

Caversham Bridge

No 729

www.cavershambridge.org

November 2025



Utterly terrifying

by Evie Porter

With no crossings or breaks in the traffic lights for pedestrians to cross, this makes the junction utterly terrifying...

A PETITION TO install a pedestrian crossing at 'The Last Crumb' junction was presented to the Reading Borough Council Traffic Management Sub-Committee on Thursday 11 September, after amassing over 1800 signatures from concerned locals and campaigners.

Heidi North, a local mother and campaigner for the crossing, was pushed to action when she was faced with crossing the junction daily to walk her son to primary school. Another local mother was forced to walk a time-consuming detour up Henley Road to protect her family from the crossing, which is plagued by accelerating drivers, heavy traffic and many different traffic streams as cars navigate the four-road junction. With no crossings or breaks in the traffic lights for pedestrians to cross, this makes the junction utterly terrifying. As one commenter on the petition said, "The weight of traffic these days, heavy lorries too, and fast

acceleration of modern engines, plus impatient lawless drivers who accelerate through on amber and red, makes crossing on foot risky and death defying, in daylight and darkness."

At a time when we are pushed to tackle obesity, protect the planet by reducing emissions, and teach road safety, this junction stands as a glaring obstacle to travelling by foot, leaving many forced to use their cars. This only adds to the traffic problem and increases the danger for pedestrians.

The petition, which is called *Stop a Fatality! – Install a pedestrian crossing on the Westfield Road/Peppard Road junction!*, is the most recent of a stream of campaigns which have been calling for the junction to be made safe for over 10 years. In 2018, Reading Borough Council added it to their 'requests for traffic management measures list', but have cited limited funding for their lack of action thereafter. The meeting of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee on 11 September concluded in their report, 'until such time as funding has been secured for this project, unfortunately we are unable to commence any detailed investigation into this request'.

To show your support for the 'Stop a Fatality!', campaign, sign their petition: tinyurl.com/evhccpkb

Remembrance and recognition

by Phil Chatfield

THE SEASONS have moved on, the days have shortened, and the leaves are falling as we look forward to November. Although we have had some rain in recent weeks, the weather has been generally dry and, at the time of writing (mid-October), we are still subject to a hosepipe ban. The flow in the River Thames is about a twentieth of what it was this time last year.

November is, of course, the season of remembrance, and our Talking Point reflects on this and what it means for us today (p2). Several of our articles this month focus on celebrating what is good about our community. Our Kind Community article reports on Caversham Visually Impaired Pedallers, a group which gives those with impaired sight a chance to enjoy cycling (p2). Several local businesses, groups and individuals have been nominated for or received awards recently. Caversham Tandoori Takeaway has been recognised as the best in Berkshire and is in the running for a further accolade. There were more than 20 nominations for the Pride of Reading Awards from our area, and the garden at the Weller Centre has received recognition (all p16).

...sporting achievement...

We also celebrate sporting achievement at Queen Anne's School (p13), and the work of the Albert Road Community Group installing a defibrillator in a disused phone box there (p18). We have several items which look forward to Christmas, including the annual toys appeal (p8), Scout Post and Artisa market (both p3). You will also find all of our regular features, from Happy Wanderer (p7) to Wellbeing with Ami Roy (p19) in this expanded, 20 page, November edition.

We do hope you enjoy reading it. Please tell your friends and neighbours about the paper – your personal recommendations are the most effective way of spreading awareness of this, your community paper.

Contact us at 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.



As long as autumn lasts, I shall not have hands, canvas and colours enough to paint the beautiful things I see

Vincent Van Gogh

Sunset from Balmore Park

photo M Dean

INSIDE



The Local Scene – Warings Bakery

p9



Primary School Choices – Open Days

p11



Caversham Group Holiday – Back to School

p17

Values, what values?



Talking Point

by Rev'd
Kevin Lovell

AS WE APPROACH the season of remembrance, we shall once again give thanks for the lives of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our country. We do so in a world of increasing conflict and ever greater division. At remembrance-tide our national flags are more visible than usual, although this year we already have a preponderance of national flags on our lamp posts and motorway flyovers.

These seem to echo a trend expressed in many places, emphasising national identity. Politically, this trend is accompanied by rhetoric which includes calls to reassert English and Christian values. Given that church attendance has halved since the 1980s, and around 90% of people don't go to church at all, this high-profile interest in Christian values is surprising.

My question is this: what do you imagine 'Christian values' are?

I can't help recalling that 2,000 years ago, the Jewish people were yearning for a long-awaited saviour. They were expecting a great king in the traditional monarchic and military sense, who would take back control of their country from outside invaders and make them a great nation once more.

What they got was a baby in a manger, who grew up to be a radical charismatic teacher and took no role in the structures of religion or state. The values he taught were of love, compassion and justice. Sometimes he did get angry, but only because love, compassion and justice were being subverted. His kingdom was no earthly territory, and yet he called all people everywhere to work towards it.

...holding it accountable...

So when I hear calls within the political arena for a re-assertion of 'Christian values', I am curious to know what exactly they are hoping for. Personally, I long to be 'godly and quietly governed' as the old prayerbook says, but there is a long history of monarchic or political power harnessing religion (not just Christianity) to serve its own purposes. The Christian faith also questions and speaks truth to political power, holding it accountable.

As we remember with gratitude those who gave so much for our freedom, I do indeed hope and pray that the values of love, compassion and justice that they fought to preserve, will prevail in our nation.

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, Vicar of St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Our *Kind* Community

by Caroline Gratrix



Freedom on two wheels

Deep understanding
of challenges faced



Visually Impaired Riders ready for the off

photo CViP

THIRTY YEARS AGO, Caversham resident John McKnight lost his sight temporarily after a rugby injury. Though he made a full recovery, the experience gave him a deep understanding of the challenges faced by people with visual impairments.

That memory became the spark for something extraordinary; John, with the help of local friends and volunteers, set up Caversham Visually Impaired Pedallers (CViP) – a group dedicated to making sure people with sight loss can still enjoy the simple joy of cycling.

What began with one tandem bike and a couple of riders has grown into a thriving community. Today, CViP has more than a dozen tandems and around 40 volunteer 'pilots' who lead rides across Caversham, Henley, Harpsden, Wargrave, and beyond.

...making a difference...

Volunteers and riders meet each month not just to cycle, but to share laughter, confidence, and freedom on the open road. For the 20 visually impaired members, the rides are more than exercise – they are a chance to socialise, build independence, and feel part of a welcoming community. For the volunteers, the reward is just as great – making a difference while doing something they love.

As regular rider Becki Meakin says: "As a blind person, it's amazing to have the opportunity to go cycling. The volunteers who pilot the tandems

For the 20 visually impaired members, the rides are more than exercise – they are a chance to socialise, build independence, and feel part of a welcoming community...

are such a kind, friendly and enthusiastic group of people. Without their help, visually impaired people like me wouldn't be able to enjoy the freedom and excitement of whizzing along on a bicycle."

The spirit of giving clearly runs in the family. John's wife Elaine, an optometrist at Moorfields Eye Hospital, co-founded Vision Care for Homeless People 25 years ago – a charity which has since provided more than 10,000 eye tests across the UK.

Caversham CViP is always looking for new riders and volunteers. Whether you're an experienced cyclist wanting to give back, or someone with sight loss keen to get pedalling, the group would love to welcome you. Women are especially encouraged to volunteer – while 80% of the riders are female, most of the pilots are men.

To find out more and get involved, contact the team at chair@cvip.org.uk

The perfect blend of Compassionate care and luxury living



Person-centred care is at the very heart of Signature's ethos. Our empathetic care teams provide both high quality practical care and day-to-day companionship, while our flexible, tailored care plans grow and change with your needs, supporting independent living for as long as possible.

Community Carers Café LAST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 10.00AM - 12.00PM

Join us, with your loved one, to enjoy a variety of activities, guest speakers, entertainers, and refreshments – in a safe and friendly environment.

To find out more, or call us on 0118 911 1240



RESIDENTIAL | NURSING | DEMENTIA CARE | RESPITE

Signature
AT CAVERSHAM

SIGNATURE AT CAVERSHAM
2 Willow View, Caversham RG4 6LB
signature-care-homes.co.uk/caversham

Make tracks to the Christmas Market

by The Editors



Santa in the Artisa Grotto 2024

photo Made by Tamalia

IN RECENT YEARS, the Community Artisa Christmas Market has become established as something to look forward to in the run-up to Christmas. Last year, over 1,500 people visited the market and enjoyed the chance to support local artists, crafters, food purveyors and makers. Santa's Grotto was the destination for many younger visitors, and he will be back again this time.

The event will take place on 16 November between 10:00 and 15:30 in the car park at South View Park, off Marsack Street in Caversham, RG4 5AF. In addition to more than 45 stalls with artists, artisans and crafters selling their goods, there will be hot food, beer from a local brewer, barista coffee and homemade cakes.

Proceeds from Santa's Grotto and a tombola will support the work of the Sue Ryder Charity. There will be plenty of family fun, with kids' activities, adult crafts, and entertainment including schoolchildren playing carols on violins at lunchtime.

Wrap up warm and come and join the fun!

This event is sponsored by Haslams. For info see:

www.madebytamalia.co.uk/page/artisa-christmas-market-2/

STOP PRESS News from Fourbears Books

CAVERSHAM'S BOOKSHOP in Prospect Street is running a Reading Challenge for young readers in Years 7 – 9 and Year 10 plus. Entrants need to read at least five books by 1 December. The prize is a ticket to a private event at Fourbears where they will be decorating gingerbread men and enjoying hot chocolate.

Alex has also announced the shop will again be open on Christmas Day between 10:30 and 13:00 with drinks, mince pies and a chance to play games.

Toys and Teens Appeal

COLLECTION POINTS in our area for the Reading Family Aid Toys and Teens Appeal (see page 8 for details) have been announced. They are:

- ★ Caversham Homecrafts
- ★ Caversham Tiles
- ★ Fourbears Books
- ★ St Barnabas Church
- ★ Weller Centre

Jamboree

by Elaine Rae



LAST MONTH we previewed the 89th Reading Scout Group 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 www.89th.org.uk and on our posters across Caversham in early November. Our post is only half the price of a second-class letter.

Each year we use this opportunity to raise money to benefit both the community and our scouts. Funds raised from recent Christmas Post campaigns have funded a community defibrillator, large tents for scout camps, and a workshop for Branching Up (which provides work experience placements for adults with learning disabilities).

This year we are raising money to provide support and improve accessibility for our scout group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers) to participate in the week-long international jamboree in Windsor (WINGS) in 2026.

Our bright red Scout post boxes with collection tins will be located across Caversham and Emmer Green starting on Saturday 29 November until the end of Thursday 18 December, and the post will be sorted and delivered by our Scout Group over the weekend of 20 and 21 December.



Fourbears Christmas 2023

photo G Grubb



We buy and sell vinyl records and music memorabilia.

Pop into our shop
NOW OPEN DAILY



POP CLASSICS RECORDS
35 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8BA
TEL. 07821 463 743
popclassics@hotmail.co.uk

BOILER REPLACEMENT SPECIALIST



- All Gas Work Undertaken • Servicing
- Landlord Safety Certificates • Central Heating

Remove years of sludge which causes your heating system to under-perform or even fail by having a Specialist Power Flush with our state of the art Magnetic System.

PEPPARD HEATING & PLUMBING
07956 566317 / 0118 9545478 / 01491 699158
for free quote

Robin James

OPTICIANS



- Comprehensive eye examinations
- Full contact lens service
- Free specs for children
- Extensive range of designer frames
- Main agent for Zeiss and Rodenstock lenses
- Free parking

0118 947 2099
www.robinjames.co.uk
44 Church St, Caversham, Reading (opposite Waitrose)



Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors

est. 1999

Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors create personal and unique funerals to celebrate your loved one. Caring for families of all faiths since 1999 in Reading and the surrounding areas.

- Private Chapel of Rest • Probate
- Prepaid funeral plans
- Memorial Masonry
- International Repatriation

0118 321 6843

Tamela House, RG1 8BB

Other branches located in Winnersh, Twyford, Binfield, Crowthorne, Maidenhead, Tadley & Whitley

milesfunerals.com

 Funeral Partners



The best community stories, the most exciting local events

All of your trusted local traders, and all for just £7 a year
Don't miss out, **subscribe today!**

St Peter's Church Roof

text and photo Francis Serjeant



Surveying St Peter's roof from the tower

IF YOU ARE one of the several hundred pedestrians daily using the churchyard public footpath linking St Peter's Avenue with central Caversham, you would have encountered a barrier, erected to protect the passers by from lemming like tiles launching themselves from the south aisle roof to the path beneath. The church is very aware that this barrier poses problems for pedestrians, as they face several inconvenient alternatives. The St Peter's Hill pavement which skirts the north side of the churchyard is far too narrow and frankly dangerous. The alternatives are either to cross this busy road with restricted traffic sightlines, or walk on the uneven ground through the churchyard. So, bear with us as we seek a solution to reopen this footpath.

To date (late September) we have requested permission from the Oxford Diocese to erect snow guards (a small metal fence) attached to the guttering as a first measure. This will prevent further tiles falling onto the path; so that the footpath can be reopened.

A total church roof survey recently occurred. Thankfully for our finances, it is only the south aisle

...erected to protect the passers by from lemming like tiles launching themselves from the south aisle roof to the path beneath

roof with its offending falling tiles which will need to be totally renewed. However, this survey, which included a drone camera, revealed further repairs are needed for all of the roof.

This is only one example of the continuous fabric repairs required for this historic building. Obviously, this requires money continuously. One way you can assist St Peter's is to become a Friend of Saint Peter Caversham (FOSP).

Details of this scheme will be found on the parish website www.ctmparish.org.uk/event/fosp/ or, alternatively, pick up a FOSP leaflet at the Church, which is open daily between 10:00 and 16:00.



A step of FAITH

by Pamela Jackman

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY ACTION (CCA) has said goodbye to the Caversham Drop-in at Caversham Baptist Church after many years of supporting its service. However, it was not the end for the Drop-In, as local charity FAITH have been taking it forward since 1 September. CCA said it had been a difficult decision, but they believe the Drop-In will flourish under FAITH. They wrote, 'We want to express our deepest gratitude to Myra and her dedicated team' describing their unwavering support as inspirational.

...those in need...

For many years the Baptist Church on Prospect Street has opened its doors every Wednesday lunchtime, welcoming the homeless, the lonely, and those in need, offering a cooked meal with a dessert, alongside warmth, dignity and community.

Myra will continue to manage the Drop-In, and the team of volunteers, who see this as a very positive move, will remain unchanged.

The Faith Christian Group is described as, 'The Church in Reading on the streets of Reading – working among the poor, needy and homeless'.



Caversham Baptist Church

photo P Chatfield

Their work includes:

- The Readifood Emergency Food Parcel Service, which currently delivers between 150-180 emergency food parcels every week to families and individuals
- A nightly winter shelter through the months of January – March, providing an evening meal and a warm and safe place to sleep, as well as breakfast the following morning.

To learn more about the work of FAITH and how you could support them, visit fcg.org.uk

ABBEYCREST
ARIA CARE

Come and
enjoy a break
with us

Laughter, joy, and companionship - Enjoy an autumn retreat this season with Aria Care. Whether you're looking for care for yourself or a loved one, our respite stays are here to lend a helping hand.

0808 281 5107 | ariacare.co.uk
Sonning Common, Berkshire, RG4 9RG

The best community stories,
the most exciting local events

All of your trusted local traders,
and all for just £7 a year

Don't miss out,
subscribe today!



For your bookshelf...

by Alex Forbes

Welcome to our monthly article where we chat about books we've enjoyed in the last month.

AUGUST SAW the release of the fifth and final instalment of the children's series Skandar. I reviewed the original Skandar about 5 years ago, and I'm delighted that the series has been as successful as it has. The first book, Skandar and the Unicorn Thief, introduces the reader to a world where unicorns aren't the fluffy My Little Pony beasts, but blood-thirsty animals that contain great magic. Each child takes a test to see if they have what it takes to become bonded with a Unicorn to become its rider and harness the magic. Skandar is smuggled into the Unicorn School despite not taking the test and soon realises he is a very special boy.

There are of course similarities with another magical boy, but there is more which is different than is the same. I've had the good fortune of seeing A F Steadman giving presentations to schools and they were special. Seeing the kids cheer and shout celebrating a unicorn they created win a fictional race was the beauty of books in its truest form.

A lot has happened in the series, but Skandar is now in hiding, not knowing who he can trust, as he continues to fight for good against evil. It's a fitting way to end a superb series. Skandar is a fantastic magical hero in children's literature, and we can't wait for current fans to enjoy the finale. There may be other books in the pipeline set elsewhere in the Skandar universe which will be fantastic.

The adult's pick is bookshop favourite Kate Wells, with a Christmas special in her Malvern Farm series, A Very Merry Murder. We join Jude and the gang on the farm as a TV crew comes to Malvern to host a Countryfile style show. First there is an accident — but was it an accident? Then someone dies — but was the victim the intended target? Kate's series is so addictive and perfect for fans of the cosy genre.

Christmas is coming, so do check out the Caversham Late Night shopping events, as well as Festive Wine with Words held in our shop.

Happy reading, whatever you have picked up, and hopefully see you in the shop soon.

www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk



It wasn't me – you can trust this bear!

photo A Forbes

★★★★★ "First Class." *The Daily Telegraph*

★★★★★ "Emotional and fascinating." *West End Best Friend*

★★★★★ "Very impressive." *Newbury Theatre*

★★★★★ "Subtle and involving." *The Spectator*

★★★★★ "Powerful... captivating... seamless." *Newbury Today*

★★★★★ "Beautifully moving" *Buzz News*

GLITCH
Written by **Zannah Kearns**
Dramaturgy by **Beth Flintoff**
Directed by **Gareth Taylor**

The true story of
The Post Office scandal
based on the experience of sub-postmistress Pam Stubbs

2026 UK Tour | rabbletheatre.com

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND THE BLADE dmp HASLAM.SNET ROSEATE SJT University of Reading

RABBLE THEATRE
by Elestr Lee

Theatre group reaches out

ALTHOUGH NO longer based in Caversham, local playgoers will be thrilled to learn RABBLE have won a grant enabling the company to tour their play *Glitch* during 2026. Written by Zannah Kearns, the play is about a Berkshire victim of the Post Office scandal.

Hazel Edwards, Director of Arts Council England (ACE) South East said, "Our investment of £85,000 into RABBLE's *Glitch* – The true story of the Post Office Scandal will enable this pertinent production to tour nationally, reaching audiences far beyond its original home in Reading."

"RABBLE tells local stories of national significance. To be able to share Pam Stubbs' inspirational story of perseverance and bravery to a national audience is brilliant, and we are grateful to ACE for enabling us to do so at this moment in time," said Toby Davies, RABBLE Artistic Director.

awcycles
110 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 6DH
0118 946 3050 • awcycles.co.uk

Call in to our Caversham Store for Bikes, Clothing, Accessories, Components, Servicing, Repair
t: 0118 946 3050
e: info@awcycles.co.uk

CURTAINS, BLINDS, PELMETS,
TIE BACKS ETC
ALL AT COMPETITIVE PRICES
CALL CAROLINE ON
0118 954 2448
OR 07815 610 007

Caversham Osteopathic Clinic
Richard Weatherall BSc OST
REGISTERED OSTEOPATH
Treating many conditions
For more information or to book an appointment
0118 947 5775
07885 454 092

1 ELECTRICS
Caversham Electrician
All your Electrical requirements
For a free quotation Phone
07771 798485 or 0118 954 6338

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Get involved in your community

Caversham Good Neighbours offer essential transport to the elderly and disabled in the neighbourhood. We're looking for volunteer drivers and people to help in our office. Why not join us?

All expenses paid

Complete autonomy over how much help you offer

Create strong friendships within our community

0118 948 3466
Monday to Friday 9:30am - 10:30am
www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk

What's On

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to 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

Please note, a listing of baby and toddler groups can be found on page 18.

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 9375103 or see 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

Tuesdays – **Rivarate Choir** – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. 19:30 in term time. Enjoy singing together. For details see 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 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

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 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

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

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

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, FB **Keep Caversham Tidy**

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

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

Until 9 November – **Exhibition of works by Ronnie Cruwys original mixed media paintings** – Caversham Picture Framers, Church Road – see cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events

Sunday 2 November – **Peppard Common walk – 4 miles** – 10:30 Meet at Peppard War Memorial Hall, Gallowstree Road, Peppard Common RG9 5JA. Pang Valley Ramblers. One of a programme of regular walks in the area – see pvrampblers.org.uk/walks-programme

Tuesday 4 November – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. www.thewi.org.uk or Tel: 0118 947 5176

Wednesday 5 November – **Rosehill Ladies** – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel: Sue 0118 947 7570 or email suegreen@hotmail.com

Wednesday 5 November – **Deep fakes and AI in film and media: seeing is not believing, a talk by Dr Dominic Lees** – 20:00 The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. To learn more visit cavershamheights.org or email: contact@cavershamheights.org

Friday 7 November – **Chazey Women's Institute** – 14:30 at St Andrew's Church Hall. Tel: 0118 947 0964, or e-mail rowena@primology.com

Friday 7 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

Saturday 8 November – **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

Saturday 8 November – **Remembrance weekend concert featuring Finzi's Requiem da Camera and his Lo, the Full and Final Sacrifice, complemented by Bach, Komm Jesu Komm** – 19:30 Reading Bach Choir, All Saints Church, Downshire Square, RG1 6NN. Tickets £18 in advance via www.readingbachchoir.org.uk or £20 on the door. Under 18's £5.

Saturday 15 November – **Performance of Joseph Haydn's 'The Creation'** – 19:30 Reading Haydn Choir, St Joseph's College, Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JT. Details www.haydnchoir.org.uk Email rdghaydnchoir+tickets@gmail.com for £1 off.

Wednesday 19 November – **The history of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, a talk by Richard Havelock** – 20:00 The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. To learn more visit cavershamheights.org or email: contact@cavershamheights.org

Wednesday 19 November – **Wildlife gardening without the mess a talk by Claire Mitchell** – 19:30 Caversham Horticultural Society. This will be an online talk (using Zoom), ticket only via [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com). Access granted from 19:30 and the talk will start shortly afterwards.

Wednesday 19 November – **Voices of Reading: Aspects of Life in the 'Long 18th Century, a talk by Joan Dils** – 19:30 The History of Reading Society, Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. Doors open at 19:00 This meeting is open to all, £2 for non-members.

Monday 24 November – **Wildlife Wanderings, presentation by wildlife photographer David Bailey** – 14:00 Reading u3a at Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. Non-members welcome, free entry. See www.readingu3a.org.uk

Thursday 27 November – **Xmas Shopping Evening** – 18:30-21:00 The Milestone Centre, Northbrook Road, Caversham Park Village. Local crafters, raffle, mince pies and free parking

Friday 28 November – **La France et l'art: Annabel Cannon discusses art from the late 19th C** – 19:30-21:30 Le Cercle Français at Church House, 59 Church Street, RG4 8AX. Admission £5 welcome drink included. Programme at www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk Email readingcirclefrancais@gmail.com

Coming up:

Monday 1 December – **The Birth of Naida, a talk by Iain Tolhurst MBE** – 19:00 doors open, 19:30 talk Reading Offshore Sailing Club. Upper Thames Motor Yacht Clubhouse, Sonning Mill Island, RG4 6TW. Details at www.readingoffshore.org.uk or call 07380 892870.

Saturday 6 December – **Green Christmas Tree Sale** – 9:30 – 13:00 Econet, Caversham Court Gardens See <https://econetreading.org.uk/events> for details

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

THERE ARE TWO applications from BT for their new Street Hubs in **Church Street**. There are similar ones around Reading, which are all part of implementing the Government's Wireless Infrastructure Strategy. These are housed within a double-sided illuminated advertising screen. One by the Spill Bar (PL/25/1352 and PL/25/1357) replaces the phone box, and the other (PL/25/1388 and PL/25/1397) is outside Waitrose, close to the passage to the car park.

These three metre high kiosks will provide 5G services, free public Wi-Fi, USB charging and emergency service access. The screens will face pedestrians, and there are concerns that they will obstruct the pavement, be a distraction to drivers and be out of keeping with the Caversham village street scene.

Also in Caversham centre, the **Alto Lounge, Church Street** (PL/25/1333) seeks consent for new fascia signage and replacement menu board, which includes the fascia for the conversion of the former charity shop next door. Two applications have been permitted in the Caversham Conservation Area – roof alterations at **6 Church Street**, a listed building (PL/25/0841) and at **18 Bridge Street** (PL/25/1004), a conversion from office to two flats.

Elsewhere, permission has been granted for the popular **Hills Meadow** Ice Rink from October to January, although concerns were expressed about the risk to trees and grass verge next to it from construction traffic. And in **George Street**, the Thames Valley Service Station have successfully appealed against the refusal of an illuminated advertising board. And the refused extension at **1 Gravel Hill Cottages, Blagrave Lane** (PL/25/0574) has been appealed.

At the **Emmer Green Reservoir, off Kiln Road**, a revised design of the new reservoir retains more trees and shows no new ecological impacts.

See www.cadra.org.uk for links to these planning applications.

CADRA Open Meeting and talk
Wednesday 19 November, 19:30

Olly's Work – a talk by Amanda Stephens

St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green RG4 8RA

Membership costs just £12 for three years –

see membermojo.co.uk/cadra for details.

Steve Daniels

Painting & Decorating

30 years experience • City and Guilds Qualified

For a professional job and free quote

Tel 0118 961 3218 • Mobile 07917 106164
s.daniels4@ntlworld.com

Dancia
Berkshire's Premier Dancewear Store

- Dance school uniforms
- Ballet shoe fitting
- Tap & jazz shoes
- Ballroom shoes
- Bags & hair accessories
- Pointe shoe fitting

Dancia,
36-38 Prospect St, Caversham, RG4 8JL
Tel: 0118 9478123
www.dancia.co.uk

Emma's Barber Shop
Goes Mobile!

Now operating in Caversham, Emmer Green, Sonning Common and all surrounding areas

Contact me to book
07901 966303
emmaruane@gmail.com

ARTISTS & MAKERS

Artists & Makers Fair
Saturday 8 November, 10 am - 4 pm
Caversham Methodist Church

Free Entry

I'VE BEEN fascinated by fungi since childhood. I must have been about nine when I persuaded my father to buy me a copy of I-Spy Wild Fruits and Fungi, which cost one shilling. I'd seen it in the newsagent's window. This was the 1950s. The book wasn't quite as drab as those which had been produced to the war-time economy standard, which had no coloured pictures at all – in this one the cover and half of the illustrations were in colour.

When trying to decide which fungus to write about for November, my mind went back to the 1970s, when a friend told me about the Field Studies Council and its week-long residential courses. For me they were more like holidays. The Council is an educational charity, with field centres across England and Wales. The first course I enrolled for was called simply 'Fungi', led by the highly eccentric Dr Fred Parker-Rhodes. He wore a battered hat, a pointed beard and a long green cloak, carrying a wicker basket over one arm in which to collect specimens. During our travels I

...rather erratic...

sat alongside him in the vehicle. I was told he was a rather erratic driver, so the others preferred to sit at the back but, never having driven a vehicle, I didn't really notice. Part of the fun of the course came at the end of the day when the kitchen staff at the field centre near Shrewsbury had gone home, and some of us went down there in secret to fry and eat some of the specimens we'd collected during the day. We must have been good students – no-one was any the worse for the experience!

In looking back through the articles I've written for the 'Bridge' over the last twenty years, I found

The first course I enrolled for was called simply 'Fungi', led by the highly eccentric Dr Fred Parker-Rhodes. He wore a battered hat, a pointed beard and a long green cloak, carrying a wicker basket over one arm in which to collect specimens...

that I'd already written about the Shaggy Ink-cap and the Bonfire Ink-cap, so I chose this one, the Magpie Ink-cap. When I came to look it up in books, to my surprise it was described as being uncommon or rare. I've found it in several beech woods just north of Caversham at this time of year. When it first pushes up through the soil, it's covered by a whitish skin, which splits to expose the cap and gills so that the spores can be shed. Pieces of the skin remain stuck to the cap, giving it a 'pied' appearance, though it's usually brown and white rather than black and white like a magpie. It's not likely to be confused with any other fungus, and is reckoned to be poisonous.

Like other ink-cap fungi, as the spores are released from the gills below the cap, the cap and gills dissolve into a black inky liquid, hence the name. I have read that, in the eighteenth century, the black spores were used to make an ink which was reckoned to be indelible.

In the woods where it grows, there are likely to be other curious fungi. Where I photographed this one, there were Horns of Plenty, Oyster Mushrooms and Earth Stars. Good hunting!



The Magpie Ink-Cap

photo Happy Wanderer

M. D. Howlett

architectural consultant

(0118) 947 7117

20 years experience in all aspects of domestic and commercial architecture, including designs, local authority applications and contract administration



Why should you install Solar PV?

You can achieve payback of 12% from your investment



0118 967 7033

info@carter-electrical.co.uk
www.carter-electrical.co.uk

Puzzle Corner

The Challenge by Rachel

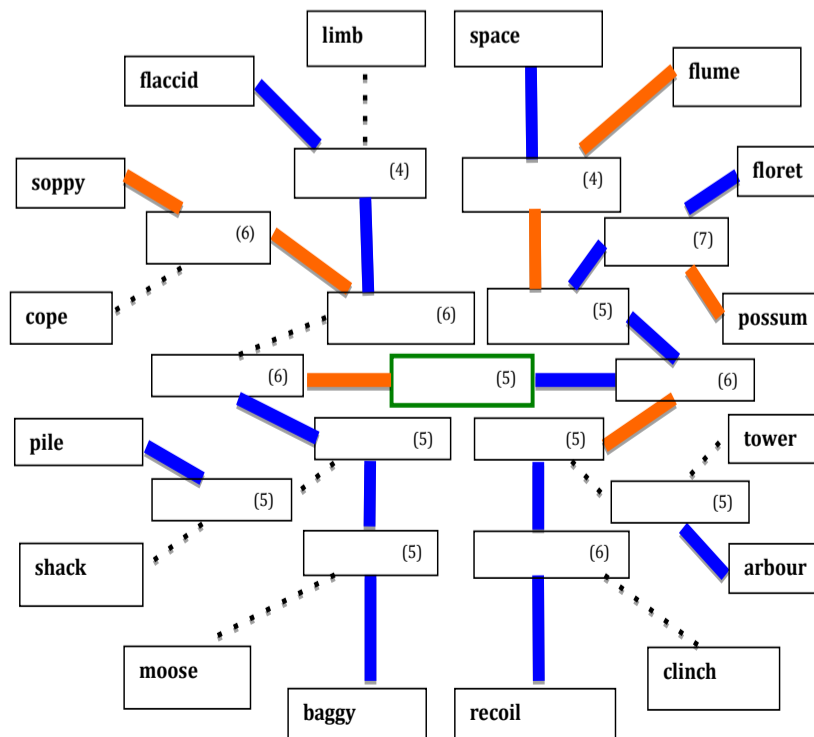
WORD PUZZLE

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

Electricity in the home

Can you find 22 words in the grid relating to electricity?

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

Cable
Circuit Breaker
Earth
Electricity
Extractor Fan
Fuse Box
Heater
Insulation
Junction Box
Lamp
Light Bulb

Negative
Neutral
Plug
Positive
Powerpoint
Shock
Short Circuit
Socket
Switch
Trunking
Wire

Ten Years After

text and photo David Howell



Celebrating 10 years at The Bite, Emmer Green

WHEN I started the Men's Breakfast 10 years ago it was because, like a lot of men who have been working away every week, when I retired, I couldn't find any suitable local community men's groups that gathered on a regular basis for support and friendship.

So I set myself three objectives to address my needs and, as I found out, the needs of a lot of other men in our community. Firstly, get me out of the house once a month, secondly, visit different venues to create variety and take us to places which we might not otherwise have visited and, thirdly, support local businesses in Emmer Green and Caversham.

The first breakfast was held at The Bite at Emmer Green and was attended by nine hearty souls who enjoyed their breakfast and didn't need to worry about the washing up. Since then, we've visited eleven different venues (some have now closed, and new ones have opened), and the most that have ever attended is twenty four. In 2018 at Richfield's Deli and Grill, we were interviewed for local TV, which was both exciting and scary.

I can remember on one occasion during COVID, so as not to break the then rules, two of us brought chairs and sat on the grass eating our breakfast from a cardboard box outside The Bite. We and the group have survived.

I didn't have any expectation of how long this group would continue, but it keeps on going with men from other churches beside St Barnabas, as well as many who profess no faith and don't attend church.

We gather on the first Wednesday of every month and I send out an invite the week before with the venue, so if anyone would like to be added to the emailing list then please feel free to contact me via email at dhowell194@gmail.com

David has recently retired as a church warden at St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green.

Sparkle this Christmas



by Perry Walker

Owner of
Perry's Beauty, Caversham
[@perrys_beautyroom](https://www.instagram.com/perrys_beautyroom)

WITH OVER 20 years' piercing experience, I know with Christmas fast approaching, many are looking for fun and personal ways to get into the festive spirit. Ear piercing has become an increasingly popular choice. Whether it's a first piercing or an addition to a growing ear stack, getting your ears pierced during the holidays is a stylish way to treat yourself or a loved one.

As people plan their festive outfits, sparkle is a must, and jewellery plays a big part. A new piercing allows for fresh accessorising opportunities, from

...glittering studs...

delicate gold hoops to glittering studs which match your partywear. It's also a great way to add a personal touch to your look for Christmas events, family gatherings, or New Year's Eve.

Ear piercing also makes a thoughtful and memorable gift. Families or friends may choose to book a piercing appointment together, a bonding experience of a shared moment that becomes part of their Christmas memories. It's a present that lasts and, with so many styles and placements available, there's something to suit every personality.



michiru-mori-yKoVKUDUETO-unsplash.com

Christmas is also a fantastic time for children to consider their first piercing, as schools are off for over two weeks, which allows for healing time.

Professional piercers are trained to ensure accurate placement and give aftercare advice to help your piercing heal beautifully. When selecting a piercing therapist, be sure to look for the correct piercing licence from Reading Borough Council and up-to-date insurance.

Whether you're adding a subtle second stud or going bold with multiple placements, piercings are a versatile way to express yourself and, with so many beautiful earrings to choose from, it's the perfect time of year to shine a little more brightly. So, if you're looking for something fun, meaningful, and a bit sparkly this season, a new ear piercing might be the perfect festive accessory.



2024 collection with the Mayor and volunteers

Bringing Christmas Joy

text and photo Paul Cooper

AS CHRISTMAS approaches, many families in Reading are struggling to make ends meet. Recent figures from End Child Poverty show more than 11,000 children in Reading – around 30% – are living in poverty. For some, Christmas morning will pass without a single present to unwrap.

This is why Reading Family Aid, a local charity run by volunteers, is launching its annual Toys and Teens Appeal on Thursday 23 October. The appeal ensures children from disadvantaged families receive gifts at Christmas – something to bring a smile, restore a little magic, and remind them their community cares.

Last year, the appeal reached more than 2,000 children, thanks to the generosity of local residents, schools and businesses. Each toy and gift donated made

a huge difference to a child who might otherwise have gone without.

This year, the need is greater than ever. With the rising cost of living putting extra pressure on families, many parents are having to make impossible choices between heating their homes, putting food on the table, or gifts for their children.

You can help to make sure more children in Reading have something to open this Christmas. There are two simple ways to get involved:

- **Donate new (or nearly new) toys and gifts at one of the Appeal's local drop-off points (or arrange a collection)**
- **Give a financial donation to help buy gifts for older children and teenagers**

Every contribution brings hope and joy to a child who deserves to feel special.

To find your nearest donation point, or donate online, visit www.readingfamilyaid.org – the last date for donations of toys and gifts is Saturday 6 December.

 the live in care company

Are you looking for a better option than a residential care home?

Expert live in care at home

From a carer you choose

Respite care available

Choice & flexibility at competitive rates

Comprehensive care, 7 days a week



★ Trustpilot

Rated "excellent" on Trustpilot



Call us today

0118 911 3070

theliveincarecompany.co.uk

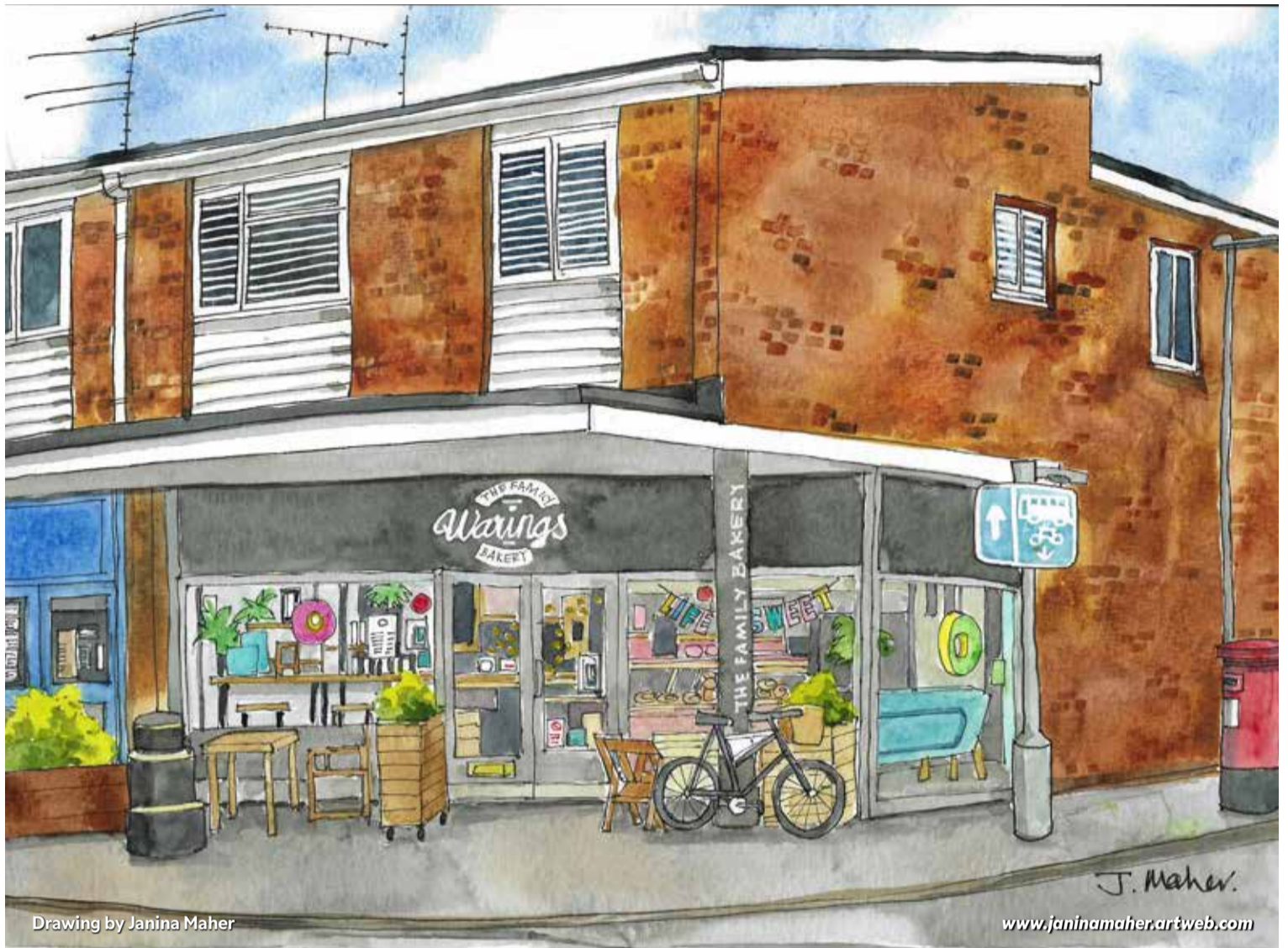
Warings Family Bakery

Their website tells us that Lawrence Webster Waring moved to Reading in 1928 from Yorkshire where he worked in the famous Betty's Tea Shop...

AM SURE most of us have noticed the vintage lady's bike, complete with basket, that is parked on the corner of Church Street and Hemdean Road. It draws attention to Warings the family Bakers which is a favourite meeting place. The family firm has a history that goes back to 1932, but the Caversham branch opened in 1995.

The site had been the garden of the house called The Priory. By 1950 along Church Street there was a garage at numbers 18-28, a shop at 30 (until recently a chemist's) then the garden. Number 32 was on the corner of Hemdean Road and was the baker's shop of J E Howard and Son. By 1968 it seems the present row of five shops had been built over the garden, replacing number 32. They were numbered 32, 32a, 32b, 32c, and 32d. Howard's bakery was there and was taken over by Scott's around 1971. Scott's the bakers closed suddenly and unexpectedly in 1994. The business was then taken over by Waring's, who opened their Caversham shop in 1995.

Their website tells us that Lawrence Webster Waring moved to Reading in 1928 from Yorkshire where he worked in the famous Betty's Tea Shop. After working for Harris' Bakery in Reading, he opened his own bakery in part of the family home in Armour Road, Tilehurst, making home deliveries by bike and later with a van. Soon his wife Louisa started selling bread from



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

their front room. It was a big family (six children), and they all helped out with the business until eventually one of the sons, Sidney, took over the firm.

It remained on a small scale until 1978 when Warings opened another bakery in Spencers Wood. Still very much a family business with traditional family values, further generations have expanded and

modernized the business. There are now five branches, as well as the main production bakery in Spencers Wood where everything is freshly baked each day and delivered to the shops.

The latest branch was opened in Henley with a special event on Saturday 13 September when Leah, Alan and Genia Waring, who run the business today,

welcomed customers who tasted their award-winning baking.

At present Caversham and Henley are the only branches that have their own kitchens and can provide a tempting breakfast menu. Our Caversham Warings is a welcoming and popular café as well as selling a wide range of craft baked bread and delicious cakes.

GRAHAM T NEALE
Painter & Decorator
 Caversham Based Tradesman
NO JOB TOO SMALL
 T 0118 954 6870
 M 07394 350790
 E grahamtneale@yahoo.com

MAPLEDURHAM PARISH HALL
TRENCH GREEN (RG4 7UA)
Good size hall for hire with stage, kitchen & storage facilities

Rural setting with parking close to Mapledurham village

Can accommodate for example:

- Children's parties
- Family celebrations
- Classes • Meetings • Sales & Exhibitions
- Drama & Music Groups
- Wi-Fi

One off occasions or multi bookings

For further enquiries contact Jane Bowen on:

07803 507234
 or email
 bowenje52@gmail.com

With thanks to David Cliffe for additional historical information.



This painting features as the September illustration for Janina's 2026 Caversham Calendar

available from
Fourbears Books
 on Prospect Street and
NOODstores
 in Church Street

janinamaher.artweb.com

E.L.P. Electrical Services Ltd

Electrical Installation Contractors

- Established Electrical Installation Company with an Excellent Reputation
- Commercial and Domestic Installations
- Specialists in Electrical Testing, Fault Diagnosis and Rectification
- Fire and Intruder Alarm Systems
- Planned, Preventative and Reactive Electrical Maintenance
- Fully NIC EIC Accredited

E.L.P. Electrical Services undertake all aspects of electrical installation work from new consumer units to full rewires, including commercial electrical projects. We even install an extra socket or 2.



01189 790171
 07909 434515

nickwright@elpelectrical.com
www.elpelectrical.com

CAVERSHAM HOMECRAFTS
 Traditional Hardware
THE LITTLE SHOP THAT THINKS BIG
 Home • Garden • Pet Accessories • Cleaning • Plumbing
 Tools • DIY • Lighting • Cooking • Haberdashery • Wool • Paints & Oils
 Over 40 years of Quality hardware in Caversham
 46 CHURCH STREET, CAVERSHAM, READING – 0118 947 2011
 Web site: www.cavershamhomecrafts.co.uk
 E-mail: info@cavershamhomecrafts.co.uk



Les Cooper

...it was a hall full of interest and made me realise how talented and resourceful the residents of Caversham can be

Good year or bad year?

IT WAS THE Caversham Horticultural Society show on 30 August, where my role was shouting out the raffle prize-winners. The show was a great success, and I was staggered by the quality of the exhibits. Excellent potatoes, beautiful flowers and really nice tomatoes, and all the time my thoughts were 'how did the exhibitors manage this?' when my own desert, sorry garden, was rather pathetic. With cookery items, handicrafts, painting and photographs it was a hall full of interest and made me realise how talented and resourceful the residents of Caversham can be.

For me this gardening year has been one of two halves. The first few months were very successful, with the

beautiful Spring flowers and the blossom laden trees. Then the lack of rain meant the second half has been pathetic with even the grass struggling to look anything at all.

My only three slight successes have been with tomatoes, little white daisies and Eucomis.

Admittedly, the tomatoes have not been show winners, but they have been interesting. They are a variety called Cocktail Crush which I raised and planted in grow bags. Not having the best ever attention, they have still produced some quite nice salad tomatoes. They are very tasty, but the skins are somewhat thick and indigestible. The question I have asked myself is, is it a variety fault or is it my slack gardening, perhaps not enough water or feed?

One thing I did get right, although I didn't do much except carry out a fair amount of watering, was to grow six Eucomis bulbs in a large container. Commonly known as the Pineapple Lily, it has an unusual tufted greenish-white flower arising from strong upright green leaves. It has looked quite exotic and has remained in flower for weeks, making a feature to catch the eye.



Pineapple plant

photo E Cooper

I must mention *Erigeron Karvinskianus* (I'd like to hear you pronounce this – Ed) the little white daisy flower growing in many gardens. It has flowered really well during the drought, when so many other perennials have struggled. Perhaps unsurprisingly it originates from Mexico.

November's National Tree Week text and photo Roslyn Weaver



Caversham Court Gardens

NOVEMBER BRINGS us the annual National Tree Week, run by The Tree Council and now in its fiftieth year. This follows hot on the heels (roots?) of the recent, separate UK Tree of the Year competition, voted by the public and run by The Woodland Trust, and won by Glasgow's Argyle Street Ash. I'm not entirely sure what the winning tree actually takes home, but apparently the Ash now goes on to represent us in a European tree of the year competition. One can only wonder if the Ash wins that too, is there a global competition with, perhaps, Antipodean trees – a rather literal fight of the Ashes, of the tree kind anyway.

No Caversham trees made it, but many local trees have their own fans, whether in Caversham Court Gardens, the many green spaces, or people's own gardens.

...special meanings...

What the competition does show is that trees have special meanings for many and inspire artists. How many songs about trees can you name? If you manage just one, that is one more than I can manage, unless we're counting a certain song about a Christmas tree. Yet there are dozens; indeed, one runner up in the Trust's competition was the King of Limbs in Savernake Forest, which is also the name of a Radiohead album. If not music, you might be able to name famous book trees, like Enid Blyton's Faraway Tree, Tolkien's Ents, or the Whomping Willow in *Harry Potter*.

Others find comfort, meaning, or interest in trees themselves, remembering favourite childhood trees, or planting them in memory of lost ones. Oaks are often linked with strength and wisdom, willows with mourning, and fir trees with Christmas. Tourism even benefits from cherry blossom visitors in Japan, for example, or 'leaf peepers' looking for changing autumnal colours in North East US.

And if, after all, a tree is just a tree to you, then no voting or quizzing or imagining is needed, you can just do what Tree Week is intended to do and celebrate the start of tree planting season by ... just planting a tree.

Gill Madeley NAHort.
Garden Design & Maintenance

- Garden Design
- Maintenance
- Seasonal Clearance
- Planting
- Advice

Caversham, Reading, Berkshire
t. 0118 947 1178 m. 07971 742 053
gillmadeleygardendesign@sky.com

JH Roofline Services

Specialising in the installation and maintenance of all types of **GUTTERING**

T **07565 303035**
E **jakehartroofing@gmail.com**

BEN MACKIE
ARBORIST

Professional Tree and Hedge care

Local to Caversham: Over 15 years experience
Royal Forestry certified • NPTC Qualified
£5m public liability
Call Ben on **07717 495047**
ben.mackie@tiscali.co.uk • benmackiearborist.com

PRIMARY SCHOOL CHOICES

by Hilary Smart

AROUND THIS time last year, we waved our youngest child off to school. This new rhythm is working very well for us, but I remember how it felt before our eldest started school. It helped that we were confident the school we had chosen for him was a great fit for his personality and our family's priorities. School open days are the best way to gauge this.

You might feel your little one will thrive in a small school, or perhaps they'd be better off in a bigger one. Outside space might be important, or the availability of wraparound care could be a deal-breaker for you. We are lucky because all of the Caversham primary schools are wonderful – there are no bad choices – but for each child there will be ones which are a better or worse fit.

Many schools have catchment areas, though you can still put in an application from outside the catchment area. St Anne's in Lower Caversham and St Martin's in Caversham Park Village are church schools and do not have a specific catchment area. Their communities are made up of families of all faiths and none who appreciate how the Christian ethos informs how children are treated and valued.

Open days can change your choices – we fell in love with St Martin's when looking round, despite it not being the closest to our house. We had a strong sense it was a school where our children would be happy and able to enjoy their learning (and it is). You know your own child best, and you will know what suits them when you see it, if you go and look.

Primary School Open Days 2025/6

The following table contains information supplied by the schools, or available on their websites at the time of writing, 10 October 2025. Only dates in November, December and January are included.

Caversham Park

Queensway, Caversham Park, Reading, RG4 6RP

Please contact the school office providing details of the date of the session you would like to attend, along with the name of the parent / carer, the child's name and a contact number. We will then confirm your place at the session.

09:30 Thursday 13 November

Phone 0118 937 5433 or email: admin@cavershampark.reading.sch.uk
Website: 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.

Starting at 10:45. Friday 7, Tuesday 11, Monday 17 November. Friday 5 December – Starting at 9:00. Fridays 28 November, 9 January

Please call the school office to book a place on 0118 937 5454.
Email: admin@cavershamprimary.reading.sch.uk
Website: www.cavershamprimary.org



Emmer Green

Grove Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8LN

Contact school to book. Include name of parent attending, child's name, a contact number and your home postcode.

All starting at 9:15. 18, 24 November, 8 January 2026

Phone 0118 937 5464 or email: admin@emmergreen.reading.sch.uk
Website: www.emmergreenprimary.com



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

Website: www.epcollier.reading.sch.uk



Micklands

Micklands Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6LU

We have the following open afternoon

Tuesday 4 November 14:00

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. **0118 937 5500**

or email: admin@micklands.reading.sch.uk to book your visit

Website: 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 2026, please join us on our open days.

9:15 on 4 November and 13:30 on 25 November

To book a place please call the school on **0118 937 5537**

or email: admin@st-annes.reading.sch.uk

Website: 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.

9:15 on 5 November, 13:30 on 26 November

Please contact the school office to make an appointment for a tour.

Phone **0118 937 5544** or email: admin@stmartins.reading.sch.uk

Website: www.stmartinscaversham.co.uk



Thameside

Harley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DB

New parent tours

Both at 10:00. 6 and 8 November

To book, please email: admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk

Phone **0118 937 5551**

Website: 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.

9:15-10:15 on 21 November, 8 December, 9 January

Contact the school office to book a place on **0118 357 0123**

Website: www.theheightsprimary.co.uk



The Hill

Peppard Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8TU

Except for 14 November, there are two time slots available (9:30 and 13:30) for each date.

6, 13, 14 (13:30 only), 20, 21, 27 November, 4 and 5 December

Call the school office on **0118 937 5560** to book, as spaces are limited.

Website: www.thehillprimary.org.uk



Creative CAVERSHAM

COMIC ART OUT OF CHAOS



Jenny Robins may be a relative newcomer... but she is already busy livening up and bringing a smile to our neighbourhood. She introduced **Elestr Lee** to her award-winning graphic novel, and talked about her recent 'collage zine' workshops and portrait painting

Slightly worried about me seeing the 'chaos' of her studio at her Caversham home, it turned out that it's a word that Jenny likes to use about herself and the world in general – although out of the muddle and confusion she is someone who has an observant eye and determination to ask questions while providing a quirky yet clear sighted commentary on everyday life. "People are amazing," she said, in summing up her work.

Having always had an interest in both collage as well



Jenny's cards for colouring-in fans!

as comics, it's not surprising that Jenny studied for an illustration degree at Southampton Solent University. Having freelanced in London, where among various assignments she got the chance to sketch fashion shows, she subsequently gained a PGCE and a Master's in art education at University College London – "I'm too much of an extrovert to work solo," she laughed, however she still values the experience she gained sketching fashion for her current work providing live portraits.

Currently she teaches art at a secondary school four days a week, while also taking bookings to do commissioned portraits, as well as live portraits at parties and weddings – and has started attending local events such as this summer's fair at St Anne's School in Caversham. She remains fascinated by creating collages, something she started making in her teenage years. "I am text-led," she explained. "So, for example, I keep folders of words I have cut out that I like.

"You can use anything to create a collage; people still cut out images from magazines and I am not afraid of using pages from books. So many unwanted books are sent to landfill, after all... You can use leaves you find, pieces of fabric. I think making a collage is a bit of an antidote to the digital overwhelm we all face. You create something new from the stuff in front of you."

...indie community...

Jenny combines her skills in illustration and collage to create graphic novels – "My collages, illustrated comics and live portraits all feed into each other," she said. "I have self-published on a small scale my own comics, which I sell, along with original collages and prints, at fairs. Then in 2016 I started developing a series of illustrated characters – little snapshots of people I created, whose lives I imagined. Eventually, I worked out a story structure, which I approached in a way that may seem almost scientific – I even made spreadsheets, so that the stories of my invented people could overlap, but in a way so that the characters could find what they needed."

The result of Jenny's ideas turned into a full-length novel which was published by Myriad, *Biscuits (Assorted)*, which won First Graphic Novel Competition in 2018. And this October Jenny was chosen as one of just five comic creators representing the UK to travel to one of the world's most important comic art museums in Brussels to take part in British Comics Now, an event organised by the Lakes International Comic Art Festival. Speaking before the event, Jenny told me, "It's a great opportunity to reach out to the European publishers. Although there is a big indie community in the UK comic art has never been accepted as mainstream in the way it has in the USA, Europe and East Asia.

"I think there is a certain snobbery against it here in the UK, unlike the golden age of comics in the USA for example. Here it has always been thought of by many as something 'just for children!'"

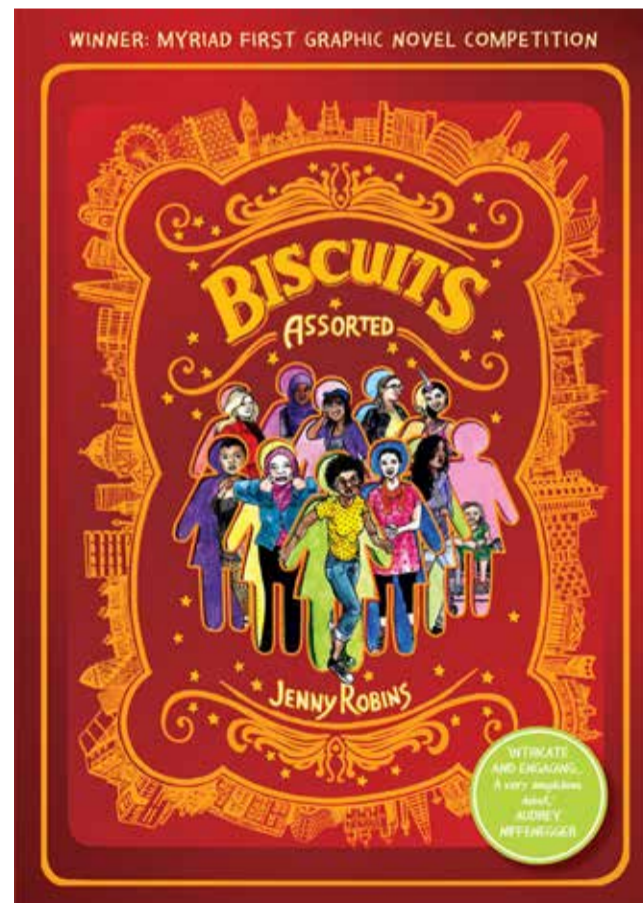
Jenny continues to create collages as pieces of art – as a teen she started off making collages as covers for mixtapes. "I'm a bit of a scatterbrain," she remarked. "In terms of the art I make, I like to bring together all the pieces I have gathered. It's a way of making sense of the sort of chaos we



Text, portraits and collage are the ingredients of Jenny's art

experience in modern life." She has recently been offering short courses in creating what she calls 'collage zines' (simple mini art-books) at both Fourbears Bookshop and Caversham Library, and she is keen that these workshops, together with her work in schools as an art teacher, helps youngsters to spend more time thinking about and making art of their own and less time online. "If you are drawing, making collages and using paints, these can only be done when you are not online.

"There is a strong theme which runs through all my work: how do we live in a world of such over-stimulation? How do we learn to care about each other as humans?"



Jenny's first award-winning graphic novel

all images J Robins

Find out more:

Meet Jenny Robins at the Artists & Makers Fair, Caversham Methodist Church, Nov 8

Nettlebed Christmas Fair Nov 22

Moulsford Preparatory School Fair Dec 6

Biscuits (Assorted) is available at Fourbears Bookshop, and can be found in Caversham Library



Sporting Profiles

by Luci Reid



Success for Queen Anne's School



Sisters n Sport Netball Champions

IT WAS A fantastic start to the year for Queen Anne's School in Caversham, as their Under-19A lacrosse and Under-16 netball teams were both crowned national champions in their respective competitions back in the spring.

At the National Schools Lacrosse Tournament, the U19A team battled through two days of fierce competition at the Aldershot Garrison Sports Fields to claim the title for the first time in nearly 30 years. After strong performances in the group stages, the team advanced through the knockout rounds with skill and tenacity, including a thrilling 5-4 quarter-final win over Withington, and a 2-1 semi-final victory over Guildford High. In a tense final, Queen Anne's secured a 3-2 victory over St Catherine's, Bramley, sealing a historic triumph.

First Team Coach, Nick Blackwell, praised the squad's resilience. Captains Mary and Lara reflected on the rollercoaster journey and the drive of the team, "We learned



Lacrosse Champions

all photos Queen Annes School

and adapted from our mistakes in those matches which led us to victory overall! The rest of the team are such amazing individuals on and off the pitch, the work ethic in this group is insane".

Just weeks later, the Under-16 netball team travelled to Loughborough for the Sisters n Sport National Finals. After a strong win over Upton Hall, they battled Ivybridge Community College in the championship match. Despite trailing early, the girls showed their spirit, fighting back to win 30-27. It was a display of skill, determination, and teamwork which culminated in a well-deserved victory.

The school has a reputation as a leader in school sport, cemented by this double success, inspiring the next generation of sportswomen. Congratulations to both teams on making history!

Get on your bike

READING CYCLE FESTIVAL took place on Christchurch meadows in September and was a celebration of all things cycling in Reading. There were stunt riding displays, a pump track and ramps for kids to try out their skills on, as well as delegations from many of the local cycling groups. The annual festival is sponsored by Avanti Cycling, who deliver Bikeability training in the local schools.

KidicalMass, whorun regular, marshalled, bike rides for families with young children, took a ride around Lower Caversham — many thanks to those who smiled and waved to encourage the children! Many of the children (including ours) then enjoyed testing out their skills on the ramps course. The stunt riding display on the grownup sized ramps was incredible. It's not often you see cyclists doing flips on their bikes in mid-air! Their performance drew lots of cheers from an appreciative crowd.

Local groups Reading Cycle Campaign

text and photo Hilary Smart

and WATCH Wokingham were there to speak to people about their important work advocating for cyclists' safety, and Reading Bike Kitchen were offering repairs. Also, the exciting new Reading Bike Hub had some of their mechanics attending the festival. The hub is in the old Mothercare unit (between Broad Street and Jackson's Corner) and has a free to use indoor balance biking track in the back part of the shop. They also offer good value bike repairs, bike hire, second hand bike sales and cycle training courses.

Rob Bowen of AW Cycles had sponsored the raffle in aid of Sport in Mind, donating a helmet, a rather good lock, and a bike. AW cycles is based on the Henley Road (see their advert on page 5) and sells, among other things, helmets, rather good locks, and bikes (including e-assist bikes).



On the bike ramp

Despite the forecast of rain (which came down later in the day) there was a good turnout for the festival. It's reflective, I think, of the increased numbers of riders we see year on year in Reading. More and

more people are swapping car journeys for cleaner, healthier (and often quicker) bike rides — if you'd like to join the crew, then any of the organisations mentioned in this article would love to have you.

Websites:

Kidical Mass: kidicalmassreading.co.uk

Reading Cycle Campaign: readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Reading Bike Hub: readingbikehub.org.uk

Would you like an honest, reliable and **AFFORDABLE**, police checked cleaner to care for your home?

TIME FOR YOU Typically **£20.00** per hour fully inclusive
DOMESTIC CLEANING



Call TODAY: **0118 430 1430**
Email: caversham@uk.timeforyou.cleaning

www.timeforyou.cleaning



A. B. WALKER
Local, independent, family-run funeral director supporting Caversham.



"EVERYONE at AB Walker Caversham were truly exceptional."

0118 947 7007
www.abwalker.co.uk

THE CAVERSHAM PICTURE FRAMER



Wine Tasting

Join our newsletter at cavershampictureframer.co.uk to find out about all our events

0118 9481610
5a Church Rd, Caversham, RG4 7AA
framing@cavershampictureframer.co.uk

LIVE AND LOCAL



Reading Festival 2025

text and photo Richard Wells



Chappell Roan on stage at Reading Festival

AS A CAVERSHAM resident, I have been going to Reading Festival for years. As a huge music fan, having so many of the world's top artists playing on my doorstep is too good an opportunity to miss! Plus, I come home every evening to my own bed and a hot shower in the morning. In my opinion the perfect way to do a festival!

The festival is a rite of passage for many youngsters following exam results, and our group is quite a bit older than the majority,

but we don't feel it! I've always found the festival to have a great vibe, with everyone there to enjoy the music and have a great time, no matter their age.

Over the past few years, the festival has seen lots of changes, with the addition of a craft beer bar and street food area with lots of picnic benches. These provide a great chance to rest and refuel after dancing around to whoever you've seen so far!

The all new Chevron Stage is amazing: added in 2024 and moved into an enormous tent for 2025, the huge blanket of LED

lights strung up above everyone's heads really takes seeing a performance there to another level.

There's plenty to see aside from the main stage acts with several smaller stages featuring comedy, up and coming artists and DJs.

The most anticipated artist of the weekend this year was Chappell Roan, who absolutely lived up to the hype. I have never seen such a huge crowd at the main stage. The atmosphere was euphoric, and everyone was singing along to every word of a set laden with all her recent hits, plus an amazing cover of Heart's Barracuda.

Other highlights included an amazing

nostalgic set from rock legends, Limp Bizkit and Sheffield hard rockers, Bring Me the Horizon, whose electric main stage performance featured astonishing production, with multiple confetti cannons, flames and lasers!

If you are a local resident, I cannot recommend it enough! We were there for the whole weekend, but a day ticket will certainly allow you to experience the festival vibes.

Being able to see an artist such as Chappell Roan in your hometown, rather than travelling to a London stadium or arena, is such a bonus!



One resident's take on the Festival!

drawing J Maher

EAR WAX

Mobile ear wax removal



Qualified audiologist • HCPC registered

Lucinda Ellis Tel. 07795 268866

Please mention this paper when replying to advertisements

Christmas past

by Maria Lloyd

CHRISTMAS IS a time for traditions and, for many of us, it's a time when we look back and remember the festivities of years gone by. Maybe it's a specific decoration you hang on the tree, a classic Christmas movie you watch every year, or a special food you eat only at this time of year.

This Christmas, Visit Reading is launching a campaign focused on Caversham's festive nostalgia. We're looking to collect your cherished stories, photographs, and memories of Christmas in our community throughout the years. We want to hear what

made the holidays special for you and your family. Did you visit a particular shop? Was there a community event you always looked forward to? Maybe you have a picture of Caversham's high street decorated for Christmas from a few decades ago.

We'll be sharing these memories on the Visit Reading website and social media channels to create a wonderful, collective archive that celebrates our shared history and brings people together. Your contributions will help keep these treasured moments alive for everyone to enjoy.

If you have any old photos, stories, or other visual items that you'd like to contribute, please email me at maria.lloyd@reading.gov.uk

We can't wait to see what you send in and help us all take a nostalgic trip back to Christmases past in Caversham.

We will start to collate all items on the following Visit Reading landing page: visit-reading.com/nostalgia

Supporting Water Aid & Launchpad Refreshments

FAIRTRADE CHRISTMAS SALE

decorations, Christmas cards, handmade crafts, chocolate & other goodies

97 SOUTHVIEW AVE RG4 5BB
13 - 15 NOVEMBER
10 - 5

Come round the side of the house
enquiries: 07986905784
email: pamch32@gmail.com

Caversham Fairtrade
find us on Facebook & Instagram
[@cavershamfairtrade](https://www.facebook.com/cavershamfairtrade)



Nativity Live

photo M Aparcar

Free Estimates

COMPSE ELECTRICAL SERVICES

All Domestic Electrical Work undertaken
Part P registered & certified

Tel: 0798 3627742 / 0795 6811443

Please mention this paper when replying to advertisements



E. H. HAMLEY & SON

Builders and Decorators
Repairs and Roof Work a Speciality

Established over 100 years | Caversham based

Please contact:

07743 929649

Email: ehamleyandson@gmail.com



What can we do about plastics? Microplastics – the issue

LAST MONTH I wrote about how we can reduce the use of plastics and ensure they are recycled. This month we consider the impact and sources of microplastics, tiny plastic particles produced by the breakdown of plastic objects.

Microplastics have been found in soils, water and air, and throughout the food chain, from nematode worms to us. Research shows them in our digestive system, bloodstream and brain. They can enter the body by inhalation, ingestion and through the skin. There are many research projects suggesting links between microplastics and health, but the harmful effects are not quantified.

There isn't information to suggest whether certain types of microplastic or their additives are more harmful than others to humans. Neither is it known if the potential health effects are due to particle shape or chemical nature. It's important to remember we inhale and ingest large numbers of other organic and inorganic microparticles daily, and some of these are also found around the body, including in the brain.

Nevertheless, the precautionary principle probably applies, which means avoiding the use of plastics, but this is hard to implement. You can't eliminate microplastics from the wider environment or your house, but you can reduce

the amount you eat and breathe at home, and how much you discharge to the environment. Our houses contain plastics in kitchen utensils, clothing, carpets and toys, as well as food containers and the food itself. Any plastic product can shed microplastic if the surface is rubbed and handled. If left in UV light, some will break down, perhaps releasing chemical additives as well as creating tiny particles. Some plastics, or their additives, are soluble in water or fats, a property increased by heating.

Next month I will look at a few ideas on how to reduce your intake of microplastics.

Sorted!

text and photo George Grubb

HAVE YOU EVER wondered what happens to the contents of your recycling bin when it is collected?

As part of Recycle Week 2025, site operator re3 was offering a small number of places for visits to the Material Recycling Facility at Smallmead, where our bin contents are processed. Although the places booked up fast, I was able to take advantage of a last-minute cancellation to join a tour at the end of September.

Many of us will be familiar with the Smallmead Recycling Centre, but there is a large space hidden behind a dividing wall, housing the recycling operation. The material for recycling arrives in a large reception area from our doorstep collections and commercial sources. Smallmead is the centre of operations for the three councils – Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell Forest – who are partners in re3, so it receives around 100 tonnes of recycling material daily.

The sorting plant occupies the centre of the

space, extending up to the roof over several floors. The material is loaded onto a hopper at the base and carried upwards on one of the conveyor belts which surround the visitor on all sides. There is a range of equipment separating out aluminium and steel cans and various types of plastic containers. But it is a small team of operators who are at the heart of the process. Working in cabins which help protect them from the noise and dust, they check the incoming flow to remove unsuitable items, such as batteries, plastic film and larger items which might damage the plant.

At the other end of the plant, operators check the flow of paper and cardboard for contamination. The paper from newspapers and magazines is a valuable source of material for paper mills, including the one which produces the newsprint used in the Caversham Bridge!

Our hosts offered a feast of statistics and information. But perhaps most importantly for householders, they are open about the destinations of the materials they have processed. They also have a rigorous system in place to audit what happens to the materials, so we can be sure our recycling efforts are worthwhile.

There is still scope to increase our recycling rate in Reading and improvements are planned. In the meantime, we can all help by ensuring recyclable waste from our home is cleaned and placed in our recycling bins. And having seen what happens, please do not put different materials together – for example a plastic tray inside a cardboard box – as these can only be separated manually.

re3 have published their Annual Environmental Report for 2024-25 (left) which contains a wealth of information about their operations. To access the report, see re3.fccenvironment.co.uk/annual-environmental-report



Conveyors of good waste



THE WINDOW REPAIR & RENOVATION SPECIALISTS

- Sash and casement windows restored
- Rotten and falling wood replaced
- Professional paint finish inside and out
- Failed putty and glazing replaced
- All types of glazing supplied and installed
- Specialists in wood treatments, varnishes and finishes
- Fineo vacuum glazing specialists
- Secondary glazing supplied and fitted

Call 07880560403 for a free estimate, or for more information visit our website www.oxfordwindowrepair.com

Jones & Jacob
Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers

Jones and Jacob Ltd offer an easy way to sell your unwanted items. We can assist with everything from single items to a full house clearance.

We hold auctions on the second Wednesday of every month, selling silver, jewellery, collectors' items, pictures and furniture.

Next auctions 12th November - 10th December

Simon has a wealth of knowledge and experience in providing valuations and as an auctioneer. He is happy to conduct valuations at your home or on site at our saleroom in Watlington.

PROBATE and INSURANCE VALUATIONS

tel: 01491 612810
jonesandjacob.com
Ingham Lane, Watlington
OX49 5EJ

Simon Jones
Director & Auctioneer

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE SERVICES

- Guttering Installations & Repairs • Roofing
- Fascias & Soffits • Painting & Decorating
- All Interior & Exterior maintenance
- Pest Control Service
- Full Public Liability Insured • Police Checked

We welcome inspection of previous work

info@theabelgroupreading.co.uk
0118 329 0175 or 07974 089978
for a free estimate

Artisa **CHRISTMAS MARKET**
MARSACK ST. CAVERSHAM

- 40+ GIFT STALLS
- SANTA'S GROTTO
- CRAFT ACTIVITIES
- FESTIVE BARBECUE
- PIZZA & PAELLA
- BARISTA COFFEE & CAKES
- FESTIVE ENTERTAINMENT

INFO: MADEBYTAMALIA.CO.UK
At: Creativ.Spaces Art Studio & Event Spaces
Southview Park, Marsack St. Caversham, RG4 5AF

16 NOV

10-3.30

FREE ENTRY

Awards in Prospect

by Phil Chatfield

THE CAVERSHAM TANDOORI takeaway in Prospect Street has been shortlisted for the regional Englands Business Awards held in Reading in October, to the surprise and delight of owner Mohammed Siraj. But it is not the only recent award nomination for the business. In December last year, this Bangladeshi and Indian takeaway was selected as the Best Takeaway in Berkshire at the national Asian Curry Awards, 2024.

Mohammed took over the business about four years ago. He started in the catering business in Cardiff more than 30 years ago, straight out of school. He said the Curry Awards Ceremony, which was held at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London, was an amazing experience. The venue itself was awe-inspiring, seating more than 1,000 diners. It was a privilege to join with so many of the best Asian chefs, including Michelin Star holders, and to be selected by the judges for the award.

The takeaway is open from 17:00 seven days a week. Although many people use delivery companies for their orders, Mohammed recommends customers should either order through their own website,



A flaming success

photo Caversham Tandoori

www.cavershamtandoori.co.uk, or use the phone. It is also best to collect your order, if possible, as this ensures the food reaches you at its best.

No matter what the result of the Englands Business Awards in October, Mohammed is pleased the quality of their food and service has been recognised through the nomination. The Caversham Tandoori has been an established part of the Prospect Street scene for some time, and he looks forward to many more years of providing great takeaway food.



THE ANNUAL Pride of Reading awards were presented on Friday 17 October at the Hilton, Reading. Since 2004, the Awards have highlighted organisations, businesses and individuals who have made a dramatic impact within Reading. The Awards are supported by local businesses, some of whom have been sponsoring since the beginning.

The 2025 Awards were launched 16 May, and nominations closed 1 August. The judges have been sorting through hundreds of nominations, and those on the shortlist were contacted in September. There were a surprisingly large number of nominations – more than 20 – from our area. They included individuals like local photographer, Mark Aparcar, nominated for the Chris Tarrant Award, and Ginny Munro, Local Hero Award, for her tireless work to establish a defibrillator on Albert Road.

...nominated businesses...

Local businesses nominated included Fourbears Books, the True Food Co-op in Emmer Green, and The Strong Women's Club, as well as Jodie Bennett who runs Caversham Artisan and Farmers Market. The Flowing Spring, Angel Bar, Spill, and Vegivores were amongst hospitality sector representations.

In the voluntary sector, the Weller Centre and Caversham-based charity The Engine Shed were nominated, alongside RG4FC, who we featured in our September edition.

At the time of writing we understand Vegivores and Fourbears Books have been shortlisted. We will have to wait until the Awards event to learn how local nominees have fared.



Website

www.cavershamtandoori.co.uk

Phone 0118 947 4867 and 0118 946 4058

Asian Curry Awards – see

www.asiancurryawards.com/2024-winners

Weller Centre Garden Awards by Hazel Bingham

THE WELLER Centre Community Garden received two awards in recognition of the hard work of all involved in caring for this peaceful space on Amersham Road.

The first was awarded by the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom campaign in association with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). The campaign is one of 16 regional and national campaigns which make up Britain in Bloom with the RHS. The award is called the *It's Your Neighbourhood* award.

Rowena Hughes, garden volunteer, went to the award ceremony on Thursday 25 September to represent the garden team and was delighted to get a level three certificate!

Rowena said: "This award recognises the hard work that goes into making this a great space for local people to enjoy – thank you to everyone who has supported us over the last year to help this garden grow and thrive!"

The second award was a Silver certificate for a Community Garden from Reading In Bloom.

The garden has suffered setbacks in the past, having been closed during the COVID-19 epidemic and flooded just 18 months ago. But the garden team, including volunteers from Food for Families, have worked hard to make it a beautiful and productive place.

If you would like to visit the garden to try some gardening, or just to relax there and enjoy it, come along on Tuesday mornings from 10:00-12:00, or drop an email to greensandjackets@gmail.com

The Weller Centre are looking for a volunteer who could help with maintaining the planting around their building.

If you could spare a few hours a month to help, please contact

admin@wellercentre.org.uk



T&S Tomalin & Son
Funeral Directors
Est before 1879

A Family Run Independent Funeral Service

24 hours service | Private client parking
Private chapel of rest | Free home visits
Pre-paid funeral plans | Full written estimate
Woodland funerals | Religious and non-religious services

Tel: 01491 573370

www.tomalins.co.uk office@tomalins.co.uk
Anderson House, 38 Reading Road,
Henley-On-Thames, RG9 1AG

THE 3CS CAVERSHAM COMMUNITY CAFE

CAVERSHAM COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Open Tuesdays, 9.30 am to 2.00 pm,
see www.3cscafe.co.uk to check dates.

Serving espresso coffees, teas,
light snacks, cakes and biscuits.

Eat in or take away.

St John's Church, Gosbrook Road, Caversham
Community led and volunteer run

The best community stories, the most exciting local events

All of your trusted local traders, and all for **just £7 a year**

Don't miss out, subscribe today!

Soft Furnishings, Loose Covers, Curtains, Roman Blinds, Re-upholstery

John Kitcher & Son

31 Burrell Road, Compton,
Newbury RG20 6NP

Tel: **07596 498482**
Email: j.pickett1@yahoo.com



Nina in her studio



A peek behind the door

by The Editors

LOCAL ARTIST Nina O'Connell, whose work we have featured over the last five years, is taking part in a special open studio event this month.

Following the success of its debut in 2024, the Acorn Open Studios Event returns this autumn on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 November 2025, from 10:30 to 16:30. Nina is the only Caversham based artist out of the 15 Berkshire artists who will welcome visitors into their working studios for the event. Rather than displaying only finished pieces, Acorn Open Studios invites you behind the scenes to see works in progress, sketchbooks, experiments, and the creative process itself. Their publicity promises 'the chance to enjoy a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere where you can talk directly to the artists about their work. And you might even discover affordable, one-of-a-kind gifts in the run-up to the festive season'.

Nina said, "As part of a talented group of local artists all opening their studios, I'm really excited to invite visitors into my own studio whilst I am working. To be able to describe my creative process and the inspiration behind it feels like a very special opportunity".

The name Acorn reflects the group's roots in Berkshire's landscape of ancient oaks – each one having grown from a small acorn. The founding artists hope their annual open studios will, like the oaks, become a lasting part of the county's cultural heritage.

For more information and updates, visit their website www.acornopenstudios.uk or sign up to the Acorn Open Studios newsletter.

Based on information from Acorn

Back to school

by Wendy Howell

We have featured the Caversham Group Holiday in the Caversham Bridge over the 60 or more years it has been running, most recently last November following their trip to Salisbury. For 2025, their week away took them back to their roots.

THIS YEAR OUR holiday group returned to Embley, the school where the holiday started some 60 years ago. It was a walk down memory lane for some of us. Much had improved, though much had stayed the same.

Arriving through the gates to the school, the view was magnificent - green fields and elegant trees. The original red-brick building is impressive, with wood-panelling and a grand staircase. It was the family home of Florence Nightingale, and her portrait hangs in the chapel.

In the purpose-built dining hall, we were treated to some fabulous meals. There was plenty of choice and, for me, sometimes too much, as it was hard to resist, and refreshments were available all day.

During the day we had various activities. There was the popular Rocket Launch (one got stuck in a tree!) and, new for this year, the Eggstronauts competition. There were also Silly Olympics for any age. Bowls, shuffleboard, croquet and pétanque were available, either as

friendly matches or part of the competitions. And there was, of course, the heated swimming pool. There was also a room dedicated mainly to jigsaws, which often saw four people at a time trying their skill.

After the delicious evening meal and a stroll around the grounds, each evening had something to while away the time: a Murder Mystery, complete with 'body'; an easier version of Taskmaster; an interactive Music Quiz; a 1% Club Event and a General Knowledge Quiz. The last evening saw us dressing up in 80s gear. We had pre-dinner drinks followed by a three-course meal. Our entertainments included a take on Family Fortunes, awards for the competitions, pass-the-parcels (there were five!) with group forfeits. The finale was a rousing rendition of the Hokey Cokey. And then to bed.

I would say that the holiday suits individuals, couples and families alike. There is as much or as little to do as you want.

Although a date for next year hasn't been agreed yet, I shall be returning.

Like to know more? Contact Joy Blount at blount.joy@gmail.com



Embley Manor House 2025

photo M Hill

JOIN THE SOLAR REVOLUTION

Lifetime solutions designed, engineered and maintained by Repsole since 2016

Scan the QR code to find out how solar works for you.

Increase your home's EPC rating and reduce your carbon footprint

Finance options with £0 upfront available

www.repsole-ts.com

- ✓ A lifetime of energy savings
- ✓ Clean sustainable energy
- ✓ Insurance-backed workmanship
- ✓ Local, established, qualified installer
- ✓ Up to 25-year warranties

Call: 020 7952 5359
9 Greyfriars Road, Reading, RG1 1NU

HANDY HOME SERVICES
Handyman • Gardener • Decorator

Based in Caversham

10% OFF for customers in Caversham

jonhbbrd@yahoo.co.uk | 0780 857 6658 | @handyhomeservicesuk

Lunch Special
at **£16.95** per person
12pm-2pm

Main Course
Chicken Tikka Masala
Vegetable Karahi or Paneer Karahi

Sides
Sag Aloo • Dal Tadka

Sundries
Pilao Rice or Boiled Rice
Plain Naan or Chapati

Please call us on
0118 946 2115
21 Prospect Street
Caversham
Reading RG4 8JB

www.binatandoori.co.uk

A beacon of care text and photos Jean Harper



Ginny Monro (right) and daughter Zoe transforming the defibrillator station

BACK IN April I was out for a Sunday walk when I spotted activity in the redundant phone box in Albert Road. Interest piqued, I found Ginny Monro and daughter Zoe, from the Albert Road Community Group, giving the box a lick of paint.

The phone box has been transformed into a defibrillator station serving the local community. Ginny led the project from the start, raising funds through cake and plant sales for the Community Heartbeat Trust. She negotiated permissions and restored and painted the old phone box herself.

With the installation of the defibrillator, Ginny realised that having access to life-saving equipment is only part of the solution, so she organised free cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillator training sessions for local residents, ensuring that the whole community feels equipped to act in an emergency.

Ginny could not have imagined her efforts would result in a nomination for the Local Hero category at the Pride of Reading Awards (see page 16). Her nominator commented, "Her dedication has created something far greater than a defibrillator – it's sparked a sense of togetherness and pride in our neighbourhood."



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.

Mondays – *Little Lambs and You* – Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, Caversham RG4 8HY 10:00-11:30. Baby and toddler group. Numbers are limited, so there is an online booking system. See

www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk/Groups/382970/Little_Lambs.aspx

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

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

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

Fridays – *Baby and Toddler Group* – Church House, Church Road, Caversham, RG4 8AX. 9:30 – 11:00. Step-free access at the back.

See www.ctmparish.org.uk/stpeter for details

Don't miss an issue by The Editors

THE 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.

To subscribe, simply make a direct payment of £5 to our subscriptions account, using your postcode and house number to identify the payment and enable us to organise delivery.

Our account details are:

Name **Caversham Bridge News**; Sort Code **30-67-99**; Account Number **72808960**

And don't forget your postcode and house number, eg **RG48AX 32**

Postal subscriptions are currently £18 per year (12 months).

If you do not wish to pay by bank transfer, contact us at subscription@cavershambridge.org or by post at Church House, Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX for alternative payment options.

THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right from the top)

limp, room, copy, blossom, floppy, bloom, sloppy, **poppy**, flower, slack, cower, stack, bower, loose, flinch

TEMPLAR ESTATE PLANNING

Your local Will writers and Estate Planners, providing a friendly and professional service for Caversham and Reading.

- ✘ Wills - drafting & review
- ✘ Lasting Powers of Attorney
- ✘ Trust formation
- ✘ Business Succession Planning
- ✘ Inheritance Tax Planning
- ✘ Probate & Executor Services
- ✘ Live in Care Services
- ✘ Funeral Plans

Concerned about getting your affairs in order? We can help you achieve that. Contact us for a friendly and free no obligation consultation for all your needs.

Please call 0118 948 4381
www.templarestateplanning.co.uk

Or visit us at our office located in Church House, 59 Church Street by the Waitrose roundabout.

The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Bridge News Ltd

Future editions:

Contributions for the November issue

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

editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy

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

advertising@cavershambridge.org

Steepal of Henley

Kitchens & Bathrooms

Complete Design & Installation Service or Supply Only
Fully Equipped Showroom

7 Reading Road, Henley-On-Thames, Oxon RG9 1AB

01491 411990

Local References Available

info@steepalofhenley.co.uk

www.steepalbathrooms.co.uk



Wellbeing with Ami Roy

Planting the tree of movement



● **The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now...** ●

IT'S NEVER too late to start improving the way you move. Small, consistent changes now can bring huge rewards later. That might mean walking more, spending time on the ground, squatting, reaching, or balancing. The aim is to keep adding useful, natural movements into your days so that you're training for your 90s, starting today.

Ageing well with natural movement is about more than fitness; it's about mindset, motivation, and making choices today that protect tomorrow.

Ageing well isn't about holding on to our younger capabilities. It's about embracing what we can do now while still building strength, mobility, and resilience. By appreciating our bodies as they are, we create a

...finding your personal 'why' to move...

positive relationship with them and open the door to independence and joy in later years.

Many people wait for a wake-up call; a health scare or an injury, before making changes.

If you've noticed your movement feels less reliable, or you're thinking differently about your future,

take that as your sign. Think about the everyday movements you want to keep; picnicking on the grass, playing with the dog, walking on uneven ground, putting trousers on standing up. These small moments are the ones worth protecting.

Your 'why' doesn't need to be dramatic to be powerful. Once you know it, it becomes your anchor for adding more movement into your life.

Ageing is a journey, not a destination. Yes, it's a cliché, but it's also true. We're ageing from the day we're born – it's not reserved for the second half of life.

...healthy ageing...

What does change in that second half is how the way we move shapes our future health. Since discovering how much our all-day movement matters to healthy ageing, I've been committed to sharing the power of natural everyday movement as a cornerstone of our health.

We've all heard that exercise is important. But knowing it and doing it are two different things. To change how we move day to day, we need more than physical goals. We need to connect with what movement means to us and why it matters. That's when motivation starts to stick.

I often remind people not to compare themselves to others or even to their younger selves, but to who they are right now. It's natural to feel frustrated when physical abilities aren't what they once were, but those feelings can shift into gratitude and acceptance.

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

Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810

penny@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith Tel: 07884 371 688

rachel@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475 697

catherine@ctmparish.org.uk

Contact: 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/

St John's Church

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

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

Compline: 8:30 on Mondays during BST (in church)

St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, 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

Full details at www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on

METHODIST CHURCH

The Methodist Church Caversham

Rev'd David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

www.cavershammethodist.org.uk

Current services

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Sunday: 10:30 – Also available on YouTube.

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Sunday: 10:30

Wednesday Worship: 10:00-10:30

3rd Thursday: Thursday Night Live 19:30

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

Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube

Details on their web site at:

www.cpurc.org.uk/live-stream

BAPTIST CHURCH

Caversham Baptist Church

Pastor:

Church office Tel: 0118 954 5353

Email: 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

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

See their web site for details:

www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

Riverside Church (Reading)

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

Current services

See their web site for services at:

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

www.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



Caversham Tiles.

EST. 1980



Berkshire's Tile Experts

Free Samples, Ample Parking

55 Donkin Hill

Caversham RG4 5DG

0118 9543315

www.cavtiles.co.uk

ALL RUBBISH COLLECTED 4U

Domestic, Commercial & Garden Waste
House / Loft Clearance
Garage / Shed Clearance

Licensed Waste Carrier with
commitment to recycling

Serving Caversham and surrounding areas
Fast, friendly & reliable service

For a free no obligation quote, please call:
0118 343 6396 / 0781 8033625
www.allrubbishcollected4U.co.uk

Richfield Flooring

Est. 2003

- Premium Amtico Retailer
- Independent family run business
- Top brand name flooring at the lowest price
- Samples to view in your home/office
- Free advice / free quotes
- Old flooring uplifted & furniture moved
- Fast turn around on fitting if required

Tel: 01189 580 445

10a Richfield Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8 EQ
info@richfieldflooring.co.uk/www.richfieldflooring.co.uk



Fireplace Magic

Chimney Sweeping
Wood & Multi-Fuel Stoves
Fireplaces, Gas & Electric Fires
Installation Service

Visit our showroom at
45 Prospect St, Caversham RG4 8JB
Tel: 0118 9463060

www.fireplacemagic.co.uk

READING PLUMBING & HEATING

ALL ASPECTS OF PLUMBING, HEATING AND GAS WORKS UNDERTAKEN.
OVER 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.
ALL WORK GUARANTEED.
DISCOUNT FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.



MOBILE: 07702556790
EMAIL: darrenscottrph@btinternet.com

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

Would you like to have this paper delivered to you monthly for just £7 per year?

Email: subscriptions@cavershambridge.org
giving your name and address or write to

Caversham Bridge, Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

You can buy single copies from:
NOODstore in Church Street,
Fourbears Books in Prospect Street,
Sheabutter Cottage on the Henley Road,
The True Food Community Co-op in Grove Road, Emmer Green,
and at the Milestone Cafe in Caversham Park Village

Thinking of Equity Release?

Experienced, qualified local Equity Release adviser providing advice across a comprehensive range of lenders.

Please contact Kristian Kolb on 0118 991 8704 to arrange a no obligation face to face/Skype appointment as required.

E: info@mayfieldmortgages.com

T: 0118 991 8704

www.mayfieldmortgages.com



Mayfield Mortgages

Mortgages made simple

Mayfield Mortgages is a trading style of Kristian Kolb who is an appointed representative of Mortgage Intelligence Ltd which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority under number 305330 in respect of mortgage, insurance and consumer credit mediation activities only.

Caversham Aerial Services

TV Aerials Supplied and Fitted.

Poor Reception? Old aerials?

Can't get the new digital channels?

Give us a call - We can help!

Phone 0118 9673596

www.caversham-aerials.co.uk



NETLEY LANDSCAPES

Established 1986



Garden design and construction
Hugh Netley, NDLC

PATIOS, FENCING, NATURAL STONEMWORK,
WALLING, PLANTING, SHRUB AND
TREE CLEARANCE, WATER FEATURES, ETC, ETC.

FREE ESTIMATES

Phone 9461701

www.netleylandscapes.co.uk

JOHN WOOLDRIDGE PLUMBING & HEATING ENGINEER

Over 35 years experience

Competent tradesman
will undertake general
plumbing and repairs



(0118) 948 2584

112 Mayfield Drive,
Caversham RG4 5JT



Gardiner's HOME CARE

0118 334 7474

We are a local, family business that has provided quality care since 1968.

Our experienced team are ready to help you in whatever way you need.

Such as:

- ✓ Companionship
- ✓ Support with medication
- ✓ Washing & dressing
- ✓ Variety of household tasks
- ✓ Overnight stays
- ✓ Social outings & appointments

We can support you to maintain your independence in the comfort of your own home.

Our visits vary from one hour to overnight stays. Please call to chat about how we can help you.

www.gardinershomecare.co.uk

10 Church Street, Caversham, Reading. RG4 8DZ

jws JWS CHAUFFEUR & EXECUTIVE SERVICE

Formerly known as Noble Chauffeur Service

Be driven in comfort, luxury Mercedes

Airports : Weddings : Special occasions

Sea Ports for Cruises

Reading based - reliable service

Jimmy Wharton Phone: 07971 434558

Proprietor

Email: jimmy@jwexeccars.co.uk

www.jwsexecutivetravel.co.uk



ARUM TREE SERVICES

TREE SURGEONS
WITH OVER 20 YEARS
EXPERIENCE IN THE WORLD
OF TREE CARE

- Tree removal, tree pruning •
- Trees supplied and planted •
- Hedge work •
- Stump Grinding •

FULLY INSURED, NPTC QUALIFIED

Tel/Fax: 0118 971 2224

Mobile: 07876 232282

CALL NOW FOR A FREE
QUOTATION

A community newspaper published by Caversham Bridge News Ltd, Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

EDITORS: Dr Alison Johnston, Mrs Heather Gale, Phil Chatfield, Judith El-Nager, Sue Silk, Maria Lloyd
Email: editors@cavershambridge.org

ADVERTISING: Kathy Fahey
Email: advertising@cavershambridge.org

COMPANY SECRETARY: Mr R Harper.

SUBSCRIPTIONS and DELIVERIES: C Clifford: Email: subscriptions@cavershambridge.org

COMPANY CHAIR: Mr Phil Chatfield: Email: chair@cavershambridge.org

COMPANY TREASURER: Mrs J Belcher
Email: treasurer@cavershambridge.org

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: Mrs J Belcher
Email: treasurer@cavershambridge.org

The views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editors or the board. The Editors reserve the right to edit contributions and will endeavour to consult with the writer where possible. Readers should note, the inclusion of advertisements in this paper is not an endorsement of the products or services offered.

Printed by: Mortons Print, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6JR



vale & west

Chartered Accountants

Friendly and personal

Providing accounting and taxation services to many local owner managed businesses and individuals, including annual accounts, payroll, VAT returns and personal tax returns. For a free initial consultation, contact Jason Pyke FCA.

T 0118 957 3238

jpyke@valewest.com