

Caversham Bridge

No 660

www.cavershambridge.org

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February 2020

St John's Altar rail kneelers completed at last!

In 1998, Christine Rowe, the wife of Rev. Stephen Rowe of St Johns Church in Lower Caversham, had an idea for an Altar rail kneeler which would celebrate the beauty and character of Caversham beside the River Thames and also honour the Lord's goodness to us. After approval from the PCC, she challenged Penelope Burns, a tapestry designer from Dorset, with the task of designing something to fit the brief. In January 2000, Stephen and Christine left Caversham to continue their ministry in Vancouver, Canada. Their project had been put on the back burner so was still a pipe dream. However, later that year, a design was approved and fabric and colour schemes were chosen.

At the start, several members of the congregation worked on the kneelers and then for various reasons, the work stalled. In desperation, enquiries were made at Jackson's department store in Reading, (which itself ceased trading a few years ago), to see if any members of their haberdashery team would be

interested in helping out. Fortunately the answer was 'Yes' and Louise Archer and her mum took on the task and almost completed two of the kneelers. The third one stayed in Caversham and was worked on over a lengthy period by several people. But two deserve special mention: Margaret Cameron and her twin sister Jean (on her visits from South Africa), who between them undertook a large part of the work.

In February 2018, St John's Church Leadership Team decided that the project must continue and so under the leadership of Pat Jones a small team of embroiderers persevered, and in December 2019 the three kneelers were finally completed! This was a wonderful team effort – the kneelers are truly beautiful. A donation was received for the upholstery and the kneelers finally took their place beside the Altar rail at St Johns and Services of Thanks and Dedication took place. The kneelers can be viewed at any of the services held at St Johns but also when the 3C's cafe is open on Tuesday mornings.



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Caversham Bridge

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas
Rev'd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239.
www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrew
Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

Caversham Thameside Ministry -
St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Marion Pyke Tel: 947 5834
Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 9470265
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810
Rev'd Judith Ryder Tel: 9473783
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152. www.cpv.org.uk

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY
Rev'd Martin Beukes, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 0118 947 2223
Rev'd D Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Colin Baker
Church office tel 0118 954 5353
Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)
www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

GRACE CHURCH
(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Pastor Keith Saynor
www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk Tel 9474529

ROMAN CATHOLIC
Our Lady and St Anne
Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery,
2 South View Avenue. Tel: 947 1787.

St Michael
Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels,
Sonning Common Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD
Rev'd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

TALKING POINT

by Keith Saynor



"No riff raff allowed"

Had Basil Fawly of Fawly Towers' fame been in charge of the guest list for Jesus' first birthday, there is one group of people who would not have been invited. You may remember on the Invitation to the Gourmet Night he held in his Hotel in Torquay he included the words "No riff raff allowed!" If you are aware of cultural standing in Judea all those years ago, you will know that shepherds were the 'riff raff' of society in Jesus' day. They were the invisible lower class and yet these were the folk whom God sent the Angels to (Luke 2:10-12). They were the ones directed to meet Jesus.

The Christmas message is that the good news is for all people; where grace is concerned there are no different classes of people. This fact is both empowering and comforting. All are welcome at the Birthday celebrations. The story is also a prompt to remind us to make room at our tables, and at our celebrations for the 'Shepherds of Our Community,' to help others who may be in need this coming year. Whatever your personal circumstances you have the ability to help those around you.

It might be that you take food to the local foodbank, spend some time with someone who has suffered bereavement recently, write an encouraging letter or follow the wonderful example of Samuel Stone. In the weeks before Christmas 1933 an intriguing notice appeared in a local paper in Ohio, USA: 'Man who felt Depression's sting to help 75 unfortunate families.' A Mr B. Virdot promised to send a cheque for the neediest in the community - many were really suffering during the 'Great Depression'. Application letters flooded in and cheques ranging from five dollars upwards were distributed to houses across the area each signed by Mr Virdot. Strangely, no one knew who he was, and the City Registry held no record of him. Over the years, the story was told but his identity was not discovered until 2008 when his grandson opened an old suitcase and found all the letters dated December 1933 as well as 150 cheque stubs. Mr Virdot was Samuel Stone. His pseudonym was a hybrid of Barbara, Virginia and Dorothy, his three daughters.

Samuel was a Romanian immigrant who grew up in a Pittsburgh ghetto. When the Depression hit, he owned a small chain of clothing stores. He was not affluent or poor, but he was willing to help; someone who through his kindness and generosity helped many other people in his community.

Jesus demonstrated this love on many occasions by the kindness He showed to others. William Penn once said "If there is any act of Kindness I can show, any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again". Let me encourage you to love others in our community through acts of kindness; you may be surprised at the impact of your words and actions! There are many in our community who need hope and comfort and we are the ones empowered to help them. People whose lives you touch will be blessed and in doing so, you will be too!

Keith Saynor is the Pastor at Grace Church Caversham.

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Are you a people person?

Caversham Good Neighbours is a group formed to offer essential transport to the elderly and disabled in our neighbourhood. If you would like to give to the community by joining us as a volunteer driver or helping in our office, then please do get in touch with us.

www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
0118 948 3466

Monday to Friday 9.30am - 11.30am
Church House 59 Church Street Caversham RG4 8AX

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter, St Peter's Hill
8.00am Holy Communion - BCP (first, second and fourth Sundays)
Matins - BCP (Third Sunday)
9.30am Holy Communion (second, third and fourth Sundays)
Service of the Word (First Sunday)
6.30pm Holy Communion with Healing Prayers usually 1st Sunday, Evensong (usually Choral on second Sunday)

St John, Gosbrook Road
9.30am Holy Communion (first, third and fourth Sundays)
9.30am All Age Worship (second Sunday)
Fifth Sunday - Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Margaret, Mapledurham
11.15am Holy Communion (first, second and fourth Sundays) Morning Worship (third Sunday)
Fifth Sunday - Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Andrew, Harrogate Road
8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am The Eucharist first Sunday BCP

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green
8.00am Said Communion (BCP)
9.30am Parish Communion
9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)
Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham
10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP
Meeting at Caversham Park School
11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH, South Street
10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
6.30pm House of Prayer (praise and prayer) - 2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm Messy Church - for all the family
Fourth Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH, Old Peppard Road
10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM
Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road
9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am
6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)
Gosbrook Road
10.30am

ROMAN CATHOLIC
Our Lady and St Anne, Southview Avenue
Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

St Michael, Sonning Common
5.30pm Saturday
9.00am and 10.30am Sunday

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)
Church Street, Reading
10.30am (House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD
Church Street, Caversham
9.30am Sunday School
11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge 2020: Copy price and subscription price

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Caversham Bridge

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Email address is: editors@cavershambridge.org
Advertising copy for the March 2020 issue should be sent Friday 31st January. The date for the April 2020 issue Friday 28th February.
Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

PARISH OFFICES

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Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ST BARNABAS
St Barnabas Centre
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am
Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors reserve the right to edit contributions submitted for matters of style, grammar, vocabulary and factual correctness, and to conform to the standards of our established editorial practice. In cases of difference the editors will endeavour to refer back to the submitter of content for resolution.

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Sue Ryder Hospice at Nettlebed to close

The Sue Ryder charity is to close its south Oxfordshire palliative care hospice at Joyce Grove, Nettlebed at the end of March 2020, after 35 years.

The charity has decided instead to focus on its 'hospice at home' service. It said there had been a 'steady decline' in the number of patients and a survey suggested more than 70% of respondents 'would prefer to die at home'.

The hospice has provided care for many people from the Caversham area over the years. The current building is a Grade-II Edwardian building, rather than being purpose built, making it expensive to operate and maintain. The charity has consulted with employees over the plans to close its inpatient unit 'after a thorough assessment of a number of factors including patient data and costs'. The number of referrals to the inpatient unit has fallen in recent years, which led the charity to cut the amount of beds in April 2019. Since then, an average of only four people had been cared for at the hospice, which meant the service had 'become financially unviable'.

Should a need arise for inpatient beds that cannot be supported within the county, patients would be offered beds at the Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice in Reading. (Sourced from the BBC web site 14th January 2020)



Excellent results for Scout Christmas Post 2019

The Christmas Post team at the 89th Reading (Milestone Wood) Scout Group would like to thank everyone who used the service in 2019 and those sites who hosted a post box.

Over 100 adults, children and young people volunteered and worked hard to make the Scout Christmas Post such a success this year.

In total, the Post team sorted and delivered over 2,900 cards, raised an amazing £881.00 for the 89th Scouts, and delivered a much needed service to the local community.

This excellent result for 2019 is £144.00 up on 2018, and means that nearly 500 more cards were handled this year than last year. It is a great turnaround after years of steady decline where people seemed to be sending fewer and fewer Christmas cards each year.

What's On in Caversham – February 2020

DATE	EVENT
1st	80's night at 'The Topsy Bean' Prospect Street. 7.00pm – 11.00pm.
2nd	Farmers Market and Artisan Fair. Caversham Precinct 10.00am – 3.00pm.
2nd	Adult craft workshop – Printmaking at 'The Last Crumb', 78 Prospect Street. 4.00pm – 6.00pm
6th	Storytime at Caversham Library for under 5's. 2.00pm – 2.30pm Free. Also 13th, 20th and 27th February.
6th	'Caversham Court and its History' Reading Family History Society. Reading Central Library, RG1 3BQ 2.00pm – 4.00pm £5.00.
16th	Farmers Market and Artisan Fair. Caversham Precinct 10.00 am – 3.00pm
19th	Music Night with Robert Benson on Saxophone at 'The Topsy Bean' at 7.00pm. Prospect Street.
20th	90's night at 'The Topsy Bean'. Prospect Street. 7.00pm – 11.00pm.
22nd	Forensic Experience for Young People aged 8 – 18. Meet the professionals at the Weller Centre Amersham Road RG4 5NA 5.00pm – 7.00pm. Try and see if you can solve a crime. Booking essential. admin@wellercentre.org.uk
26th	Ash Wednesday. See church websites for details of services and study groups in Lent.
29th	Swish Weller Centre Style. 12.00pm – 2.00pm. Bring clothes and toys you no longer want and swap! Refreshments available. Bring items before 21st February.
29th	Early Spring Concert at St Andrews, Albert Road. 7.30pm. Tickets £20.00. info@concertsincaversham.co.uk 0118 948 4112

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Cooking up friendship 'Stay Awhile' – Could you help?



Stay Awhile Christmas Lunch helpers

There is no feeling quite like being lonely and always eating alone. Eating meals together is a recurring theme in the Bible and social meals are deeply ingrained in our God created being.

A number of churches in Caversham organise lunch clubs or similar opportunities for people to eat or meet together. 'Stay Awhile' is one such ministry at Caversham Heights Methodist Church which offers older folks an opportunity to come together once a week on a Monday, share a good home-cooked lunch and find friendship. We have a brilliant team of helpers and are now looking to find a couple more people with a love of cooking and a

heart to serve our guests. Could this be you? Could you help in the kitchen with food preparation and serving?

If you are interested and could help out as part of a rota approximately once a month on a Monday, please contact Kathy Munns on 0118 954 6680.

Meet the Specialists – Seminar on 'Living with Long Term Diseases: Stroke, Heart and Diabetes'



Caversham Heights Methodist Church

On Wednesday 25th March from 10.00am to 12.30pm, the Balmore Park's Patient Participation Group is hosting a Seminar on 'Living with Long Term Diseases: Stroke, Heart and Diabetes' at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Specialists will talk about each disease and, after a break for refreshments, will circulate for informal chats about each condition. This is a chance to understand the symptoms and what can be done to help sufferers have a better and fuller lifestyle. The church is on the junction of Highmoor Road and Woodcote Road (RG4 7BG). All are welcome to attend. There is no need to book and no charge. For further details please use email: balmoreparkppg@gmail.com

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'Newcomers to Reading': a presentation by the History of Reading Society

The subject of the December talk was 'What did Newcomers do for Reading'. The speaker was Joan Dils, the Society's President.

In December 2019 the *Reading Chronicle* reported that 'nearly one third of people living in Reading were born outside the UK'. The town's location and its ability to attract migrants over the last millenium has helped to cement its position as a major commercial and transport hub for southern England.

The first mention of Reading is in the 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle' under the date 871; it was then known as 'Raedigam' and was in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex. Its first inhabitants were the descendants of settlers from northern Europe who arrived in the wake of the Roman withdrawal from Britain in the fifth-century.

In 1121, Reading's status and demographics were profoundly altered with the foundation of the Benedictine Abbey by King Henry I. The first monks came from Cluny in France and Lewes in Sussex. From the beginning the Abbey was the town's largest employer: during the forty years it took to build many of the craftsmen and labourers employed came from outside the town and made it their home.

Soon after its foundation, the Abbey established an alternative 'new market' opposite St.Laurence's Church in direct competition with the existing one at St. Mary's Butts. Merchants from across Berkshire came to settle in the town so that they could ply their wares there with the pilgrims who came to venerate the abbey's holy relics.

Throughout the medieval period, the origins of many of the migrants who settled in Reading could be discerned from the 'locative' surnames then in use: Andrew of Burghfield and Henry of Greenham are two some examples. By the fifteenth-century, Reading had become an important centre for the manufacture of cloth; this had attracted immigrants from

the Low Countries. From the 1440s, these immigrant workers were taxed by the Crown; the tax known as the 'Aliens Subsidy' would last until the early 1500s.

The next significant wave of migration to Reading would occur in the nineteenth-century. In the 1840s, immigrants would arrive from Ireland fleeing the ravages of the potato famine; many would find employment constructing the Great Western Railway. Before the arrival of the railway Reading was the principal market place for its agricultural hinterland; by the end of the century it had become an important manufacturing centre: beer, biscuits and seeds its principal



Huntley & Palmers biscuit factory in the 1930s

products. These new industries would need a large workforce: many would come from across southern England; they were mostly displaced agricultural labourers made redundant because of the mechanization of farming.

Some of the founders of these new businesses were themselves migrants: Joseph Huntley (Huntley & Palmers Biscuits) came from Burford, Oxfordshire and John Sutton (Suttons Seeds) came from London.

In the second half of the twentieth-century following the Second World War immigration would come principally from Britain's colonies. The newly created National Health Service finding it had a severe labour shortage led the government to launch a recruitment drive in Britain's Caribbean colonies; many of them would come to work for the Battle and the Royal Berkshire Hospitals and settle permanently in Reading.

In this century, their numbers would be augmented by immigrants from the European Union who have come to work in the town's booming services sector.

For more information about membership and future talks visit: historyofreadingsociety.org.uk



New factory workers houses in East Reading c.1900



The new municipal buildings in Blagrove Street

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Caversham Retail Review: February 2020

Caversham Bridge is a strong supporter of retailing and services in Caversham (in all its parts) for the contribution they make in different ways to a viable and sustainable community. Very little stays completely the same from one year to the next and changes can be both small and large. So, your community paper is going to provide an 'observatory' for this aspect of local life. From time to time we will draw together some observations on 'Caversham Retail and Services' and see if this helps to find focus and value on this aspect of our community life. We will continue to offer traditional reports and features, but use the review both for

finer grained observation and for wider purposes. As a nation of shoppers we hope readers will find a place and space here in CB to make their own contributions and observations.

We need to keep our view as wide open as we can. Besides Caversham Centre, there are retail centres in Henley Road / Donkin Hill, Caversham Park Village and Emmer Green. Further afield the communities of Sonning Common and Woodcote have a viable retailing and services offer, and their residents are likely to be drawn in to the Caversham orbit. Reading centre and the large number of out of centre retail locations are also part of the mix (as much as part of the problems of traffic and its management).

New Computer Shop opens in Prospect Street

'Short Circuit' is a new computer and mobile phone repair shop in Prospect Street (in what was formerly 'The Flowering Teapot'). The shop is run by Hugo Rodas and Valter Vilheua, who have a similar shop in Henley. It is open Monday to Friday 9.30am -to7.00pm and Saturday 10.00am to 5.00pm. Services also include phone unlocking, data recovery, virus removal, repair of broken/cracked screens and liquid damage.

'Vegivores' in Caversham

In the Caversham Precinct, we said farewell in 2019 to the much loved Caversham Café: an old style place of refreshments and all day breakfasts. In late Autumn 'Vegivores' opened to provide a new dining experience in Caversham. No irony intended when its next door neighbour is the Caversham Butcher. Diversity and health in eating can take many forms! Oakham in Rutland had not been able to resist the tidal flow of the 'Golden Arches' but we hope that Mr McDonald and his Scouts have not been observed in Caversham.

'The Last Crumb'

Last Autumn the Prince of Wales public house at the top of Prospect Street closed and has been transformed and given a new lease of life as 'The Last Crumb'. Painted a rather sombre grey it is nevertheless becoming familiar to those who queue at the traffic lights adjacent. Reader reports and feedback please.

Retail Roundup: where do we stand?

Looking at 2019, the most significant losses to Caversham Centre have been the closure of the NatWest Bank branch and the difficulties of taking on the function of a Post Office in one of the established businesses. Nevertheless, recently re-elected local MP Matt Rodda campaigned energetically on the community's behalf. Waitrose and Iceland continue as 'majors' as does Budgens at Emmer Green and a Co-op at Donkin Hill (as well as Sonning Common and Woodcote). Tesco locals in Caversham Centre and Peppard Road gain traffic as they sell automobile fuel.

There are some bright spots to report. Warings bakery still functions as such but has refurbished its cafeteria side and seems to compete well with other outlets, but the 'coffee house market' is competitive! In Prospect Street, the Baron Cadogan public house has changed hands to become an independent. The Caversham Emporium has moved from the Precinct to the main road and is the sales outlet for Caversham Bridge.

In conclusion, we will continue to observe what 2020 brings to all the retail centres in greater Caversham!

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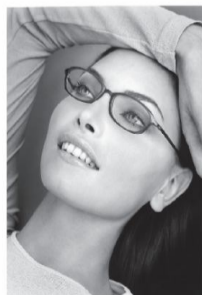
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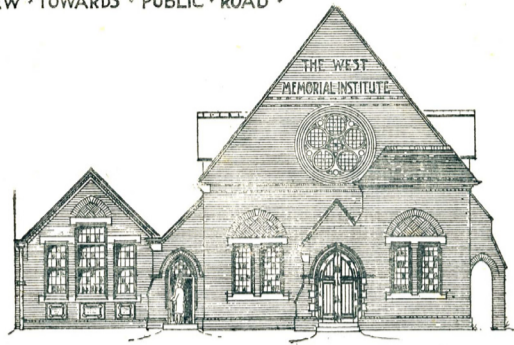
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HAPPY WANDERER

The West Memorial Institute

THE WEST MEMORIAL INSTITUTE
VIEW TOWARDS PUBLIC ROAD



Here is one of Caversham's most distinctive buildings, still there, on Gosbrook Road. It has been many different things in its time. I decided to find out about it after coming across a leaflet in the local ephemera collection at Reading Central Library, and I am grateful to them for allowing me to reproduce a part of it here.

In the May 2016 edition I wrote about Ebenezer West, who ran a boys' boarding school, Amersham Hall, on the site of the present-day Queen Anne's School. The building on Gosbrook Road was opened as the Caversham Free Church on 19th April, 1866, and Mr. West was the major contributor to the building fund. The word 'Free' presumably meant independent of the Government, the Church of England and the Catholic Church: it was a Protestant Non-Conformist church. The architect was Alfred Waterhouse, one of the greatest architects of Victorian England.

Such was the popularity of the new church that a bigger building was soon needed. The old church seated 320 'hearers' and Mr. Waterhouse was called in again to design a church to seat 600. This church was opened on 2nd October, 1877, and again the building was paid for mainly by Mr. West. It was about this time that the congregation decided to join the Baptist

Union, and the building is now the Caversham Baptist Church, on the corner of Prospect Street and South Street, and another of Caversham's most distinctive buildings.

So after only eleven years as a church, what happened to the building on Gosbrook Road?

For some years it was a British School – as opposed to the National School or Parish School in School Lane behind it. British Schools were supported by Non-Conformists.

This school must have closed by 1911, when the plans were announced for the site to become the West Memorial Institute, which was to provide rooms 'for wholesome recreation and moral improvement for the young men of Caversham, and to increase the space available for religious teaching on Sundays in connection with the Caversham Free Church.'

The statement of accounts on the leaflet shows expenditure on a billiard table, games equipment, and scout uniforms. It is dated Christmas 1913, and shows that the most generous donor to the project was Alfred Slater West, the son of Ebenezer, and that the outstanding debt had been cancelled by donations from the old boys of Amersham House School.

The Reading street directories suggest that the building remained in the ownership of the Free Church until 1976 at least, when the directories ceased publication, but the building, or part of it, may have been rented out. I have been told that in the 1950s, it was being used as a school health clinic. When Highfield Developments bought it in July 1999, it was boarded up, but had been used as a dance school. It is now called The Waterhouse, after its architect, and is divided into apartments.

It is interesting to compare the drawing on the 1913 leaflet with the front of the building now, to spot the changes, and to speculate on what that external staircase to the right was for and when it was added.

Happy Wanderer

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Letter to the editors

I can confirm for The Happy Wanderer that there were at least two folk who walked the iced River Thames at Caversham in 1963. I was 7 years old at the time and stepped out across the ice from Caversham Promenade with my father. As we approached Caversham Court there were large cracks in the ice and a ribbon of water at the edge. In consequence we turned back a few feet from the bank. I do not recall anyone else being on the ice, just a black dog racing around. It was clearly an unwise thing to do but in the context of the time my father must have thought it safe when we set out.

Roz Capek

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Christmas Eve in Caversham

Christmas Eve was busy in Caversham. At St Peter's church, in the early morning, there was a production line of children and adults making Christingles for the afternoon's double festivities. In St Martin's Centre, Forrester's Hair Salon was buzzing as votes were being cast by customers for the best pantomime costume worn by staff. At The Caversham Butcher the race was on to get all the turkeys and Christmas meats to excited customers by lunchtime. Above the door to Church House the banner was telling us to 'Follow the Star' and in the afternoon at Caversham Baptist church, costumes were being donned, donkeys tinselled and parts rehearsed in preparation for Nativity LIVE.

Christingles

Christingles are made from oranges decorated with red tape, sweets and a candle, and they are used in a candlelit celebration which takes place in the weeks leading up to Christmas. A collection is held to support children and young people in very difficult circumstances to try and bring light back into their lives. This year 630 people went to two Christingles held on Christmas Eve in the afternoon at St Peter's church and over £1000.00 was raised for The Children's Society.



Orange operations - Judy, Mary and Nigel inserting candles, sweets needed next.



Christingles completed!

Jennings

Leo Jennings opened his first butchers shop in Prospect Street in Caversham in 1922 and when he died in 1964 his five sons continued the business. By the early 1980's there were six Jennings shops in Reading but with the growing trend for eating out, more good quality suppliers of meat were needed by the catering trade and so the shops gradually disappeared. Jennings has now become 'The Caversham Butcher' and is run by Nigel, Dave, Melvin, Mo and Roland. All the meat sold, except the beef which is from Scotland, is locally sourced. The queue of people on Christmas Eve morning, eager to collect their turkeys and hams from this popular butchers shop, extended down to the Costa Coffee shop!



Queueing for Turkeys!

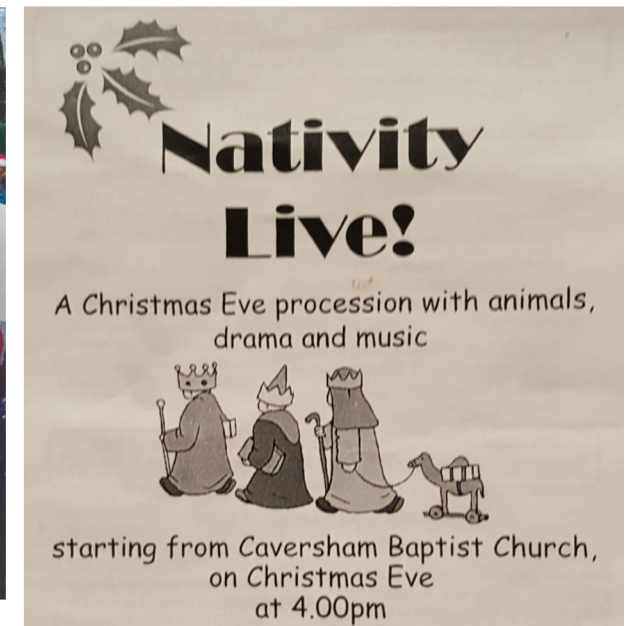
a King. More people join in along the way, including dogs with festive coats and flashing collars, and, on arriving at Caversham Methodist Church, the actors take their places and everyone assembles to welcome the baby Jesus. All sing and musicians play,

*"Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King."*

The long awaited arrival of Jesus is celebrated and refreshments are enjoyed. Finally a collection is taken for CCA (Christian Community Action), a local Reading charity which provides practical help and support to people in need. Nativity Live, a wonderful retelling of the Christmas Story, with animals, drama and music is over for another year.



Angels announce the Great News to lowly shepherds with their sheep.



The 'Nativity Live!' song sheet.

Forrester's

Forrester's is a popular hair and beauty salon which came to Caversham in 1971 and is managed by Rory Gamble. Every year a competition is held on Christmas Eve, and customers choose which member of staff has the best pantomime costume. This year Mel Cant as a baker was the winner. Well done Mel! Please note, Forrester's are giving all customers a New Year gift of 15% discount on services in January and February. Congratulations also due on Forrester's delightful shop front creation of a Winter scene.



Beautiful Winter scene created on the shop front of Forrester's.



The Caversham Butcher

Nativity Live

Nativity Live has taken place in Caversham for several years now. At 4 o'clock, under the gaze of the banner saying, 'Follow the Star', the journey to Bethlehem began. There was Mary and Joseph, a sound and lighting crew, musicians, a donkey, narrator Rev. David Jenkins, and some Caversham people with song sheets, leaving Caversham Baptist church and arriving at the Clifton Arms close by, to be told, "there is no room at the inn". The journey continues, following the star, down South Street to Westfield Road Park where shepherds watching over their flocks (real sheep) are waiting! The story unfolds and carols are sung and, on reaching St John's Church, the Wise Men appear who had been studying the stars and looking for



Church House banner telling us to 'Follow the Star'.



One star performer seasonally attired.

It's Panto time in Forrester's!



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Out and About:

a winter visit to Windsor

Windsor is one of our middle-distance neighbours. In a world ranking of known places to visit (which to the best of my knowledge does not exist, and why should it?) Windsor would likely be a candidate and a member. As UK residents, we are aware of Windsor for many reasons and I will leave the reader to consider and enumerate



The imposing keep and the bailey

should they wish. For visitors to the UK it is no doubt a draw as it has become ripe for exploitation by the multi-faceted tourism and visitor industry. If you are a visitor to London (perhaps for a one and only visit), Windsor is a natural partner for a visit, as could be Stratford upon Avon, Stonehenge, Oxford and Cambridge or Canterbury to name but a few. As one of the homes of our reigning monarch it features frequently in all public media and our Royal Family takes its name from the place. From a Caversham perspective, we may regard Windsor (and a lot of other places nearer and further away) with an 'inverse vision'. This 'near but less or not visited status' is a characteristic we likely share with all other places. The residents of Sydney, Australia or Cairo, Egypt or even



Panorama from the 'main carriage entrance' with distant view of the avenue across the Home Park and beyond

Paris, France are no doubt conscious of their world ranking sights, but oblivious to them on a daily basis!

Having the pleasure of visitors who had not been to the UK or Europe before and having some ideas about how they might spend their time with us raised the questions of 'how to decide what they should see', 'what they would like to see' and how 'what was desired to see should be visited'. The period after Christmas turned out to be cold, grey and windy but at least it was dry. So just after noon on Sunday we set off by car to reach Windsor by way of Bracknell and Ascot with fleeting commentary on the fame and joys of both. The A332 from Ascot has the

continued on page 11

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continued from page 10

a winter visit to Windsor

advantage of entering Windsor across the Great Park so providing fleeting glimpses of what is to come. Car parking was trial and error for the 'Satnav-less driver' but successful, and we found a place adjacent to the railway viaduct and only a ten minutes stroll to the visitor centre. Windsor Castle was our target but the stroll from the railway station (still trains to Slough, but its halls outweighed by commercial activity)



Christmas wreath decorates gateway to inner courtyard

provides visual and spatial moments to take in the still impressive architecture. The castle site was first built upon by William the Conqueror in the late 11th Century and exploits a massive chalk bluff above the Thames. Castle and town occupy the back slope. New since my last visit is a display about the evolution of the castle to provide context. From thence, visitors pass to the terrace with good views of Eton and the College,

and modern Slough in the near distance to remind us of the real world. The State Apartments provided the main meat for our visit which was unhurried. The audio guide was informative and easy to use. Many uniformed staff were on hand to guide and respond to questions. Some of the most interesting and absorbing areas are the rooms still used by the Queen and Royal Family for both private family use, and for events with guests, in addition to the formal public rooms including the Great Hall.

Our visit was the last day before the two week winter closure. As the afternoon drew in, a warmth was created by the rich and historic décor of the apartments. What made this winter visit so special were the Christmas decoration in every room. A tradition that dates back to the time of Victoria and Albert. Great inspiration for the Christmas tree dresser! So, a good reason for a Christmas period visit! We certainly had an uncrowded visit but this is untypical of the annual round! St George's Chapel was closed, but our 'spur of the moment' visit proved to be very satisfying for all our party. Readers of CB may like to renew their acquaintance with Windsor Castle, Park and town. It is well worth looking at this website before a visit – www.rct.uk. There is now a scheme whereby UK taxpayers can have their admission treated as a donation, and with your ticket duly stamped you have free admission for the rest of the year. We made our visit by car, but Windsor can be reached by train from Reading with a change at Slough and also by bus (perhaps a nice way to go on a fine day in the Spring and Summer). Cyclists could plan a decent route and there is the Thames path and River ... another story perhaps.

(Contributed by Stephen A. Roberts)

'The life and work of William Hogarth': a talk given to the Caversham Heights Society

Having not met since the concert by the Glass Ensemble on 4th December 2019, followed by a Christmas Party, it was good to gather together on 15th January 2020 for our first talk of this year when John Brearley, a former Head of Visual Arts at Waingel's Copse School, entertained us with his talk on 'The life and work of William Hogarth.' I say "entertained" because this was one of the most fascinating, humorous and informative talks on art that most of us had ever heard.

John began by setting the scene for William Hogarth's life and times (1697- 1764). He described the social situation in the late Seventeenth century, especially in London, the squalor, the contrast between rich and poor, the appalling housing conditions, and the moral laxity of society in general, so much so that prostitution was rife amongst the aristocracy and drunkenness was rampant amongst the poor, who drowned their sorrows in either beer or gin. In 1720 there were 700 gin distilleries and over 3500 outlets! (There are similarities with today!) Two of Hogarth's most famous paintings are 'Gin Lane' and 'Beer Lane'.

Hogarth was born in Smithfield and initially made his name as an apprentice silversmith whose artistic designs gained him a considerable reputation. His great claim to fame, however, are his satirical paintings of the lives and times of the great and the good. Hogarth had a deep sense of morality and injustice and sought to expose this through his art, by which means he hoped to educate the poorer classes. Fortunately he left explanations of who the figures were in his paintings. So appalled was he by the squalor and poverty that many children were brought up in that he became a founding member of the Coram Fields Foundling Hospital in 1712. He is known as 'The Father of English Art.' It was the manner in which John delivered this talk that had many of us in fits of laughter. An excellent evening.

Forthcoming events include talks on pollinating insects, Morris dancing, and models of royal carriages. New members are always welcome. Meetings are held on alternate Wednesday evenings at Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 7.15pm, beginning with coffee and followed by a talk. Further details can be found at www.cavershamheights.org



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Christmas at St Anne's School




The last week before Christmas was a busy week at St Anne's School, full of Christmas festivities.
 On Tuesday the Nursery and Reception children gave a performance of their play for parents and carers and on Wednesday KSI children presented a Nativity play to their parents and carers.
 On Thursday evening KS2 pupils held their Carol service in church. This was a wonderful evening of carols, readings and poems. And, naturally there was a Christmas lunch enjoyed by all.



An evening of Christmas entertainment by 1st Caversham Park Guides

The 1st Caversham Park Guides Unit gave a very good evening of Christmas Entertainment on 3rd December at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church. This was in aid of their proposed trip to Switzerland in the summer of 2020. The church was full of friends and parents, and the girls produced a fun evening for everyone. All the girls took part with readings, recitations, music and dancing. The girls played a variety of musical instruments, guitars, keyboards, and clarinets. The guides' music led the singing of familiar carols, with the guitars beautifully leading into 'Silent Night'. The dancing was delightful and had obviously been organised by the girls themselves. They were in top form and thoroughly enjoyed entertaining their audience.
 Refreshments were served after the concert and there were various stalls selling homemade marmalade, Christmas cards and knitted toys raising the sum of £235.00, which was much appreciated by the leaders, and they expressed special thanks to Rev. David Jenkins for his piano playing, Brenda Caborn for organising the refreshments, and David Herbert, Gareth Sweeting and Rev. Martin Beukes for their help on the technical side. Congratulations to all, we look forward to the next time.

Early Spring Concert at St Andrews Church, Caversham Heights Saturday 29th February 2020 – 7.30pm

An evening of classical gems for piano trio and oboe trio, given by these internationally acclaimed, prize-winning musicians: Jiafeng Chen – violin; Naomi Watts – cello; Jennifer Hughes – piano; Timothy Watts – oboe.

The programme consists of: Beethoven piano trio in Eb major op1 no1; Mozart Viennese Serenade in C for oboe, violin and cello, and Brahms piano trio in B major op 8.

Tickets: In advance at £18.00 and £20.00 from Walton's the Jewellers (cash only closed Mondays); at the door: £20.00, £22.00; On line 'box office': £19.00, £21.00 www.concertsincaversham.co.uk
 Students 16-25 years £5.00; under 16s free. Or order by phone: 0118 948 4112/0118 946 3202.

Winter Wordsearch

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

Answers to Winter Wordsearch

BOOTS	MITTENS
FEEDINGBIRDS	PORAGE
HOTTODDIE	SNOWMAN
LOGFIRES	WINTERJASMINE
OVERCOATS	COUGHSCOLDS
SNOWDROPS	HIBERNATION
WINTER	ICESKATING
CASSEROLES	NEWYEAR
FROST	SCARVES
HOTWATERBOTTLE	SOUP

A Seasonal Recipe for February

COMPOTE of RHUBARB AND BANANAS

Pink tender rhubarb is already growing in the garden in February; it should be cooked slowly to keep its shape.

1lb /500g rhubarb
6oz/ 175g sugar
Juice of an orange
1lb/500g bananas

Trim tops and bottoms of rhubarb and cut into 1"/2.5cm lengths.

Place in an ovenproof dish with the orange juice and sugar.

Stir and cover.

Bake for 35mins at 325F/160c/gas 3.

Peel and thinly slice the bananas into a serving dish.

Pour over the hot rhubarb and juices.

Cool and then chill in the fridge.

Serve with cream or Vanilla ice cream.

Pre-school boxes clever – reducing waste

Caversham Heights Pre-School has come up with a clever new scheme to reduce waste, save time and money whilst raising funds for the preschool.

Their 'Party Box' contains a range of easy to clean plates, cups, bowls and jugs for up to 36 people and can be hired for just £7.00. This alternative is cheaper than buying disposable equivalents, so why throw away when you can hire and reuse?

The box contains:

- * 36 x plates and cups
- * 12 x small bowls (ideal for snacks)
- * 3 x jugs (ideal for both water and squash)
- * 6 x plates with 3 compartments

Hiring the party box is easy, just e-mail: fundraisingchps@gmail.com with your preferred date and they will arrange collection with you.

(Contributed by Laura Mines and Phil Chatfield)

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Help the Swans survive Winter



Swans feeding: a familiar Caversham waterside sight

Cold weather and fast flowing rivers can mean that the swan's natural food source is scarce. We have many swans on the Thames in Caversham and we are urged to feed them. Suggested foods are: mixed greens such as lettuce and spinach, oats and pellets, peas, rice and potatoes – including peelings. Bread (not mouldy) is also good, but not in large quantities as it can cause dietary problems. Food should be thrown into the water, as this aids digestion and discourages swans from coming onto the bank where they are vulnerable.

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At this time of the year, many of us are considering summer holidays. Cheap flights have transformed travel. Short breaks in Europe or holidays in the sun are increasingly popular and affordable. But the carbon dioxide emitted from flying can be a large part of an individual's carbon footprint. The UK personal annual average is calculated as 5,650 Kg and, for example, a return flight from London to Sardinia contributes 254 kilogrammes per passenger (about 5% of an annual carbon footprint).

So is there any alternative? Yes, there is. Many people are turning to rail travel within Europe, which has a fraction of the impact of flying. Swedish climate change activist Greta Thunberg undertook a lecture tour of Europe by train in April 2019. Since then, web sites offering rail only holidays have seen a boom in interest.

High speed trains in Europe have transformed continental travel. London to Lisbon, Barcelona, Marseilles, Milan or Cologne is now possible in a day. Starting your holiday from London at St Pancras station by Eurostar is far less stressful than any airport. There is no need to check in luggage and the seats are comfortable and spacious compared with an aircraft. By train, the journey becomes part of the adventure, rather than a flight which can be exhausting.

For more information, see the Man at Seat 61 web site, which provides information on the best train travel options in Europe and how to buy tickets.

<https://www.seat61.com/Europe-train-travel.htm>

(Contributed by Phil Chatfield)

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LES COOPER IN THE GARDEN



Be Different!

Surely you are not one of those 'easy life gardeners' who motor down to the nearest garden centre to buy a box or two of lobelia in order to enhance their front garden? No, you would not be reading this if you were. I just know that you are one of the brave types like me who love to grow their own flowers. In August we DIY folk can look with pride at our own home-grown marigolds. Admittedly our neighbour's garden-centre antirrhinums are bigger and brighter but our plants are more special. They have not spent as much money as us because we had to buy the seed, the compost and those new non-plastic pots. But what does money matter when these flowers are your very own work!

So how about getting even bolder and growing something different this March, something showier? Let us get our neighbours looking over the

fence and saying, "that's nice, what have you got there?"

Of course, the choice is immense and I could suggest hollyhocks or lupins etc. but we want to be a little different. Here are a couple of suggestions, both half-hardy annuals, but I grow them as annuals. My first one is Cosmos simply because there is a huge choice, they are floriferous, easy to germinate and so tolerant of weather conditions.

My second is Tithonia, a fairly large (2.5 feet), leafy plant with bright orange or red flowers - again, easy to germinate and, because it originates from Mexico, it seems happiest during a dry summer which maybe is on its way. If you have never heard of it, I promise that you will be pleased.

There are my two suggestions but it's your gardening world, so go out and be a bit different.

Caversham Horticultural Society

Caversham Horticultural Society's first talk of the year will be held on Tuesday 4 February at 7.45pm, given by Lou Phillips on the subject 'Down to Earth: learn about your soil and how to look after it'. This talk, as with all others in 2020, will be held at the new venue, Church House, 57 Church St Caversham RG4 8AX. This venue is between Waitrose and the archway through to the Waitrose carpark. Admission £3.00 for non members. Light refreshments after the talk.

Also starting from the 1st February the society's Saturdays' trading shed will be open between 10 - 11.30am every Saturday until the end of October for the sale of seed potatoes, fertilizers and compost for members. To make use of this facility gardeners within the RG4 postal district need to join the society either at the shed during opening hours or by contacting the membership secretary erae@harpolutions.co.uk

The following talk on Tuesday 3rd March will be given by Alison Galer of Florence Gardening entitled 'Inspiration from my Show Garden'.

Snowdrops: an early sign of Spring



Snowdrops have been appearing in Caversham gardens a little before Christmas and are now increasingly visible. Always a cheering sight to see a clump or even many clumps appearing in gardens and out in the public realm. Hopefully gardeners and walkers can remember locations and be on the lookout when the season comes around again. But, those in the wild should be left alone to be admired!

Chazey WI

Imagine, ladies, a life without elastic – it's a stretch, isn't it?

No bras and knickers as we know them but an underwear drawer with whalebone corsets, multiple petticoats and perhaps a chemise made out of an old pillowcase. Yet this was what Chazey WI members were asked to contemplate when writer Jane Stubbs visited us in December to describe what life was like for ordinary women in the 19th century.

As we sat there in our comfy M&S 'pants and bras', we could only wonder at the tricky underwear world of the early Victorian era. To make matters worse, when Queen Victoria came to the throne, the poor had no drains, no public toilets, no bathrooms and certainly no washing machines.

Laundry, in those days, consisted of cold water brought in from outside by bucket, a massive iron mangle and a heck of a lot of starch.

Jane started to look into women's underwear while researching a book and brought along a dummy dressed in the kind of domestic servant uniform worn by Mrs Fairfax, the housekeeper in Jane Eyre.

It was crucial, she explained, that legs were covered so as not to inflame Victorian male passions, and that the waist was nipped in – the ideal was an eye-watering 18 inches, achieved through a combination of dieting and tight lacing. The term straight-laced hails from here.

A servant's costume would have weighed at least six pounds, thanks to corsets and a plethora of petticoats, often starched, and with whalebone hoops to keep the skirt as far from the legs as possible. And the object was always to keep clean to avoid the terrible palaver of washing your clothes.

Domestic service was one of the very few jobs available for ordinary early 19th century women (along with prostitution) and as the century wore on, Jane explained how the skirt shape changed as women enjoyed more freedom and opportunity. Middle class women, meanwhile, had nothing to do while their servants skivvied, and many of them simply went mad from boredom.

Chazey WI meets every first Friday at 2.30pm at St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road, Caversham Heights. New members are always welcome and your first three visits are free.

You can email us at chazeywi@berkshirewi.co.uk or find us on Facebook.

Rosehill WI

We were welcomed to our December meeting by President Arlene Riley. An invitation has been received from Caversham WI's birthday celebrations on 17th December. Judith (Treasurer) handed out subscription envelopes, these to be returned at the February meeting. New committee members are required and Arlene again asked members to consider joining the Committee.

Arlene introduced Carol Wheeler (Carol of the Bells) who played several classic Christmas tunes. We were also able to sing along with some of the tunes.

There is no meeting in January. The next one will be on 5th February at 2.00 pm.

Caversham Bridge

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WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT)



Rise, take your mat and walk



Women, men and children of all ages are called to 'Rise, take your mat and walk' to join this day of prayer.* Women of Zimbabwe have prepared this year's service and they encourage us all to reflect on the difficulties and unrest that have plagued their country over many years. They share the challenges they have met and the hopes they have for the future. They encourage us to '**Rise, take your mat and walk**' with them as they continue their often turbulent journey towards full reconciliation.

World Day of Prayer is an international inter-church organisation which enables us to hear the thoughts of women from all parts of the world: their hopes, concerns and prayers. The preparation for the day is vast. An international committee is based in New York and there are national committees in each participating country. Regional conferences meet to consider the service and then local groups make their plans. Finally, at a church near you on Friday 6 March 2020, people will gather to celebrate the service prepared by the women of Zimbabwe.

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 170 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world --- through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas - before finishing in American Samoa more than 36 hours later.

This year at St. Barnabas Emmer Green, on Friday 6 March 2020 at 7:30pm.

* For further information and resources see the WDP website: wwdp.org.uk

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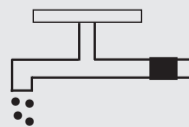
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