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# Caversham Bridge

No 717

[www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org)

November 2024

## An Anniversary to Celebrate

### from St Anne's School

**S**T ANNE'S Catholic School in Caversham is celebrating a major milestone as it marks 125 years of dedicated service to education and the local community. Established in September 1899, the school has long been a cornerstone of learning in the area, consistently evolving to meet the demands of changing times, while maintaining its focus on nurturing young minds.

As part of the anniversary celebrations, the school recently captured a drone photograph featuring the entire school community. The aerial image serves as a visual representation of the unity and spirit that have been central to St Anne's for over a century.

Throughout the 2024-2025 academic year, St Anne's will host a series of events designed to reflect on its rich history, celebrate its many achievements, and look ahead to the future. These events will bring together alumni, current pupils, and staff, all united in their shared pride in the school's enduring legacy of excellence and community involvement.

Newly-appointed Headteacher Bridget Tobin expressed her enthusiasm for the upcoming celebrations, emphasizing the importance of recognising both the school's past and its future. "This anniversary offers us a chance to celebrate the generations of pupils who have passed through our doors, and to look forward to the continued success of our school", she said.

The school will provide regular updates on its planned events and encourages the wider community to participate in commemorating this significant occasion.



Drone shot of staff and pupils at St Anne's

photo St Anne's School



### by Phil Chatfield

**A** NUMBER OF the articles in our November edition have a focus on the local schools and young people in our community. We celebrate the 125th anniversary of St Anne's Catholic Primary School (above) and their recent Living Simply Award (p13). We also have a feature on choosing the right primary school for your child (p11), and a short report on the new playground facilities in Westfield Park (p3). In addition, we have details of the annual Toys and Teens appeal (p10).

Of course, November is the month of remembrance, and we will wear the Flanders poppies and remember those who served in past conflicts. However, war is not just a matter of history, and our Talking Point from Alan Race this month reflects on the current conflict in the Middle East (p2).

Contributions from our regular writers include Happy Wanderer's investigation into fairy rings and fungi, also the subject of our word search (both p7), the Wellbeing item on aging well (p18) and the latest from Perry Walker on men's health (p17).

Art and creativity are covered in our Creative Caversham article on local artist Jo Lillywhite (p9), whose work is currently being exhibited at the Caversham Picture Framers, our Local Scene painting of St Peter's Church by Janina Maher (p15) and our Live and Local music reviews (p14). Fourbears Books hosted a sold-out visit from world famous author Alexander McCall Smith at the Baptist Church early in October (p5).

### ...make a note...

Finally, we have an article from the Caversham Traders' Association about their work to promote local businesses (p17). Make a note of the date for the late-night shopping event they are organising on Friday 6 December.

You can contact us by email at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or by post, c/o Church House, Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX with your comments or contributions.

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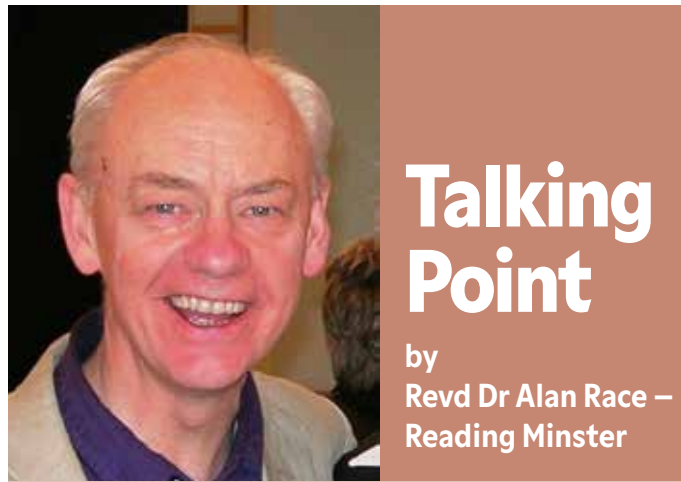


**Wilfred Owen in Dunsden**

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# One Year On



IT IS ONE YEAR (7 October 2023) since the horrendous attack by Hamas on Israeli citizens close to the border between Israel and Gaza, which reaped a harvest of indiscriminate killing and hostage-taking. The audacity, senselessness, violence, and scale of deaths sent shockwaves around the world. It was obvious that there would be retaliations, but no-one expected these to be on the scale that we have witnessed. A Muslim friend confessed that he was dumbstruck, wondering what Hamas was trying to achieve.

Equally, the Israeli response has involved indiscriminate killing and loss of life for Gazan citizens, not to mention the destruction of towns and villages, infrastructure, hospitals, universities and schools. The whole scene is one of unbelievable destruction. The violence has also given permission for increased attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank by Israeli settlers. Jewish friends have expressed their despair at the ferocity of Israel’s actions, even as they support its right to defend itself against aggression from outsiders. And now the focus has shifted to Lebanon-Israel borderlands, where Hamas-supporting Hezbollah has a stronghold.

To say that the politics of the region is complicated is a massive understatement. But underneath the conflict massive trauma fuels perspectives. On the Israeli side is the trauma of the Jewish Holocaust (Shoah) and the loss of the six million. On the Palestinian side is the trauma of the Catastrophe (Nakba), with the expulsion of approximately 750,000 Palestinian people from the land at the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. Both sides

“ **To say that the politics of the region is complicated is a massive understatement**

view these events as grave injustices, and peace proposals over time have not been able to heal the hatreds, fears, and suspicions engendered by trauma. Neither side now is open to any two-state solution - always the favoured compromise for two sides who wish the other did not exist.

How might we, who look on with dismay, respond to these unfolding events? We might pray for peace, of course. Even for those who have ceased to believe in an intervening Deity, prayer still exists to concentrate the mind, and assists in maintaining a hold on peace as a future possibility. We could lend our efforts to any number of organisations and movements promoting ‘hope not hate’ as a way of reducing tensions between communities nearer to home. We could become more informed about the history of trauma affecting relationships in the Middle East, which would in turn help to address our unconscious biases in response to conflict, including any hidden leanings towards Antisemitism or Islamophobia. We could increase our efforts to bridge divides by getting to know those of a faith-tradition different from our own and thereby learn respect for another’s beliefs and practices. If we believe in the values of hope, peace, and justice, then putting these ideals into practice will be a test of their credibility for us.

# Reading Railways: From Bond to Paddington and Beyond

**November marks two years since the Elizabeth Line fully opened, and the final piece of the Crossrail puzzle moved into place**

**text and photo Roslyn Weaver**

THE NEW Bond Street station and connection of the Reading line to the central tunnels made it possible to take the train to central London without changing at Paddington, closing the gap between Caversham and the City via Christchurch Bridge.

It is difficult to resist the literary connections of railways – Reading, Bond, and Paddington – so I won’t even try. Fittingly, one of the literary creations most famously associated with railways, a bear by the name of Paddington, has local links, as the work of Michael Bond, who was born in Newbury and raised in Reading. Yet bears named Paddington are not alone in their literary connections to trains. If pressed, most of us can probably come up with railway-themed novels or famous fictional trains. Even those who cannot would recognize something among the Hogwarts Express and Platform 9¾, *The Railway Children* or, as we approach Christmas, *The Polar Express*. For the grownups, literary trains often take a darker track, with the

most famous ones appearing in crime novels, whether *The Orient Express*, *The 4.50 from Paddington*, or others where closed environments, multiple suspects, passing witnesses, and train timetable technicalities prove key to solving the mystery. And, for the uncharitable, it is easy to talk about other fictions of British railways, from Crossrail budgets and timelines to daily schedules and reasonable fares.

**...engineering marvels...**

Far more edifying, though, to wonder why railways and trains are so beloved. Maybe it’s the stations and platforms themselves; some works of art – indeed, the Elizabeth Line infrastructure has been shortlisted this year for excellence in architecture. Or the engineering marvels of lines and viaducts and tunnels; the trainspotting joys of documenting trains, locomotives, wagons, or the historical treasure troves of tours exploring abandoned tube stations. It might be the promise of faraway holidays and adventure, crossing countries and continents – or simply the pleasures of returning home. Or it might just be the joys of reading about a bear called Paddington.



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Christchurch Bridge – closing the gap





photo 89th Reading Scouts

# Scout Christmas Post

by Robin Kent

THE 89TH READING Scout group are again gearing up to help the local community to save money this Christmas.

The 89th Reading Scout group will once again be providing a Christmas Post service to the residents of Caversham, Caversham Heights, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village.

The exact locations of our boxes are not yet finalised, but we will announce them on our website in the coming weeks. Each year we use this opportunity to raise money for the benefit of both the community and the scouts at the 89th. Funds raised from previous postal collections have gone to many things, including the community defibrillator sited outside our HQ and last year to replace some large tents.

We will announce the recipient of the 2024 postal fund on 29 November when our boxes will be open to you.

The Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers of the 89th are getting ready to help you spread the joy of Christmas through card giving to all your friends. So get writing those Christmas cards and look out for our bright red Scout post boxes across Caversham and Emmer Green.

Scout Post 2024 – Starts on 29 November 2024, post will be delivered over the weekend of 21/22 December.

Full details of postal box locations and how the service works will be available on our website: [www.89th.org.uk](http://www.89th.org.uk)

## Bright, beautiful and fun



Views of the renewed playground

photos A Paton

AS PART of a programme of refurbishments of playgrounds in Reading, the council consulted with local residents in early 2024 about designs for a renewed and enlarged playground in the north east corner of Westfield Park. The scheme aimed to provide a fun environment for children aged 3-12 years old. Contractors worked through the early part of the year to install the new equipment and to lay the brightly coloured surface. The playground has been open for a few months now and has been very popular with local families.

by the Editors



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THE PAPER is delivered by our team of volunteers throughout Mapledurham, Caversham, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village, as well as the Caversham Road area. Currently 13 monthly editions cost £7.

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# A Creative Gift



Highly creative table at The Artists & Makers Fair

photo J Harper

by George Grubb

**T**HE ARTISTS AND Makers Fair is three years old. Caversham's celebration of the creative arts was the brainchild of local enthusiasts, Shirley Strickland and Jean Harper, who started their own fabric and needle felting business *Nimble Thimble* during the Covid-19 lockdown. Disappointed by the lack of a regular event for local artists and craftspeople to exhibit and sell their work, they decided to organize one themselves. A chance conversation put them in contact with Eunice Cooper, in charge of room hire at Caversham Methodist Church and from then on it was smooth sailing.

Jean says, 'In the early days, we attracted only around 9 or 10 exhibitors but, as our reputation grew, more and more artists and craftspeople applied, and we had to expand into the church'.

The Fair now attracts a wide variety of painters, textile artists, sculptors, glassworkers, ceramicists and jewellers, all offering a range of exhibits to

suit all pockets. In addition, several exhibitors offer craft activities for younger visitors, and every month there is a prize for the winner of the colouring competition.

Last, but by no means least, the Artists and Makers Fairs is home to the extremely popular Lobby Café, with all the cakes made by Shirley, who is not only an amazing artist, but also makes 'exceedingly good cakes!' Proceeds from the café's drinks sales are given to a different local charity every month.

The Artists and Makers Fair takes place eight months of the year on the second Saturday of the month, from 10:00 to 16:00 in Caversham Methodist Church and Hall on the corner of Gosbrook and Ardler Roads. It is a dog-friendly event and entry is free. The remaining fairs for 2024 are Saturday 9 November and Saturday 14 December.

**For more information see:**

**Website:** [www.artistsandmakersfairs.co.uk](http://www.artistsandmakersfairs.co.uk)

**Facebook:** [Artistsandmakersfair](https://www.facebook.com/artistsandmakersfair)

**Instagram:** [artistsandmakersfaircaversham](https://www.instagram.com/artistsandmakersfaircaversham)

## What Christ? Whose Christ?

*New Options for Old Theories*

by The Editors

WHAT CHRIST?  
WHOSE CHRIST?

New Options for Old Theories



Alan Race &  
Jonathan Clatworthy (editors)

**R**EADING MINSTER hosted the launch of the new book edited by Caversham resident the Revd Dr Alan Race and the Revd Jonathan Clatworthy on 20 September. There have been many theories down the ages about how to describe the figure of Jesus, his impact and place in history. In 1921 the organisation The Modern Churchmen's Union (now called more simply Modern Church) held a conference in Girton College, Cambridge, and explored these theories in the light of new scientific and historical understanding. This book expands on those discussions and widens their scope in the context of a very different environment over one hundred years later.

In 1921 many people were questioning the portrayal of Jesus as one who came from heaven, lived on earth for 30 years before his execution on the cross by the Roman authorities after a brief period of teaching and preaching, and then returned to heaven. This seemed unbelievable to many people in 1921 and has remained unbelievable to many since then. *What Christ? Whose Christ?* shows how the early centuries view of Jesus as a divine saviour figure sent by God so exalted the status of Jesus that it undermined his message of the justice and peace of God's Kingdom intended for the earth, and in the process lost sight of his human nature. Today there is a greater appetite to reclaim the human nature of Jesus and from there ask how he has come to embody a sense of God's call and challenge.

The book explores this meaning of Jesus in the light of new insights from New Testament study, feminist principles, relationships to other world religions (especially Hinduism and Buddhism), and awareness of post-colonial realities. It is not written in a popular style, but the editors trust it is in an accessible style for different audiences. It is available directly from Alan at £12.50, which is half the cover price.

**Alan is attached to Reading Minster in a supporting ministerial capacity.**

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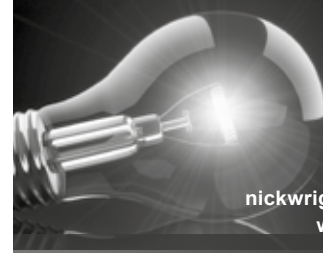


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by Alex Forbes



## For your bookshelf....

Welcome to Fourbears Books reviews where we pick a couple of books to write about each month. We are fast approaching Christmas, and have lots going on, including our 4th birthday! We will also have a Reverse Santa on 6 December at 17:30. A Reverse Santa is where children give Santa a gift instead of the other way around. Santa collects books and toys (new or as new) to redistribute to less fortunate families around Reading for Christmas via Reading Family Aid. We have already started collecting items in the shop if anyone doesn't want to wait until December.

THE FIRST OF the two books we have selected is a children's picture book called *Oi Dinosaurs!* by Kes Gray. For those who are not familiar with the *Oi* series, they feature a Dog, a Cat, and a Frog, and the three of them discuss the rhyming conventions of animal seating arrangements, such as a Cat sits on a mat, Frogs sit on logs, etc. Always silly, each book in the series has a different theme or twist. I personally thought the series was starting to stale a little until this latest release, which has the three friends discussing where prehistoric animals sit, and what they sit on. It has plenty to make adults chuckle and kids will love it. It's not short of a fact or two.

Our other book choice also has a historical link, as it's *Odyssey: Stephen Fry's Greek Myths, Book 4*. Following the success of *Troy*, *Mythos* and *Heroes*, this is the most famous heroic story of all time. *Odyssey* is chock full of monsters,

murder, maelstroms, gods, giants, wit, wisdom – and the most cunning hero of them all – Odysseus. Fry breathes contemporary relevance into these ancient tales, and his wry sense of humour and natural gift for storytelling make for a highly engaging read. We have Special Indie Bookshop editions, which you can't get at the big online shop. If you prefer audio books, then I recommend checking out Libro.FM. They supply audio books as a rival to Amazon. The difference is, you can nominate us and for every purchase Fourbears Books receives a small slice of the pie. Every little helps! See <https://libro.fm>

Do check out our website for latest events, we have Robert Thorogood coming in January to discuss his series the Marlow Murder Club. Robert is perhaps better known as creator of BBC hit *Death in Paradise*. We hope to see you in the shop soon.

**Happy reading!**



Has anyone seen my friends?

Alex has reported the loss of the bears who live at the shop and usually feature in these photos. Can anyone help our lonely survivor?

photo A Forbes

## A Full House

text and  
photo  
Phil Chatfield



CAVERSHAM BAPTIST Church was the venue for a sold-out audience with world-famous author Alexander McCall Smith on 3 October. With over 100 books published in 46 languages worldwide, more than 100 people took advantage of the opportunity to hear him speak in Caversham. The event was organised by Alex Forbes, of Fourbears Books, and was part of a UK promotional tour by Edinburgh resident McCall Smith.

Alexander talked about his own background growing up in Africa, and later academic links which took him to Botswana. Here he found a people with a special spirit, which eventually inspired his long running 'No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency' series of books, of which the twenty-fifth title, *The Great Hippopotamus Hotel*, has just been published.

He described how the chief character of the books, Mma Ramotswe, was born in a short story and came to life when he expanded it into a novel, *No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency*, published in 1998. The book was not an immediate success, and it was some time before a review in the New York Times of what was by then a series of four books, resulted in publisher Random House taking an interest.

### ...prolific and fast...

Since then, more than 20 million copies of his books have been sold. In addition to writing new titles for The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency series, he has also created several other book series, such as the Isabel Dalhousie and Scotland Street novels based in Edinburgh. He is a prolific and fast writer, completing five books a year – most writers would be content with one! The current tour of the UK features three new books, including *The Conditions of Unconditional Love* (an Isabel Dalhousie book), *The Great Hippopotamus Hotel* and a stand-alone book, *The Winds from Further West*.

Alexander held the audience captive for more than an hour, speaking about his journey as an author from a children's book to novels, noting how his readers connected with the kindness which characterises his writing. He had plenty of amusing anecdotes and tales of readers around the world who had, in some ways, recreated his imagined worlds. The session ended with him answering questions from the audience, and then gifting three souvenir pamphlets to members of the audience, before the obligatory book signing session.

For more information on the author and his books, see [www.alexandermccallsmith.co.uk](http://www.alexandermccallsmith.co.uk)

For future events organised by Fourbears Books, see [www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk](http://www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk)



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# What's On

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to [whatson@cavershambridge.org](mailto:whatson@cavershambridge.org)  
We need to receive these no later than the 10th of the month before the event for inclusion in the printed paper. Later submissions can be included in our online What's On, which is updated regularly. To see what has been added check:  
[cavershambridge.org/archives/category/around-caversham](http://cavershambridge.org/archives/category/around-caversham)

Please note, we have moved the listing of baby and toddler groups to a new feature on page 10.

**Caversham Library** – 09:00-17:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00-19:00 Thursday and 10:00-15:00 Saturday. Regular events include:  
*Rhymetimes for the little ones* – popular, so please book first! Every Tuesday at 10:15 and 11:15.

**Games Club**, Friday mornings 10:30-12:00. All adults welcome – refreshments!

**Sit and Stitch** 17:30-19:45, on 2nd and 4th Thursdays every month. Refreshments – come and be inspired. Tel: 0118 937 5103 or see [reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library](http://reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library)

**Geo Café** – *Artists Against Homelessness*, an ongoing and changing exhibition of art by local artists at Geo Café, Prospect Street. For each sale the artist makes a donation to Launchpad Reading. Open every day.

**Mondays** – **Caversham Park Bridge Club** – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 0118 334 8195 for further information. [bridgewebs.com/cavershampark](http://bridgewebs.com/cavershampark)

**Tuesdays** – **Rivarate Choir** – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. 19:30 in term time. Enjoy singing together. For details see [rivarate.com](http://rivarate.com)

**Wednesdays** – **Caversham Writers** – Welcoming enthusiastic hobbyists and aspiring authors alike. Meeting weekly in person or via Zoom. Free to all. For details: [meetup.com/CavershamWriters](https://meetup.com/CavershamWriters) or [@CavershamWriter](https://twitter.com/CavershamWriter) on Twitter (X)

**Wednesdays** – **Light on the Hill Café** – 19:30-21:30 at Grace Church, 119 Peppard Road, RG4 8TR. A wellbeing café for adults 18+. Come as you are for tea and a chat. Please see: [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

**Wednesdays** – **The Waltham St Lawrence Silver Ban** – Neville Hall in Waltham St Lawrence RG10 0JJ. 20:00-22:00. Free and friendly club for brass instrumentalists. Email: [waltham.band@gmail.com](mailto:waltham.band@gmail.com)

**Thursdays** – **Friendly Over-60s Social Club** – 10:00-13:00 at Milestone Centre, Caversham Park Village. Hot lunch, quizzes and the chance to chat. Contact Cheryl at 07964 750182 or Trina at 07477 570541

**Thursdays** – **Weller Centre Craft Group** – 13:00-15:00. Be creative with friends. For details contact Pam Chatfield at [pamch32@gmail.com](mailto:pamch32@gmail.com) Mobile 07986 905784 or Weller Centre 0118 947 5828

**Thursdays** – **New Caversham Heights Bridge Club** – 14:00 at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. For details contact Duncan Knight on 0118 947 5544 or email [duncan.knight@googlemail.com](mailto:duncan.knight@googlemail.com)

**Fridays** – **Warm Welcome Space** – 10:00-13:30 at Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, RG4 8HY. All welcome, just drop in for free refreshments, including hot soup from 12:00. Tel: 0118 954 5353 [www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

**Saturdays** – **Keep Caversham Tidy** – A local charity dedicated to eliminating litter and improving public spaces in Caversham. Free to join and no ongoing commitment. Families welcome! Email [Keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com](mailto:Keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com), FB Keep Caversham Tidy

**Sundays** – **Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market** – Caversham Precinct, 10:00-15:00. See [www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](https://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

**Sundays** – **Nordic Walk (or just walking)**. Free to all. Tel: 07931 754096 or email Pat at [Wirralbird@hotmail.com](mailto:Wirralbird@hotmail.com)

**Sundays** – **Readifolk Song and Music Club** – 20:00-22:30 in the Community Hall, Watlington House, RG1 4RA. £8 admission for performances, £3 on singing nights. See [www.redifolk.co.uk](http://www.redifolk.co.uk)

**Wednesday 2 October-Saturday 16 November** – *Landscapes of Colour Exhibition of paintings by Jo Lillywhite* – Caversham Picture Framers, Church Road – see [cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events](http://cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events)

**Friday 1 November** – **Bereavement Café** – 14:00-15:30 at St. Barnabas, Emmer Green. A safe place to find others who have had their own loss and can appreciate something of your experience. For further info Tel. Gill at 0118 947 8772

**Friday 1 November** – **Chazey Women's Institute** – 14:30 at St Andrew's Church Hall. Tel: 0118 947 0964, or e-mail [rowena@primology.com](mailto:rowena@primology.com)

**Tuesday 5 November** – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk) or Tel: 0118 947 5176

**Wednesday 6 November** – **Bradfield South End, Beenham and Douai Abbey walk (SU597707) 5.8m** – 10:30 Meet at recreation ground car park. Nearest postcode RG7 6EY. The walk is over a varied countryside, there are several stiles, some uphill stretches and it can be a little muddy after rain Pang Valley Ramblers. One of a programme of regular walks in the area – see <https://pvrblers.org.uk/walks-programme>

**Wednesday 6 November** – **Rosehill Ladies** – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel: Sue 0118 947 7570 or email [suegreen@hotmail.com](mailto:suegreen@hotmail.com)

**Wednesday 6 November** – **Your King and Country need you, a talk by Dr Graham Twemlow** – 20:00 at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. The Caversham Heights Society. To learn more visit [cavershamheights.org](http://cavershamheights.org) or email: [contact@cavershamheights.org](mailto:contact@cavershamheights.org)

**Saturday 9 November** – **Artists & Makers Fair** – 10:00-16:00 at Caversham Methodist Hall, Gosbrook Road. Local artists and craftspeople display their work for sale. Free entry. For further information phone Jean at 07808 966928 or visit [www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk)

**Wednesday 13 November** – **A plant a month, a talk by Claire Mitchell** – 19:30 (entry from 19:15) Zoom meeting. For details, see [www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk)

**Saturday 16 November** – **Performance of 'Maria Theresa' Mass by Haydn and C.P.E. Bach's 'Magnificat'** – 19:30 at St Joseph's College, Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JT. Reading Haydn Choir with professional soloists and orchestra. Further details at [www.haydnchoir.org.uk](http://www.haydnchoir.org.uk)

**Wednesday 20 November** – **The Hidden Chalk Mines of Emmer Green, a talk by Rob Wallace** – 20:00 at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. The Caversham Heights Society. Contact details above on 6 November

**Friday 22 November** – **Les Français à Istanbul/Constantinople de François Ier à Napoléon Bonaparte (1515 à 1800) with Catherine Vigne and Anne Mézin** – 19:30-21:30 at Church House, 59 Church Street, RG4 8AX. Le Cercle Français, for those who are learning French, love France and for French nationals. Admission £5 welcome drink included. Email [readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com](mailto:readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com) Website [www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Monday 25 November** – **The Saxophone and my Life as an Army Musician** – 14.00 at Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. Talk and demonstration to Reading u3a by Jon Woodhouse, ex-HM Lifeguards Band Musician. Free entry, non-members welcome. See [www.readingu3a.org.uk](http://www.readingu3a.org.uk)

# CADRA Planning Bulletin

**A summary of planning and transport matters affecting the RG4 area, provided by Caversham and District Residents Association [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk)**

**L**OCAL PLANS are moving a step forward. **The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Draft Local Plan 2041** was published for representations for a six-week period ending 12 November, before submission to the Secretary of State. <https://theconversation.southandvale.gov.uk/jlp> We have been working through the documents which show little difference from the Preferred Options Consultation version in January. The broad policies are encouraging in protecting important landscape, along with a separation between Reading and the South Oxfordshire villages. The list of sites proposed by landowners and developers includes many sites close to our boundary which are assessed as appropriate for further consideration: these provide evidence of potential capacity. The general policies in the plan, the development of Neighbourhood Plans by local parishes and the Chilterns boundary review will all be important for any decisions to approve sites for residential development.

Subject to approval by Council, the **Reading Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Partial Update** will also be published for representations, before submission to the Secretary of State.

New planning applications include permission to use **Reading Gaol** as a Firearms Training Centre for a period of five years. **(PL/24/1222)**. The owner of the **triangle of land on the Gosbrook Road and George Street junction** has applied to build a terrace of five houses. **(PL/24/0900)** There is a requirement to replant trees which were confirmed as unsafe to retain and complex flooding issues. The formal deadline for comments will have passed but later comments may be accepted.

The **telecom mast on Woodcote Road** was erected in April without planning permission. Although initially confirmed as 'not permitted development', we are now informed planning considerations have concluded. After much debate, all provisions of legislation were checked and satisfactorily met.

See [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk) for links to these planning applications.

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**Wednesday  
13 November 2024  
7.30 pm**

**Caversham Baptist Church  
1 Prospect Street,  
Reading RG4 8JB**

**Open Meeting  
& Talk**

**Speakers:**  
**Paul Jefferies**  
Assistant Director of Operations,  
South Central Ambulance Service  
(NHS Foundation) Trust

**Richard Company**  
Critical Care Paramedic,  
Thames Valley Air Ambulance

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**www.cadra.org.uk**

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Caversham & District  
Residents' Association



**H**AVE YOU ever seen a fairy ring? I took this photograph of the best one I've seen so far on Crookham Common, south of Thatcham, though it's not exactly a perfect circle. Fairy rings tend to occur in grassland and are caused by various species of fungi.

The fungi are an extraordinary and varied form of life. When I was young, they were thought of as a primitive kind of plant. Scientific knowledge has advanced greatly since then, and they are now recognised as something completely different, neither animals nor plants, and very varied.

We've only recently discovered the close relationship between some fungi and trees. They've evolved together and are interdependent. These fungi exist in the soil, their mycorrhiza or underground filaments linking the trees, so they feed one other, and the trees can apparently interact with one another.

## ...attacks your toenails...

Other fungi are well known because, to humans, they're a nuisance, like dry rot which consumes wood, especially wood in old buildings. And there are the fungi which cause disease in humans, such as thrush, ringworm, and the one that attacks your toenails.

Then there are the useful ones which have been used for millennia, to consume cereal grains and plant juices, using their starch and sugar to cause bread to rise, and to produce alcohol. We couldn't see them until microscopes came along – before then, they were something of a mystery. Where I grew up, people made oatcakes with yeast and, in the previous century, had prepared the oatmeal and water mixture the night before, marking the surface with a cross to deflect the malign influence of witches.



Fairy ring on Crookham Common

photo Happy Wanderer

The fungi with which we are most familiar in the wild push up through the soil, often quite suddenly in the autumn. These also were thought of as being mysterious if not dangerous. The mushrooms and toadstools had a stalk with a circular cap on top. The word 'mushroom' was a version of the French word 'mousseron' and was edible. The word 'toadstool' was English, and meant what you would expect. The Oxford English Dictionary tells us that both words were recorded from the Middle Ages onwards, and that these fungi were also known as toads' caps and toads' hats. Toads can exude irritant fluids from their warty backs, and were considered to be poisonous, like toadstools.

Returning to fairy rings, many different beliefs existed to explain how they were caused. One was that they marked the place where fairies or witches danced in a circle. They could vary greatly in size, and some of them have been observed, in the same place, for a century and more, gradually increasing in diameter. Other theories involved ants, slugs, moles, and lightning strikes. It was not until the 1790s that they became connected with various species of mushroom. If the mushrooms weren't present, their mycorrhiza, connected to the grass roots, would still be there, giving rise to grass of a different colour and causing people to wonder.

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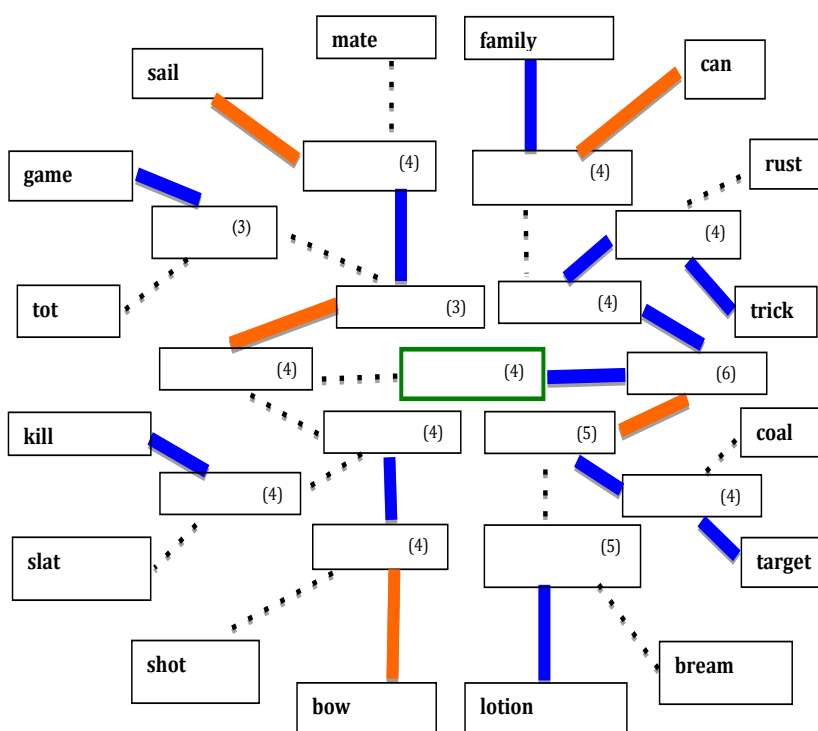
## Puzzle Corner

### The Challenge by Rachel

#### WORD PUZZLE

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *tingle* has 6 letters, rhymes with *shingle* and means *thrill*.

Rhyme ———  
Letter change .....  
Meaning ———



Answers on page 18

### BRITISH FUNGI

There are over 15,000 British Fungi.  
Can you find 18 in the grid?

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

Ascot Hat  
Black Bulgar  
Chantrelle  
Death Cap  
Earthball  
Field  
Fly Agaric  
Horn of Plenty  
Inkcap

Jelly Ear  
Larch Bolete  
Liberty Cap  
Oyster  
Penny Bun  
Puffball  
Scarlet Elfcap  
Shaggy Parasol  
Sulphur Tuft



# Reflections on my 30 years as an editor from 1982



by Eric Chappell, editor 1982-2012

**H**OW PRODUCTION of the paper has changed over the years! In the 1980s, all items were handwritten for the Parish Secretary to type on working sheets for the first editorial meeting, when the general layout was agreed. The printers then prepared a draft for the second editors' meeting and, when approved, the paper was returned for printing. When email became available, most - then all - copy went straight to the Parish Office for typing.

The influence of the different editors can be seen over the years. Firstly, Canon Grimwade's influence was paramount. The paper was his idea and was based on the parish magazine. He had many contacts within Caversham whom he got to write for the paper, like Katy in Caversham (local newsy items), and Molly Casey (Watch Dog - the forerunner of CADRA). When retired teachers were editors, the grammar of contributions, including the proper use of apostrophes, split infinitives and choice of vocabulary (shorter English words instead of Americanisms) were looked at.

## ...no restriction...

From the start we had no articles or references to the drinks trade, nor could any item include any indirect advertising, otherwise the company treasurer would object on the grounds that all advertising had to be billed.

There was no restriction on the number of words in an article. However

we started limiting them after a particular clerical contribution covered a page and a half instead of the normal half page.

The other main area of change has been the dramatic reduction in religious content, reflecting how religious attitudes are no longer part of the pattern of social activities but a private concern. Giving more attention to what is happening in our area was an editorial move helping to make the paper a proper community 'Bridge'.



Eric Chappell in The Caversham Bridge, 2014

# Art Stories

by Robin Thomas



Elaine and Robin

photo B Bishop

**E**ARLIER THIS year I was approached by Elaine Blake, art curator at Reading Museum. Elaine wanted to mount an exhibition to show off some recent acquisitions. These include paintings, sculptures, photographs and mixed media items. The idea was an unusual one - normally exhibitions are related to a particular artist or school or theme - but it turned out to have several advantages: it provided an opportunity to celebrate works provided through the Reading Foundation for Art, a remarkable local charity which has been collecting art for the town for 50 years; it was in line with a theme in the museum's exhibition programming in these straitened times for exhibitions to be low budget; it provided a showcase for a lively selection of works of art united only by their quality and intrinsic interest.

Another theme of the museum's approach to exhibitions was the desire to feature community involvement and creative responses to artworks. "Why not have some stories," asked Elaine, which is where I came in. She and I worked on a plan.

We wanted very short pieces and to draw contributions as far as possible from writers living in, or associated with, Reading. Most important, we wanted to encourage writers to be imaginative and to have fun.

## ...excellent response...

Claire Dyer (prose) and I (poetry) compiled a list of writers whom we asked for expressions of interest. There was an excellent response. The outcome was a good number of pieces - coming from different points of view and all high quality - responding to the various art works. In the meantime, Elaine was putting together facts about each of them, and the result is very attractive cards clearly labelled 'facts' and 'fictions' readily available to be read by visitors.

Continuing with the theme of community involvement, the exhibition includes a panel where visitors are encouraged to attach their own responses to the works.

The exhibition runs until 22 February 2025, and I encourage everyone to go and see it, read the stories and the facts and, if they feel like it, contribute their own. There will also be related events in early 2025. Look out for Reading Museum Art in the Dark Months 2025.



Art Stories exhibition at Reading Museum to 22 February 2024

photo R Thomas



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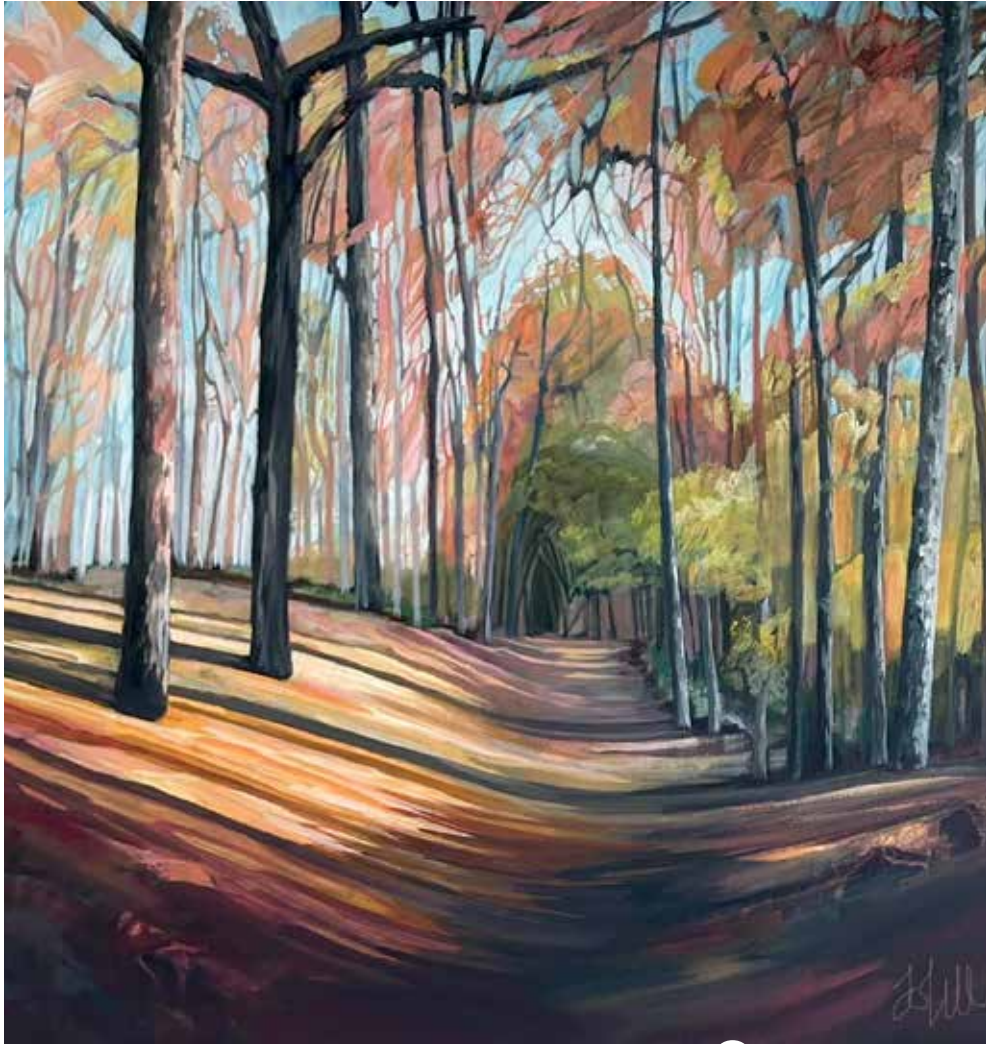
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# Creative CAVERSHAM



## A strong view of our local landscape



**Jo Lillywhite** has a passion for the local woodlands and countryside surrounding this area, which she captures on canvas. **Elestr Lee** had a preview of her latest paintings, on view in Caversham this November

**I**F YOU'VE been past the Caversham Picture Framer in Church Road you can hardly have failed to notice the vibrant eye-catching local landscapes displayed in the window and on the walls there.

They are the work of Jo Lillywhite – and in fact mark her second solo exhibition in Caversham, having previously been featured in 2019, before the shop moved into its current location. “As well as having examples of my work in the Caversham

Picture Framers, I also take part in the Henley Arts Trail and the Oxfordshire Artsweeks, where I have been exhibiting in Watlington in previous years,” Jo explained. She is very excited about showing her work again in Caversham and is impressed with the new exhibition space at the Picture Framer’s shop.

Jo has been selling her paintings since 2017, largely at shows and trails in the surrounding area, as well as taking

commissions. However, she didn’t start out as an artist. “I didn’t do a fine arts degree, and I am largely self-taught,” she explained.

With a degree in management, she originally worked in IT and finance. However, she decided she needed a career change after her two children were born. “I started going to local art groups, as well as attending workshops. I learnt how to use pastels and acrylics and tried portraiture, painting animals as well as landscapes.

“With art, you have to try out various things, and eventually you feel what’s right for you, and what resonates.”

Jo has found it is the landscape surrounding the part of south Oxfordshire adjoining Caversham which really inspires the work she produces.

“**People who look at my paintings often ask me about my style... what I love is perspective, the feeling you could wander into the scene, or to continue walking on through**

“I love the woodlands, as well as the fields around here. People who look at my paintings often ask me about my style... what I love is perspective, the feeling you could wander into the scene, or to continue walking on through. This leads to a strong sense of depth and line. Also, when I am painting the tall, majestic beech trees, they look so strong. I love to paint their straight, upright forms.”

Jo’s use of colour is also very powerful. “You can put a lot of joy into your work with the use of bold colours,” she commented. “I have tried using calmer colours and even tried monochrome – but it just isn’t me!” she laughed.

She thoroughly enjoys meeting the public during the Artsweeks and the trails she takes part in, and feels these events benefit both artists and customers alike. “People who come to see our work love



An icy scene, entitled *Wintry Arches*

meeting the artists,” she said. Her work can also be found in shops and galleries in the area.

Her children are both now teenagers, and Jo is loving her career as an artist. “In fact, my daughter is also very good at art, and is working towards her GCSE Art at Langtree,” she mentioned. Most recently Jo has been busy creating new works for her latest exhibition at the Picture Framers, depicting scenes in the Woodcote, Checkendon and Stoke Row countryside.

“I have also been on walks along the Ridgeway and have discovered Grim’s Ditch, which has really inspired me. I am fascinated by the old drover’s ways and ancient pathways which can still be walked. I want the exhibition to include a series of new works, so I have been working on these in recent months. I use acrylic paint as well as pastels, so these mediums will be featured, and the paintings will have a local and seasonal theme.”

Find out more: [jolillywhiteart.co.uk](http://jolillywhiteart.co.uk)

**Jo’s solo exhibition at the Caversham Picture Framer, 5A Church Road, runs from October 2 – November 16. Free entry**



*Ridgeway Hues* (top left) and another seasonal view, *Into the Autumn*

**all photos J Lillywhite**





Caversham Group Holiday

photo C Blount

# Caversham Group Holiday

by Audrey Asquith

**M**Y HUSBAND and I, in our eighties, decided we would look for a holiday nearer home this year. In July we joined the Caversham Group Holiday for seven days at Salisbury.

How have we missed this before? Sixty years ago, the Revd John Grimwade of St Peter's had the idea of taking a coach full of people away for a Parish Holiday. A boarding school was chosen as having lots of facilities and sleeping arrangements for a large group. Every year since that time families and friends have spent a week away with plenty for everyone to do and enjoy. The holiday is now called the Caversham Group Holiday.

This year we stayed at Chafyn Grove School in Salisbury, a boarding school with extensive grounds and sports facilities, including a heated outdoor swimming pool. Three excellent meals a day were served in the dining hall and there was unlimited tea and coffee. There were young families, grandparents with grandchildren, some people on their own and older people (like us!).

Members of the committee and volunteers were much involved with events. Peter and I had no idea how karaoke, Traitors or Cluedo worked. Competitions for croquet, bowls, whist, bridge, shuffleboard, and others ran throughout the week — all great fun. On Sunday morning the Revd John Dudley took a communion service. The heated pool was very popular as we had perfect weather — a few of us even managed a quiet swim at 7:30.

Large 1000-piece jigsaws were scattered around the dining hall, where anyone could stop and add a few pieces. We were amazed to find some people could do jigsaws without a picture to replicate.

Salisbury and its beautiful cathedral were a very short bus ride away or, for the younger and fitter holidaymakers, an easy walk.

We marked the holiday's sixtieth year by holding a 60s-themed evening — great hilarity and fun was had by all.

These holidays don't just happen. A lot of planning and hard work go into the preparation, and our grateful thanks go to all those volunteer organisers. They made a lot of people very happy. Next year's holiday is already in preparation!

Anyone wishing for more information about the holiday please contact Joy Blount at [blount.joy@gmail.com](mailto:blount.joy@gmail.com)



**For the youngest members of our community**

**LISTED BELOW are regular term-time events for toddlers, babies and their carers. All are free of charge, although donations towards costs are welcome.**

**Tuesdays – Babies and Toddlers** – Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, RG4 8EB. 10:00 - 11:30. Refreshments available. All welcome.

[cavershammethodist.org.uk/baby-toddler-group](http://cavershammethodist.org.uk/baby-toddler-group)

**Tuesdays – St. John's Baby and Toddler Group** – Caversham Hall, St. John's Road, RG4 5AN. 09:30 - 11:00. All welcome.

**Thursdays – Toddler Thursday** – St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA. 8:45 - 10:00. Friendly group for preschoolers and parents/carers, refreshments available. [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on)

**Thursdays – Baby Massage with midwife Katie** – 12:15-12:55 at the Weller Centre during term times. Suitable for babies from 6 weeks to crawling. 50p donation towards costs, refreshments available.

**Fridays – Tiddlers for Babies and Toddlers** – St Andrew's Church, Albert Road. Caversham Heights. RG4 7PL. 9:30 - 11:00. All are welcome, refreshments available. [www.facebook.com/groups/209815529592564](https://www.facebook.com/groups/209815529592564)

# A Christmas Gift

by Paul Cooper  
of Reading Family Aid



LOCAL CHARITY Reading Family Aid, which supports disadvantaged children and their families, launched its Toys and Teens Appeal for 2024 on 24 October. Each Christmas, the Appeal helps guarantee children who would otherwise not receive a single present, have something to open on Christmas morning.

The Reading and Caversham areas seem so prosperous that many people find it hard to imagine there are desperately deprived families here. But the cost-of-living crisis continues to hit families hard in so many ways, and your support makes a real difference to every family.

Last year, over 2,500 children received a gift at Christmas, thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters, but we need your help again this year. There are two ways you can do so:

1. Donate toys at one of our donation points (or we will collect)
2. Donate money to our appeal, to go towards additional toys

The final date for donations is 7 December. For details of how to donate toys, please visit: [www.readingfamilyaid.org/donate-toys](http://www.readingfamilyaid.org/donate-toys)

Local donation points include:

- Caversham Library
- Caversham Homecrafts
- Fourbears Books
- Caversham Tiles

To donate money, visit our LocalGiving page:

<https://localgiving.org/charity/readingfamilyaid>

Please help us to make this Christmas extra special for children and families who deserve it this year. Thank you!

There's more information about the appeal on our website:

[www.readingfamilyaid.org/toys-teens-appeal](http://www.readingfamilyaid.org/toys-teens-appeal)



Mayor 2024 Appeal Launch

photo C McLean

Also supporting Water Aid & Launched Refreshments

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# CHOOSING A COMMUNITY

by Hilary Smart

**T**HIS TIME last year we received the primary school application form for our younger son. For him, the choice of school was easy — we wanted him to go to the school his brother was at — but I still remember how stressful choosing a school was the first time around. We made a list of what we thought was important for our son. He was a quiet and inquisitive child, so we were looking for somewhere nurturing and

small, somewhere that would engage him academically and value him as a person. We pored through the websites of all the schools we were likely to get into and tried to work out which would suit our family best.

It seemed really hard to choose, until we went to a few school open days and accidentally fell in love with St Martin's, which just happened to be the furthest from our house. This left us with a 10km round trip by bike for the school run. Oops! At least everyone is awake by the time we get there.

We're lucky that we have so many good schools and wonderful teachers here in Caversham. As happy as we are at our school, I know friends who speak just as highly of all of our schools. The best school is the one that is the right fit for your family, and there's no better way to get a feel for the character of a school than by visiting it and seeing the pupils and staff interacting.



The school run

photo H Smart

## Primary School Open Days 2024

*The following table contains information supplied by the schools, or available on their websites at the time of writing, 10 October 2024. Only dates in November, December and January are included.*

### Caversham Park

Queensway, Caversham Park, Reading, RG4 6RP

Looking for a school place? If you would like to arrange a visit to the school for you and your child, please contact the school office to arrange a parent / carer tour with Miss Ray, our Headteacher, or join us on one of our Open Afternoons:

**13:45 Wednesday 6 November and Wednesday 20 November**

Phone 0118 937 5433 or email: [admin@cavershampark.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cavershampark.reading.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.cavershamparkprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.cavershamparkprimaryschool.co.uk)



### Caversham Primary

Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7RA

Join us for a school tour with the Co-Heads Mrs Jones-King and Mrs Grover.

**Fridays starting at 10:45. 11, 18, 25 October; 15, 29 November.  
Starting at 9:00 25 October, 22 November**

Please call the school office to book a place on 0118 937 5454.  
Email: [admin@cavershamprimary.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cavershamprimary.reading.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.cavershamprimary.org](http://www.cavershamprimary.org)



### Emmer Green

Grove Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8LN

Parent Tour — Please book with our office

**All starting at 9:15. 8, 14, 22 October; 6, 11, 25 November**

Please contact the school for information.  
Phone 0118 937 5464 or email: [admin@emmergreen.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@emmergreen.reading.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.emmergreenprimary.com](http://www.emmergreenprimary.com)



### Micklands

Micklands Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6LU

We have the following open mornings/afternoon.

**Thursday 3 October 2024 9:30 – 10:30,  
Tuesday 5 November 2024 14:00 – 15:00**

If you would like to book a place, please call the school office on 0118 937 5500. If you are unable to make any of the above dates, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate your schedule.

or email: [admin@micklands.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@micklands.reading.sch.uk) to book your visit  
Website: [micklands.reading.sch.uk](http://micklands.reading.sch.uk)



### St Anne's

Washington Road Caversham Reading RG4 5AA

If you are looking for a place for your child from September 2025, please join us on our open days.

**14:00 on 24 October and 20 November; 9:30 on 6 November, 10 December**

To book a place please call the school on 0118 937 5537  
or email: [admin@st-annes.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-annes.reading.sch.uk)  
Website: [st-annes.reading.sch.uk/reading/primary/stannes](http://st-annes.reading.sch.uk/reading/primary/stannes)



### St Martin's

Pendennis Avenue, Caversham Park Village, RG4 6SS

We welcome applications from all parents and carers, of all faiths and none. Please contact the school office to make an appointment for a tour.

**Open days 19, 24 October, 15 November,  
10 January, 10:00 -11:00, 14:00-15:00**

**Autumn fun session:  
Saturday 5 October 2024 10:00-11:00 – a session for 3 year olds**

Please contact the school office to make an appointment for a tour.  
Phone 0118 937 5544 or email: [admin@stmartins.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stmartins.reading.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.stmartinscaversham.co.uk](http://www.stmartinscaversham.co.uk)



### Thameside

Harley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DB

New parent tours

**All at 10:00. 3, 10, 17, 24 October, & November 7**

To book, please email: [admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk)  
Phone 0118 937 5551  
Website: [www.thameside.reading.sch.uk](http://www.thameside.reading.sch.uk)



### The Heights

129 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham. Reading, RG4 7LB

Tours run for maximum two adults per household. Places are limited and booking is essential.

**From 9:15-10:15 on 18 October, 8 and 22 November, 6 December, 10 January**

Contact the school office to book a place on 0118 357 0123  
Website: [www.theheightsprimary.co.uk](http://www.theheightsprimary.co.uk)



### The Hill

Peppard Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8TU

New Parent Tours

**24 and 25 October; 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, November, 5 and 6 December**

Contact the school office to book a place on 0118 937 5560  
AM and PM slots available. Booking required  
Website: [www.thehillprimary.org.uk](http://www.thehillprimary.org.uk)



### EP Collier Primary School and Nursery

Ross Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8DZ

0118 937 5470

Prospective parent tours are available by emailing the school office via [admin@epcollier.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@epcollier.reading.sch.uk)





# Les Cooper

# Delights in November

**C**AN YOU believe it is November already? All those things I was going to do but haven't actually managed, yet. November always seems to me, as I am sure it does to you, to be a turning point. The clocks change and the weather does too, well it does sometimes. I get annoyed because the shops begin to anticipate Christmas; give me the good old days when we did our shopping on Christmas Eve. But there is something good about this time of the year and I can't quite put my finger on what is. Is it because it is a busy time for wildlife in the garden?

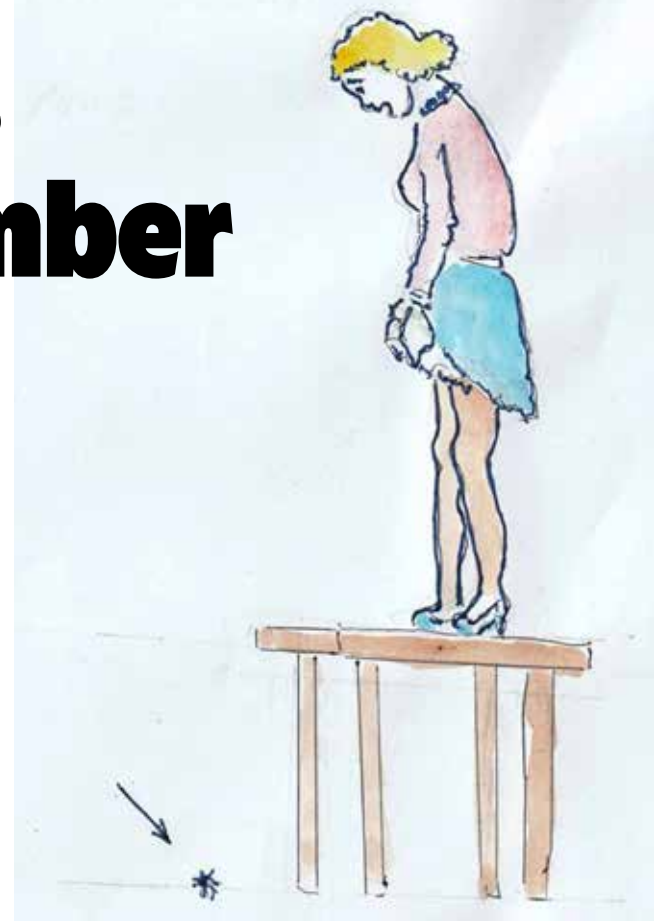
The spiders are all around and I love them, even though I do get tangled in their webs as I wander out in the morning. I can never understand women, mostly women, being scared of them. I worked with a charming young lady who, one morning, I found standing on a table, literally quivering with fear and pointing at a small black spider on the floor. I should not have laughed as I took it outside. In this country they are totally harmless and only flitting insects and flies need to panic.

If we fail to appreciate our spiders, then one little creature we surely take for granted is the woodlouse or, as I have always called it, the cheeselog. They are always around clearing up for us and scurrying away when we disturb them.

Now is the time to start putting out food for the birds: sunflower seeds, Nyjer (or Niger) seeds and meal worms, plus fat balls. I read recently about not bothering with grain, because only the pigeons and sparrows eat it, and they drive the other seed-eating birds away. That was new to me, but it did make me wonder.

Partly through choice and partly incompetence, my garden becomes wilder as the years roll by, and I have thought about sowing a few teasels to make it even wilder. I know Goldfinches like trying to pull out seed from the bristly heads and who could fail to be enchanted with them in their garden. But, and there is always a but, do I want rampant teasels taking over? I have read that they can become an annoyance, and it makes me wonder.

Why is it things are never straightforward, even in the garden?



Girl with spider

written and drawn L Cooper



Kidical Mass in Reading

photo Dr P Vega

## Reading Cycle Festival and Kidical Mass Ride

by Hilary Smart

READING CYCLE Festival took place on Sunday 7 September. It was an opportunity for cyclists and cycle-curious people of all ages to enjoy a bike-themed afternoon. There were opportunities to try out a range of unusual cycles, including a penny farthing. Avanti Cycling had set out several courses of varying difficulties for various sizes of children. Both of mine loved testing their skills over the ramps.

Even for those not on their own bikes, there was great entertainment, including a team of stunt riders demonstrating their impressive jumping and balancing skills, a small selection of fairground rides for little ones, and plenty of food and drinks stalls.

Many local cycling groups were represented. Dr Bike was offering free bike check-ups. The police were handing out

hi-vis equipment to many delighted children. Reading Cycle Campaign (who work with the council to try to improve Reading's cycling infrastructure) were on hand to answer questions and sign up new members, and Kidical Mass Reading (who do the same but with a particular eye to how accessible infrastructure is for children) also had a stand.

Kidical Mass Reading ran a family-friendly ride from the festival, which had about 90 riders. The route included the tunnel under the station, which is newly opened to cyclists. Simon Smart, the Kidical Mass route planner, says, "The tunnel under the station makes a much-needed safe connection into Reading town centre from Caversham which, importantly, can be used safely by young and less confident cyclists. It's a really great change to Reading."

For more information on Reading Cycle Campaign, see <https://readingcyclecampaign.org.uk>

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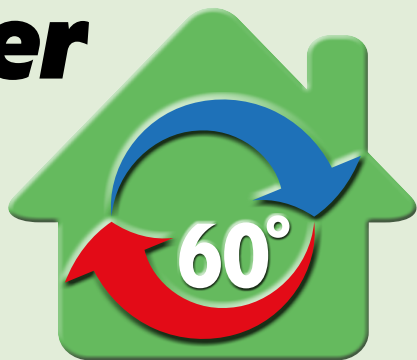


# Eco Tip

by Tricia Marcouse

## The 60 degree reminder

**W**HATEVER ENERGY-SAVING tips the government may put out this winter, here is an explanation of last winter's message to 'turn your gas boiler settings down to 60 degrees to save energy and £££'.



Most gas boilers are condensing models – either combi boilers which heat incoming water directly from the mains or store heated water in a cylinder. The system is controlled by a room thermostat that tells the boiler when to switch on and off to regulate room temperature, and boiler controls to set the temperature of the water to radiators and hot taps/tank. The latter are the ones involved in the 60 degree message.

### ...gadgets to control...

While creating very hot water, then having to add cold water to make it usable, is daft. The main reason for reducing boiler temperature is to allow the condensing boiler to work at maximum efficiency, as it recovers heat from the combustion exhaust gases rather than discharging it. You can get gadgets to control the system's efficiency automatically, but a simpler approach is to keep the temperature of water flowing to the radiators as low as practical to heat the house, and the temperature of hot water at a reasonable level, with 60°C as the starting point. If you can cope with a lower temperature, then so much the better!

The same simple advice does not apply to hot water tank systems. Bacteria can develop in a warm water tank, so it is important that this temperature climbs above 60°C on a regular basis to kill them. This suggests that 65°C is the right temperature for the boiler controls (the temperature of water in the tank will be lower than the boiler temperature). If you have separate controls for hot water and radiators, then the radiators can go down to 60°C, as above. If you had the time, patience and easy access, you could change the boiler temperature at different times of the day or certain days of the week, as heating the water to 65°C twice a week is enough to prevent bacteria growth.

### ...thermal underwear...

Finally, turning down the room thermostats will save money, but may not be comfortable. Yes, you can wear thermal underwear and ski jacket indoors, but draughts may be the issue. Please do a draughtproofing survey of your house and check whether there are simple changes to be made (see [www.draughtbusters.net](http://www.draughtbusters.net) for advice on how to do this).

# Living Simply

photo and story  
St Anne's School

**P**UPILS AND staff from St. Anne's have achieved the LiveSimply Award, validating their commitment to living simply, sustainably, and in solidarity with the world's poorest communities. The award, championed by the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), was presented to the school after they successfully planned and implemented faith-inspired actions that emphasized the

importance of caring for people and the planet. Their efforts have had a positive impact not only within the school but also in the local community and globally, as they reached out to make a difference.

The school's eco-drive initiative, organized by the One World Council group, saw pupils participate in tree planting and recycling projects. A highlight of the project was when pupils collaborated with local businesses to launch a zero-waste campaign, sparking positive change in the wider community.

A Year Five pupil commented on why they took part in the LiveSimply Award: "It felt amazing to be part of something bigger. Knowing that our actions help people around the world made all the hard work worthwhile."

### ...a real difference...

Another pupil from Year Four added, "I would encourage every school to take part in the LiveSimply Award. It's a great way to make a real difference while learning about how we can protect the environment and help others."

Bridget Tobin, Headteacher said: "This award is a reflection of the school community's dedication to caring for our common home and making a lasting difference. The pupils' passion and commitment to the cause have been inspiring, and we are proud to continue this journey of faith and action."

The CAFOD LiveSimply Coordinator for Schools said: "Congratulations to the pupils and staff on achieving the LiveSimply Award. Their actions are wonderful examples of caring for others and our common home, and we wish them well as they continue to live simply, sustainably, and in solidarity."



St Anne's Living Simply award

For further information, please contact: Bridget Tobin,  
[head@st-annes.reading.sch.uk](mailto:head@st-annes.reading.sch.uk)  
Tel. 0118 937 5537

For more on LiveSimply see:  
[cafod.org.uk/campaign/livesimply-award](http://cafod.org.uk/campaign/livesimply-award)

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# Sporting Profiles

Iris Hajda

## Champion BMX rider

by George Grubb

**L**AST MONTH we featured a sports person who had just reached her 80th birthday. This month we turn the spotlight on a local BMX rider who competes in the female 11-year-old class, Iris Hajda.

Iris tells us her dad did BMX when he was a child and belonged to Hayes Hawks BMX Club. So just after lockdown, in September 2020, she joined the club too. She started competing four years ago and became South Region Champion in her first year.

The following year she entered national races, finishing the year as National number 2! In 2023 she became British and National number 1 and started international level racing, becoming both European and World Number 8. She maintained her British and National standing in 2024 but didn't do as well as she had hoped at the World Championships in Rock Hill, as she fell off in her semi-final. However, she went to Verona for the European

Championships and came third, so she is now ranked third in Europe.

BMX riders compete in gender and age group categories. Iris raced in the female 11s this year and will be racing in female 12s next year. When asked what she enjoyed about the sport, she said "Seeing my friends and racing. I enjoy travelling to different places, such as Rock Hill, South Carolina and Verona. I like to win!"

Riding in competitions requires special equipment, including body and leg protection, helmet and a race bike, which is different to a normal BMX bike. Iris said "I ride a Pure Bike from the Pure Bike Co. This is the team I ride for, and they provide me with my bike and a race jersey. Going into 2025, I am hoping to have a sponsor". Travelling to competitions is expensive and her mum has started a GoFundMe page to raise funds to travel to Copenhagen for the World Championship in August 2025 and Latvia for the European Championships. She has had some support from local company Betty B's Motorhome Hire, who have



Iris Hajda in action

photo T Twist – @tt\_photography70

You can follow Iris via her Instagram account, [@irisbmxe3](https://www.instagram.com/irisbmxe3)

BMX races can be viewed on Youtube at [www.youtube.com/aperturebmxe3](https://www.youtube.com/aperturebmxe3)

For more information on BMX, visit the British Cycling website [www.britishcycling.org.uk/bmx](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/bmx)

Iris says the best club local to Reading is Hayes Hawks BMX Race Club [www.hawksbm.co.uk](https://www.hawksbm.co.uk)

For the GoFundMe link for donations to support Iris, see <https://gofund.me/506ec834>

provided a motorhome at a discount for the Copenhagen trip, but she still needs a main sponsor.

When asked where someone living in our area who is interested in BMX could practice, Iris said "There are no BMX tracks in Reading, so I travel to lots of different places (Hayes, Runnymede, Andover and Gravesend) to train. We do have a few 'pump-tracks' like the one at Long Barn Lane in Whitley where I practiced my skills in the early days."



**Steve Morano Band:** The Retreat 10/08/2024

**Totally Blondie:** Kenton Theatre 06/09/2024

Report and photos by Richard Wells



Steve Morano Band

**A**NYONE FAMILIAR with the local music scene in Reading will almost certainly know Steve Morano. Steve has been playing shows, both solo and with his band, for over 20 years in pubs, clubs and festivals all over Reading and the surrounding areas.

We recently caught Steve performing at The Retreat on St John's Street. Steve was appearing with a full band on this occasion, and they were in great form. Tight, but clearly enjoying themselves and having a great time.

Steve has a fun and affable rapport with his audience, but it's when he starts to sing that he comes into his own. His distinctive soulful voice really brings his bluesy songs to life, and even those unfamiliar with his material are sure to be singing along by the final chorus.

Whether with his band, or solo, Steve is a must see for any local music fan!

The Retreat is a cozy little community pub, with a strong reputation for supporting local musicians. With a great selection of local ales, it's a friendly and welcoming place to while away an evening seeing the talent Reading has to offer.

In September we caught Totally Blondie at The Kenton Theatre



Totally Blondie as Blondie

in Henley. As you may have guessed, they are a tribute to the legendary Blondie.

When they took to the stage, lead singer Chloe was not only instantly recognisable as the iconic Debbie Harry, but also has all the mannerisms and dance moves down pat. Her vocals were uncanny, and the band was faultless.

They instantly had the crowd in the palms of their hands, running through Blondie's numerous hits and some lesser-known tracks along the way. Whether a casual or a die-hard fan, you can't fail to enjoy this show.

The Kenton Theatre is in the heart of Henley, and is the fourth oldest working theatre in the UK. Run as a charity with numerous volunteers, the venue hosts a plethora of different performances and is definitely worth a visit!

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# St Peter's Church



Drawing by Janina Maher

[www.janinamaher.artweb.com](http://www.janinamaher.artweb.com)

**F**OR CENTURIES the Parish Church of St Peter's has had a prominent position high on a hill above the centre of Caversham – a clear landmark when viewed from the Reading side of the river which has featured in so many paintings and prints of the village. Today, it is lovely to wander into the gardens of Caversham Court, under the arch on the right, up the steps through the beautifully planted flower beds and into the churchyard via the open gate in the wall. From this promontory one can glimpse the river through the trees.

*...difficult to imagine...*

The origins of this beautiful church date back to the Norman period – the Norman font is still in use and the arched doorway in the south porch has typical Norman 'dog-tooth' decoration. Built of traditional flint and stone, the building has undergone many alterations, particularly when it was heavily restored in the nineteenth century. Some of the changes were brought about during the Civil War and the siege of Reading. It is said that the Royalists had placed a cannon on the tower and created defences around the church guarding the approach to the bridge. Under fire from the Parliamentary cannons, the church suffered severe damage to the north and west sides, and part of the tower and the spire were shot away. In the peace of the churchyard today it is difficult to imagine the chaos and suffering of battle. A wooden tower was built as a replacement, but this had become rather rotten by 1878, when the present

stone tower was built. There are eight bells installed in the tower, which are still rung by an enthusiastic band of bell ringers – the oldest bell is dated 1637 and was cast in Reading.

The increasing population of the parish meant more space was needed, which led to extensive changes in the nineteenth century. These resulted in many medieval features of the building being lost. A vestry was built in 1857 at the end of the North Chapel, and a south aisle was added in 1887. In 1924 the chancel was extended and a new south chapel (the Lady Chapel) built.

Today the church has kept up to date with a lively and active congregation, senior and junior choirs, and lots of activities for young and old. In last month's Caversham Bridge, there was an article about the launch of a *Friends of St Peter's Church* to help with the care and maintenance of this historical building and to make sure it thrives for centuries to come.

This drawing is one of a number which appear in  
**Janina's 2025 Caversham Calendar**  
which is available from  
Fourbears Books in Prospect Street.

# Wilfred Owen in Dunsden

by Linda Glithro

ON SATURDAY 9 November, there will be an opportunity to find out more about the WWI poet Wilfred Owen's time in Dunsden, and the stained-glass window installed last year in All Saints' Church to commemorate this.

The window was designed by Natasha Redina as an entry for the 2022 Stevens' Competition and commissioned by the Dunsden Owen Association and the Church, with oversight from the Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass. David Woodward and Linda Glithro of the Association will lead the event.

We will meet in All Saints' Church car park, RG4 9PH, at 10:30 to view and hear about the window, from the initial idea to its dedication. This will be followed by a walk to see some of the local places which were key to Owen's time in Dunsden. Robust footwear is required, as some of the walk is across farmland. The event is expected to last 1½ to 2 hours. Donation requested, to be shared between the Dunsden Owen Association and All Saints' Church.

**Enquiries: 07855 553 245**



Dunsden Church

photo F Smith



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# Grief Encounters



George and Alan

photo G Picton

## by Glyn Picton

ON THE EVENING of 23 May 2018, my wife of nearly 60 years passed away in our bedroom overlooking the garden she had tended for over four decades. The passing of time has done little to ease the pain of life without her. The heartache, the tears, the feelings of emptiness and desolation have remained constant companions. I held her hand at her bedside as she silently slipped into her new world, beginning a journey where I could no longer follow. I realized with great sadness my life would be very different without her love, tenderness and support. Not only for me but for everyone she cared about, especially her family.

### ...self-pity taken hold...

Later, I received an invitation to join a bereavement course, which I assumed would offer information, advice, and guidance to help those wrestling with grief. I wasn't coping well, but I felt sharing my experience with others in similar situations could be a positive step toward adjusting to my new reality, where self-pity had taken hold. On the first evening of the course, I quickly realized I did not have a monopoly on self-pity. I had a 'why me' mentality, harbouring anger toward those who had, however unintentionally, been part of my wife's fight for life. One by one, most participants struggled to find words to express their innermost

thoughts; nervously, hesitantly, tearfully. What became clear on that cold winter's night was our need of someone who truly cared, who would listen intently, understand deeply, and empathize with our attempts to voice what our broken hearts longed to say. We needed to know we were not alone, that others were navigating similar struggles and sharing the same human frailty. That first evening was truly food for thought.

The six-week course soon ended. We had started as strangers but, by the end, we had become something more. It was suggested that some of us might like to stay in touch and meet socially from time to time, maybe for a drink and a chat. The course organizers also arranged social gatherings, which continued throughout 2024. Three of us discovered we had been conscripted for National Service, back when we were young and fit. So, in addition to the social evenings organized by the course for both men and women, we former National Servicemen decided to meet regularly at a local pub. There, we talked about our time in military service, exchanged memorabilia and photos, and enjoyed lively conversations. We even arranged a few lunches throughout the year, including a special one at Christmas.

You can read more in Alan's account on this page, which includes an invitation to others in our predicament, and contact details, or you can contact me at [pictonglyn@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pictonglyn@yahoo.co.uk) or on 0118 947 5008.

## LIVING WITH LOSS

IT IS ALWAYS hard when someone close to us dies, and we can often find it difficult to talk about how we feel or the person we have lost. The Caversham, Thameside and Mapledurham Parish regularly organises a *Bereavement Journey* course, which runs for six weeks. This provides a chance to feel less isolated by sharing the journey with others. Each session has short film clips and time for discussion in a small group. The articles below were written by Alan and Glyn who met on one of these courses. Look out for details of the next course, which will be publicised in the Caversham Bridge.

A Bereavement Café also meets monthly at St Barnabas church in Emmer Green – see our What's On page for details.

By The Editors

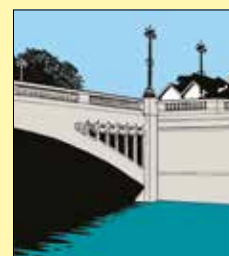
## Did You Serve in the Armed Forces? Have You Experienced a Bereavement?

### by Alan Standing

SERVED IN the Royal Air Force (RAF) from 1956 to 1958 as a Radar Operator. During my service, I was posted to various RAF sites, including some in Northern Ireland, ending up at Hope Cove, Devon. After nearly 60 years of marriage, I sadly lost my wife, Christine, to cancer in December 2021. Devastated, I was encouraged by Reverend Penny Cuthbert of St John's Church in Caversham, to attend a bereavement meeting at the church in May 2022. At the meeting, I sat next to a gentleman named George Leach. George had also recently lost his wife, Wendy, who passed away from Parkinson's disease just a few weeks before Christine.

After the service, another gentleman approached us and introduced himself as Glyn Picton. Glyn had lost his wife, Jocelyn, in May 2018. During our conversation, we discovered that Glyn and I had both served in the RAF during the same period, though we had never met before. Glyn was an administrator at RAF St Athan in South Wales. Although George is the same age as Glyn and me, he didn't start his National Service until 1959, serving in the Royal Artillery from 1959-61. The three of us spent a long time talking, and decided to meet up for a drink in a few weeks. That gathering marked the beginning of a new friendship, one which remains strong to this day. We meet every 5-6 weeks for a chat, drink, or meal. Our group has since grown to include another member, John Russell who, though not an ex-serviceman, also experienced a bereavement, losing his wife, Melanie, in May 2022. The four of us have become close friends and we would warmly welcome anyone who would like to join our group.

You can contact Alan on 0118 947 0059.



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# Keeping it Local

by Katia Major



**Our values are to:**

- **Work together**
- **Celebrate local and independent businesses**
- **Support each other**
- **Protect and enjoy our local natural environment**

If you are interested in joining CTA, please contact [cavershamtraders@googlemail.com](mailto:cavershamtraders@googlemail.com)

You just need to be a business in the Caversham or surrounding area providing services or products, and with an interest in collaborating and promoting our unique community. You don't have to have a shop or physical premises. Every business owner who feels they can contribute is welcome.

**L**OCAL BUSINESSES in Caversham and Emmer Green are at the heart of our community. They provide accessible services and resources for us all, creating valuable work opportunities for local people. We are fortunate in having a wide range of independent businesses, from restaurants and financial advisers to a tile shop and nail bars!

The Caversham Traders Association (CTA) is made up of businesses which are located in and around the area who share the same passion to celebrate local and independent business and our beautiful, river-side environment.

The Association has been running for many years, supporting local developments and championing business needs. It has always been run by volunteers from the local business community. A new volunteer Board was formed in December 2023 to lead on several new initiatives, including:

#### **Coordinating 'What's On in Caversham':**

Linking with Reading to ensure residents and visitors can readily discover what's happening locally. We will also be launching our own Caversham website shortly.

#### **Celebrating local business:**

This started in December 2023 with our great Cavmas Hamper giveaway, and will continue this year with similar opportunities to win gifts from local businesses!

#### **Events:**

From regular Farmer Markets to Summer Picnics and Christmas Lights, we have plenty of ideas for events and plan to grow them in the future.

#### **Collaborating with others:**

Connecting with organisations which are already doing amazing things in Caversham like Friends of Caversham Court Gardens and the Caversham and District Residents Association.

CTA aims to promote members so everyone can benefit from the tremendous local expertise and skills on offer.

## Just can't get away from home!

by Rowena Waddington

RUFUS ISAACS ROAD in Caversham. Who was this man? I always wondered. Well, I found out in a very roundabout way when I visited my son and his wife in Canterbury. We decided to visit English Heritage's Walmer Castle, near Deal, which was built as an artillery fort to defend the coast of England. The castle walls are surrounded by cannons pointed out to sea ready for action.

But a few days before we went to Canterbury, my husband and I enjoyed a very informative boat trip from Caversham to Mapledurham. The 'captain' gave an excellent commentary on the sights along the way and pointed out that a painting of Mapledurham Mill was used on the album cover of a 1970s Black Sabbath LP. If you're a child of the 60s, you'll know they were a heavy metal rock band. So I Googled Black Sabbath's album covers, and there was The Mill, with a very menacing and chilling black figure in the foreground.

Back to Walmer Castle: in one of the many rooms, I spotted a small painting which I felt sure was Mapledurham Mill, and it was! What was the connection? Rufus Isaacs was the 1st Marquess of Reading from 1860 to 1935, who was also known as the Earl of Reading. Apparently in 1937, he held the title of Lord Warden of Walmer Castle for one year, so I can only guess the painting was a 'nod' to his association with Reading.

The Lord Warden at Walmer Castle wasn't bestowed upon just anyone. The late Queen Mother held this title from 1978 to 2002, and Lord Wardens had the privilege of a private apartment within the Castle, where they could entertain.



## Tips for men's skincare

**W**HEN IT comes to skincare and beauty, society tends to focus on women. However, skincare and health are not gender specific and men have their own concerns due to the differences in their skin. I thought for this article I would highlight the top treatments for my male clients.

Most men seem to think a facial doesn't sound appealing, but they are shocked at how much they enjoy a microdermabrasion treatment. Aluminum oxide crystals, alongside vacuum suction, allows for a vigorous exfoliation of the skin. For men who shave, it is very effective, as razor burns, and in-growing hairs can be a problem. Exfoliation of the skin is key to getting a smooth shave. It can be especially effective for men in manual industries, who see huge improvements after regular facials. And everyone loves a scalp massage, which is often included!

by Perry Walker

Owner of Perry's Beauty, Caversham [@perrys\\_beautyroom](https://www.perrysbeautyroom.co.uk)

Pedicures can have many benefits for men, including improved nail health. By keeping nails trimmed you can reduce the chance of ingrown nails and improve the overall health of the nail plate. Pedicures improve circulation of the feet, which is especially helpful in winter. Pedicures are very effective at reducing stress. In addition, a pedicure increases confidence, as the appearance of the feet is improved.

**...confidence is improved...**

Hair removal is a big one for my clients. Men often wish to remove hair in the summer months for the holiday season and, although it can be painful, it is very beneficial. Confidence is improved, but also waxing and Intense Pulsed Light treatments can help to reduce unwanted hair and the embarrassment and discomfort that goes with it.

My last one isn't for everyone, but male clients who have had it are thrilled with the results. Advanced skin microneedling for men is incredibly effective. Men, like women, are often unhappy with the signs of ageing and want to improve the appearance of their skin. Collagen induction microneedling can improve fine lines and wrinkles, reduce pore size, rejuvenate and plump dull skin and enhance the overall appearance of the skin.

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# Wellbeing *with Ami Roy*

## Becoming Well Aged

**W**HEN WE contemplate growing older, we probably wish for physical and financial independence, joyful and engaging activities, and closeness with loved ones. Whether by playing pickleball or bridge, working part-time, or running after grandchildren, the big question is how every older adult can do what matters to them.

A new survey of more than 21,000 people aged over 55 across 21 countries found respondents largely agree about the importance of having purpose, managing stress,

enjoying meaningful connections with others, and preserving independence.

The results, unsurprisingly, show that older adults in whatever country who have financial stability are most likely to be able to stick to healthy habits, including those which boost cognitive health. Contrary to the perception that older adults are tech laggards, the results found widespread technology adoption, especially in smartphone use, among the older adult population.

On other topics, including how respondents perceive their health, how they want to engage in society, and how they view the best ways to stay healthy, responses vary widely. In particular, respondents in high-income economies (HIEs) aren't necessarily thriving more than counterparts in lower-income economies. For example, almost 20 percent of respondents in HIEs say they would like to work in their old age but aren't currently doing so. Respondents living in HIEs also

describe substantially lower levels of societal participation compared with their counterparts in other countries.

Physical health has the sharpest drop—38 percent—when looking at the average response, between the youngest and oldest cohorts. For those aged 55 to 64, mental health tends to be the most positively rated dimension. For those aged 65 and over, spiritual health becomes the most positively rated dimension.

Managing stress has a significant positive impact. Respondents aged 65 to 79 who agree or strongly agree that 'they manage their stress levels' have an average 17-percent uplift in their perceived overall health.

Feeling respected by one's community and believing that the perspective of older adults is valued also result in substantial uplifts, with the greatest effect seen in respondents in HIEs. This supports the idea that reframing ageing has the potential to alter how older adults perceive their own health.

Reports of overall health are better for survey respondents who engage in working, volunteering, education, and community activities than for those who don't. The greatest gain is seen with volunteering (eight percentage points, on average).

Healthy ageing starts with individual actions, with people following behaviours proven to improve health, supported by an environment that makes them accessible to all. It is a lifelong journey, and it is never too late to set out on the path to becoming well aged.

## Friends at work

text and photo Steve Ayres, Econet

**E**CONET IS A WILDLIFE conservation group which undertakes a wide range of activities relating to the conservation of the natural environment in public open spaces and other sites in and around Reading.

There are two local sites where Econet volunteers work: these are at Clayfield Copse and Mapledurham Playing Fields (MPF). Traditionally these were known as the *Friends of groups*.

At the end of September, the MPF team began work to improve the fruit trees in the community orchard. Many of the trees had lost their original stakes and, with small root development on a thin soil, they were leaning over and rocking in the wind.

Econet donated replacement stakes and ties, and about 25% of the trees now have new stakes and are less 'wonky'. The remainder of the work will be tackled in future months.

Please look at our website if you'd like to find out more about either of the local *Friends of groups*, or any of the other sites where Econet carries out wildlife conservation. The Econet web page is at [www.econetreading.org.uk](http://www.econetreading.org.uk)



Some volunteers at the September work party at Mapledurham Playing Fields take a well-deserved break from their work!

## THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right from the top)

male, clan, toy, ruse, boy, plan, ploy, **plot**, scheme, play, dream, slay, goal, show, cream.

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[www.steepalbathrooms.co.uk](http://www.steepalbathrooms.co.uk)



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### Contributions for the December issue

should be submitted by 1 November and for the January 2025 edition by 1 December. These should be emailed to:

[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

### Dates for advertising copy

are 1 November for the December issue and 1 December for the January 2025 issue. These should be emailed to:

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# First Impressions Matter

## CV Myths by Laura Harmsworth



In these articles, I offer guidance on the most effective ways to search for jobs and write CVs. There aren't specific rules per se; different CV writers might advise different strategies. There is also a wealth of information online, albeit some of it outdated.

However, there are some common myths you should be aware of.

### 1. A CV should be only one page

One of the biggest myths is that your CV must fit on a single page. This can be true for fresh graduates or those with limited experience but, if you have a lot of experience, you need more space to showcase your skills and achievements. You can go beyond two if needed as long as it is all clear and relevant. You don't want to eliminate key info that will get you the job, just to stick to a page rule.

### 2. You must include every job you've ever had

Don't list every single job you've held. Keep it relevant to the job you're applying for. You can list older jobs with the job title, company, and dates if needed. Every time you add a role to your CV, reduce or eliminate one that's old or less relevant. You can keep more details in your LinkedIn profile.

### 3. Fancy formatting will impress employers

It might be tempting to use fancy fonts and colours to stand out, don't – and stay away from the Canva and Etsy templates. Many companies use applicant tracking systems (ATS) to track applications and parse CV information. Some of these systems may struggle with complex designs, and the information might not make it from your CV to their system—your biggest achievement could show as a blank space. Stick to a clean, professional layout.

### 4. You should list all your skills

While it's essential to highlight your skills, listing every single one can dilute your value. Focus on key skills that relate to the role. Highlight what is being asked for in the job ad (or example job adverts if you're not applying for a specific job) and ensure these are in your CV, backed up with evidence (achievements).

### 5. A CV doesn't need updating if you're not job-hunting

If you're not actively looking for a new role, keeping your CV updated ensures you're prepared for unexpected

opportunities. It's much easier to update as you go rather than try to recall everything after several years. I can't tell you how often people have contacted me for urgent help because they were approached for a role, and their CV was not current.

**In conclusion, understanding these common CV myths can help you create a more effective CV. Focus on relevance, clarity, and keeping your CV up-to-date, and you'll be ready for any opportunity that comes your way.**

**Happy job hunting!**

You can follow Laura on:

[www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting](https://www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting)

on LinkedIn:

[www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth)

website: [www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

Email: [contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](mailto:contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

## Local Clergy and Church Services

### ANGLICAN

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###### Rev'd Mike Smith,

The Rectory, 20 Church Rd, Caversham RG4 7AD  
Tel: 0118 947 9505 [rector@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810  
[penny@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:penny@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith Tel: 07884 371688  
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Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475697  
[catherine@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:catherine@ctmparish.org.uk)

Contact: [admin@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@ctmparish.org.uk) or 0118 996 8836  
Correspondence address: Church House,  
59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

#### Current services

##### St Margaret's Church

Mapledurham – 11:15. 1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday Service of the Word.

##### St Peter's Church

1st Sunday of the month: 9.30 All Age Service of the Word, with music group and choir  
18.30 Holy Communion with prayers for healing, with choir  
2nd and 4th Sundays: 8.00 said BCP Holy Communion  
9.30 Holy Communion with choir and activities for young people, primary and secondary age  
3rd Sunday: 9.30 All Age Holy Communion in a shorter format, with choir – 18.30 Choral Evensong  
Wednesday: 9.30 said Holy Communion  
All services live streamed on Zoom. For Zoom details go to [www.ctmparish.org.uk/services/online/](http://www.ctmparish.org.uk/services/online/)

##### St John's Church

Gosbrook Road Sunday services  
8:00 Online CTM Youtube channel (stays available to watch anytime)  
9:30 1st and 3rd Sunday Holy Communion, 2nd All Age Worship, 4th Service of the Word  
Sunday Club for children on 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays

#### St Andrew's

Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage, Harrogate Road.  
Tel: 0118 947 2788 [www.standrewscaversham.org](http://www.standrewscaversham.org)

#### Current services

St Andrew's weekly services are Sundays at 8:00 and 10:00. The 10:00 is also livestreamed on the St Andrew's YouTube channel. Prayer Book Communion at 11.30 on the first Sunday of each month. More info on the parish website. [www.standrewscaversham.org/services](http://www.standrewscaversham.org/services)  
Compline: 8.30 on Mondays during BST (in church)

#### St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, [vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk)  
Church Office Tel: 0118 947 8239

#### Current Services

Sundays: 8:00 BCP Holy Communion (1st Sunday only)  
9:30 Parish Communion (Service of the Word on 2nd Sunday)  
11:30 All Age Worship (Café Church or Family Communion)  
Wednesdays: 10:30 Midweek Communion  
Morning Prayer: Tuesdays 8:30 in church; Mon/Weds/Thurs 8:00. online at  
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### METHODIST CHURCH

#### The Methodist Church Caversham

Rev'd Jeongsook Kim Tel: 0118 947 2223  
Rev'd David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592  
[www.cavershammethodist.org.uk](http://www.cavershammethodist.org.uk)

#### Current services

##### Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Highmoor Road  
Sunday – 10.30 – Also available on YouTube.

##### Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Current services: Sunday – 10:30  
New Testament Church of God

Rev'd Dr Garrick Wilson  
Tel: 0118 946 3009

### UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

#### United Reformed Church, Caversham Park

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston

Tel: 0118 947 5152 [www.cavershamparkurc.com](http://www.cavershamparkurc.com)

#### Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube  
Details on their web site at:  
<https://cpurc.org.uk/live-stream>

### BAPTIST CHURCH

#### Caversham Baptist Church

Pastor: Colin Baker

Church office Tel: 0118 954 5353

Email: [secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

#### Current services

Sunday worship 10:30 each week, including groups for children and youth  
Sermons are recorded and uploaded to  
[www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)  
Hymn Café 15:00-16:00 on the last Sunday of each month

#### Grace Church (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Elders Nick King and David Steed

Tel: 0118 947 4529 [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

See their web site for details:

[www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

#### Riverside Church (Reading)

[www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk](http://www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne

Fr Joe McLoughlin, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue  
Tel: 0118 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

#### Current services

See their web site for services at:  
[www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

#### St Michael, Sonning Common

(including Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village)

Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michael's, Sonning Common  
Tel: 0118 972 3418

<http://saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk>

For details of the services being held at each of our churches, please visit their respective websites (on this page) or the Churches Together in Caversham website [www.cavershamchurch.org](http://www.cavershamchurch.org)





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