

# Caversham Bridge

No 728

www.cavershambridge.org

October 2025

## On the buses

by **The Editors**

IT'S GOOD NEWS for bus users in Emmer Green and Caversham, with an improved timetable from 1 September. This sees a welcome increase in the frequency of buses serving Kidmore End Road and Courtney Drive, and a new low price fare for the trip from the centre of Caversham and central Reading.

The changes in our area are based on both customer and driver feedback. Customer requests regarding services in Emmer Green have been answered, with the circular Berry services (routes 23 and 24) and the Pink service (route 25 to Peppard Common) swapping their routes through Emmer Green. The Berry services will return to Courtenay Drive and Kidmore End Road, and Pink 25/25a will now run directly along Peppard Road. In addition, the Berry services will use Caversham Bridge in both directions. As a result, both sides of Caversham Park will have links to central Caversham in both directions. The Company state they will provide more buses and drivers for the

routes to help improve timekeeping and performance.

Bus frequency between the centre of Caversham and central Reading will be up to every 15 minutes. In addition, after a successful trial during the summer, a special £1.50 short-hop fare will apply for this trip. This applies to all journeys between Central Reading and Caversham Library on Pink 22/25, Berry 23/24, Little Berries 27/29, and Westfield Road on Aqua 28.

**...easier to follow...**

In Lower Caversham, Little Berries 27 is being renumbered to 29a, with an amended timetable during the daytime. Evening journeys will now follow the 29 route in both directions to improve reliability and to make it easier to follow for customers. The 29/29a timetable is also being adjusted to work better with Pink 25/25a and provide buses up to every 15 minutes over Reading Bridge.

Pink 25/25a and outbound Aqua 28/28a buses to Henley will now additionally stop at Reading Station North interchange.

Based on information from Reading Buses website – [www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk)



Berry bus

photo P Chatfield

## Summer goes out with a bang



After the storm, South View Avenue

photo A Crawford

by **Phil Chatfield**

**A**FTER MONTHS of dry weather, heatwaves and hosepipe bans, the summer ended suddenly in thunderstorms and showers as September started. Sunshine and showers combined to create this perfect rainbow early in the month.

The football season has started, and this October edition of the Caversham Bridge has several related articles. Happy Wanderer looks back at the football ferry, which brought Reading fans to see games here in Caversham, and our wordsearch has a football theme (both p7). We find out more about local team RG4 FC which gives young people a chance to play the game and, for older players, we report on Rotherfield United Walking Football Club and their charity fundraising efforts (both p13).

Les Cooper reflects on what the changing climate means for our gardens (p10). Les also appeared at the Caversham Horticultural

Society Autumn Show in his role as Society President, and we have a report from Francis Sarjent on the show (p2).

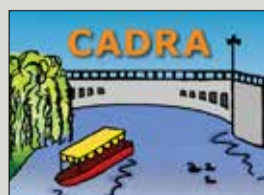
Our Creative Caversham subject this month is Cath Baldwin and her printed creations (p12). Writer, Elestr Lee, reports on her experience of etching and printing at The Print Club which has recently opened behind the Caversham Picture Framers' premises (p8). Church House and the now closed Caversham Barber's Shop are the subject of *The Local Scene* painting from Janina Maher this month (p9). Marking the 250th anniversary of her birth, Jane Austen makes an appearance in both the book reviews (p5) and our article from Roslyn Weaver (p10).

Finally, we have a report on a mission trip to Romania in the summer by a team from local churches. The team members took part in the work of The Smiles Foundation charity, helping some of the poorest in the country (p4).

**We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Caversham Bridge. Please do tell friends and neighbours about the paper and encourage them to subscribe!**

Contact us at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or by post at Church House, Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX. Please note, it is currently not possible to contact us by phone.

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# Hope for today and for ever



## Talking Point

by  
David Steed

**A**T OUR RETREAT in June, the Caversham ministers looked at each of the four chapters of Paul's letter to the church at Colosse. I believe there are valuable lessons in the book of Colossians that we can all apply in 2025. "Christ is enough", Paul declares, "He is God, the fullness of God, the one who made the world, the reason that everything exists". The Colossian church was a thankful church. The 'quiet revival' shows thankfulness for church across the UK, while the Transform Reading network fosters unity amongst pastors and leaders of Christian organisations, and in Caversham, in each of our seven churches.

The Colossian church was characterised by faith and love for the saints. It was the love that the churches had for one another that turned the world upside down, as recorded in the book of Acts, resulting in spectacular growth. We may engage in many actions as churches, which is good, as we welcome and serve the community that God has put us amongst. But the love we have for one another, born out of our love for God and filled by the Holy Spirit, will impress and draw people outside the church to Jesus.

The faith and love that Paul speaks about springs from hope - distinctly lacking in the UK and many other places today. Arguably, the nineties and noughties were

decades of hope, optimism and prosperity in Britain - great music, sport, and 'Cool Britannia'. However, since the 2008 financial crisis, a growing sense of unease was born out of a lack of hope. The economy has grown sluggishly at best, and many have been drawn into debt and poverty.

Paul talks about the supremacy of Christ, alive and reigning. Our mission is to make known the gospel - the mystery of the faith - to those who are struggling and hopeless. Hope was a key element in the church in Paul's day, a sure hope. Not the hope we might have that it will be a nice day or you have a good holiday, or your children or grandchildren do well in their exams. He talks about the Hope of Glory: if we put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ and have repented of our sin, he will grant us eternal life. It is also a hope for today that, whatever situations we face, he is with us and for us.

The hope is based on the fact that Jesus died and rose again and ascended into heaven. Without this fact at the centre of the Christian faith, there would be no hope and, as Paul says elsewhere in his letter to the churches, we would be dead in our sins.

David Steed  
Elder at Grace Church Caversham



Les Cooper checking out the flower displays

photo J Brownlee

# Putting on a show

by Francis Sarjent

**F**OR ME THERE is always a period of anxiety in the run up to the Caversham Horticultural Society Autumn Show. Will there be enough entries and will a decent number of visitors turn up? Both factors have the weather in common.

This year has been particularly tough on gardeners, with periods of prolonged drought. Normally a mainstay of this show, many potential entries of soft fruit and annual vegetables such as runner beans had gone over by the end of August. Incidentally, this early arrival of native berries before autumn could have a detrimental effect on wildlife which relies on autumn berries to fatten up before the winter.

Ironically, the long-awaited rain appeared over the show weekend, which could have reduced the number of show visitors. Thankfully this was not a major factor, and a healthy number of people came to support the show, to meet with friends, and enjoy the tea and homemade cakes. It was also very encouraging to view the trestle tables 'groaning' with ornamental plants, fruit, and vegetables on display. The show also included entries in domestic and craft classes, which were well supported. Plus, of course, we had several classes reserved for children and, as usual, there were several fearsome examples of vegetable monsters on display!



Fine displays of veg this year

photo C Clifford



Tomatoes taking centre stage

photo J Brownlee

Apart from inviting you to add the following show dates in your 2026 diaries, we extend an invitation for readers to submit entries. You do not need to be a member of the Society to exhibit. We start with a small Spring show, held at Caversham Methodist Church on Saturday 28 March. Mainly spring plants will be on display but there are also some domestic classes. Our main autumn show will be held at Emmer Green Primary School on Saturday 5 September. Details of both shows and how to enter will be displayed on the Society's website.

[www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk)

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# CONCERTS in CAVERSHAM

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH in Albert Road will once again be the venue for the *Concerts in Caversham Autumn Festival of Music and Art* between 24 October and 1 November.

The four concerts start on Friday 24 October with The CinC Ensemble, lead by violinist Ellie Fagg with Tom Norris - viola, Naomi Watts - cello and Jennifer Walsh - piano. They will play trios by Haydn and Dohnanyi and the piano quartet in G minor by Brahms.

On Saturday 25 October The Pelleas Ensemble, with Henry Roberts - flute, Luba Tunnicliffe - viola

and Rosanna Rolton - harp, take the stage. On Friday 31 October, bass baritone Dingle Yandell, with Adrienne Black on piano, perform opera highlights and Wagner's *Wesendonck* Leier, as well as lighter numbers.

Finally, on Saturday 1 November, The Ferrio Saxophone Quartet with Adrienne Black on piano will draw on their unusually wide range of styles and periods in their highly engaging concert programmes. Huw Wiggin, Ellie McCurry, David Zucchi and Katie Samways make up one of Europe's leading saxophone quartets.

**Tickets are available online at [www.concertsincaversham.co.uk](http://www.concertsincaversham.co.uk) from the 'Box Office'. Ticket 'bundles' providing big savings are available for those attending all four concerts.**



## Your community – your paper

by The Editors

**T**HE CAVERSHAM BRIDGE is produced and delivered by more than 100 volunteers who work together to bring you news and information about our community each month. The paper is delivered in Emmer Green, Caversham, Mapledurham and Caversham Park Village, as well as the Caversham Road area, for £7 a year. It is also available to buy in Noodstore and Fourbears Books in Caversham, the True Food Co-op in Emmer Green, the Milestone Centre and Sheabutter Cottage at the Henley Road shops.

Subscriptions run from April, so for new subscribers, the charge is £5 until April 2026.

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**Church House, Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX** for alternative payment options.

### Can you help?

We have around 80-90 people who help distribute and deliver your paper. We are currently looking for volunteers who could help with deliveries in Kidmore Road, between St Andrew's Road and Richmond Road and in the Carlton Road / Connisboro Avenue area.

We are also looking for someone who could cover other rounds across Caversham and Emmer Green when the regular volunteer is away.

It takes about one hour a month to deliver the papers, which would be delivered to you by one of our distribution volunteers.

Please contact

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

for more information.

### Are you familiar with Quickbooks?

We need a volunteer who could help us to find our way around a newly acquired Quickbooks accounting package. Could you spare a few hours to help with this?

Contact [chair@cavershambridge.org](mailto:chair@cavershambridge.org)



photo 89th Reading Scouts

## Dusting off the red boxes

by Elaine Rae

**T**HE 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 is 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, replacement of large tents and, last year, to Branching Up, a service which provides work experience placements for adults with learning disabilities.

We will announce the recipient of the 2025 postal fund on 28 November when our bright red Scout post boxes will open across Caversham and Emmer Green.

All post will be delivered by our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers and leaders over the weekend of 20 and 21 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)**

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# Remembering A Loved One

by Revd Penny Cuthbert

ON THE Sunday nearest to All Souls Day it is common for churches to hold a special service to remember those we have loved and lost. For many, it is a way of honouring their memory and giving thanks for their lives and all they meant to us. Everyone in the local community is invited to this act of remembrance. Some come on their own, others come with friends or family members. Some people just come for a year or two after a loss, whilst others come every year.

During the service, the names of those we are remembering are read aloud, and there is an opportunity to light candles in their memory. Those attending can't always put their finger on why this matters, or why it's helpful, but many find this service a comfort and a step towards healing. This can be especially so if it was not possible to attend the funeral of a loved one.

...eternal life...

As we remember those we have lost, we also reflect on the love of God, who gave us Jesus so anyone who wants to can receive eternal life through him. We pray for the comfort he promises to those who mourn, for ourselves and those around us. People often comment on the peace they experience in this service, a peace which is often hard to find in the world around us.

Remembering a Loved One services this year will be on 2 November, 16:00 at St John the Baptist, Gosbrook Road, RG4 5AN, and 18:30 at St Peter's, The Warren, RG4 7TH. For more information, or if you would like the names of your loved one to be read out at either of these services, please email [admin@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@ctmparish.org.uk) stating clearly the name of your loved one and the church at which you would like that name read out.

To learn more about the bereavement support offered by Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish, email [bereavement@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:bereavement@ctmparish.org.uk) or call Penny on 07825331810. Penny is Associate Vicar St John's Caversham



Team mission Romania 2025

photo St John's Church

## Mission Romania August 2025

# SHINE! (WOO!)

by Anna Clarke

I'VE RECENTLY returned from leading a group from St John's and St Peter's Churches in Caversham on a week-long mission trip to Romania – and what a week it was!

I couldn't be prouder of the team. For most it was their first mission trip. One had never owned a passport; another had never flown before! Saying 'Yes' took courage. For God promised, 'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid... for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.' (Joshua Chapter 1 verse 9).

We served with *The Smiles Foundation (Smiles)*, a Christian charity whose aim is to "Put smiles on faces in the name of Christ" and to show people they are loved and not forgotten. Our week was filled with projects:

- Running children's outreach in rural communities and in the local community, where many children do not yet know Jesus
- Visiting *Smiles* residential centres for the elderly – sharing songs, prayers, and encouragement
- Tackling practical jobs like sorting the warehouse, clearing an old nursery building, and painting rooms in a centre for the elderly
- Joining *Smiles* social workers on home visits to people living in extreme poverty

These visits were especially moving. Many live without running water and face daily hardship, yet have a strong faith. One woman, Luci, welcomed us into her crumbling home with joy. Her life reflected Philippians Chapter 4 verses 12–13: "I have learned

the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Before we left, Luci insisted on praying for us, a moment that deeply humbled and inspired the team.

We're now thinking about how we can continue our mission in Caversham. Team members have said: "The trip has encouraged me to serve the poor in our own community"; "It's made me grateful for what we have"; "It's challenged me to think about how our church can help those in need". Overseas mission shaped my own call into full-time children's ministry, and I believe this trip will bear fruit in many lives in future.

Though 17 of us travelled, we knew we represented something much bigger. Our church family, friends, and supporters 'sent us' with prayer, encouragement and financial support – just as the early church sent Barnabas and Saul (Acts Chapter 13 verses 1-3). Through our fundraising we were able to donate over £2000 to Smiles. To everyone who supported us – THANK YOU!

Above all, we are thankful for God's faithfulness. Again and again we saw Him at work - in children's laughter, elderly smiles, and prayers shared in tiny homes. Throughout the week we often sang: "Shine! (Woo!) From the inside out, that the world will see You live in me". Our prayer is that His light continues to shine through us, not because life is easy, but because Jesus is the Light of the world. And when His light shines, even the darkest places cannot stay dark.

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## For your bookshelf...

by Alex Forbes

Welcome to the *Fourbears* article where we pick a couple of titles we have enjoyed recently. I am delighted to announce that, in August, my wife Claire gave birth to a little boy called Willoughby. Everyone is doing brilliantly, and an added bonus is that, with all the sleepless nights, there is opportunity to read more!

ONE BOOK which received some attention at the start of the year due to a TV adaptation was *Miss Austen* by Gill Hornby. The TV show was aired by the BBC and was brilliant. Following Jane Austen's death, her sister, Cassandra, destroyed a number of letters Jane had written. This book is based on a literary mystery which has long puzzled biographers and academics. *Miss Austen* is a wonderfully original and emotionally complex novel about the loves and lives of Cassandra and Jane Austen. It's an intelligent, clever and entertaining read. Perfect for fans of Austen's work and the start of the trilogy of books Hornby has written in this world. All three books have been absolutely devoured over the long nights.

On a related note, we have Jessica Bull coming to the shop in November. Jess has written the

brilliant *Miss Austen Investigates* series where Jane Austen is a super sleuth. Jess' new book *The Austen Christmas Murders* is published in November, and we are delighted she will be coming to the shop on Thursday 20 November to discuss her book and all things Austen.

My children's choice is local author Iszi Lawrence and her popular *Time Machine Next Door* series. These books are perfect for ages 7+ and fans of *Horrible Histories*. There are multiple books in the series following two children, Sunil and Alex. Alex has built a time machine, so they travel back for various adventures. The two latest books released in August are *Inventors and Dinosaurs* and *Artists and a Disappearing Dog*. The former finds the pair in a spot of bother as a dinosaur has come to the present and the time machine is broken. How will they get the dino back to its own time? Both books are quirky, fun, informative reads that will have children laughing out loud.

Thank you to Iszi, who is a huge supporter of the shop and lent us some awesome props for our window display.

Happy reading and hope to see you soon.  
[www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk](http://www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk)



Can you take me back to meet Miss Austen?

photo A Forbes



Colin Baker at the Holiday Club

photo J Wilson

## On the move

COLIN BAKER, who wrote our August *Talking Point*, has since left Caversham Baptist Church to take up ministry in Burgess Hill. In recent years, Colin has played an active role in Churches Together in Caversham, in particular helping with the Holiday Club and the planning of Nativity Live. His last service was 7 September.

Colin wrote, 'I have been called to Sheddingdean Baptist Church in Burgess Hill. It is a church plant from Gateway Baptist in Burgess Hill itself. The church currently meets in a school and has very strong links into schools, the community centre and the local football club. This takes me back to my church planting roots both prior to and during training at Spurgeons College and of course my first four years of ministry in Scotland.'

We wish Colin and Alison all the best for the future. The Editors

## Be Kind

Colin's last *Talking Point* for us in August focussed on 'civility' – kindness and neighbourly love. This thought from Caroline Flack, spotted on the wall of a café during a recent holiday, sums it up beautifully.

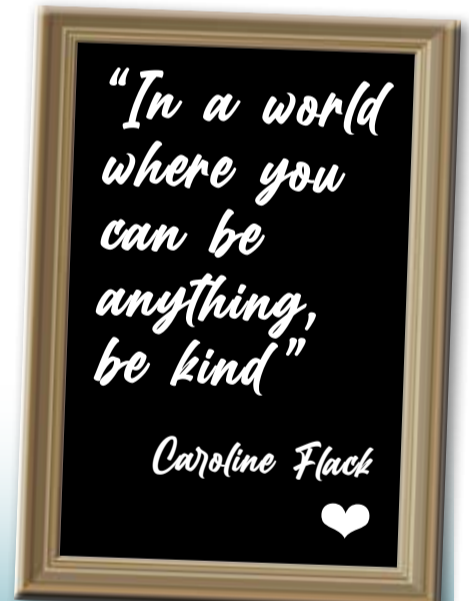


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# What's On

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, a listing of baby and toddler groups can be found on page 14.

**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)

**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)

**Thursdays** – **Weller Voices Community Choir** – 19:30-20:30. Weller Centre, 110 Amersham Road, RG4 5NA. Term time only. Singing is fun, free and for all. Join any of our sessions. For details contact [wellervoices@gmail.com](mailto:wellervoices@gmail.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](http://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** – **Redifolk 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)

**From 1 October until 9 November** – **Exhibition of works by Ronnie Cruwys original mixed media paintings** – Caversham Picture Framers, Church Road – see <https://cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events>

**Wednesday 1 October: Whiteknights & Maiden Erlegh Lakes** – 4.5 miles – 10:30 Meet outside Reading Station Main Entrance at 9:50 to travel by bus to the university or join us at the Pepper Lane Entrance, nearest postcode RG2 7DN. Pang Valley Ramblers. One of a programme of regular walks in the area – see [pvrblers.org.uk/walks-programme](http://pvrblers.org.uk/walks-programme)

**Wednesday 1 October** – **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 1 October** – **Thames Hospice: Quality of life to the end of life, for everyone a talk by Dr Rachael De Caux** – 20:00 The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. To learn more visit [cavershamheights.org](http://cavershamheights.org) or email: [contact@cavershamheights.org](mailto:contact@cavershamheights.org)

**Friday 3 October** – **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)

**Friday 3 October** – **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

**Saturday 4 October** – **Plant sale** – 10:00-11:00 Caversham Horticultural Society, Oakley Road Allotments (adjacent to Vets)

**Tuesday 7 October** – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk) or Tel: 0118 947 5176

**Saturday 11 October** – **Artists & Makers Fair** – 10:00-16:00 at Caversham Methodist Church, 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 15 October** – **What is It? A Talk about Unusual Tools with Richard Anderson** – 19:30 Caversham Horticultural Society, Caversham Baptist Church. £3 non members. Light refreshments.

**Wednesday 15 October** – **How Is Reading Philanthropist Arthur Hill Connected To The National Trust? A talk by Duncan McKay** – 19:00 for 19:30 start. The Reading History Society at the Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BE: £2 for non-members.

**Wednesday 15 October** – **Jane's story, a talk about Jane Austen by Joy Pibworth** – 20:00 The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. To learn more visit [cavershamheights.org](http://cavershamheights.org) or email: [contact@cavershamheights.org](mailto:contact@cavershamheights.org)

**Saturday 18 October** – **'Come & Sing' workshop** – 10:00-16:30. Reading Bach Choir invites you to Mozart's Mass in C Minor, a workshop at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, RG4 7BG. Everyone is welcome. Tickets, including tea/coffee and music £25 (under 18's £5) via [www.readingbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.readingbachchoir.org.uk)

**Saturday 18 October** – **Meet artist Ronnie Cruwys** – 17:30 Caversham Picture Framers. An opportunity to meet the artist, view her exhibition, and share some food and wine. Ronnie will be doing a short artist talk at 18:30. Everyone is welcome. Please RSVP see <https://cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events>

**Friday 24 October** – **Le 9ème art – a talk by Lou Brimacombe** – 19:30-21:30 Le Cercle Français at Church House, 59 Church Street, RG4 8AX. For those who are learning French, love France and for French nationals. Admission £5 welcome drink included. See [www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk) for programme. Email [readingcerclefrançais@gmail.com](mailto:readingcerclefrançais@gmail.com)

**Monday 27 October** – **Artists of the Great War – Presentation by art historian Mike Grundy** – 14:00 Reading u3a at Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. Non-members welcome, free entry. 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)**

**T**HIS MONTH, new local applications include – **Hills Meadow, George Street** (PL/25/1225), erection of a temporary ice rink, marquee and stalls during the 2025 Christmas period. Whilst a popular annual event, the site is close to the very popular and pleasant footpath to Lower Caversham and View Island. This raises issues regarding noise, traffic, damage to trees and shrubs, and flood risk, which will all need to be considered. Along **The Warren** (PL/25/1174), there's a proposal to build a detached house on land which has long been designated for 'leisure use' only.

**Baltimore House in Newlands Avenue** (PL/25/1171), a listed building converted into flats in the early 1990s, has an application for external and internal improvement and restoration to a ground floor flat. There is also internal conservation work proposed to a listed home on **Church Road** (PL/25/1083). On **Upper Warren Avenue** (PL/25/1100), plans have been submitted to replace a bungalow on a sizeable plot with a larger home.

In **South Oxfordshire**, there are revised plans to the controversial proposal for **70 houses on Land West of Kidmore End Road** (P25/S1431/O). This is on some of the land that was formerly part of the Emmer Green golf course in the SODC area. The parish council and other groups have maintained their objections regarding the impact on the landscape, traffic increase, infrastructure needs and that it is contrary to the adopted Local Plan.

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

**CADRA** is a non-political voice for Caversham, Emmer Green and the community around North Reading. It is run by a small team of volunteers.

**Membership costs just £9 for three years** – see [membermojo.co.uk/cadra](http://membermojo.co.uk/cadra) for details.

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**Artists & Makers Fair**  
Saturday 11 October, 10 am - 4 pm  
Caversham Methodist Church

Free Entry

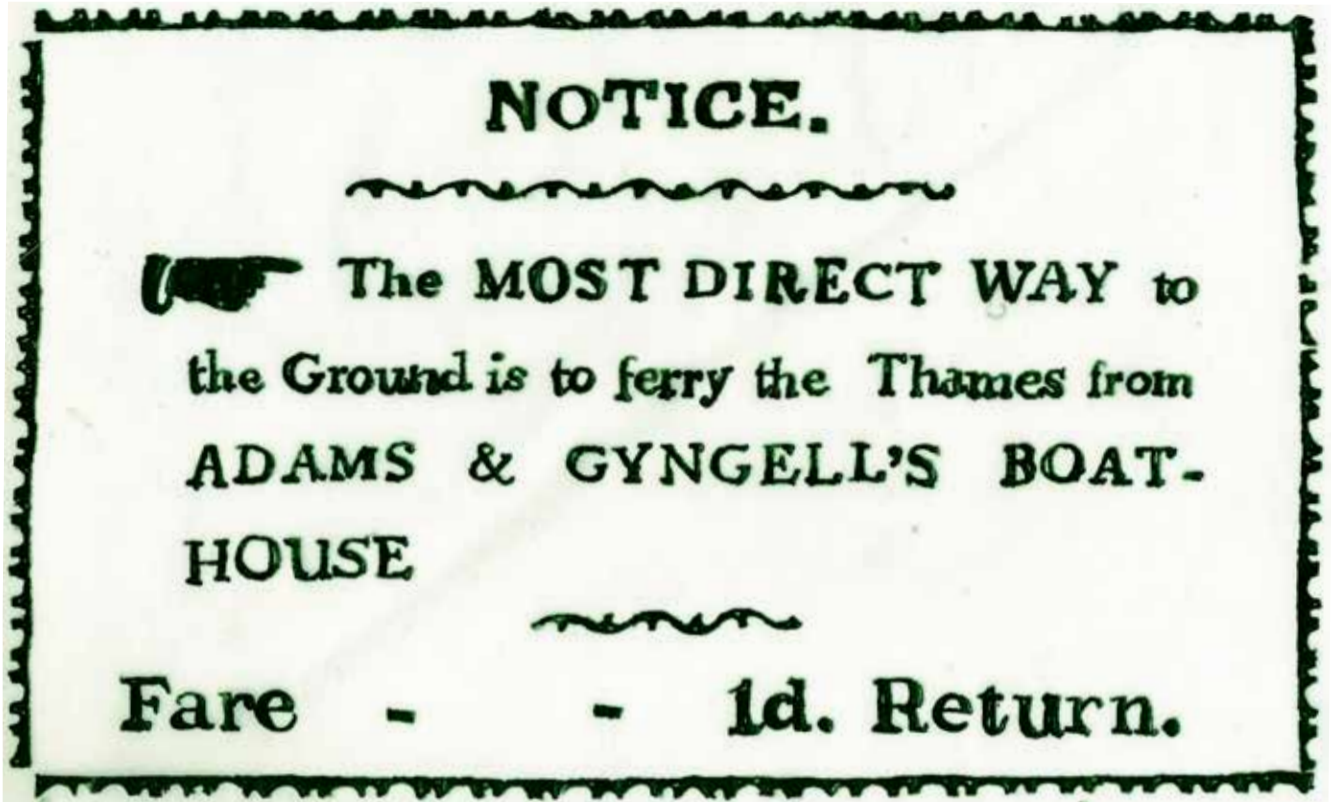
**R**ECORDS SHOW that, in the Middle Ages, the Thames at Reading could be forded, probably using a paved causeway, but they also show that people were sometimes drowned in the attempt. It seems likely that the fords were only passable in safety when there wasn't much water coming down, even for people on horseback. Ferries were probably used as well.

The first mention of a ferry between Caversham and Reading comes in 1231 when King Henry III directed the Keeper of Windsor Forest to deliver an oak to Andrew, Sergeant of Caversham, for a boat to ferry poor people across the water at Caversham. In 1238, timber was granted for a ferry to carry pilgrims to Caversham – presumably to the Chapel and Shrine of Our Lady, which had a collection of holy relics, but not so impressive as the holy relics at Reading Abbey. It was in the Deans Farm area.

### ...only option...

Ferries continued in use until 1869, when Caversham Bridge had been rebuilt in iron, and you no longer had to pay a toll to cross it. The last ferryman was Mr Piper, who lived in a house next to Caversham Bridge, where the Chapel of St Anne had once stood. Piper's Island was named after him. It was presumably cheaper to use his ferry than to pay the toll to use the narrow bridge, and may have been the only option for wagons carrying wide loads.

To my surprise, I've recently found out that there was a later ferry between Reading and Caversham, in the 1890s. This comes in the unpublished memoirs of W E Woodeson, a Reading man. They're packed with interesting insights into how people lived in Reading, which no-one else seems to have remarked on, so I'm editing them, with a view to having them published. Mr Woodeson says that, between 1889 and 1896, Reading Football Club played on the same ground as Caversham Cricket Club. Many of the players and fans, rather than using Caversham Bridge and then walking



Football Ferry notice

image Happy Wanderer

along Bridge Street, Church Street and Gosbrook Road, would walk to one of the boatyards, near to where Reading Bridge was later built, and take a ferry to the end of George Street. Access to the ground was 'between the houses in George Street,' suggesting there wasn't access from the river bank. The ground must have been on Christchurch Meadows, near Gosbrook Road.

David Downs, in his history of the football club, *Biscuits and Royals* shows an advertisement for the ferry on the

back cover of a football programme from 1894. It's rather tattered and hard to read, so I've re-drawn it for this article. He writes, 'Players had to make the trip to the ground by crossing from East's boathouse, near Caversham Lock, and the journey, by barge, was a risky one. Even when the players had reached the ground, they were often disappointed to find that the fixture had been cancelled, because the pitch was waterlogged.' No wonder the club moved to Elm Park in 1896!

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## Puzzle Corner

### The Challenge by Rachel

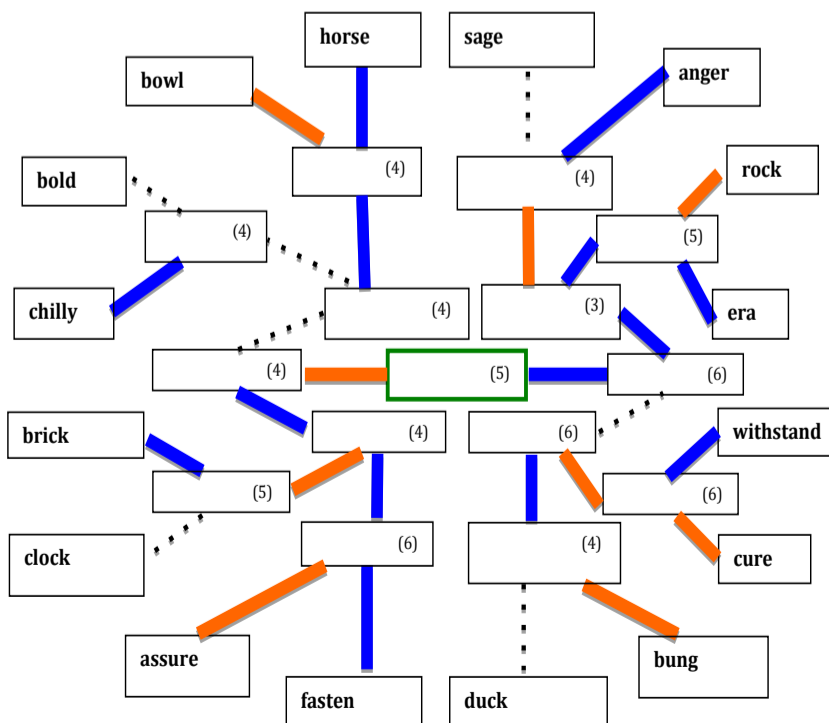
#### WORD PUZZLE

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 14

### The Beautiful Game

Can you find 24 words in the grid relating to football?

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

Centre Forward  
Club  
Corner  
Fan  
Final Whistle  
Football  
Foul  
Goal  
Goalie  
Half Time  
Handball  
Kick Off

League  
Linesman  
Offside  
Penalty  
Red Card  
Referee  
Tackle  
Team  
The Box  
Throw In  
Tournament  
Winger

# Henley Road Post Office – update



by Phil Chatfield

FOLLOWING THE closure of the Post Office counter at the Henley Road Co-Op, local MP Matt Rodda has launched a consultation to find out the impact on local residents. You can access this at [mattroddamp.com/henleyroad](http://mattroddamp.com/henleyroad)

Matt met an External Affairs Manager at the Post Office on 29 August to discuss the closure, and to find out what the Post Office is doing to restore services in this area. Apparently, the Post Office recognises the concerns of local residents and is actively seeking new partners in the immediate area to host a new Post Office Local branch. If your business is interested, please visit [www.runapostoffice.co.uk](http://www.runapostoffice.co.uk)

Matt said: “Post offices provide a vital local service and it is very important for residents to have access to a post office close to where they live”, and has offered to support the Post Office in their search for a new partner.

Several local people have emphasised the importance of regular opening times, as it was not uncommon for the Henley Road office to be closed unexpectedly. This resulted in some potential users going elsewhere rather than risk finding the counter closed.

In the meantime, Caversham Bridge reader Michael Lingham has contacted us to suggest the 163-165 Caversham Road Post Office as an alternative option. Although parking can be difficult, there is a frequent bus service from Caversham, including the Henley Road, (see our page 1 article for details). The counter is open from 7:00 to 22:00 except Sunday, when the hours are 8:00 to 21:00. Michael comments “I have used them a few times and had never needed to queue.”

## Caversham Print Club

# The day my prints appeared...

text and photos Elestr Lee

**An ancient fine art tradition is alive and well – with weekly taster sessions available in the heart of Caversham**

**C** AVERS HAM PICTURE Framers owner, Alex Foster, is an etching enthusiast; he has a mine of knowledge about practitioners old and contemporary and is very keen to share his love of the art-form through weekly practical sessions at his Print Club studio. Situated in a small building behind his Church Street shop, the studio opened in March 2025. As well as offering an opportunity to create etchings, Alex also organises one-off courses in a range of arts and crafts.

Curious to find out more, I was thrilled to be offered the chance to take part in the weekly Wednesday Print Club meet and find out more about the skill of etching. Alex has amassed all the equipment necessary to make and print an etching; he offers support and encouragement for beginners and the experienced alike. Anyone who is bitten by the bug can return regularly, gain in experience and benefit from using the studio’s equipment. It’s not quite the same as signing up for an evening class – Alex is there to advise but hopes that once attendees master the basics, they grow in confidence while trying a variety of etching techniques for themselves.

At the session I attended, I was joined by Bekky, Francesca and Victor, all experienced artists, although newcomers to etching. My last art lesson was 50 years ago in school, so I felt at a bit of a disadvantage. However, etching (and printing generally) is something I have always found fascinating and, as a journalist, I loved visiting printers and watching the vast industrial machines at work.

Preparing the zinc plate on which your design is etched is a vital part of the process (and probably not my finest hour!). At



Print Club action

this session we used ‘hard wax’; once the etching plate was evenly coated in the wax, using various tools to create your design wasn’t the hard part. As a complete novice, I used sandpaper to create some texture and an etching tool to create a simple outline. Once the wax is removed, the plate inked, and excess paint polished off, the ink is left in the grooves of the design.

Positioned on damp paper, carefully protected by tissue and newsprint paper, my plate was ready to go under the press... a modern studio version, with a large, easily turned wheel. Slowly

*...surprisingly exciting...*

the cloth covering my plate passed under the heavy press and it was time to uncover my handiwork. We were all nervous to see our prints appear. Peeping under the cloth and uncovering my design was surprisingly exciting. To my amazement, the printed result did appear like the design I had created. There were blemishes because initially I hadn’t applied the wax evenly, but I now understood a lot more about the process. The next Rembrandt? Definitely not. But it was wonderful to try my hand at this incredible art form, and I would encourage anyone interested in giving it a go!

**Find out more:**

**Elestr Lee was offered the chance to attend one of the Wednesday Etching Club Meets, £25 per session**

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Print Club results



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## Church House and The Barber Shop

**The various rents and hire fees produce an income, and the profits generated provide grants for activities in the Parish. Throughout the day the building is buzzing with activities for young and old...**

**C**HURCH HOUSE, situated on the busy junction of Church Street, Prospect Street and Gosbrook Road, has been an active centre for the community since 1943, when two sisters, Annie and Jessie Haslam, gave the property to the Parish to support the Church and Christian worship. The building provides two commercial units, there is a flat, a large meeting room, an administration office, and spaces used by charities. These include Sport in Mind, which promotes mental health and therapy through sport for children and adults, and Caversham Good Neighbours who provide transport for the elderly and disabled – a team of volunteers are available to drive clients to appointments. The various rents and hire fees produce an income, and the profits generated provide grants for activities in the Parish. Throughout the day the building is buzzing with activities for young and old.

**...rather nostalgic...**

Nigel Smith, one of the main administrators of Church House, kindly showed me around the premises and, in particular, the large meeting room on the first floor. This was rather nostalgic for me, as in 1978 my wife and I helped to mount an exhibition on the history of Caversham curated by Mary Kift – a passionate local historian who for many years wrote articles for the *Caversham Bridge*. A number of these articles were eventually brought together in her book, *Life in Old Caversham*, published in 1980 (a new edition was published in 2004).

The meeting room (available for hire) is large



Drawing by Janina Maher

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

enough to extend to the first floor of the adjoining property (number 57), which is also part of Church House (number 59). Sadly, The Barber Shop, with its attractive façade shown in Janina Maher's drawing, has recently closed down. For years I have been a regular customer and always felt sorry for the hairdressers – my bald head offered no opportunity for their creative skills. An article on Emma Ruane, who owned the business for nearly thirty years, appeared in the July *Caversham Bridge*. We wish her good luck with her new mobile service, details of which appear in her advert on page 6.



**This painting of the Angel Bar is on the cover of Janina's 2026 Caversham Calendar**

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# Les Cooper

## What to try when it's dry?

**W**HAT DO YOU think? Has 2025 been a bad year for us gardeners? As I write now in August my mood is certainly one of despondency, with a ban on using a hose and my garden looking absolutely dried out. Climate change is taking place whether we, or our politicians, like it or not. Are you old enough to remember those days when we had no central heating, when there was frost on the windows and the glorious days when there was enough snow to build a snowman? The summers were perfect too, or so my faulty memory tells me, when as youngsters we played outdoors all day. Those were the days, well perhaps in my dreams they were.

Returning to the present and, looking back to the start of this year, things were great when the apple and cherry

trees bloomed magnificently, the tulips and daffodils were fine and my group of fritillaria were beautiful. In other words, this year we have won some and we have lost out too.

I don't think there is much we as individuals can do to stop climate change, but we should perhaps try to plant sensibly.

Looking on-line at a few suggestions recommending drought resistant plants, it did make me realise this is a good idea and there are plenty to choose from.

Just to mention a few obvious ones: Osteospermum originate from South Africa and unsurprisingly flourish in hot, dry conditions. Even in relatively poor soils they will give a vibrant display. A sturdy, long flowering plant it is very adaptable and relatively low maintenance.

Lavender enjoys hot, dry conditions. We



The Lavender Mount at Wisley

photo P Chatfield

have a group of Hidcote lavender that the bumble bees revel in and makes us feel like natures' helpers.

Sea holly (Eryngium) copes with hot weather and the bees love it. Looking rather like thistles, the blue or white flowers stand out in a summer border.

Cistus, rock roses, are robust and extremely drought tolerant shrubs which survive in most soils. The blooms only last a day, but they are produced in

abundance. Cistus grow well in poor, stony ground and many species tolerate chalky, alkaline conditions.

Sedum with its big, fleshy leaves always manages a smothering of pink flowers in late summer.

These are a few suggestions and there are plenty of others but the important thing to bear in mind is plants like these only survive droughts if and when they are already well-established.

## Celebrating 250 years of Jane Austen text and photo Roslyn Weaver



Reading Abbey Gateway

**"**IT IS A TRUTH universally acknowledged' that anyone writing about Jane Austen in 2025 has to begin with those famous words. Of course, this is true not just now but in any year – however, this year in particular has been embraced most ardently by Austen fans because it marks 250 years since Austen's birth in December 1775.

In case you missed it, this year has seen a great variety of events timed to mark the 250 years, with readers around the world making the most of it by planning all manner of celebrations and getting started as early as January. Even just locally, the array of events is impressive, with past and future ones this year in the area including themed afternoon teas or walking tours of town and schoolroom, Austen-inspired plays, and outdoor picnic viewings of film adaptations such as Pride and Prejudice, not to mention Caversham's very own bookshop-hosted Austen quiz night and related author talks.

In our case, we have a special excuse for getting into the fandom frenzy, given that Austen attended the Reading Ladies' Boarding School for 18 months in 1785 and 1786. The Austen family lived in Hampshire, but Jane attended the school with her older sister Cassandra. Located in the Abbey Gateway area, not all the original buildings have survived, but the Gateway section remains and has been rebuilt and restored over the years, and in June this year a plaque was added to note the link to Austen.

Rumour has it that the school inspired her later descriptions of Mrs Goddard's school in Emma – and, even if it didn't, the young schoolgirl Jane certainly seems to have begun her writing shortly afterwards, making it easier to claim this area as some kind of literary inspiration for Austen; the Reading which inspired Austen's writing, if you will. This may not be a truth universally acknowledged, or even acknowledged by anyone, but we can embrace it ardently anyway.

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**O**N 14 AUGUST this year, UN delegates failed to agree an international deal to reduce plastic pollution. It might have been possible to agree on increasing plastic recycling, but not on reducing production of plastics. On the whole, oil producing states want to increase production of plastics because of falling fuel sales. World-wide plastic production is set to increase and consequently so will plastic waste.

Plastics are everywhere, from gas and water pipes and medical equipment through disposable nappies to packaging and clothing. They are extremely useful, with a wide variety of properties, making 'recycling of plastics' fairly unhelpful, since different types of plastic require totally different recycling technologies.

**The plastics issue is three-fold:**

- **Emissions** during production (some hazardous). Many are being addressed through green chemistry projects (including manufacture of new plastics from non-oil substrates)
- **Poor waste** management practices with limited recycling, export of mixed or contaminated plastics, and too much plastic waste strewn across the planet on land and at sea
- **The amount** of microplastics accumulating in the food chain and found in all living creatures, including us

We can't influence production emissions at present. Those of us living in the Reading area don't need to worry about our plastic waste going into the environment through poor management practices. It's collected in closed containers and goes to licensed recycling or incineration sites. In fact, the biggest risk of our own plastic waste ending up in the soil or oceans is if we contaminate the plastic recycling stream by putting in very dirty plastic containers, or the wrong type of plastic, so an entire batch gets rejected from recovery sites in the UK, and then goes who knows where? There is legislation in place to bring in doorstep

# What can we do about plastics?

recycling of soft plastic film and bags from 2027 but, at present, these materials need to go to some supermarket collection points, not into the red, recycling, bins. If you are not sure whether something can go for recycling, or it is too difficult to wash, then put it into the general waste for incineration and energy production. This recovers the energy within the plastic and avoids otherwise recyclable loads being rejected.

What can we do as individuals or businesses to reduce plastic use and minimize problems due to limited recycling? The obvious one is to buy less in the first place.

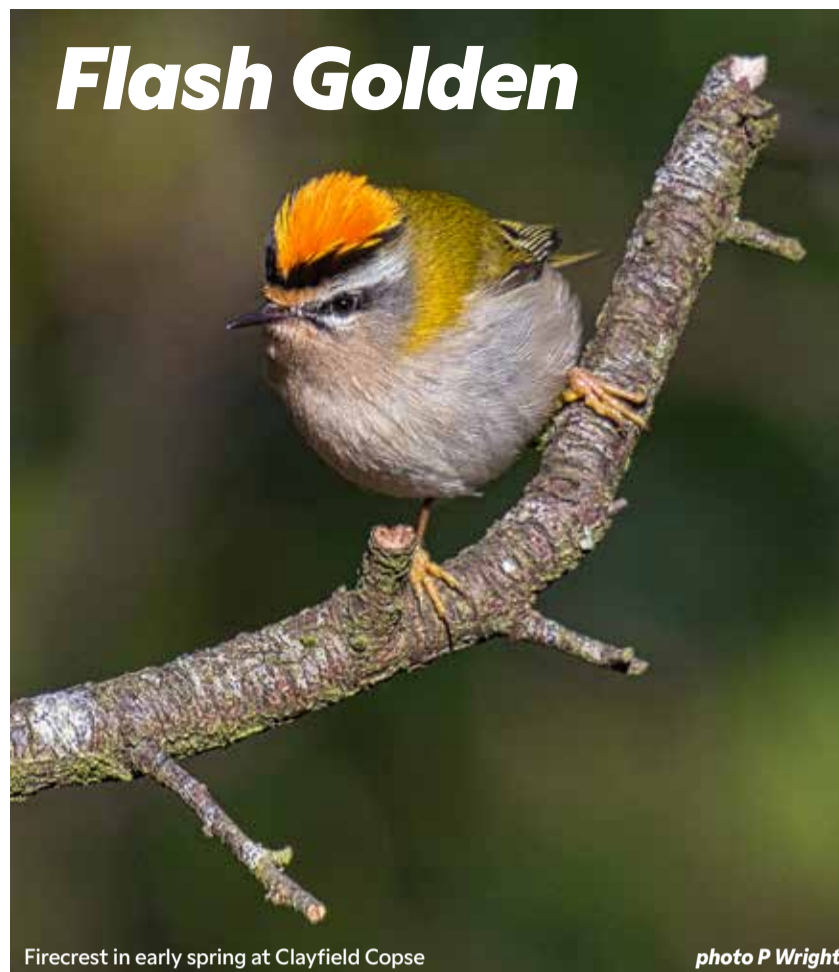
**...get into the habit...**

Specialist shops, such as True Food Coop, the stalls at local markets or the local minimarket, offer a range of goods to pack into your own reusable bags and containers, but even major supermarkets offer some loose vegetables and fruit. Get into the habit of looking for these and complain if they have run out.

Carrying a refillable mug for hot drinks, or taking a packed lunch to school or work, reduces packaging.

Polite nudging is a very useful activity when making a purchase. For example, 'the sandwich I bought from X says the packaging is totally recyclable in household collections. Why isn't yours?' or 'I was in RHS Bridgewater this summer and they offer £1 off a coffee for bringing your own mug, why do you offer only 20p?'. Good to do this in-store, better still write to HQ.

All useful, but doesn't address the 'what do I use instead' issue or the potential risks of reusing plastic containers. I've run out of space so the microplastics issue comes next month!



Firecrest in early spring at Clayfield Copse

photo P Wright

## IN THE NEWS by George Grubb

**T**HE ROYAL SOCIETY for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) publishes an online 'Bird of the month' feature on their website, with photos taken around the country submitted by members. In August they published a selection of the best photos submitted in the previous six months, which included this spectacular shot of a Firecrest at Clayfield Copse. Described by the RSPB as a 'tiny, restless jewel of a bird' which 'vies with the Goldcrest for the title of the UK's smallest bird'.

We managed to track down the photographer, Paul Wright, and he gave permission for us to use the photo. He said there seemed to be an increase in Firecrest numbers in the area. "Previous to this year, I'd only experienced a couple of sightings, but they've appeared in a number of different sites now.

"It was early spring, so there were a couple of pairs doing what birds do in spring – chasing each other and displaying – hence the crest being evident. It is unusual to get a clear shot like this, as they normally keep well within the vegetation".

The birds weigh just 5-7 gm with a wingspan of 13-16 cm and can be found in woodland, suburban and urban areas. They feed on tiny morsels like spiders, moth eggs and other small insect food.

See [www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/firecrest](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/firecrest) for further details.

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# Creative CAVERSHAM

## Recycled juice packs turned to works of art



Supporting other people through art led **Cath Baldwin** to discover the artform which excites her the most – print making. A new course at the Print Club combines her interest in making prints with recycling everyday materials.

**Elestr Lee** reports

**F**OLLOWING AN art foundation course lasting two years, I went to Salisbury to a textile course, but I didn't really enjoy this, so after completing the course, I stepped away.

"While studying, I had been doing youth work as part of a holiday scheme for Reading Borough Council, so I became a Youth and Community worker, for around ten years. Initially I was working with young people, but I also ran community centres in various locations. I found I was frequently using art in workshops, as a way of engaging

with people. I decided to get myself a qualification, so I could do this aspect of my work professionally.

"Berkshire College of Art had just moved into Reading College, so I got a place on the course there, and it so happened that it was run by Doug Hack, a print maker. I'd gone along to get myself a teaching qualification and ended up completely enamoured by the print-making process!" Reading-born Cath said.

"In fact, after qualifying, Reading College offered me a teaching job, and I worked

there for 17 years," she added. "I ended up teaching the foundation course in art and design, and I felt very lucky, teaching so many talented youngsters. I was able to combine my interest in art with my interest in people. And as we were encouraged to use the college facilities for our own further development, I was able to create my own art, and as members of staff, we frequently had the opportunity to exhibit our work.

"As well as exhibiting at Reading College, I have been part of Whiteknights Trail for the past 20 years, and I am also a member of the Reading Guild of Artists."

### ...preferred method...

Cath is interested in various methods of printing, such as silk screen and etching. However, she is particularly fascinated by creating lino cuts. "Lino is basically a rubber compound, bound to hessian," she explained. "I like the fact that rubber is biodegradable. In the past, the paints used to always be oil based, and we had to use solvents. But now everything can be water based, which is much better for both your health and the environment."

Creating lino cuts has become Cath's preferred method of printing. "It's a very slow process and it can take weeks to create a print!" she said. "Basically, you create the design in layers, working from the lightest colour you require (white being the background colour) through to the darkest. My notebooks are full of the stages! I will start to carve the lino block with my design, print out the lightest of the colours, then continue to carve the area required for the next shade, and so on, until I have completed my design."

As well as creating lino cut prints, Cath is also very interested in using everyday materials to create prints, and her one-day course at the Caversham Picture Framer Print Club venue this October teaching Tetra-Pak Etching quickly sold out! Tetra-Pak cartons (such as used for juices and milk) are widely used and probably found in all our kitchens – but they are difficult to recycle, so Cath is interested in offering a new use for the material which is otherwise thrown away.

### ...Pak into plate...

"If you clean and open a Tetra-Pak carton it can be turned into an etching plate. You need the carton, inks, a pasta-making machine, and you can etch with equipment such as a darning needle or an awl.

"Once you have cut open the Tetra-Pak with scissors, you then use the inside of the carton as the plate for your design. I've been creating these for a couple of years now!"

Cath loves to create her often witty designs. "I am inspired by words, by phrases I see in newspaper articles. My earlier work used to be quite political, but now I am getting older I think my work is a lot calmer... I often find inspiration in the minutiae of the everyday. I recently produced a print based on a bowl of strawberries – they just looked so beautiful!"

She is pleased to be exhibiting her work both in this area – her prints have been on display at Caversham's Geo Café, as well as at the Whiteknights Trail, the RGA – as well as further afield, at The Base in Newbury and the Urban Arts Fair in Battersea. Cath



**I often find inspiration in the minutiae of the everyday. I recently produced a print based on a bowl of strawberries – they just looked so beautiful!...**

now enjoys teaching adults, both in Reading, Henley and Somerset as well as at Micklams Farm, and more courses will be on offer at the Print Club early next year.

"They have such great facilities, the classes are small, but it is so popular," Cath told me. "And the wheel has turned full circle – I have taught a fabric printing workshop there!"

Find out more:

**Courses with Cath:**

**Introduction to Lino Cutting**

Saturday January 24

**Block Print Your Fabric**

Saturday February 28

[cavershampictureframer.co.uk](http://cavershampictureframer.co.uk)

[instagram.com/cathbaldwinmakesstuff](https://www.instagram.com/cathbaldwinmakesstuff)



Using everyday materials Cath creates homely designs such as this simple vase of flowers



A classic breakfast scene **all photos C. Baldwin**



Competition winners and other nominees  
photo Neil@NGsportsphotography

**R**G4FC WAS SET up in 2022 to make football accessible to kids who would normally miss out. We wanted to be as inclusive as possible, so it runs on donations as opposed to fixed fees. This means children who cannot normally afford the fees get to play football. We also have children with Special Educational Needs who have been rejected elsewhere.

We have a small group of amazing volunteers who give up a lot of time to coach, fundraise and even make the kits in order to keep costs as low as possible. In just three years, we have gone from six children in our first session to having now approximately 50 children. We also have approximately 20 men who play in our 6-a-side teams to help promote mental health and fitness.

We have been lucky this year in receiving recognition for what we are doing. We won the Katie Henderson memorial trophy for commitment to sport at Reading Sports Personality Awards in December 2024 and the Berks & Bucks Football Association (BBFA) respect award. So, when we were nominated for BBFA Club of the year, we were very surprised. BBFA have over 600 clubs (approximately 3500 teams) in its area, so you can imagine our surprise at being finalists!

We went to Milton Keynes for the awards thinking it would be a great chance to meet other clubs and maybe make some connections. We were amazed when it was announced

we won the award! So many clubs are doing exactly what we are - trying to make football as cheap and accessible as possible. Some have been established for many years, so it was a great honour to win.

Without the amazing support team around us we would not even have a club. So I would like to say a massive thank to everyone.

To our volunteers Sean, Hazel, Simone, Leon, Liam, Martin and Alan, who work extremely hard and give up many hours.

**...taxi services...**

To our parents who provide taxi services every weekend to make sure all the players can get to where they need to be, and help us in any way they can.

To our sponsors AO, Grant Plant, Wiseman's finance and TM Group. Without them we would not have the funding to keep costs down.

Finally, and most importantly, our players. They turn up every week come rain or shine and give it 100%, even when others may have given up. The determination and commitment they have shown has been incredible.

With the support team we have now, the future for the club looks bright. We hope to expand in the next season or two, with a ladies'/girls' team and a disability/pan-disability team to make us truly all inclusive.

# Team Spirit

by Martin Bingham

Last month we included a short note about the award that the Weller Centre based RG4FC had received at the Grassroots Football Awards in July. We asked if we could have more information about the Club.



# But not teen spirit

by Ian Beale

**F**OR OLDER football players, Rotherfield United Walking Football Club (RUWFC) offers the opportunity for anyone to play in a team but at a more relaxed pace. Founded in 2016, the Club has grown into a thriving community with members drawn from around the area. It holds training and playing sessions twice a week at their own Bishopswood ground, Highdown School, and Rivermead Sports Centre, offering players the chance to stay active and engaged. RUWFC competes in Oxfordshire leagues, and boasts a vibrant social scene, welcoming family and friends to its events. It is a self-funded club, and also raises significant funds each year to support both local and national charities.

**...great causes...**

This year, the Club is holding its annual Charity Music Night on Saturday 25 October at Peppard Memorial Hall. The event promises an evening of live music, classic dance floor hits from the 60s, 70s and 80s, and fantastic food and drinks—all in support of great causes.

The night will feature local performers and a DJ spinning timeless favourites, creating an electric atmosphere to bring the community together. Guests can enjoy great food and a selection of

affordable wines and beers, ensuring a lively, fun-filled evening.

All proceeds from the event will benefit FISH Volunteer Centre in Sonning Common, which provides essential support and transport for the local community, and Prostate Cancer UK, helping fund life-saving research and initiatives. Last year we raised over £5,000, and this year we are determined to do better.

A raffle and auction will close the night, featuring prizes donated by local businesses and RUWFC members. To make this year's fundraising effort even more successful, RUWFC invites local businesses to contribute prize donations and support a thriving, socially active sports club with members from Sonning Common and beyond.

If you would like to donate a prize, please contact Barry Stevenson, RUWFC Chairman, at [barryjstevenson@gmail.com](mailto:barryjstevenson@gmail.com)

To learn more about the club visit [rotherfieldfc.com/team/walking-football](http://rotherfieldfc.com/team/walking-football)

For membership enquiries, please contact [christophergguy@gmail.com](mailto:christophergguy@gmail.com)



Boot Boys kicking up a storm

photo RUWFC



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# Wellbeing with Ami Roy

## Get a grip!



Image Freepik.com

IN THE LAST few years, grip strength has become increasingly established as a trusted marker of health, with studies citing it as a better indicator of all-cause cardiovascular mortality than blood pressure, and highlighting the association between forearm strength and a longer life.

One research study conducted in 2019 showed weaker grip strength could reveal if you were at risk of problems ranging from diabetes and sleep problems to cognitive impairment and depression. A 2022 study analysing 1,275 participants then showed those with lower grip strength also aged faster, measured by age acceleration of DNA methylation, or chemical 'tags' on your DNA that control which genes are turned on or off.

### The test:

All you need is any object that you can grasp and can be deformed without causing pain or discomfort. Simply squeeze it for as long as you can before your grip fatigues. Being able to maintain a maximal squeeze on something like a tennis ball for 15-30 seconds would be a good standard to strive for. Noting how long you squeeze can help you track progress.

The connection between grip strength and longevity is particularly intriguing. A growing body of research suggests measuring grip strength could provide valuable insights into a person's lifespan.

This connection is believed to be because grip strength reflects a person's overall physical capacity. Those with stronger grips tend to have better cardiovascular health, more robust muscles, and improved physical function, all of which contribute to a longer, healthier life. In contrast, those with weaker grips may be at higher risk of developing health problems that can shorten life expectancy, such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

**Key nutrients that support muscle health and, by extension, grip strength, include:**

- Protein ● Collagen
- Vitamin D ● Magnesium and Potassium

There are numerous exercises which can be used to strengthen the grip. By strengthening the muscles in the hands and forearms, weightlifting exercises, such as hanging from a bar, cable pulls, dowel rod rolls and others, can improve hand and grip strength. Finger-specific exercises, such as squeezing a hand grip or a rubber ball, are also effective for strengthening the fingers. In addition to exercises, gentle use is a good idea to keep the hands and fingers mobile. Use it or lose it, so people often say. Keep hydrated with plenty of water and, if you are suffering with any loss of feeling in the fingers or numbness, ensure you speak to your local physiotherapist, osteopath, or GP. Physios, especially hand physiotherapists, often treat people's hands and fingers which can help improve grip strength.

## Local Clergy and Church Services

### ANGLICAN

#### Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

##### St Margaret, St Peter, St John

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

[rachel@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ctmparish.org.uk)

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

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

Thursday: 10:00 Holy Communion

#### 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 5214

#### Current Services

Sundays: 8:00 BCP Holy Communion (1st Sunday only)

9:30 Parish Communion (Service of the Word on

2nd Sunday)

11:15 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

[www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen/live\\_videos](http://www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen/live_videos)

Full details at [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on)

### METHODIST CHURCH

#### The Methodist Church Caversham

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)

Deacon Brian Theobald, The Presbytery, 18 Peppard Road,

Sonning Common RG4 9SU – 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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