

Caversham Bridge

www.cavershambridge.org

December 2025

Three of the very best

by **Caroline Gratrix**

Last month, we reported on the nominees for the Pride of Reading Awards from our area. This month, Caroline Gratrix, of Walk Works provides an update and news of local winners.

CAVERSHAM'S THRIVING independent and community-led spirit was front and centre at this year's Pride of Reading Awards, held at the Hilton, Reading, on Friday 17 October. With more than 20 nominations from our area alone, the awards shone a spotlight on the remarkable individuals, businesses, and voluntary groups that make up the fabric of RG4.

We're thrilled to share that Alex Forbes of Fourbears Books won Independent Trader of the Year, while Kevin Farrell of Vegivores took home the Hospitality Award. Walk Works, run by Liz Bradbury and me, received the coveted Community of the Year award.

For Walk Works, the win was made even more special because we were nominated by Natalie Higley of the Strong Women's Club. This is another local, female-run business which launched at the same time as us. It's a testament to the deep sense of support and collaboration running through Caversham's vibrant independent business scene.

The awards, launched in 2004, are a celebration of the people and organisations making a real difference in Reading. Hosted by Mel Bloor of ITV Meridian and supported by long-time patrons like Chris Tarrant and Sir John Madejski, this year's event continued this legacy of community recognition.

Local nominees for 2025 represented a cross-section of our neighbourhood. Photographer Mark Apcar was up for the Chris Tarrant Award, and Ginny Munro was nominated for Local Hero for her tireless work on installing a defibrillator in Albert Road. The True Food Co-op, Strong Women's Club, and Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market organiser, Jodie Bennett, also featured among the nominees.

...also recognised...

In the voluntary sector, nominations included the Weller Centre, RG4FC and the Engine Shed, while hospitality businesses like the Flowing Spring, Angel Bar, and Spill were also recognised.

The Pride of Reading Committee told us our area saw a record number of nominations this year, thanks in large part to our supportive, engaged community.

Our area continues to establish itself as a creative and connected hub for independent businesses in Berkshire. To be honoured among such inspiring peers at the Pride of Reading Awards is not just a win, it's a celebration of everything we've built together.



Liz, Claire and Alex Forbes, Kevin and Caroline

photo G Dinning

Plenty to look forward to

by **Phil Chatfield**

AS THE YEAR draws to a close, there is still plenty to look forward to in December. But we start with a celebration of local businesses and their owners, featured in our November edition, who have been successful in recent local award ceremonies (see above and p3).

Music of all kinds takes centre stage this month, with reviews of events at local venues, including Jagged Little Alanis (p7), Concerts in Caversham, and Reading Bach Choir (p13). On the same page we also highlight concerts coming up in December. The musical theme continues with our *Creative Caversham* artist, professional soprano singer Julie Kench (p12).

Other forthcoming events include the late-night shopping event organised by the Caversham Traders Association (p5), the Green Christmas Tree Sale at Caversham Court Gardens (p2), and Nativity Live on Christmas Eve (p4). You will also find details

of church services over the Christmas period on the same page, and our listing of other events this month in What's On (p6).

Our regular writers include Happy Wanderer, with a seasonal look at pantomimes (p7), Roslyn Weaver considering seasonal abundance (p10), and the welcome return of Laura Harmsworth with careers advice (p14). Les Cooper considers the demise of double digging and a promising new plant for the garden (p10), and our wellbeing subject is a diverse diet (p15).

Advertising is an important part of the service the Caversham Bridge provides for our community. Our advertisers are mostly small local businesses and have often advertised with us for many years. So, whether you are looking for financial advice, a plumber, or a tree surgeon, do check our adverts. And if you contact any, please tell them you spotted their ad in the 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



Egret at View Island, 5 October

photo Natalie Clark

INSIDE



**Talking Point
– Angels from
the realms**

p2



**Our Kind
Community –
Clare Daley**

p8



**The Local
Scene – The
Waterhouse**

p9

Angels from the realms of glory



Talking Point

by Revd
Dr Catherine Radcliffe

STEPHEN IS described in Acts (Chapter 6 verse 15) as having a face that was like the face of an angel. What did Stephen look like, do you think? Have you ever seen an angel?

The word angel derives from the Greek 'angelos', meaning messenger. Jesus taught that angels are always present with children to watch out for them (Matthew Chapter 18 verse 10). 'I tell you that they have angels in heaven who are always with my Father in heaven'. Throughout the Bible, angels have been both guardians and messengers. I used to imagine my guardian angel sitting on my shoulder, always on the lookout to keep me safe. An angel closed the lions' mouths and saved Daniel. The angel Gabriel brought the all-important message to Mary to tell her she would be mother of the Christ Child. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream telling him to marry Mary and, again, to tell him to flee to Egypt. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Between the two visits of an angel to Joseph, monumental events had taken place.

Joseph and a very pregnant Mary had travelled 90 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem to obey the decree of Emperor Augustus for everyone to be registered in their own towns. Mary is always depicted riding a donkey but there is no mention of a donkey in the Bible. Our

imaginings prefer that she hadn't had to walk all that way! On reaching Bethlehem, there were crowds of people, all anxious to find a place to stay. But for Mary and Joseph there was nowhere but a stable. A couple of years ago I rethought the stable; not so much a 'lowly' stable but an oasis of quiet, not accommodation overcrowded with humanity, but a sacred space in which to give birth to God's own son.

Jesus' birth was the start of something colossal, life changing, world changing. What an impact he has had on our lives and still has on the lives of billions of people.

After the effort of the journey and giving birth, how Mary must have been filled with elation cradling her tiny son. Imagine this elation shared by God who just had to tell someone! And what better way to announce a really significant birth than to shout it from the heavens, to tell the very people who would benefit from the birth. Firstly, with the messenger, 'Do not be afraid' and then a spectacular multitude of the heavenly host. What better way to express the birth of God's son! 'Angels from the realms of glory' proclaiming Messiah's birth. The blessings of Christmas to you all.

by Revd Dr Catherine Radcliffe –
Assistant Curate St Peter's Caversham



One happy customer

photo P Chatfield

Green Christmas Sale at Caversham Court

**6 December
09:30-12:30**

by Trish Marcouse

SCAFFOLDING STILL adorns the walls of Caversham Court, but ignore it and come into the gardens for the annual sale of Scots Pine Christmas trees, harvested as part of the necessary management of lowland heath. Regenerating pine trees shade out the heather and take moisture out of the heathland pools, and this destroys a rare habitat, home to specialty species. A Scots Pine tree has more open branches than a standard Norway Spruce, but this allows your decorations to be seen to advantage. More importantly, they don't drop their needles, have a wonderful scent and, occasionally, are ready decorated with pinecones.

That's just the start. We'll have a range of natural decorations for sale (although as I write this in October, the holly berries are already an orange-

red, and it seems unlikely that they will last until early December), Fair Trade goods for Christmas gifts, local honey and beeswax candles, wood tree decorations, storage jars free of plastic, turned bowls and walking sticks, plus a whole range of homes and food for birds and hedgehogs from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, as well as cards and calendars.

You can also go up the steps to St Peter's church for their bazaar, including refreshments; the usual tea, coffee and cake, plus mulled fruit juice and mince pies.

There is no parking at Caversham Court, apart from a few disabled parking bays. We will have creches for trees and other goods in the gardens and also at the church. Park elsewhere and walk in to do your shopping, and then bring the car down to load up with your tree and other goodies.

A Scots Pine tree has more open branches than a standard Norway Spruce, but this allows your decorations to be seen to advantage. More importantly, they don't drop their needles, and have a wonderful scent...

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

Help with Quickbooks

We are still seeking help from someone with experience of using Quickbooks.

Could you spend a few hours helping us to a better understanding of how the programme works?

Contact
chair@cavershambridge.org

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: 10th December - 14th January

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





Scout Christmas Post

photo 89th Reading Scouts

Scout Christmas Post now open



by Elaine Rae

The 89th Reading Scout Group are looking forward to delivering your cards and helping the local community to save money this Christmas. The locations of our bright red Scout post boxes have now been announced.

YOU CAN FIND them at the following locations:

- ➡ **Budgens** (Emmer Green)
- ➡ **Caversham library**
- ➡ **Co-op** (Henley Road)
- ➡ **Woodcote Way Stores** (Caversham Heights)
- ➡ **Ela's coffee bar** (at Playhatch Garden centre)
- ➡ **Doctors' Surgeries** at Emmer Green and Balmore Park

Also at St Andrew's church, St Barnabas church, St John's church, St Peter's church, Gosbrook

Road Methodist church and Caversham Heights Methodist church, and at our 89th Scout HQ.

Each card costs 45p to post (half the price of a second-class stamp). The boxes are open from Saturday 29 November until the end of Thursday 18 December. The post will be sorted and delivered by Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers over the weekend of 20 and 21 December.

Each year we raise money for the benefit of both the community and the scouts at the 89th. In recent years the post campaigns have funded a community defibrillator, large tents for scout camps, and a workshop for Branching Up (providing work experience placements for adults with learning disabilities).

This year we are raising money to support our Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers) in participating in the weeklong international jamboree in Windsor (WINGS) in 2026 and, in particular, improving accessibility for all.

For details see: www.89th.org.uk

Takeaway Triumph

The Editors

LAST MONTH we reported that the Caversham Tandoori had been shortlisted for the regional England's Business Awards in Reading. Owner, Mohammed Siraj, attended the event on Sunday 12 October, and was thrilled to be called up to receive the award for Best Takeaway in Berkshire. As a Regional Award winner, the business now goes forward to the annual national Grand Final in Birmingham on 16 November.

Following on from the Asian Curry Awards recognition of the quality of their food in the December 2024, it is clear local curry lovers need look no further for a great takeaway!

Website: www.cavershamtandoori.co.uk



Mohammed with award

photo England Business Awards



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


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)


Building and Roofing Specialist
Tel: (0118) 947 3503 • Mobile 07944 272804
FREE ESTIMATES & QUOTES
COMPETITIVE PRICES NO JOB TOO SMALL.
Also undertaken small building jobs • Repairs & maintenance



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!



Special Christmas Services for December 2025 at:



St Andrew's	
Sunday 21, 17:00	Carols by Candlelight
Wednesday 24, 15:30	CHRISTMAS EVE – Nativity Service
Wednesday 24, 20:00	CHRISTMAS EVE – Christmas Night Service
Thursday 25	CHRISTMAS DAY – 8:00 and 10:00 Christmas Day Eucharist
St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park	
Saturday 20, 18:00	Blue Christmas (Longest Night Service)
Sunday 21, 11:15	Pop-up Nativity
Sunday 21, 16:00	Nine Lessons and Carols
Wednesday 24, 16:00	CHRISTMAS EVE – Christingle Nativity service
Wednesday 24, 23:30	CHRISTMAS EVE – Midnight Mass
Thursday 25, 10:00	CHRISTMAS DAY - Christmas Family Communion
Full details at www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on	
St John the Baptist, Gosbrook Road	
Sunday 14, 16:00	Christingle Service
Wednesday 17, 19:30	Community Carol Service
Sunday 21, 15:30	Longest Night Service
Wednesday 24, 15:30	CHRISTMAS EVE – Nativity Live!
Be part of the drama of Christmas starting at the Fox and Hounds!	
Wednesday 24, 16:00	CHRISTMAS EVE – Midnight Communion
Thursday 25, 9:30	CHRISTMAS DAY – All age Christmas Communion
St Margaret, Mapledurham	
Sunday 14, 17:00	Carol by candlelight
Wednesday 24, 16:00	CHRISTMAS EVE – Christingle Service
Wednesday 24, 23:30	CHRISTMAS EVE – Midnight Mass
Thursday 25, 11:15	CHRISTMAS DAY – Christmas Day, Christmas Communion

St Peter	
Monday 15, 19:30	Carols in Caversham Court
Sunday 21, 18:30	Lessons and Carols
Wednesday 24	CHRISTMAS EVE – Christingle Services: 15:00 & 16:30
Wednesday 24, 23:30	CHRISTMAS EVE – Midnight Mass
Thursday 25, 8:00	CHRISTMAS DAY – Holy Communion (traditional)
Thursday 25, 9:30	CHRISTMAS DAY – Christmas Communion family service
Grace Church Caversham (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)	
Sunday 21, 10:30	Morning service
Sunday 21, 18:00	Carol service
Thursday 25, 10:30	CHRISTMAS DAY – Christmas servicee
Caversham Baptist Church	
Sunday 14, 10:30	Morning Worship – with Nativity Play
Sunday 21, 18:00	Carol service
Thursday 25, 10:30	CHRISTMAS DAY – Morning Worship
Caversham Methodist Church	
Sunday 14, 10:30	Shared Carol Service at Caversham Heights
Thursday 18, 19:30	Carols and Stories at Gosbrook Road
Thursday 25, 10:30	Shared Service at Caversham Heights
Our Lady and St Anne	
Thursday 18, 19:30	Carol Service with readings
Wednesday 24	CHRISTMAS EVE: 17:00 – Children's Mass 19:30 – Christmas Carols • 20:00 – Mass of Christmas Night [sung]
Thursday 25	CHRISTMAS DAY: 8:00 – Mass of Christmas Dawn 10:00 – Mass of Christmas Day
Caversham Park United Reformed Church	
Wednesday 24, 11:00	CHRISTMAS EVE service followed by a bring and share lunch

Nativity Live

The story of Christmas told on the streets of Caversham
Christmas Eve 3.30pm

Walk the Christmas story through Caversham.
Starting at The Fox & Hounds pub, RG4 8BN.
Then celebrate with carols and refreshments
at St. John's Church, St. John's Road, Caversham, RG4 8EB.

If you wish please come dressed as shepherds, sheep or other nativity characters
and children please bring a parent or guardian with you.

A joint initiative between the churches of Caversham Baptist, Caversham Methodists and St. John's C of E



Not to be missed *by Suzi Woodham*

A REGULAR event in Caversham's Christmas celebrations is Nativity Live; a walkabout performance of the Nativity story with live donkeys, goats and sheep. This year's event will start at 15:30 on Christmas Eve in the car park of The Fox and Hounds pub, following a short route through Caversham (see map below), and concluding at St John's Church with carols and refreshments. Dressing up as a Nativity character (shepherd, wise person, sheep etc) is very much encouraged, and this year we are inviting anyone who would like to be an angel to take part in a brief choreographed moment!

For further details of this angelic surprise please email caversham.nativity@gmail.com

Otherwise, just turn up at the Fox and Hounds on Christmas Eve ready to follow the star!



Mary, Joseph and the Baby

photo M Apar



Route for the Nativity Live celebration

ABBEYCREST
ARIA CARE

Come and enjoy a break with us

Laughter, joy, and companionship - Enjoy a winter 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



by Alex Forbes



For your bookshelf....

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

WE ARE WELL and truly in the festive season. It's been lovely seeing people buying books as Christmas presents. They are such great gifts. Christmas can be a difficult time for some, and, on Christmas Day, we will be opening our doors from 10:30-13:00. The till will be shut, but there will be drinks and Christmas nibbles, and lots of Christmas cheer for anyone that wants a bit of company on Christmas Day. We did it in 2023 and it was such a lovely day.

We've picked a couple of Christmas crackers to discuss this month. First up is our children's selection *The Christmas Carrolls* by Mel Taylor-Bessent. This is a lovely festive book for readers aged 8+, and the first in a trilogy. We meet the Carrolls, who love Christmas. They really, really love Christmas. Holly Carroll is home schooled and it couldn't be better. They have a Christmas tree up all year round, a carol-singing toilet, and a donkey who believes he is a reindeer. But when Holly moves to a new school, she quickly discovers that not everyone wants to celebrate Christmas every day. Is Holly about to lose her Christmas spirit?

This is such a fun book. It gets you in the festive mood and is thoroughly heartwarming; it reminded me of other classic Christmas stories and films. It would make a perfect tree present for someone to read the night before Christmas – it's a book that spreads joy.

There are certain films and TV shows which are tied to Christmas like a pig is tied to a blanket. Films like *Scrooged*, *The Muppet Christmas Carol* and *It's a Wonderful Life*. Another classic Christmas tradition is a good old mystery. Alexandra Benedict is fast becoming an author whose Christmas mystery is eagerly anticipated every year. Past titles include *The Christmas Jigsaw Murders* and *Murder on the Christmas Express*. This year her festive title is *The Christmas Cracker Killer*.

When Edie O'Sullivan wins a two-day Christmas break in a hotel on a remote Scottish island, she's looking forward to a picture-perfect Christmas, full of winter walks, roaring fires, good books and even better whisky. But when a guest dies under mysterious circumstances, Edie realises that there is a killer amongst them. I can't say too much on this book other than it was great. Good characters, a fiendish mystery, and being set in Scotland always adds a bonus point for me. It's only in hardback currently but her other books are in paperback and well worth a go if you haven't read anything by Alexandra before.

Everyone at Fourbears Books wishes you and your family a joyful, relaxing festive period however you like to spend it. We hope to see you in the shop for some Christmas shopping. Happy reading to you and your loved ones.



Everyone loves a bear at Christmas

photo A Forbes



Getting into the Christmas spirit

by Pam Gumbrell

CAVERSHAM WILL transform into a Winter Wonderland on Friday 5 December as the Caversham Traders Association (CTA) hosts its annual Late Night Shopping event, bringing Christmas magic to the high street.

This year's event promises to be the most exciting yet, with real reindeer making a special appearance alongside festive market stalls, live music, and extended shopping hours across the precinct.

Local favourite BKRY will host a Mrs Claus Biscuit Decorating event, while the popular Caversham Sunday Market returns to the high street with artisan stalls offering unique gift ideas from local makers and producers. Fourbears Bookshop will host Santa himself, with a twist – reverse Santa! Bring a gift for Santa to give to children who need it the most. Live performances from local schools and professional musicians will provide the perfect festive soundtrack throughout the evening. In addition, the Baptist Church on the corner of Prospect Street and Church Street will be hosting a craft market from 16:30.

...spectacular hamper...

Shoppers can also take part in the 12 Shops of Christmas giveaway, where participants collect stamps from 12 different participating businesses before entering a prize draw - check out [@visit_caversham](#) for more info on that. The winner will receive a spectacular hamper containing over 15 prizes donated by local shops – a true celebration of Caversham's vibrant business community.

"We're thrilled to bring the community together for what's always a highlight of our calendar," said Jodie Anderton, organiser of the Caversham Artisan and Farmers Market. "The combination of extended shopping hours, entertainment, and real reindeer creates such a special atmosphere. It's the perfect opportunity to support local businesses whilst getting into the Christmas spirit."

The event runs from 16:00 on Friday 5 December across Caversham's high street and precinct. All are welcome, and admission is free.

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**

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



Caversham Electrician

All your Electrical requirements

For a free quotation Phone

07771 798485 or 0118 954 6338

CURTAINS, BLINDS, PELMETS,
TIE BACKS ETC

ALL AT COMPETITIVE PRICES

CALL CAROLINE ON

0118 954 2448

OR **07815 610 007**



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 14.
More concerts in December are listed on page 13.

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 3348195 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 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

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

Thursdays – *Friendly Over-60s Social Club* – 10:00-13:00 at Milestone Centre, Caversham Park Village. Hot lunch, quizzes and the chance to chat. Contact Cheryl at 0796 4750182 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 9475544 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](https://www.facebook.com/KeepCavershamTidy)

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 Wiralbird@hotmail.com

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

Until 24 December – *Exhibition of works by Kate Findlay*. Kate creates stunning scenes from embroidered fabric, and also produces limited edition prints – Caversham Picture Framers, Church Road – see <https://cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events>

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

Tuesday 2 December – *Caversham Women's Institute* – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. www.thewi.org.uk or Tel: 0118 947 5176

Wednesday 3 December – *Rosehill Ladies* – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel: Sue 0118 947 7570 or email suegreen@hotmail.com

Wednesday 3 December – *Christmas celebration* – 19:30. Sip our special hot punch while being entertained by magician, Ian Keable. Following the show, we will enjoy the bring and share refreshments. Please bring refreshments to bring and share. The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. To learn more visit cavershamheights.org or email: contact@cavershamheights.org

Friday 5 December – *Chazey Women's Institute* – 14:30 at St Andrew's Church Hall. Tel: 0118 9470 964, or e-mail rowena@primology.com

Friday 5 December – *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 6 December – *Green Christmas Tree Sale* – 9:30-13:00 Econet, Caversham Court Gardens. See page 2 or econetreading.org.uk/events for details

Saturday 6 December – *Reading Haydn Choir's Christmas concert* – 19:00 St William of York Church, Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JP A selection of seasonal music including an arrangement of well-known carols, including 'A Winter's Night' by Cecilia McDowall. And Yuletide nibbles! Details www.haydnchoir.org

Sunday 7 December – *Christmas Gala* – 14:00 – 18:00 St Andrew's Church Hall – details below

Wednesday 10 December – *ECONet-local green spaces, a talk by Judith Oliver* – 19:30 Caversham Horticultural Society talk, Caversham Baptist Church opposite Waitrose. Light refreshments £3 entry for non members.

Saturday 13 December – *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

Sunday 14 December – *Winter Wonderland with Glass Ensemble* – 16:00 Caversham Heights Methodist Church, 74 Highmoor Road. Featuring works by John Rutter, Sarah Quartel, Edward Elgar and more. A blend of choral Christmas classics with contemporary charm to warm the spirit on a frosty evening. Refreshments will be provided and there will be a retiring collection for charity. Please contact Susie at: asusied@btinternet.com or 07930 690873 for ticket information.

Finding something a bit special...

HEAD TO St Andrew's Hall on Sunday 7 December for this year's *Christmas Gala*. Many well-known faces will be setting out their stalls, including artist Nina O'Connell, ceramicist Debbie Page and weaver Gloria Pitt. Newcomers include artists Andrew Field as well as Lynda Hopkins. Catch up with friends over a cuppa and delicious cake organised by the Ways & Means Trust. Sunday 7 December, 14:00 – 18:00, St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road RG4 7PL

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

READING BOROUGH Council's Planning Applications Committee (PAC) discussed their response to the extension of the current development on the former **Reading Golf Club** by up to 70 homes (PL/25/0731) on land in the South Oxfordshire District Council area (SODC). They agreed to request of SODC that amounts from the Section 106 payments for road junctions, healthcare and bus services be paid to Reading. The associated application (PL/25/0691) relating to connecting the sites may also go to a public PAC meeting. Final approval for the development rests with SODC (P25/S1431/O).

In the Emmer Green Ward the children's nursery extension at **88 Knights Way (PL/25/0883) for 30 under-threes was withdrawn**. In Caversham Heights Ward an extension and outbuildings to a previously run-down bungalow at **2 Conisboro Way (PL/25/1524)** is proposed. At **1 St Peters Hill (PL/25/0921)**, a listed building in the conservation area, approval is sought to install wrought iron gates and landscaping more in keeping with the rest of the property. A new dwelling on **The Warren (PL/25/1174)** on what is considered a leisure plot was withdrawn, whilst another at **25 Tredegar Road (PL/23/0549)** was approved.

In Caversham Ward, **18 Church Road (PL/25/1597)** backing on to the river seeks an extension. **Banksfoot, 43 Church Road (PL/25/1452)** plans to replace a rotting window to match the listed building's character. In Thames Ward, an appeal was dismissed for five townhouses at **24 George Street (PL/24/0900)** citing character, flood risk, living conditions, and biodiversity failures. **Village Hotels**, at the former Crowne Plaza, (PL/25/1455) are seeking consent to erect their brand advertisements.

In South Oxfordshire permission was granted for a new water reservoir next to an existing one (P23/S3410/FUL) on **Kiln Road**, meaning some construction traffic. **The Redgrave Pinsent Rowing Lake's** (P25/S1611/FUL) new boat store was approved, with 30-year ecological monitoring condition and construction traffic restrictions.

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

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



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



Christmas Artists & Makers Fair
Saturday 13 December, 10 am - 4 pm






Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road

Free Entry

WILL YOU BE going to a pantomime this year? The tradition of mid-winter entertainment goes back a long way. The word 'pantomime' is Greek in origin, and referred to an entertainment in Ancient Greece in which anything and everything could be imitated – a popular entertainment. By the time the word reached this country, it was an entertainment involving comedy, music and dance, evolving in the eighteenth century from the Commedia dell'arte which originated in Italy, and from the traditional mummers' plays from this country which told the story of St George and the dragon. The pantomime came to be loosely based on any well-known story or fairy tale.

...not aimed at children...

The first pantomime to be performed in Reading seems to have been *Robinson Crusoe* at the theatre in Friar Street in December 1789. The advertising said that the show included 'three picturesque views over the island, and a perfect representation of the savages landing in canoes, and a full view of the sea'. It doesn't seem to have been aimed at children. The tradition of the dame being played by a man, and the principal boy by a shapely young woman, and the booing and hissing at the villain seem to have developed later, but the spectacular scenery and special effects were there from the beginning.

The Friar Street Theatre lasted until

Pantomimes have also proved money-spinners for amateur dramatic societies. If they can persuade someone to write a script, there are no royalties to pay and the profit enables the society to survive for another year...

1868, after which came a succession of other Friar Street theatres, the last of them being the New Royal County Theatre. This theatre had a rival, The Palace, which opened in a completely new street, Cheapside, in 1907 and, for the next 30 years, Reading had two theatres. Then, on the night of 7 January 1937, the County Theatre was destroyed by fire, during the run of the pantomime, which was once again *Robinson Crusoe*. With the rise in popularity of television and people's reluctance to turn out and pay for theatre seats, the Palace was forced to close in January 1960, its last show being the pantomime *Babes in the Wood*.

The Hexagon opened in 1977 but, although Christmas shows were put on, it wasn't until 1983 that it was a pantomime. From then onwards, the Hexagon panto has gone from strength to strength – this year's show is *Beauty and the Beast*.



Cinderella at Caversham Heights Methodist Church

image Happy Wanderer

Pantomimes have also proved money-spinners for amateur dramatic societies. If they can persuade someone to write a script, there are no royalties to pay and the profit enables the society to survive for another year. 'Happy Wanderer' has written a number of scripts in his time, always trying to bear in mind the talents of the actors, dancers and musicians, and the need for knock-about comedy to entertain

the youngsters, while slipping in jokes likely to appeal to grown-ups.

For the picture, I've chosen a scene from *Cinderella*, as performed by the Methodists at Caversham Heights in 1999. I didn't write this one, but I did appear in it. Children and grown-ups were involved, all brought together with a common purpose, with a good deal of good humour and fun, whilst raising money for a good cause.

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

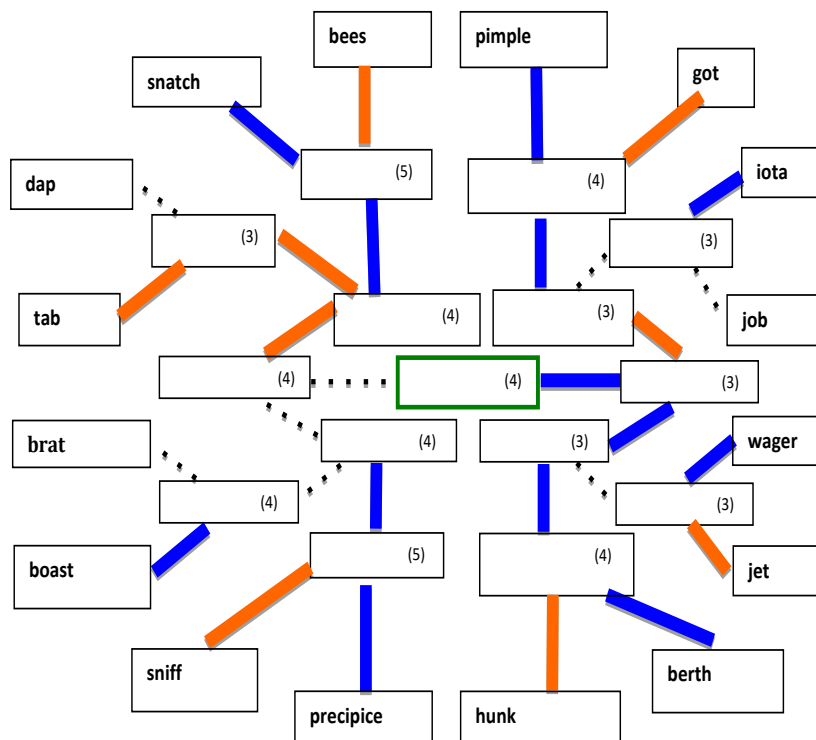
Puzzle Corner

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 14

WINTER SPORTS

Can you find 20 words in the grid relating to winter sports?

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

Alpine
Biathlon
Bobsleigh
Cross Country
Curling
Figure Skating
Ice
Ice Hockey
Luge
Skeleton Bob

Skiing
Ski Jump
Sledge
Slalom
Sledding
Snow
Snowboard
Toboggan
Rink
Winter Olympics

Claire Daley: A Beacon of Community Spirit



Claire Daley

Our Kind Community

text and photo Caroline Gratrix



CLAIRE DALEY has spent her career supporting young people, particularly those with additional needs. In her current role at New Meaning Training in Reading, she works as a SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health) practitioner, helping students navigate challenges and build confidence.

Launched in 2015 in High Wycombe, New Meaning Training helps 16–25 year olds gain skills and qualifications through further education and training. It now operates across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. They run small classes of around 12 students, running courses in construction, sports, art and design, life skills, and employability, giving young people the chance to feel inspired and work-ready.

Outside of work, Claire is mother to three sons and has devoted the last 17 years to volunteering with Caversham Trents Football Club, where she currently serves as chairperson. She supports the U18 Boys' Team, manages administration, and makes it a priority to listen to everyone

involved, gathering opinions to improve the club experience. For Claire, it's about showing her sons and all the young people she works with that, 'You're never too old to learn something new' and, more importantly, it's wonderful simply to enjoy being a kid.

The club's three main committee members are all parents whose sons have moved on from playing, a testament to the lasting impact Caversham Trents has and the dedication of people like Claire. She embodies community spirit, reminding us that strong, caring communities thrive because of individuals willing to give their time, energy and heart. In addition to this, she is a strong supporter of the Stephens family, who tragically lost their son Olly to knife crime in Bugs Bottom, and she continues to support the campaigns and community work created in his memory.

Claire Daley is the kind of person who makes Emmer Green a better place, proving that kindness, commitment, and a love for helping others really do make all the difference.



THE Oxford WINDOW REPAIR COMPANY

THE WINDOW REPAIR & RENOVATION SPECIALISTS

- Sash and casement windows restored
- Rotten and failing 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



LIVE AND LOCAL

Jagged Little Alanis

Facebar – September 2025

text and photo Richard Wells

JAGGED LITTLE ALANIS, the UK's most popular Alanis Morissette tribute act, has been on my list of acts I've wanted to see for a while and when we were unable to go to see the real Alanis in July when she was in the UK, we had to get tickets for the next best thing!

We love the Facebar on Ambrose Place in Chatham Street; there is always a warm and friendly welcome and a plethora of different music on their line up from tribute acts, up and coming acts and a few well-known names. Always worth a look to check out what's on and support your local grass roots venue.

Local band, 'Purple Roots', supported with a set packed with covers of 90s and 00s tunes which went down well with a crowd who were definitely up for a nostalgia trip.

Jagged Little Alanis followed with a set based around Alanis Morissette's iconic 1995 album, *Jagged Little Pill* getting the crowd singing along to every word of huge hits such as *Ironic*, *You Learn* and *You Outta Know*. They mixed in a few well-known numbers from other Alanis albums and the odd deep cut, which kept things interesting.

The band really is impressive, recreating the sound and experience of an Alanis show and clearly having a great time while doing it, which made for a great atmosphere. "Alanis" has an amazing voice and has clearly studied her Canadian counterpart to ensure she delivers that unique and authentic sound. She also has a wealth of knowledge on the background of the songs, which she shares with the audience, which really added to the show.

Jagged Little Alanis are based in Berkshire, so hopefully there will be a chance for us to go and see them again before long. Maybe I will see you there?



Jagged Little Alanis performing at Facebar



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



Thimbleby & Shorland
Auctioneers & Valuers, established 1901

We offer free appraisals and valuations of your items, including antiques, silver, jewellery, militaria, watches or anything 'old and interesting'



Thimbleby & Shorland
31 Great Knollys St.
Reading
RG1 7HU

Telephone: 0118 950 8611
www.tsauktion.co.uk



The Waterhouse

When no longer a church, the building was renamed the West Memorial Institute and became a centre for community use – my wife remembers taking our daughter there to ballet classes in the hall in the 1980s...

THE SUBJECT OF Janina Maher's picture this month is The Waterhouse, the church-like Victorian building with the lovely rose window at the beginning of Gosbrook Road. Today the building has been converted into flats but in fact, the building did start life as a church. In 1865–6 it was built in the Gothic style and designed by one of the most distinguished and prolific architects of the nineteenth century, Alfred Waterhouse (1830–1905). The clue of course is in the present name of the property but originally it was commissioned by Ebenezer West as Caversham's Free Church. West was a school master from Amersham and, around the same time, he also commissioned Waterhouse to design a school building, which was called Amersham Hall, as a non-conformist boys' school to accommodate pupils from their previous premises in Amersham. The hall is now part of Queen Anne's School. The congregation of the Free Church grew considerably over the next decade and soon the building became too small. Waterhouse then designed the much larger Baptist Free Church over the road at the junction of Prospect Street, Church Street, South Street and Gosbrook Road which is still such a lively church today.

...numerous commissions...

Waterhouse moved to Reading in the 1860s and he undertook numerous commissions in the town. He designed a number of houses on the Whiteknights estate which are now part of the University. He built Foxhill House for his own country residence, close to Whiteknights House, which he built for his parents. From 1871–6 he designed a new extension to Reading's Town Hall, which wrapped around the earlier Georgian hall in his distinctive Gothic style – and he added the clock tower in 1887. Waterhouse



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

also designed Reading School and parts of Leighton Park School. Perhaps his most famous buildings of national importance are the Natural History Museum in London and Manchester Town Hall.

The Waterhouse in the Gosbrook Road is modest in scale but still has some notable features – the circular rose window, the flying buttresses, a vast steep tiled roof and decorative brickwork in pointed arches over the windows. When no longer a church, the building was renamed the West Memorial Institute and became a centre for community use – my wife remembers taking our daughter there to ballet classes in the hall in the 1980s.



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 rewire, including commercial electrical projects. We even install an extra socket or 2.



01189 790171
07909 434515

nickwright@elpelectrical.com
www.elpelectrical.com

GRAHAM T NEALE

Painter & Decorator

Caversham Based Tradesman

NO JOB TOO SMALL

T 0118 954 6870
M 07394 350790
E grahamtneale@yahoo.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

WHITEKNIGHTS INDOOR BOWLS CLUB



FREE TASTER SESSION

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY
FROM 2.30 PM

Please bring clean, flat soled shoes or trainers on the day

21 Beech Lane,
Earley, RG6 5PT

TO BOOK CONTACT
0118 986 0759

clubmanager@whiteknightsibc.co.uk www.whiteknightsibc.co.uk

Please mention this paper when replying to advertisements



Les Cooper

A new kid on the block?

TO BE TRUTHFUL it is not easy to tell gardeners what they should be doing in December when usually I do so very little myself. In bygone days I would have boasted how, before Christmas, I would be double digging my vegetable plot prior to the January frosts. Now modern growers leave the earthworms to do the work for them and I doubt if even the Met Office can predict when frosts might arrive.

These days no-dig gardening is deemed to be better than deep digging because it conserves and enhances the soil structure, giving us a chance to grow superior and stronger plants. It is great to think by doing less we are doing more for the environment. Apparently digging disrupts the fungal network, and the soil drainage, which releases soil carbon - the result being a less healthy soil.

There is an odd thought still lingering in my mind. Why did I get such good results when I did double dig in the autumn?

I kid myself my knowledge of flowering plants is reasonable but, when I found an advertisement in the Saturday newspaper offering for sale a plant I had never heard a thing about before, I was

rather upset. I didn't actually cry but I did think, 'and here am I writing garden articles???' The plant on offer was *Loropetalum Chinense*, the Chinese witch hazel, and when I looked it up, I discovered it is a relative newcomer to the gardening scene. A bush with a winning combination of showy evergreen foliage and bright coloured flowers and one which is ideal as part of the mixed border. It's a highly ornamental small shrub with a height and spread of 1-1.2 metres and is compact enough to make it suitable for a large pot as well as the border.

It is reasonably hardy and should be grown in partial shade sheltered from the wind. The usually grown variety has spidery raspberry red, slightly scented flowers arriving in the late winter/early spring.

I must admit it sounds rather good. But when I tried to buy some plants, I found other newspaper readers had been ensnared by its charm too, because the offer had sold out. I looked elsewhere and I have bought a couple to try out. Hopefully one day I will discover if *Loropetalum Chinense* is really as good as it appears to be.



Christchurch Meadows

**text and photo
Roslyn Weaver**

AS THE YEAR draws to a close, it's easy to let it pass without pause for thought, because of busyness or because it's hard not to dwell on troubles near or far – wars and conflict around the globe, angry protests closer to home, or our own personal challenges. Yet, despite negative media headlines, it's not all bad news of despair and darkness everywhere. Even just a casual glance through previous issues of this newspaper finds plenty of little bits of light shining through. Local communities coming together to support a store after theft – raising funds for repairing a crumbling church roof – volunteering time and effort to help others. Local artists, musicians, and writers creating and sharing; independent shops serving the community with excellence; neighbours quietly helping each other; residents greening this patch of the planet in gardens, allotments, pot plants. Looking for the downside will surely find it; just as looking for hope will also surely find it, and find it in abundance.

This is a lesson most truly learned by everyone's favourite Christmas miser, Scrooge (with a local connection coming from reports that Charles Dickens gave a reading of *A Christmas Carol* in Reading in the 1850s). Scrooge goes from grasping for everything and holding it tightly, to sharing whatever he has with others, looking for ways to bless others.

...promises and hope...

Abundance is everywhere this season. It is in the joy of sharing food together with others, whether a roast dinner or coffee. In the delight of giving gifts, whether gifts of time, help, encouragement, or material items. In thanksgiving and reminders of what we've been given materially, physically, relationally. And above all else, abundance in the promises and hope from the Christian faith that is at the heart of Christmas. We may not have Christmas ghosts encouraging us to do that but it's well worth seeking that time amidst the busyness, to stop and dwell with gratitude on what we have – counting and naming our blessings one by one, as the old hymn goes – and to enrich other people's lives in whatever ways we can this season.

Est before 1879

Tomalin & Son
Funeral Directors

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

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**

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

What can we do about plastics? Reducing microplastics in our lives

MY LAST ARTICLE discussed the microplastics issue. So here are a few ideas on how to reduce your intake of microplastics.

If you are replacing your vacuum cleaner, choose one with a good HEPA filter¹ preferably sealed, and use it often to reduce all microparticles in the house, including microplastics. You can buy HEPA filters to purify the air in specific rooms, which can pick up a wider range of nano plastics than HEPA vacuums – but beware of noise levels and misleading marketing.

- **Unscrewing or removing a plastic lid** from a container creates microplastics. Store items used regularly, such as tea, sugar, flour, or your favourite spices, in tins, glass jars with cork or wooden lids, Kilner jars, etc

- **Keep plastic storage containers you do use** in a cupboard or fridge, together with any purchased products in plastic (vinegars, oils, ketchup). This will reduce ultra-violet light degradation of the plastic. This is particularly important for liquid products. You can buy some in glass or metal containers or, better still, refill glass bottles, for example at the True Food Cooperative in Emmer Green

- **If you use plastic containers** for storage or freezing, avoid heating liquids or prepared meals in them – transfer to ceramics or Pyrex

- **Preprepared meals** will contain more microplastics than freshly prepared meals because of the preparation processes and the plastic trays used

for heating at home. More products are available in paper trays in the frozen section than in the ready meal options. For example, Iceland's own products are all in paper trays

- **BUT ingredients used at home** also contain microplastics. Some evidence suggests washing dry goods before cooking removes a good proportion of the microplastics from packaging and transport. Washing meat or fish bought in plastic trays can help. Of course, there are microplastics in tap water!

- **Plastic chopping boards** will produce microplastics to add to the food. Replace them with wooden ones. Dispose of any cookware with a damaged non-stick surface. Go back to wooden spoons and metal whisks

- **Work towards natural fibres** for clothing and household fabrics but bear in mind the convenience factor – more ironing, darning socks, sides to middle for sheets, moth holes. It is probably worth identifying key areas where you are more likely to inhale the microplastics, or the user is still growing fast and will meet microplastics all their lives: bedding and clothing for babies and children, pillowcases for everyone, getting rid of 'fluffy' artificial material pillowcases

Wishing you a happy no plastic Christmas!

1. HEPA - high efficiency particulate air. An efficiency standard for air filters. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HEPA

New Recycling Service

by Monica Bulmer

UNWANTED HOUSEHOLD items can now be collected from our doorsteps, free of charge. A new collaboration between the re3 (see below) and WRAP (Waste Resource Action Programme) is trialling a free service operated by Anglo Doorstep Collections, which runs independently of the Council.

This free service offers an easy way to give pre-loved items a second life while supporting selected charities. Items such as clothing, shoes, small electricals, towels, bed linen, children's toys and more in good condition will be reused wherever possible for their original intended purpose. For every collection, Anglo makes a charitable donation to one of its partner charities and plants a tree for each booking made. If you already take items to a local charity, please continue to do so. This service offers added convenience and aims to divert items which would otherwise end up in our waste bins.

Local councillors commented, 'Reuse plays a vital role

in reducing waste. It is estimated that up to 15% of the contents of general waste bins are reusable clothing and textiles, meaning valuable items are lost rather than being given a second life. This simple service makes it easier than ever for households to declutter responsibly while giving back to the community'.

To use the service, book a free collection slot online at anglodoorstepcollections.co.uk/re3partnership

Once the collection date is confirmed, items should be bagged or boxed and left on the doorstep on the agreed day.

This service is not part of the regular waste and recycling or bulky waste collection. If you need a collection of furniture or other larger items, book a separate bulky waste collection with the Council. Further details are available on the re3 website.

About re3: re3 is a waste management partnership between Bracknell Forest, Reading and Wokingham Borough Councils and FCC Environment. For more information check their website www.re3.org.uk



Anglo Doorstep Collection

photo P Chatfield

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.

www.repsol-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

jonhbbd@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

Creative CAVERSHAM



Hitting the high notes

Professional soprano **Julie Kench** can be heard bringing us the joy of Advent and Christmas music together with members of Tamesis Chamber Choir at St Anne's this December. She told **Elestr Lee** about the successful career she's built on her love of singing

BORN IN CHESHIRE, singer Julie Kench has lived in Reading since the mid-90s when she moved here with her teacher husband. Having studied music and drama, initially she wasn't sure about her future, although she was drawn to being an entertainer; after university she loved working as a Pontins' Bluecoat. She then enrolled at Trinity Laban College for the Postgraduate Certificate and Advanced Diploma as an opera singer. In 2003 Julie won the Ricordi Opera Prize, sang leading roles in operas as well as performing as soloist in many of the great oratorios.

"Once I left Trinity I set myself a year to get a professional job... I was considering joining English National Opera's Jerwood Artists' scheme, then an opportunity came up to audition to join the acapella group, The Swingle Singers. Getting a professional job in the music world is always brutal – for the Swingles I did four rounds of auditions. But I got in – and enjoyed five years touring the world. We performed on many of the world's leading stages, including at the Proms, and under the baton of many great conductors such as Zubin Mehta.

"In 2009, I decided to leave as I wanted to start a family, and my son was born in 2010, my daughter arrived in 2014. Before joining the Swingles I'd done some work for Berkshire

Maestros, so after I left the group I started teaching singing, initially working for The Abbey, then at Queen Anne's and Shiplake College.

"When my children were babies, I wanted to do something just for me – to get away from nappies! I joined Tamesis Chamber Choir, which is made up of 26 members, many of whom are semi-professional musicians and teachers. That was such a good thing to do – singing, just for the fun of it. I have been in Tamesis ever since!"

A new opportunity for performing professionally opened in 2016, when ex-Swingle singer, Meinir Thomas, got in touch. "Meinir messaged me to say, 'Do you fancy forming a duo?'" Julie recalled. "Her plan was that we would sing on cruise ships – but we had just three weeks to prepare our showcase! I asked my husband, and we agreed we could manage if I got the opportunity to go away. Meinir and I got together – we're both sopranos, but we found that after singing with the Swingles, our voices still sounded good together. We could blend very well – so this was how we came to form our duo, Indigo May.

That was such a good thing to do – singing, just for the fun of it...

"We were offered a contract on Cunard cruises. We travel to amazing places – the longest cruise went from Iceland to Greenland, across to Canada and ending in New York – mostly they are much shorter. I now juggle performing, teaching at two schools, my own private teaching studio, with organising my own children!"

Julie uses her understanding of both the technique and power of singing in other ways: once a month she supports the Henley Parkinson's Group with a singing workshop, which aims to help people with Parkinson's continue to use their voices. Julie also performs in local care homes, bringing musical memories to residents. "At first I found it challenging," she says frankly. "But now I love it!"

This year Julie launched a new project in the heart of our



Seasonal sounds from Indigo May's CD

photo Indigo May



Julie's inaugural Festival of Song took place at Caversham Baptist Church earlier this year

photo Tamesis Chamber Choir

community with her inaugural Caversham Festival of Song, which took place at the Baptist Church in June. "I discovered the Baptist Church as a venue when I attended an event as part of the Fourbears Literary Festival the previous year. I planned to open on the Friday evening with a performance by Indigo May – but then we were offered the chance to perform on a cruise that same week. But we decided that as we were sailing back into Southampton on the Friday itself, it would work! We arrived back from New York on the Queen Mary 2, jumped in the car, picked up the PA – and were back in Caversham to perform that same evening!" Julie laughed.

"The festival included Tamesis' annual summer concert, but it was also the chance to showcase my pupils and young singers. It was such a great opportunity to give them a platform, as well as giving families the chance to join in with group singing. It was a brilliant weekend – and I plan to put on another festival next year."

Julie feels privileged to combine her work with her passion. "I am very lucky to have a job that is my hobby as well. Not everyone gets that chance. To achieve this, you must be creative; it's never easy – you have to take the knocks and be resilient but also take the chances life brings."

Find out more:

Advent into Christmas 16:00, December 7
Church of Our Lady and St Anne, Caversham

Tickets:

www.tamesischamberchoir

Indigomayduo@gmail.com

Juliekenchsinging@gmail.com



Members of Tamesis Chamber Choir performing with Indigo May – Julie (left), Tamesis director Louise Rapple Moore, and Meinir (right)

photo Tamesis Chamber Choir photo of Julie (above) Paul Wilkinson

Musical Events Fitting The Season

by Elestr Lee

CIVIC DECORATIONS are appearing, twinkly lights are adorning our houses and Christmas trees are looking festive – it's that time of year again! Everyone loves to share food and drink with family and friends and to join together in traditional songs. Here we review recent concerts and list those coming up in December.

Bringing A New Sound-World

THE AUTUMN series of Concerts in Caversham provided a treasure-trove of sounds and artistic vision. Local artist Sally Taylor's paintings decorated the church, while music was provided by a range of professional musicians from singer Alex Jones, members of The CinC Ensemble playing string trios and quartets – as well as a performance by the Ferrio Saxophone Quartet, and a recital by the Pelleas Ensemble, made up of flute, harp and viola.

This unusual combination was formed when the trio were students. Rosanna Rolton replaced regular harpist Oliver Wass for this concert. Harpist Rosanna, flautist Henry Roberts and violist Luba Tunnicliffe introduced the programme. To expand the limited repertoire available, they explained, they also performed works specially arranged, often by the musicians themselves. This allowed them to create a very individual soundscape, introducing the audience to quite extraordinary, often ethereal effects that each of the instruments could make, enhancing music chosen from a range of eras and places.

The concert began and ended with two very different choices of arrangements of folk music, firstly from Romania and ending with three Irish tunes. The sometimes floaty, other-times abruptly percussive effects were also interwoven into an arrangement of three vocal compositions by early Baroque composer Barbara Strozzi. Ravel's *Sonatine* and Debussy's *Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp* provided the more familiar sounds associated with this combination of instruments, and the audience were offered a special treat – a solo performance of the exciting *Baroque Flamenco* by harpist Deborah Henson-Conant, in which the sounds of the flamenco guitar plus the beat of the castanets were all provided by the harp.



Members of Reading Bach Choir invite everyone to Come And Sing this December

photo RBC

Concert To Remember

Reading Bach Choir, Saturday 8 November

CAVERSHAM-BASED Reading Bach Choir (RBC) gave their November concert in Reading's All Saint's Church, in Downshire Square, the handsome backdrop and clear acoustic of the church proving a perfect setting. Joined by organist Tom Winpenny and solo baritone Richard Bannon, both added solemnity and commitment to the evening's programme, devised by RBC musical director Daniel Mahoney. Fitting to the weekend (and punctuated by the explosions of fireworks) the theme was remembrance, explored by three composers from different eras.

Berkshire-based composer Gerald Finzi's music dominated the evening, with a performance of his anthem *Lo, the Full, Final Sacrifice*, composed in 1946. This was preceded by *The Flaming Heart* by Richard Barnard, which won the Finzi Trust's International Composing Competition in 2023.

Bach's motet *Komm, Jesu, Komm*, completed the first half, the singers dealing effortlessly with the complexity of Bach's challenges. After the interval the choir sang Finzi's *Requiem da Camera*, settings of poems by John Masefield, Thomas Hardy and Wilfred Wilson Gibson. Composed in the 1920s, Finzi dedicated the work to his teacher Ernest Farrar, who died just before Armistice. After the Masefield poem, *How still this quiet cornfield is tonight*, the choir moved to the sides of the church, and baritone Richard Bannon sang the Hardy setting *Only a man harrowing clods* which, simply and aptly for our times, conjures the awful image of life going on after the destructiveness of war. The choir sang the remaining setting of Gibson's *We who are left* from the sides – the empty space behind the conductor only reinforcing the power of Finzi's music.

Where To Hear Traditional Carols (And Join In Too!)

Saturday 6 December 19:00 Concerts in Caversham Christmas Concert by Candlelight at St Andrew's Church
concertsincaversham.co.uk

Sunday 7 December 16:00 Tamesis Chamber Choir presents *Advent into Christmas* at the Church of Our Lady and St Anne
tamesischamberchoir.co.uk

Sunday 7 December 10:00 – 15:00 *Weller Voices* will be raising their voices during the Christmas Market at the Weller Centre, Amersham Road

Saturday 13 December 15:30 Reading A440 Choir with guests Kryla Ukrainian Ladies' Choir perform *Stepping into Christmas*, in aid of Ukraine Chain. Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road
ticketsource.co.uk/reading-a440-choir

Saturday 13 December – Karl Jenkins 'A Celebration of Christmas' – 19:00 South Chiltern Choral Society with the Hill Primary School, Queen Anne's School, Caversham. Tickets and information: www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk

Monday 15 December – Friends of Caversham Court Gardens Carol Evening – 19:30 Mulled wine, minced pies and hot chocolate from 18:15 Contact: friends@fccg.org.uk
Website: <https://home.fccg.org.uk>

Tuesday 16 December 19:30 Reading Bach Choir invite you to *Come and Sing* at St Andrew's Church, Albert Road
readingbachchoir.org.uk

Thursday 18 December 19:30 *Weller Voices* will perform carols and Christmas songs old and new at their *Café Concert*, the Weller Centre, Amersham Road

Please check ticket prices and availability before setting out!

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
FUNERAL SERVICES SINCE 1826



Independent, family-run funeral directors, since 1826 in Caversham.

0118 947 7007

abwalker.co.uk | ★ Trustpilot Excellent Oct '25

THE CAVERSHAM PICTURE FRAMER



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



First Impressions Matter by Laura Harmsworth

Your Career Isn't a Calendar



IT'S TEMPTING to treat our careers like the academic year - full of September energy and January resolutions. But most of those Autumn targets you set yourself have probably gone nowhere.

September arrives with its back-to-school momentum. You promised yourself you'd update your CV, reach out to that contact, and finally sort your LinkedIn profile. Then October happened. November brought dark evenings and fatigue. Now it's December, and you're telling yourself you'll start afresh in January.

This cycle is exhausting, and it's not serving you.

Your career development doesn't operate on a school calendar. Opportunities don't wait for neat quarterly milestones. The hiring manager who needs someone with your expertise doesn't care that you've decided January is your 'fresh start' month.

Consider a different approach: rolling 90-day plans. Not annual resolutions that lose momentum by February, but shorter, realistic cycles that acknowledge how life actually works.

What does this look like practically? Instead of 'get a new job by Spring', try 'have three meaningful conversations with people in my target sector by mid-February'. Rather than 'completely overhaul my career', commit to 'dedicate one hour weekly to skill development for the next 12 weeks'.

One gift December offers is perspective. You can assess what worked from September's plans without the pressure of starting



from scratch. What genuine progress did you make? What barriers appeared? What do you actually want versus what you think you should want?

Your December task: identify one action that moves you forward, however small. Not a grand plan. Not a resolution. Just one thing you'll do before the year ends. Perhaps it's updating one section of your CV. Maybe it's sending one message to reconnect with a former colleague.

You can follow Laura on:

www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting

on LinkedIn:

www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth

Website: www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk

Email: contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk



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

EAR WAX

Mobile ear wax removal

Qualified audiologist • HCPC registered

Lucinda Ellis Tel. 07795 268866



THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right from the top)

seize, spot, dab, jot, grab dot, crab, **crib**, cot, crag, bed, brag, bet cliff, bunk

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

Future editions:

Contributions for the January 2026 issue

should be submitted by 1 December and for the February 2026 edition by 1 January. These should be emailed to:

editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy

are 1 December for the January 2026 issue and 1 January 2026 for the February 2026 issue. These should be emailed to:

advertising@cavershambridge.org

Free Estimates

COMPSE ELECTRICAL SERVICES

All Domestic Electrical Work undertaken
Part P registered & certified

Tel: 0798 3627742 / 0795 6811443



E. H. HAMLEY & SON

**Builders and Decorators
Repairs and Roof Work a Speciality**

Established over 100 years | Caversham based

Please contact:

07743 929649

Email: ehhamleyandson@gmail.com



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.

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

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



A, B, C – Eating the Alphabet!

LATEST RESEARCH has indicated that we all might need to establish an A to Z list of foods, no longer relying simply on the 5-a-day guidance that was issued a couple of decades ago. I was very intrigued by the findings as we have a larger pantry of spices and ingredients in the Indian Subcontinent and, for many years, the 5-a-day instructions felt restrictive to me.

Let's find out how we view the food alphabet and challenge ourselves.

Eating a diverse diet rich in fibre is one of the single best things we can do to

live a more stress-free life. A diverse diet means a diverse and resilient microbiome. If we increase the variety of vegetables, low-glycaemic fruits (such as blueberries and cherries), and fibre-rich foods such as beans and legumes in our diet, we are increasing the amount of fibre we are eating. This will encourage the growth of different and happy gut bugs, sending signals to our brain that everything is good.

Here's my quick list of favourites. As you can see, my Indian herbs featured strongly, and I missed only one letter. Do make your own!

Asparagus, broccoli, chickpeas, dill, edamame beans, fennel, ginger, hazelnuts, iceberg lettuce, jeera (cumin), kiwi fruits, leeks, mushrooms, nectarines, okra, peas, quinoa, raspberries, shallots, turmeric, urad daal, variali (fennel), watermelon, x (marks the spot!), yams, zucchini.

I hope the winter months allow us to get creative with the food alphabet!

From the Caversham Bridge team
We wish all our readers a joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year

THE CAVERSHAM BRIDGE aims to reflect our local community and to build a sense of belonging. To this end, we welcome your contributions and are always pleased to receive suggestions for articles to be included in the paper. Has someone gone above and beyond the everyday to help you or a neighbour? Do you have suggestions for people who could be included in our Community Connections or Kind Community features?

Contact us at editors@cavershambridge.org

Subscriptions reminder

Our subscriptions now run from 1 April and will remain unchanged at £7 a year for 2026/7. More than 60% of subscriptions were paid by bank transfer last year, which saves significant bank charges imposed on cash and cheque payments. A standing order is a simple way to ensure your subscription is paid on time. It is helpful if these are set up for payment around the middle of March to allow us to notify your volunteer deliverer you have paid.

Our account details are:

The Caversham Bridge News, Sort Code 30-67-99, Account Number 72808960.

And don't forget your postcode and house number, for example, RG48AX 32 so we can link payment to delivery.

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 371688

rachel@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475697

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

Gosbrook Road Sunday services

9:30 1st and 3rd Sunday Holy Communion,

2nd All Age Worship, 4th Service of the Word

Sunday Club for children on 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays

Thursday: 10:00 Holy Communion

St Andrew's

Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage, Harrogate Road.

Tel: 0118 947 2788 www.standrewscaversham.org

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

Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road

Current services

Sunday: 10.30 – Also on YouTube

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Current services

1st and 3rd Sundays: 10:30

Worship on Wednesday: 10:00-10:30

New Testament Church of God

Rev'd Dr Garrick Wilson

Tel: 0118 946 3009

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

United Reformed Church, Caversham Park

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston

Tel: 0118 947 5152 www.cavershamparkurc.com

Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube

Details on their web site at:

<https://cpurc.org.uk/live-stream>

BAPTIST CHURCH

Caversham Baptist Church

Pastor:

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

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

<http://saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk>

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



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



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: darrenscotttrph@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.



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
- ✓ Washing & dressing
- ✓ Overnight stays
- ✓ Support with medication
- ✓ Variety of household tasks
- ✓ 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

Proprietor

Phone: 07971 434558

Email: jimmy@jwexeccars.co.uk

www.jwsexecutivetravel.co.uk

**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

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 STONWORK,
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**



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**

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