow Butterfly (credit: Wikicommons)

Southern Europe means they have a rapid and powerful flight despite looking quite fragile.

As well as taking part in surveys on butterflies, moths, reptiles and bats (look out for notifications on Instagram or Facebook, if you'd like to help), Wilder Bramley joined Natural Basingstoke at Beggarswood for the Annual Bioblitz on 1 August. There were other groups present, and activities to participate in, including: finding out about bats, Swift boxes for your home, a talk on mammals, surveys on wildflowers and butterflies, 'what invertebrates live in the hedges', what's in the local rivers, (some tiny fish, invertebrates and pond plants), making wildflower seed bombs and even being given a lovely purple stone to put into a shallow dish of water to attract bees to have a drink during these hot days.

Looking forward, Wilder Bramley have been given the opportunity to participate in the planning and design of some natural ponds in Bramley. This year has shown just how important water is to wildlife and if the ponds can be correctly installed, they could become a lifeline long into the future. A very exciting opportunity, so watch this space as more details come forward. We also continue to look after our local meadows with two working parties on Saturday 12 September at Saint James Church and Saturday 10 October at Clift meadow (both at 9.30am until 12.30pm).

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Signs of the Times

Lammas Growth

The Christian calendar is marked by festivals and celebratory days, many of which predate Christianity itself and have ties with ancient pagan counterparts. One such is Lammastide, a festival traditionally celebrated on August 1st, and which marked the start of cereal harvest. The festival also lends its name a natural phenomenon known as Lammas Growth, where trees (notably Pedunculate Oaks in Bramley and Little London) produce a second flush of leaves in the height of summer. This new foliage starts off lime green, but often becomes increasingly tinged with red. As an ecological strategy, this new growth regenerates the tree's powers of photosynthesis: trees have evolved to replace those spring leaves consumed by hungry caterpillars that rely on this food source to complete their life cycles.

Lammas Growth is still a feature of nature's calendar. However, what has changed is the timing. Nowadays, the fresh reddish leaves that signal the process often appear at the end of June, a full month earlier than would have been the case 50 years ago. Unsurprisingly, the reason is related to our changing climate. Not only are average and extreme global temperatures rising year on year, but the seasons are changing too: spring and summer arrive progressively earlier with each passing year, signalled and responded to by the changing flowering seasons of native wild plants. Changing patterns in nature have increased interest in a branch of science called phenology, the study of the timing of biological events in relation to seasonal and climatic changes.



Lammas growth on Pedunculate Oak. Photo © Paul Sterry.

House guests

Soaring temperatures generated by the recent heat waves mean that house owners have little option but to leave upstairs windows open throughout the day and night in an attempt stay cool. Moths often investigate bedrooms when drawn in through an open window by a lamp. Some species, such as the Old Lady, regard our homes as potential daytime roosts and take up temporary residence. However, a select band of moths has gone a stage further and evolved a strategy to mitigate excessive summer temperatures through a process called aestivation. This is a state of dormancy similar to hibernation but one that occurs in summer not winter. A classic example is found in Svensson's Copper Underwing, which seeks refuge in cool, dark places to escape the heat, often remaining inactive for days, sometimes weeks, on end. Although loft spaces, sheds and bird boxes traditionally serve as communal roosts, the moths occasionally choose



Two house guest moths: Old Lady (left) and Svensson's Copper Underwing (right). Photo © Paul Sterry.

a forgotten spot indoors, for example behind a shutter or a picture frame. In case you are worried, neither moth species will show the slightest interest in your household fabrics or carpets. They are simply seeking refuge and adults feed by night on sugary nectar, while their caterpillars eat the leaves of shrubs and trees.

Grass Snakes

Grass Snakes are apex predators of their own little worlds of meadows and ponds, and are welcomed and encouraged by anyone with environmental empathy. Apart from ponds, two other habitats are vital to their survival: grasslands and composts heaps. The snakes use the former for cover and to hunt, and the latter for breeding. Compost heaps generate internal heat through decomposition and Grass Snakes use them as natural incubators for their eggs; incubation takes between 20 and 40 days on average, depending on temperatures. Among the worst things you can do for these embattled animals is to cut grassland prematurely in early summer and destroy or burn the contents of compost heaps or piles of wood chippings, which also serve as nurseries for snake eggs. Disappointingly, such unenlightened and environmentally-unfriendly practices are still far too common.



A juvenile Grass Snake emerging from its egg, having spent nearly 40 days and 40 nights incubating in a pile of wood chippings. Photo © Paul Sterry.

Paul Sterry

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WHAT'S ON AT ANVIL ARTS

RUSSELL WATSON

Sat 12 Sep, 7.45pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £54, £38, VIP £89

Russell Watson takes you on a journey through the highs and lows of an extraordinary life, from chart-topping success to surviving not one, but two life-threatening illnesses. With warmth, humour, and a voice that soars, he'll share the personal stories behind the spotlight. This is more than a concert; it's a rare chance to spend an evening up close with The Voice himself.

JAMES B PARTRIDGE - Primary School Bangers

Tue 15 Sep, 7.30pm, The Anvil, Tickets: £36, £33, £29.50

Get ready for a joy-filled, nostalgia-fuelled night out as teacher James B Partridge brings his viral hit show Primary School Bangers to Basingstoke. What started in the classroom has become a nationwide phenomenon, as he leads audiences through the songs that defined our school days. Singalongs, throwback mashups and tongue-in-cheek humour in a show that's funny, heartfelt, and irresistibly communal.

Dyad Productions and Company Gavin Robertson present

GENERAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY WARD 10

Tue 15 Sep, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £20

A comedy mashup spoof of every cliché-ridden medical drama that'll leave you in stitches. It's Dr Ann Fleming's first day at St David's, where her unfortunately named mentor, Dr Death, is determined to show her who's in charge. As medical emergencies overload the hapless staff, Dr Fleming has to juggle a complicated, budding love affair, with a liver, and a nosy hospital boss. All the troupes of Holby City, Casualty, E.R., and Doctors, not to mention movies galore, are re-imagined in a pacy, hilarious homage to the intrigues and dramas of every hospital plotline.

GRAHAM PARKER

Wed 16 Sep, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £36.50

Slinging his signature guitar and singing with inimitable soulful grit, Graham Parker is celebrating the 50th

anniversary of his albums, Howlin' Wind and Heat Treatment. More than fifty years after his debut, he remains a true original. His music continues to blend soul, rock, wit, and sharp storytelling in a way that few artists have matched, securing his place among the most enduring voices.

MY ROYAL LIFE: An Audience with LUCY WORSLEY

Wed 23 Sep, 7.30pm, The Anvil, Tickets: £54, £44, £34
Suitable for ages 14 and over

Step into a glittering regal world with historian and author Lucy Worsley, who spent twenty years working as Chief Curator in some of Britain's most marvellous palaces. Lucy takes you behind the scenes and into the history of the royal residences she came to know so well, from Hampton Court's Haunted Gallery to the gilded apartments of Kensington Palace. Along the way, meet some of Britain's best-known kings and queens and find out what Lucy really thinks of them!

LE VENT DU NORD

Sun 27 Sep, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £26

The multi-award winning and highly acclaimed Le Vent du Nord is a leading force in Québec's progressive francophone folk movement. The group's vast repertoire draws from both traditional sources and original compositions, while enhancing its hard-driving soulful music with a broad range of global influences. Since its inception in August 2002, Le Vent du Nord has enjoyed meteoric success, performing well over 2,500 concerts over four continents and racking up several prestigious awards.

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

Wed 30 Sep, 7.30pm, The Anvil, Tickets: £48.50, £44.50, £39.50, £29.50, £21. Under 25s and f/t students £14

The concert includes Tchaikovsky's full-blooded romantic Fantasy Overture: Romeo and Juliet, one of his best works, Grieg's Piano Concerto, the perfect balance of drama and lyricism, from its famous opening flourish through the passionate slow movement to the vigorous 'peasant dance' finale, and finally Beethoven's fifth symphony with its most recognisable opening in music. The pianist is Lukas Sternath, and the conductor Delyana Lazarova.



Basingstoke Ladies Probus Club moves on through the next 'Probus' year....

The Basingstoke Ladies Probus Club exists to bring together a group of people who aim to be friends and support each other in whatever way they are able. In so doing, the Club provides stimulation, interest and friendship to retired and semi-retired professional and business ladies through a programme of monthly meetings, offering the chance to meet new people with varied interests and experiences during their working lives, hear about subjects not otherwise encountered and, most importantly, enjoy each other's company. And with the creation of a Theatre group, those with that interest have enjoyed several local productions.

All this while also savouring the delights of an excellent lunch provided by BCoT's much praised restaurant.

The programme of future speakers for the year '26-27 is confirmed as follows:

20 November '26 – Fiends and Felons – My Life with Crime

29 January '27 – The Saxophone, and My Life as an Army Musician

26 February '27 – Travels on a Narrowboat

19 March '27 – Dogs for Autism

30 April '27 – The Eye and Vision in Art

21 May '27 – We Had One of Those!

18 June '27 – Mystery Guests!

July/August – Summer outing(s)

24 September '27 – Black Redcoats – The Corps of Colonial Marines 1814-16

22 October '27 – Our AGM – open to all members

Interested? Curious? Like to know more?

Do contact Admin.Secretary, Jane Leese (reverendjane@hotmail.co.uk – 07754 296994 – you can be sure of a friendly chat with no obligation to go further – or perhaps a desire to discover more.

Annie Vicars

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</i>	Cross House
<i>Pilates for Sport 7pm</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

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 – 1.15pm</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>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>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>Post Natal Pilates 1.45-3.15 (Pure Performance)</i>	Village Hall
<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>	
<i>Wee Kicks Football 8.30-11.00am</i>	Village Hall

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		
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	
Naturally Yoga with Sam	Samantha Webber	07713 349227	www.naturallyyoga.co.uk sam@naturalnook.co.uk	
NHS Health Visitor	Nicola Jones		nicola.jones206@nhs.net	
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	
Wee Kicks	Dan Grant	02843 449769	northhants@weekicks.co.uk	
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	

What's all the Buzz about in September?

Honeybees and Bumblebees ensure the next season's generation through production of queens and drones, but there is a striking difference between queen replacement for the Honeybee.

The goal of the Bumblebee queen is to mate, fatten-up for winter hibernation, and start her own colony in the spring. There is no competitive rivalry as the current queen dies with her nest.



In contrast, the queen Honeybee lives up to 5 years and any other queen is a 'competitor'. The existing queen will not kill her daughter but will leave the hive after laying several queen cells as part of the natural

Honeybee swarming behaviour. Beekeepers manage this by splitting hives and creating a 'false swarming'. Either approach works as the colony is only queen-less for about three weeks. When the queens emerge from pupation it's a 'stinging' fight to the death with only one victorious queen. She leaves the nest for a short period to mate with a drone, returning with enough sperm for up to a million eggs over a 4-5-year period. She spends the rest of her life in the dark laying eggs and being cared for by the worker bees.

The Honeybee and Bumblebee drones behave in similar ways, leaving the nest and hanging around together (similar to young unattached male human behaviour!) and it is not yet clear how the virgin

queens know how or where to go to seek out these male gatherings. The only difference is that the Honeybee queen emergence happens mid-summer whilst the Bumblebee queen and drones usually depart their nest in late summer.

What you can do to help: Bumblebee queens need to fatten up to survive the winter, so consider ensuring your garden includes some late summer/autumn pollinator plants. You will be rewarded with the low buzzing hum of a queen feeding, as well as enjoying the masses of drones who hang around waiting for the queen!

Barbara and Kenneth Robson

on behalf CB400 Foundation

<https://www.charlesbutler400foundation.org.uk/>



Cryptic Crossword No: 101 Solution

27	CROSS-LEGGED	1	GARDEN PARTY
26	SOY	6	CAP
25	ARRIVING	8	ACCEPTED
24	OBLIGE	9	ICE AGE
22	REPACKAGE	10	CLOUDLESS
20	ABSOLVE	13	ABETTED
18	DISC	14	KNEE
16	NARRATE	16	NARRATE
14	PRECEDED	20	ABSOLVE
13	CHARITY	22	REPACKAGE
10	TRIP	24	OBLIGE
9	PIECEWORKER	25	ARRIVING
8	EXPEDIENTLY	26	SOY
7	RACCOON	27	CROSS-LEGGED
6	GLANCE		
5	DOWN		
4	PIECEWORKER		
3	EXPEDIENTLY		
2	RACCOON		
1	GLANCE		

CodeWord No: 87 Solution

S	H	E	A	R	S	A	L	T	I	R	E
K	L	E	S	E	S	E	E	E	E	R	
C	A	D	E	N	C	E	S	C	A	L	E
A	D	E	N	E	N	E	E	E	R	H	
U	N	A	P	P	R	E	C	I	A	T	E
Q			O		V		D	X		A	
	E	R	A	F	I	X	D	E	W		
Z	E			Y	T	S					Y
T	O	T	A	L	E	C	L	I	P	S	S
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CLASSIFIED ADVERTS

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