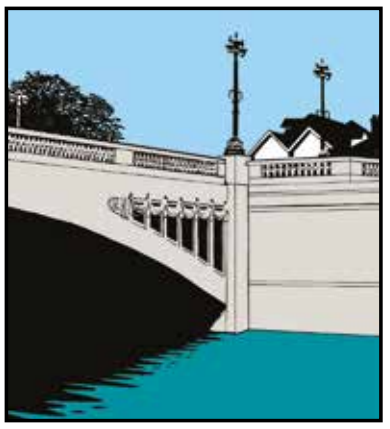


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Caversham Bridge

No 739 www.cavershambridge.org September 2026

Shop local...

text and photos Phil Chatfield

OVER THE years the Caversham Bridge has reported on changes in the local retail scene and endeavoured to support local business. Our shops provide a valuable local service, catering for a wide range of needs but, as always, there are changes happening all the time.

Several local shops have closed or are about to – Chillis Convenience Store opposite Waitrose has shut and Dancia and My Phone Doctor in Prospect Street are both moving from Caversham. The Shea Butter Cottage shop on the Henley Road closed earlier this year and is now only trading online **(https://sheabuttercottage.com)** and at events. The kitchen refurbishment shop on Donkin Hill has closed and is awaiting new tenants, whilst Kitchen Solutions on Church Road is also now empty.

Prospect Street has also seen the arrival of two new businesses. Rejuven8 has transformed the long vacant Peking Palace, and Chrysallis Skin and Wellness has replaced the Bliss Natty Nail Bar. The hair salon on the corner with Church Street is now No.48 Hair and Beauty, with a new team, Grace and Nicky, who have moved their business from Sonning Common.

House of Cards, a small chain which started locally, has now been sold to a new owner, Card Zone, but they seem to want to keep the character of the shop unchanged. Cadeaux closed in August for a revamp and will be combining with The Edit to reopen soon.

> ***If we wish to continue to be able to pop into a shop for advice on a book or DIY supplies, or to try out a bike, please consider our local businesses...***

Our community is the home of many local, independent shops, cafés and restaurants, which together make for a lively and attractive centre, provide employment and feed money back into the local economy. Nood Store in Church Street is an example of this, selling its own brand of cosmetics and cleaning products made in Caversham, as well as gifts made by local producers. But the increases in rents and council tax are making life increasingly difficult for all of them, especially when combined with the rise in online shopping.

If we wish to continue to be able to pop into a shop for advice on a book or DIY supplies, or to try out a bike, please consider our local businesses and help to support our wider community before clicking the pay button for an online purchase.



Nood Store, Church Street



Newly opened Crysallis Skin and Wellness, Prospect Street



I've never seen so many people there! There was a great atmosphere. People were sharing their special eclipse sunglasses. It was a lovely, memorable experience.

Olwen Badziak

New shoots... and old

By Elestr Lee

WHILE SUPPORTING established local businesses, it's also always good to discover initiatives starting up, as well as celebrating long-established institutions that make Caversham so special.

This month Caroline Gratrix *(p13)* meets Peter Doyle and finds out about his new studio in Marsack Street, where he will offer guitar lessons and provide rehearsal space, including for the Guitar Orchestra of Reading! Young musicians in Caversham have been inspired by Music Made Fearless Junior Jam – Edward Sanderson meets its founder Sabrina Findlay, also on *page 13*. The fearless Rosyln Weaver continues her tour of local eateries, investigating the Friday Club at The Collective in Church Road, while also taking time to enjoy a drink at The Griffin opposite *(p2)*. On a more sombre note, Happy Wanderer *(p7)* strolls around Caversham Cemetery in Hemdean Road, a tranquil space often overlooked by local residents – overgrown, with damaged gravestones yet bursting with wildlife, home to an amazing variety of plants, birds and animals. Les Cooper ponders whether his 'natural' policy is actually creating something more akin to a wilderness in his garden *(p14)*.

For those determined to tame nature, Ian Noble presents a fascinating history of the various horticultural societies which have existed in Caversham since 1861 *(p15)*, with a reminder that Caversham's Horticultural Society Autumn Show takes place on September 5 at Emmer Green Primary School. We carry a report by Christine Bradbury on the 50th anniversary of another long-running group – the Caversham Heights Society, which is still going strong *(p14)*.

This month's issue highlights so many opportunities available in our area, giving us places to visit or clubs to join with like-minded neighbours. Having interests, getting out and about and being active is vital to health and happiness... which just happens to be Ami Roy's theme in her *Wellbeing* article *(p19)* this month.

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.

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CHURCHES TOGETHER in CAVERSHAM

Share Nicely!



Talking Point

by Kevin Lovell

THE SCHOOL YEAR begins and a fresh cohort of 5-year-olds set off in new uniforms. As a proud grandparent, my experience of little ones grappling with basic life skills is recent. Some skills, like walking, they tackled with alacrity and great tenacity. Other behaviours, like learning to share, came harder. Someone sharing their sweets with them was easy. Telling someone else how to share was OK. But sharing something of theirs with another – well that took longer! Exhortations to 'Share nicely' often went unheeded, as the instinct to protect their own interests overtook the needs and feelings of others.

'Sharing nicely' sounds a child-like expression. Yet, as we grow up, I hope we learn that sharing sits at the heart of a fulfilled adult life. That generosity of heart to give and receive, which begins with sweets and toys, can become our superpower.

Generous sharing can be seen at the heart of solutions to our challenges in communal life. Proposals to redesign the 'Last Crumb' junction come down to whether motorists can offer longer journey times in exchange for improved pedestrian safety. When education, healthcare and national security (to name a few) are manifestly in need of extra funding, how do we agree on some people contributing more, in order that all can have the basic benefits of a civil society? Or how do the developed nations reduce their carbon emissions in order that the whole world does not overheat?

There are no easy answers, though I find wisdom in scripture that speaks to the unchanging character of human nature. From my own Judeo-Christian tradition, the laws which God gave to the Israelites in the Old Testament were essentially a charter for sharing, so everyone had enough and no-one got too much. Those rules were hard: farmers told to leave some of the harvest at the edges of fields deliberately, for poor people to collect (Leviticus Chapter 23); also a radical reset of land ownership every 50 years (Leviticus Chapter 25). Later in the New Testament, John the Baptist said, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise" (Luke Chapter 3). Other faiths offer similarly uncompromising advice.

What I think my grandchildren have learned is that sharing is risky. When you share what is yours, you may get everything back and more; you may get nothing! But I hope they also learn that if you don't share at all, everyone is worse off.

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



Secret little courtyard in Caversham...

Wine in the courtyard

text and photo Roslyn Weaver

Caversham Food Trail

OUR FOOD trail began last month with riverside tea and cake at Caversham Court Gardens. For the second stop, either cut straight to the chase and walk right or work up an appetite by heading up The Mount – its incline alone surely earns that slice of cake – then down Priest Hill to St Anne's Well. Destination: somewhere else with a view, but this time swap the river for some greenery, and tea for wine, or non-alcoholic option. And if September means saving pennies, then your own glass in the garden works (or beside a pot plant, if gardenless).

The first option is The Collective, on the corner of St Annes and Church Roads. A café serving drinks and food—with what seems a strong runner and cyclist presence on Sunday mornings whenever I pass – it also hosts Friday Club evenings. At Friday Club, you can sit inside, or out front if you're feeling just a little bit French and wanting to people-watch, but otherwise keep walking through to find what feels like a secret little courtyard, home to a magnolia tree (a sapling from a much older nearby tree, apparently) and strings of lights. A rosé and sauvignon blanc made the cut when I visited, but there are other drink options and food. I visited in July and was told the Club would break for August and resume in September.

Another green courtyard can be found on the other side of the road, at the well-known Griffin. Its pub interior has plenty of charm, with one of the few fires to enjoy locally on a cold wintry day, and the courtyard in summertime is filled with greenery; even the tables had strawberry plants when I visited. Plenty of drink and food choices to enjoy while you ponder the mystery of why the best view of the river here is given to the car park, not diners.

If all that wine and courtyard enjoying is too much, stay tuned for where we go next on the food trail—it might just be time to spice things up with our next stop.

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The results are in...

A HUGE heartfelt "thank you" from Richard and Jean Harper for everyone who supported their Afternoon Tea fundraiser for breast cancer research charity, Breast Cancer Now. The weather was wonderful, everyone had a lovely time and most importantly, over £670 was raised for the charity. Thanks also to Caversham Waitrose and to Warings Bakery for their generous donations of delicious cakes and scones. They were very much appreciated.

If you are keen to support the cause, *Breast Cancer Now Tea Parties* may still be being held locally and there is a Just Giving Page –
www.justgiving.com/page/jean-harper-4



Enjoying the tea ***photo J Harper***

Gardeners' Tales

by Val Pegrum

GARDENERS HAVE played an important but often undervalued role in the running of landed estates right up to the present day. Portraits, old photographs, wage slips and newspaper reports from the Caversham Court archive give an insight into the lives of the gardening staff and the often complex relationships between employer and head gardener over the centuries. See some of the tools they used and peep into the former kitchen garden with its yew hedge dating back to the 1700s, which provided food and flowers for the household and guests all year round.

Head for the vinery at Caversham Court Gardens for stories about men and women who toiled in the gardens of what is now Caversham Court, growing food and flowers for the household and winning prizes at horticultural shows.

Please note, the vinery is currently only accessible down steps. Volunteers are available to look after buggies left near the entrance. There is an accessible portaloo by the main entrance, but baby changing facilities and the tea kiosk are down steps on the main lawn level alongside the vinery. Limited accessible parking near entrance, other parking in central Caversham or in local streets. Dogs must be kept on a lead.

Beyond the Garden Wall –
Gardeners' tales from Caversham Court

Sunday 13 September and Sunday 20 September
11:00 to 16:00. Caversham Court Gardens, Church Road, Caversham, RG4 7AD
Prebooking not required.
Contact friends@fccg.org.uk
Website: https://home.fccg.org.uk
Heritage Open Days:
www.heritageopendays.org.uk

News from The Editors

Join Our Team

WE HAVE several posts available for volunteers interested in being part of the team which keeps the Caversham Bridge running. We are currently seeking a volunteer to manage our advertising and our relationship with our advertisers. This is a key role – advertising helps link our readers with a wide range of local businesses and provides around half the income for the paper.

If you enjoy meeting people, making connections and have basic IT skills, perhaps this is something you would enjoy? There are no fixed hours, although there are print deadlines which need to be met each month.

To find out more, contact Phil Chatfield at chair@cavershambridge.org

Increasing our circulation

WE ARE always amazed by the number of local people who have never heard of our paper, even after more than 60 years of publication!
Please do pass on your copy to a friend when you have finished it and recommend subscribing – or perhaps give a gift subscription *(see details below).*

Subscribing to the Caversham Bridge

THE ANNUAL subscription for the Caversham Bridge is £7 for 12 editions and runs from 1 April for all our subscribers. For new subscribers the subscription for the remainder of the year through to April 2027 is £5.

You can pay by bank transfer or standing order. Please ensure standing orders are set for £7 with payment around 15 March. You can also pay by cheque.

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Gift Subscriptions are available for £7, with a colourful gift card featuring some of Janina Maher's paintings of local buildings. Contact **subscriptions@cavershambridge.org**

You Wrote



St Margaret's Church, Mapledurham *photo F Smith*

Mapledurham – a request to readers

WE HAVE received the following request from Mary Westley,

We are updating our Eagle has landed noticeboard outside St Margaret's Church, Mapledurham and need replacement photographs, as the originals are now very faded and we have not as yet been able to track down any copies.

Does anyone have photos of the shooting of the film in 1976 which we would be able to reproduce and display please?

If you can help, please email **editors@cavershambridge.org**

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Hands UP

Reinspired Caversham in high demand

REINSPIRED CAVERSHAM is a charity supported by Churches Together in Caversham, which goes into primary schools in Caversham and Emmer Green, to deliver sessions complementing the Berkshire Religious Education syllabus. We have two paid project managers and around 15 volunteers from various churches in Caversham. Every session starts with an assurance that we are not there to change their beliefs, but instead to explain what it is that Christians believe and do. The sessions start with a question such as 'Has Christmas lost its true meaning?', 'What can we learn from the Easter story about forgiveness?', or 'Is it possible to be kind to everyone all of the time?' The children explore these through videos, discussion, Bible reading, drama and always a craft activity. Last year we presented to 5 schools in front of 1,100 children, some of them several times. Naturally the busiest times of year are the run ups to Christmas and Easter, when there is a high demand from schools for the sessions.

...want to help...

Each term we hold a 'Craft Café', with coffee and cake, to prepare all the pieces for craft. This generally involves cutting out cardboard shapes – such as 200 stars, 300 Easter Egg shapes, 1,000 small card circles. This is very suitable for additional volunteers who may not feel able to go into schools, but really want to help.

The Churches support us with volunteers but also financially. We are grateful to all the Churches in Churches Together, and to CTM Parish which makes additional donations. We are acutely aware that churches in the area have a lot of demands on their funds, so donations from individuals will always be welcome.



Volunteers at the Craft Café ***photo REinspired***

You can follow us on Facebook (**REinspired Caversham**) or, if you would like to volunteer, make a donation, or help in any way, email **reicaversham@gmail.com**

How to get involved:

- **Volunteer to go into schools to support the paid Team Leaders**
- **Volunteer at the Craft Café**
- **Make a donation**

Around the world – without leaving Caversham



The stage is set ***photo S Christy***

by Evie Porter

IMAGINE TRAVELLING from Amsterdam to the Great Barrier Reef, to Beijing and then Ethiopia, before ending up at Niagara Falls, all within the space of a week... for just £40!

That is the journey undertaken by 153 children and over 70 volunteers during the 2026 Caversham Churches Together Go Global Holiday Club.

'Around the world we start to see
How big God's love can really be
Different people different ways
Joined together in His praise'.

Each morning was welcomed with children of all belief backgrounds singing and dancing together along to the words of the *Go Global* theme song (Composed by the very talented Wilson family!), which speaks for the ethos of Churches Together in Caversham (CTC) Holiday Clubs; the message of love and inclusivity for people from all walks of life.

Continuing the laughter was the incompetent Miles O'Way and his foil, and the impeccably organised Carrie On-Bag during the daily stage drama, as they continued on their (rather ambitious) global quest for truth.

After assembly, the children split into their fittingly named teams (Planes, Trains, Buses and Ships), and worked together to win points (or, in CTC jargon, stars) as they discussed their takeaways from the day's Bible verse and got crafting – from weaving baskets to fashioning gecko-shaped sun catchers, the talent and creativity of the CTC attendees was so impressive.

During the afternoons, so many new hobbies were on offer to explore – laser tag, wool-spinning and building a giant cardboard bus, to name just a few!

Run entirely by a team of extremely hard-working and dedicated volunteers, the CTC Holiday Club is a testament to the continued strength and generosity of the Caversham community. By Friday afternoon, the volunteers were exhausted, but the children had evidently had a wonderful time, with many looking forward to coming back next year from 26 to 30 July 2027!



Children and volunteers all enjoyed the week ***photo J Wilson***

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For your bookshelf....

by Adrian Raffill

Welcome to the Fourbears Books monthly column! I'm delighted to have joined the team in the bookshop, and I am looking forward to sharing some good reads with you each month.

I HAD THE great privilege of accompanying children's author Christopher Edge on a couple of school visits recently, where he gave an entertaining talk to Years 4, 5, and 6 about predicting the future. I learnt plenty myself – hands up if you know what oomancy is...

Christopher's new book is my children's pick this month. In *How to Steal the Future*, twelve-year-old Drew has to navigate his way through a deadly, ever-changing maze at the heart of which lies the Avenir – a secret technology capable of unlocking the future. Many have tried to steal the Avenir, but nobody has ever succeeded. Drew is the latest to try, but his real motivation isn't to win the prize, it's to find his sister, Evie, who was the last one to enter the maze and hasn't been seen since.

Drew has to solve a series of puzzles, codes and riddles in his dangerous quest to save Evie. The puzzles Christopher set at the school visits were safer but tricky, nonetheless. Well done to the ten-year-old at Micklands Primary School who knew that oomancy involves using eggs to predict the future. I didn't see that coming.

Towards the end of *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's narrator describes the wealthy elites he's watched destroying lives as 'careless people'. It's no coincidence that Sarah Wynn-Williams has taken that as the title of her whistleblowing memoir, which is my adult pick for this month. *Careless People* is the shocking and darkly funny story of her seven years working at Facebook.

She had a front row seat for the political machinations of Big Tech in world affairs and first-hand experience of a toxic corporate culture at Meta/Facebook. Wynn-Williams famously had to sit silently during a Hay Festival event due to legal action taken by Meta. They don't want you to read this book – I can think of no higher recommendation.

Both books are available at Fourbears, we look forward to seeing you soon!

www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk



Apprehensive bear!

photo A Raffill



Organic September Easy Organic Food Swaps

by Tayma Cannon

TRUE FOOD in Emmer Green will be embracing the Soil Association's *Organic September*[1] initiative again this year. This campaign aims to raise awareness of the incredible benefits organic farming can bring not just for our climate and nature but also our health.

Science shows that organic foods can have more nutritional value and tend to have lower levels of pesticides than non-organic equivalents. However, it can be difficult to try and switch to an entirely organic diet, so why not try these simple swaps to get you started in the areas that will have the greatest impact.

Drink organic milk

Organic milk comes from cows raised to higher welfare standards, with a grass-based diet and no routine antibiotics. Studies show a clear difference between organic and conventional milk, with organic milk having a higher concentration of certain essential minerals, vitamins and antioxidants such as Omega-3s. See **https://tinyurl.com/2t5yb9rn** for details.

Start the day with an organic breakfast

An organic swap at breakfast can significantly reduce your pesticide exposure for the day. Non-organic breakfast items, including oats, cereals and bread, commonly contain glyphosate residues. Glyphosate is an artificial herbicide which is banned in organic farming, as it has been linked to health issues in humans.

If you like to *go to work on an egg* then consider an organic swap. Organic eggs have higher levels of Omega-3, making them a healthier choice.

Swap the fruit and veg you eat most often to organic

Consider which fruits and vegetables you eat most regularly and swap those to organic. Research has shown organic produce has up to 30-40% more polyphenols than non-organic (Baranski *et al* 2014), and up to 69% more antioxidants (Rahman *et al* 2024).

Every year PAN UK (The Pesticide Action Network) publishes a list of the *dirty dozen*, which shows where multiple pesticide residues remain on non-organic fruit and vegetables. The most recent list ranked grapefruit, grapes, limes, bananas, and sweet peppers as the five most heavily contaminated.

To get started on these swaps call in to your local, organic shop: True Food Co-op. There you can buy a huge range of great value, zero-waste organic products in the quantity you require.

***For more information on True Food, visit* https://truefood.coop**

1. **www.soilassociation.org/support-us/take-action/organic-september**

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What's On

If you have an event planned, please send details to whatson@cavershambridge.org We need these no later than the 10th of the month before the event for inclusion in the paper. It is helpful if they are submitted in the standard format below, using Calibri font. Later submissions can be included on our online What's On, which is updated regularly. To see what has been added check: cavershambridge.org/archives/category/around-caversham

Regular weekly events are now listed separately, see *What's On Weekly*, page 16.
A listing of baby and toddler groups can be found on page 18.

Tuesday 1 September – *Community Café walk 2.5 Miles* – 10:30 – SU722745 Meet at St John the Baptist Church, St John's Road, Caversham. On road parking – 2 hour limit. 23, 28, 29 buses stop outside the church. A short walk over Caversham weir, Forbury Gardens, Reading Abbey and Oscar Wilde walk. Coffee, tea and toasted sandwiches in the community cafe after the walk Pang Valley Ramblers. One of a programme of regular walks in the area – see **pvramblers.org.uk/walks-programme**

Tuesday 1 September – *Caversham Women's Institute* – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. **www.thewi.org.uk** or Tel: 0118 947 5176

Wednesday 2 September – *Rosehill Ladies* – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel: Sue 01189477570 or email **suegreen@hotmail.com**

Friday 4 September – *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 5 September – *Caversham Horticultural Society's Autumn Show* – 14:00-16:00 Emmer Green Primary School (St Barnabas Road entrance). Many plant, craft and domestic categories open to RG4 non-members. Refreshments, plants and spring bulbs for sale. See website for details **www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/autumn-show1**

Friday 11 to Sunday 20 September – *Heritage Open Days events* – Events in the Reading area, including Behind the Garden Wall - Gardeners' tales from Caversham Court (see page 3) and Caversham Road: An area shaped by Victorian aesthetics and innovation guided walk on 13 and 14 September. For full details, see **https://tinyurl.com/3e989njj**

Saturday 12 September – *Now That's What I Call a Requiem! a 'Come and Sing Workshop' with Reading Bach Choir* – 09:45-17:00 Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road, Caversham, RG4 7BG. Details page 11.

Wednesday 16 September – *1500 Years of Christianity in Reading, a talk by John Dearing* – 19:00 doors open, 19:30 start. Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. The History of Reading Society. This meeting is open to all, visitors are asked to pay £2 each to attend. There will also be a book sale.
Email **historyofreadingsociety@yahoo.com**
Website **www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk**

Saturday 19 September – *Experimental Printmaking – Drypoint, Monotype and Chine Collé – guest tutor Alda Jane* – 10:30-15:30 One of a series of workshops hosted by Caversham Picture Framers as part of their Print Club. For details of this and forthcoming events, see **https://tinyurl.com/2tatke4m**

Wednesday 23 September – *The beginning of the Caversham Heights Society, a talk by Cheryl Underhill* – 20:00 The Caversham Heights Society at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. This will be preceded by a short AGM at 17:30. See page 14.
To learn more visit **cavershamheights.org**
or email: **contact@cavershamheights.org**

Friday 25 September – *L'âge d'or de la chanson française, talk with songs, Peter Prowse* – 19:30-21:30 Le Cercle Français at Church House, 59 Church Street, RG4 8AX. For those who are learning French, love France and for French nationals. Admission £5 welcome drink included. See **www.readingfrenchcircle.co.uk** for programme. Email **readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com**

Saturday 26 September – *Simplexity by Edward and Talor Chilvers* – 15:00 Caversham's Baptist Church . Details page 11.

Saturday 26 September – *September Song* – an evening of light entertainment – 19:30-21:30 Gosbrook Road Methodist Church. Details page 11.

Saturday 26 September – *'Love is as strong as': Music inspired by the Song of Songs, from Victoria to MacMillan* – 19:30, Douai Abbey. Echo Vocal Ensemble, conductor Sarah Latto. Details page 11.

Monday 28 September – *26,000 nautical miles round the world on board Gt Britain II, a talk by Ian Worley* – 14:00 Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading. Reading u3a. Non-members welcome, free entry. See **www.readingu3a.org.uk**

Coming Soon:

Saturday 24 October – *Autumn Concert with pianist Max Mostkovski* – 19:30 St Andrew's Church Albert Road RG4 7PL. Concerts in Caversham. Tickets from £18-£26. For information and tickets see **www.concertsincaversham.co.uk** Tickets available at Caversham Picture Framers from 1 September.

You Wrote

Dear Editors

THE ARTICLE by Alan Monk was very interesting, but it contained a mistake when he said Reading has no model railway club - it most definitely does! The Reading Society of Model Engineers was founded in 1910 and is still going strong. The Club premises are in the Bath Road adjacent to Prospect Park and it currently has about 80 members. Although primarily a model engineering society, it has an OO Gauge model railway in the club room and a very well attended miniature steam railway running for the public on the first Sunday of the month.

Best regards, Mike Sinclair

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

ESSENTIAL CONSERVATION and repair work at **Caversham Court, Church Road** (PL/26/0617) has now been approved. The work is not yet scheduled, but we look forward to the removal of the tarpaulin and safety railings. As previously noted, repairs to the surrounding pathway to improve wheelchair accessibility are not included, and we have no update on this.

At **2 Bridge Street, Caversham** (PL/26/0736), which is now Pathaan's Restaurant, the owners failed to get approval for their Flood Risk Assessment and Plan, which is a condition relating to PL/24/0022, for the already built covered terrace over the river. Refusal reasons included no Flood Emergency Plan with clear warnings and evacuation procedures, missing detail on escape routes and removal of debris management from under the terrace.

At **2 Rosehill Farm Cottages, Emmer Green** (PL/26/0953 & P26/S2021/FUL) in South Oxfordshire, there is an application for a single-storey self-build dwelling on land to the rear of the farm cottages that face the Peppard Road. The proposal replaces an existing stable and garage block. The site lies within Kidmore End Parish, close to the county boundary. Access would be via Chalkhouse Green Lane which leads onto the Peppard Road. The recent appeal dismissal for 70 houses at Land West of Kidmore Road established a precedent against new dwellings on the border. Kidmore End Parish Council have objected and expressed concerns about it being infill garden development, its dangerous access, waste collection, loss of local character and impact on ecology.

Across the Thames on Richfield Avenue, at the **River Academy School** (PL/26/0162), permission has been granted for new lighting columns around the existing netball courts. The floodlights may only operate between 16:00 and 21:30, Monday to Friday, and not at weekends or on Bank Holidays.

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

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

Membership costs just £12 for three years –

see **membermojo.co.uk/cadra** for details.

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Happy Wanderer walks around The Old Cemetery

JUST OCCASIONALLY, and for a change, I'll go for a walk round the Caversham Cemetery – not the Reading municipal cemetery off Henley Road, which was consecrated in 1927, but the Caversham Cemetery run by the Caversham Burial Board from 1884. By then, the churchyard around St Peter's was full, and something needed to be done. Eventually, the Burial Board was taken over by the Caversham Urban District Council, and then from 1911 by Reading Borough Council. The walk can easily be combined with Balmore Walk, the path giving extensive views over Caversham and the town centre.

If you turn off Hemdean Road by the primary school, you'll see the cemetery buildings by the entrance on the right. There's the building that once contained a waiting room – there was no chapel – then the house of the custodian, and then the building where the wheeled bier was kept. Apparently, services were held outside by a lych-gate. There's no lych-gate now, but there is a bell-cote, without a bell, at the end of the building.

...prevent toppling...

The old cemetery is now largely forgotten about. When people have heard about it at all, they often think that it must be closed and inaccessible. A bit neglected it certainly is, with lots of gravestones that have had to be laid flat to prevent them toppling. Many of them are overgrown, and it's no longer easy to read who's buried where. Fortunately, the members of the Berkshire Family History Society have transcribed the inscriptions.

Many well-known local families have graves here, and one day I might force my way through the undergrowth and investigate the grave with the large and striking statue of a weeping lady, which these days looms up out of the undergrowth. Another monument that usually catches my eye, the one photographed here, is that of the family of William McIlroy, who started the department store on Oxford Road in 1875. His son, also William McIlroy, took the business over, but the shop closed suddenly in 1954 – though the building is still there. Quite why the family bought a plot in the Caversham Cemetery isn't obvious. The first burial here was that of William Perry McIlroy, who died in infancy in 1887. Another son, Leslie Gordon McIlroy, followed him in 1911, aged 16. The elder William died in Dublin whilst on holiday, in 1915. His home in Reading was Holybrook House on Castle Street – the house next to the slip-road down to the Inner Distribution Road. His wife, Henrietta, was the last person to be buried here, in 1927.

> ***When I first moved to Caversham, I remember noticing the odd human bone where they'd been digging, but I haven't seen one recently...***

Usually during these peregrinations I'm the only person there – though this year I met a couple of other people, out for a stroll. The cemetery looks particularly good at bluebell time among the large old trees, my favourite being the weeping beech. It's very tall and impressive. The area is obviously a haven for birds, and for badgers. When I first moved to Caversham, I remember noticing the odd human bone where they'd been digging, but I haven't seen one recently.



The overgrown Caversham Cemetery *photo Happy Wanderer*

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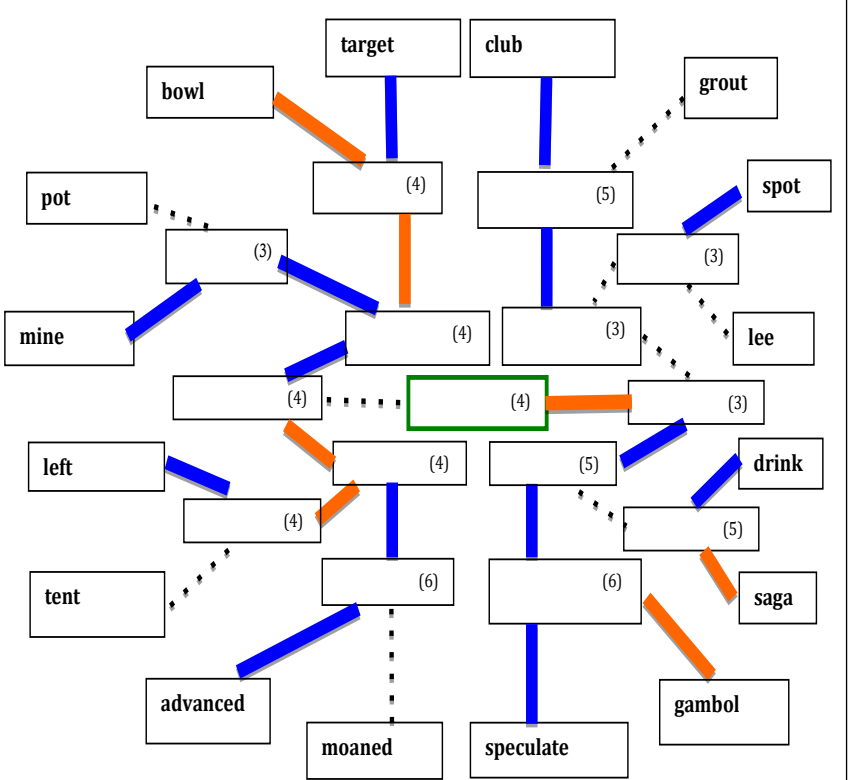
Puzzle Corner

The Challenge by Rachel

WORD PUZZLE

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

Rhyme
Letter change
Meaning



Answers on page 18

Beat It

Can you find the 22 words relating to percussion instruments? Which is the odd one out?

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

Bass
Bongo
Cajon
Castanets
Cowbell
Cymbals
Djembe
Drum
Glockenspiel
Gong
Hi-hat
Kalimba
Kettledrum
Maracas
Shakers
Snare
Stool
Tambourine
Timpani
Triangle
Tubular bells
Xylophone

Community Connections

Interview with Dave Clarke

by Sarah Stuffins



Dave Clarke *photo courtesy D Clark*

DAVE CLARKE, the newly elected Green Party councillor for Thames Ward, is a doctor by profession, working as an A&E consultant at the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH). After growing up in the Midlands, he did all his medical training in the north-west. He took a post at the RBH as the family was keen to move further south to be nearer their parents. They have both since followed Dave to the Reading area. After working abroad in his early career, Dave has retained his interest in global health and works for UK Med, a frontline medical aid charity working in disaster areas, including Ukraine in April 2022.

...underrepresented...

Dave first became a member of the Green Party about seven years ago because he felt environmental issues were underrepresented in politics. A conversation about a year ago led to him being listed as a potential candidate to stand as a councillor in Reading. He was keen to do something different and, with the support of the hospital, he agreed to stand.

He sees many synergies between his work in A&E and as a councillor, with similar skills being valuable. Thames Ward is very diverse, with very different populations in different areas of the ward. Dave particularly enjoys the personal contacts he makes and would like to see more councillors working together.

How long have you lived in RG4?

We moved to Caversham in 2014 soon after I started work at the RBH. We first discovered the area because it was recommended by colleagues when we were house hunting. I also wanted to be able to cycle to work and we have lived off the Henley Road ever since.

Where are your favourite places to eat, drink and shop in our area?

I am a big fan of La Bella Café, and our family enjoys a walk out to the Crown at Playhatch for a meal.

How do you think we can be eco-friendlier here?

We do the basics quite well as individuals, but this can only get us so far. It is necessary for institutions to be more proactive – the role of the council in providing services is pivotal in getting us to be as green as possible.

How would you strengthen our sense of community?

More local neighbourhood communities building up, such as the Belltower Community or the residents of Heron's Island, where volunteers work together to improve their areas.

If you could bring anything here, such as an event, experience or a shop, what would it be?

I would like to see local buildings that have fallen into disuse or disrepair restored, such as Pipers Island or the Pavillion, giving them a new lease of life for the community.

New Galleries Make Impression

By Elestr Lee

ANY THOUGHTS that this area is something of a sleepy suburb are rapidly vanishing – nowadays Caversham is definitely a place where 'things happen' – thanks to the creative drive of local residents and business owners.

Caversham Picture Framers has further expanded with the opening of a new branch in Duke St, Henley. The framing service will also provide a gallery, and its first exhibition is of 20thC lithographs by Henri Matisse. It opened on August 19 and will run until October 10. For information about events and exhibitions in Caversham and Henley: **cavershampictureframer.co.uk**

And Caversham can boast of a completely new private art gallery, which is dedicated to offering the chance for art lovers to view large scale conceptual art. The Lower Gallery is the passion project of Caversham resident Christopher Bowsher, who spent 20 years as an advertising creative director.

In 2022 Christopher decided to take something of a career change and has gained RHS qualifications to become a fulltime gardener. In his spare time, he had a dream to create a studio space in his garden, which he has built himself, largely from reclaimed Reading bricks. "I washed them all, and smoothed them," Reading-born Christopher told me as he showed me the astonishing result. The simple, one storey studio with spacious plain walls and little to distract is the perfect place to display ambitious works, in a calm contemplative environment – north-west facing.

Having spent the past six years building the studio Christopher was thrilled to open the Lower Gallery this summer with his first exhibition by conceptual artist Duncan Weston, entitled Hidden Messages. Christopher intends to follow this with future exhibitions next year; look out for information on the Lower Gallery website.

Find out more: **thelowergallery.com**



Christopher's first exhibition





The Lower Gallery opened this summer *photos C Bowsher*



The Local Scene by Martin Andrews

Caversham Lock

It's fascinating to watch the variety of boats passing through the lock, and Tanya and her team of volunteers chatting to the folk on their boats and seeing them safely on their way...



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

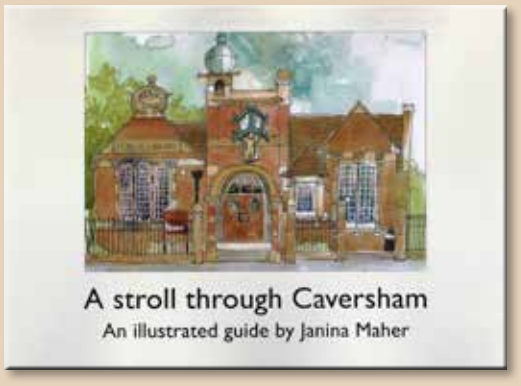
CAVERSHAM LOCK, one of the 44 locks on the Thames, is always busy with the traffic of all kinds of vessel – people enjoying a holiday afloat, pleasure boats, narrow boats and barges, canoes and kayaks. It is operated and managed by the resident lock keeper, Tanya Rosenberg, who has been in charge for thirty years and had the honour of being the first female lock keeper on the Thames. She is a popular and well-known figure to all who use the river and the crossing over the lock gates.

Controlling the flow and water level of the Thames has always been important for the safe navigation of essential water transport in past centuries. The river also provided a source of power for numerous watermills along its banks. The weir at Caversham dates back to the fifteenth century when the flow of water was used to power a mill. A 'flash lock' was built to allow the river traffic to pass, and there was always tension between the mill owners, the bargemen and those who were responsible for the lock, over control of the river flow. The first 'pound lock', using the present system of two gates, opened in 1778, and it was rebuilt in 1875. A lock house was provided for the lock keeper in 1819, and the present red brick lock house dates from 1931.

Until the 1960s the lock was operated manually, the gates being opened by pushing heavy beams (back-breaking work) – today it uses a hydraulic system. When visiting the lock, you might spot the cast iron plaque low down on the left-hand side of the control hut which marks the water level of the last great flood of 1947 – much of lower Caversham was affected, and photographs exist showing boats floating down Washington Road.

The first authority managing the river were the Thames Navigation Commissioners who were appointed in 1751 to be responsible for the towpaths, locks, tolls and regulation of the river and its traffic. In 1866 a new authority was formed called the Thames Conservancy and they occupied buildings next to the lock with mooring for their elegant launches. Today the river is managed by the Environment Agency.

It's a lovely walk over the weir, known locally as the 'clappers', across the lock to King's Meadow. It's fascinating to watch the variety of boats passing through the lock, and Tanya and her team of volunteers chatting to the folk on their boats and seeing them safely on their way.



A Stroll through Caversham

Janina's popular book, featuring her paintings and a description of the buildings, has been reprinted and is available from

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janinamaher.artweb.com/drawings-prints-paintings

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Dylan Collie as Hamlet and Amy Taulbut as Ophelia ***photos R Brown***

Chapter House setting for a superb *Hamlet* review by Elestr Lee

READING ABBEY'S rectangular Chapter House, still surrounded by mighty walls despite Henry VIII's wrecking efforts, creates a striking outdoor theatre space (this summer's balmy weather being an added bonus). In July Progress Theatre returned to the venue for their new production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. As Progress's Patron Sir Kenneth Branagh noted in his programme introduction, this was the first time the play had been presented within the ruins.

While no castle, the imposing setting added its own atmosphere to the simple yet effective set, dominated (as were many of the costumes) with the adornment of watch parts, symbolising Hamlet's cry that 'the time is out of joint'. Director John Goodman chose a 'steampunk' style for the costumes, merging Victorian fashion with industrial adornments. which managed to convey a sense of history as well as the disturbing essence of the play.

...fast-moving...

Most notably Goodman also adapted the play from its original four hours to a fast-moving and gripping two and a half. This version concentrated solely on the emotional drama resulting from the deaths of the king and subsequently Polonius, without losing any of the most famous speeches. In his version, the Gravedigger, played by Christine Moran, opens the play with a prologue, adding wry and knowing humour as a foil to the darkly developing drama.

With an all-round strong cast, Hamlet and Ophelia were played by young actors Dylan Collie and Amy Taulbut, both displaying enormous mastery of such well-known and complex roles, exploring the anxiety and anguish of their characters' situations. Further adaptations of the original re-worked the characters of Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern as being female associates of Hamlet (portrayed wittily by actors Jessica Brauner and Ariana Patterson), and I was beginning to wonder if the final awful denouement might in this version end with a comic soliloquy by the Gravedigger...but no worries. The bodies piled up, with just Horatio (Dean Stephenson) left to end proceedings, with the poignant "Good night, sweet prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest".

Next production news, see:
progresstheatre.co.uk



Christine Moran played the Gravedigger



Caversham Bridge front cover, November 2025

Safety in sight? by Evie Porter

IN NOVEMBER last year, I reported on the Last Crumb Junction crossing campaign, which aims to make the roads safer for pedestrians and drivers. At the time, the Stop a Fatality petition had amassed over 1800 signatures and had been presented to the Reading Borough Council Traffic Management Sub-Committee.

Since then, local activism has continued to prove its power, with the Council's February meeting committing £500,000 towards reconstruction of the crossing. Although momentum was slowed by the May elections and subsequent reshuffling of council roles, progress has continued, thanks to the tenacity of campaigners, Matt Rodda MP and councillors - particularly Jacopo Lanzoni, who has contributed through his role as former chair of the Traffic Sub-Committee.

The new chair of the Traffic Sub-Committee, Richard Davies, has already engaged with local campaigners and has shown a desire to be just as committed to this project going forward. A site meeting was held on the 18 June, following which Mr Lanzoni, Mr Davis and Mr John Ennis (Lead Councillor for Transport) submitted an enquiry to the Traffic Management Team.

We were very lucky to have welcomed Mr Ennis to Kendrick School earlier in the year to discuss the issue with students, where he said, "I really enjoyed coming to the Kendrick Journalism Club and being put under scrutiny". Speaking at a council meeting in March, he said the project was "Number one on our priority list, although it will take time to get [the improvements] right for local residents as pedestrians and road users", as topographical surveys and consultation periods are required. On behalf of the campaign group, Heidi N said, "We are extremely pleased that Reading Borough Council has allocated the funding to deliver the junction improvements, and we are very much looking forward to work commencing".

Caversham can be proud of the headway local people have achieved in making our community safer. Given that this junction has been a source of concern for my entire lifetime, it is encouraging to see meaningful improvements finally on the horizon.

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A Musical Month

There are a number of musical events in the calendar for September. These include a 'Come and Sing workshop' with the Reading Bach Choir, a performance of new music by Edward and Talor Chilvers and September Song, and an evening of light entertainment featuring the Thames Valley Chorus.

"REQUIEM ÆTERNAM – NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL A REQUIEM!"

The Reading Bach Choir (RBC) on 12 September.

This is a 'Come and Sing Workshop' for all ability levels.

A CHORAL DAY of well-loved movements from iconic Requiem settings including Verdi's Dies *Irae*, Brahms' *Denn wir haben*, Mozart's *Rex tremendae* and Fauré's *Agnus Dei.*

Experience the spine-tingling drama of some of the most iconic Requiems with the Choir.

In this workshop they will explore the contrasts and consonances between some of the great requiem settings, from the quiet intimacy of Fauré to the exuberant theatricality of Verdi. Spanning nearly 200 years of music history and a variety of religious and ceremonial approaches to the Requiem, the vocal demands of the day will be equally varied!

Whether you are an experienced chorister or have never sung a Requiem before, come and enjoy the thrill of singing these masterpieces with the Choir. All are welcome.

The former RBC Director Matthew Hamilton (director 2010-2017) returns to Reading for this special 60th anniversary workshop. Since celebrating their 50th anniversary with the Choir, Matthew has become a leading director of symphonic choruses and has prepared all of today's works for many of the world's leading conductors and orchestras. He is currently Choral Director at the Hallé.

The accompanist for the day is Nicholas Shaw.

Saturday 12 September –
Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road, Caversham, RG4 7BG. Registration from 09:45, starting at 10:30 with a 17:00 finish. There will be an informal performance at 16:15, so please invite your family and friends (free entry, donations welcome)

Tickets – £25 including music, tea/coffee & cake (£20 for under 21s)

Bring your own lunch (no alcohol please)

Visit* www.readingbachchoir.org.uk *to book

ALTERNATIVE EXERIENCE – AND PHONE FREE!

***Simplexity*, Edward and Talor Chilvers,**

Saturday 26 September

Edward and Talor are returning to Caversham's Baptist Church for a special afternoon of music, photographs and meditation. Edward's latest album of piano compositions is entitled Simplexity, and the couple have combined their talents to create an immersive event drawing on their vision.

There will be comfortable seating at the Baptist Church, and the performers list the event as phone free, and an opportunity to experience 'deep listening, quiet reflection and a shared experience'. With a sell-out recital of Simplexity at London's Steinway Hall, it is a great opportunity to let go of everyday stress and find tranquillity in the heart of Caversham.

***Find out more at* https://tinyurl.com/4bcum7c3**

Saturday 26 September –
Simplexity
by Edward and Talor Chilvers

15:00 Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, RG4 8HY

SEPTEMBER SONG

An Evening of Light Entertainment,

Saturday 26 September

Caversham Methodist Churches host the Thames Valley Chorus, with guest artists Jessica Sierpowski, Imogen Kemsley and Joseph Haycocks at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church. A charity evening of light entertainment featuring songs from the shows amongst other musical items. Interval refreshment provided and facilities for charitable donations available.

To book email euniceandles@gmail.com or call B Cooper 07442 206606.

19:30-21:30 Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road, RG4 5AE.

LOVE IS AS STRONG AS

Music inspired by the Song of Songs, from Victoria to MacMillan
Saturday 26 September

The Echo Vocal Ensemble, conducted by Sarah Latto.

Tickets: £27 (Standard Advance) / £35 (on door). Under 30s: £14 (Standard Advance) / £18 (On door).

***Booking at* https://tinyurl.com/39ranrde**

19:30 Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, RG7 5TQ.

EcoTip

by Tricia Marcouse

Spot-on flea and tick treatments for pets

INSECTS, NEARLY 90% of all animal species, are experiencing declines worldwide. Much more research is needed to pinpoint the cause(s), but habitat loss, climate change and agricultural practices, including increased use of agricultural chemicals, are expected to be major contributing factors.

It's easy to blame agricultural methods, but that doesn't explain the huge reduction in urban insect numbers where more of us are gardening organically and trying to attract wildlife into the garden, and the council has reduced pesticide use and leaving longer verges. The truth is that biocides are used increasingly across many industries as well as widely at home. One worrying example is regular flea and tick treatments for pets.

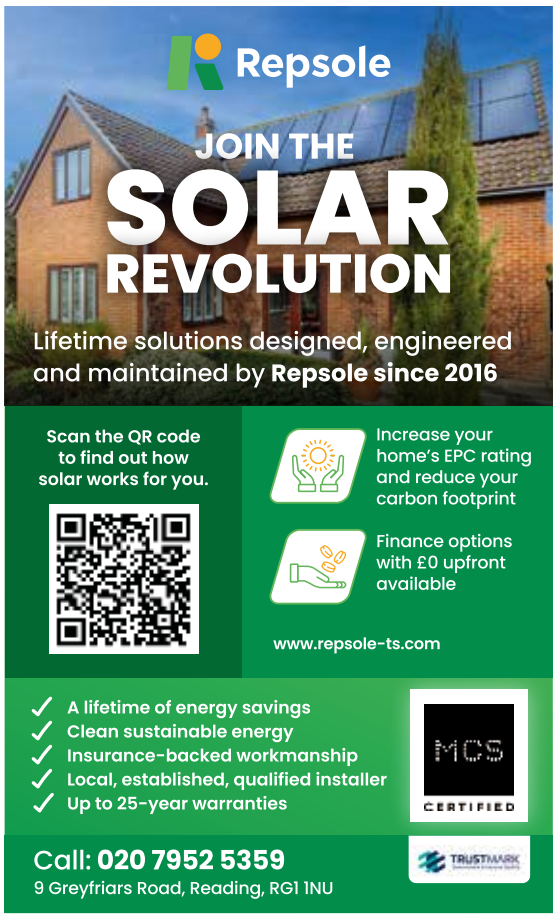
...extolling the benefits...

The TV offers numerous ads extolling the benefits for the comfort of both pet and owner of monthly treatment to prevent infestation, whether or not there are any sign of fleas or ticks. The treatment is systemic and present in hair, skin flakes, and faeces, and spread from these to wherever the pet goes. Research by Sussex University in 2021 shows significant quantities of fibronil and imidacloprid, common active ingredients in flea and tick treatments, and banned from agricultural use because of detrimental effects on the environment present in surface waters, particularly downstream of wastewater treatment plants. The levels found would be toxic to aquatic invertebrates. Whether faeces in the garden or in parks are affecting soil insects is not known at present, but it seems a realistic probability.

Many vets are changing advice and recommending using these treatments only when there is a problem, and probably avoiding use in the winter, when the parasites are less active. Others will still recommend monthly treatment, no matter whether there are any indications of a problem.

What should you do? First, ask your vet for advice on treatment regularity or whether there are options available without chemicals which are prohibited from agricultural use. Second, don't wash your dog, allow the dog to swim in rivers, flush faeces down the toilet or put pet's bedding/clothes in the washing machine immediately after (up to 3 days) treatment.

Kent Wildlife Trust have a very good factsheet on dos and don'ts www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/blog/flea-treatment-toxic-to-wildlife





Creative CAVERSHAM

Drawn to art...



Like all skills, competence at drawing comes with regular practise. Artist **Mark A Webber** offers budding artists the chance to try their hand, as he explained to **Elestr Lee**



The map of London Mark produced for the London Design Fair in 2006

THOSE WHO enjoy the visual arts might assume that painting and drawing have a fundamental place in art schools: in fact, the opposite is true. "Nowadays," explained Mark Webber, alumni of the Falmouth School of Art, "it's all about the concept, not the practise. Things are different on the Continent, but some art students these days have never drawn or had any experience of drawing.

"But I think that you see things differently when you can draw."

Mark, who grew up in Caversham and attended The Hill and then Highdown, didn't come from an artistic family. But he always enjoyed art – and loved to draw. "I started drawing and doodling when I was very young, aged six or seven. By the time I was 13 I would always sketch for around an hour every evening, before I went to bed. No one else in my family did anything like this.

"I went to Reading College and did a graphic design course. Then I went off to Falmouth University and assumed that with graphic design I would get a job in the corporate world. However, things worked out a bit differently!"

In fact, a brief set by the International Society of Typographic designers "Where In The World" while at Reading College fired his imagination. "I had visited New York, and I realised that my passion was for self-expression. I created a large lino cut map of New York, using typography to replicate the disorientation and vibrancy of the streets before leaving Reading College. In 2006 I produced a map of London for the London Design Fair, then in 2008, and while still at Falmouth I discovered I had been awarded a Silver Cube by the prestigious Art Directors Club of New York for my map of that city.

"As well as Amsterdam, I then made maps of Paris and Berlin. Each one led to an increase in scale and ambition. It took me two months to carve the Paris map, using a massive sheet of linoleum lying on my bedroom floor. The biggest was in Berlin, which I did in 2010. At the culmination of this I hosted a public printing, turning the process of printing into a collective event."

...act of will...

Extraordinarily Mark took on these enormous projects despite coping with chronic arthritis. "I taught myself to use the gouge needed to cut the lino with both my left and right hands, enabling me to give one hand a rest. Seeing the project through is a vital act of will," he said, although nowadays his latest projects are not at such vast scale.

"After Berlin, I came back to Reading, but it's hard to find studio space here. Fortunately, Jelly, based at the Broad Street Mall offered me space, and this gave me the chance to work on my solo show which took place in Shoreditch in London in 2014."

Today Mark is an art technician at the Education Department of Reading University. He's completed a map of Bath, and is working on his hometown, Reading, while developing new artistic ideas such as digital drawing, as well as going back to his first love – drawing.

"I like sketching live," he explained. "I'm currently running weekly life drawing groups at the Caversham Picture Framers Print Club. I don't teach as such, but I organise the sessions – it's for anyone who wants to start or improve their skills. Some have never drawn before.

"We have a model, and the session starts with a series of 'quick poses', which start at just one minute. We build up the time to 15 minutes, and the session ends with an hour's pose. At first people can be shocked at the idea of having just one minute to do their sketch, but they begin to build an intuition for what they can get down. If you only have 30 seconds to a minute, you have to get down what you want quickly... people end up liking the 'quick pose' sessions!

"The classes are limited to 12 people, and the age range is mixed from people in their 20s up. They really value this opportunity, and I am really grateful to Alex Foster for opening up the Print Club and creating this space to encourage the arts and give these opportunities to help our local community."

Having found international acclaim Mark is now very much Reading based, and there will be a chance to see some of his work here before long. In October he will be joined by sculptor Roger Smalley and artist, printmaker and ceramicist Robert Fitzmaurice for an exhibition at the Caversham Picture Framers entitled Modern Forms. "I'll be showing some of my abstract prints, some original drawings, and there will also be a couple of my maps!"

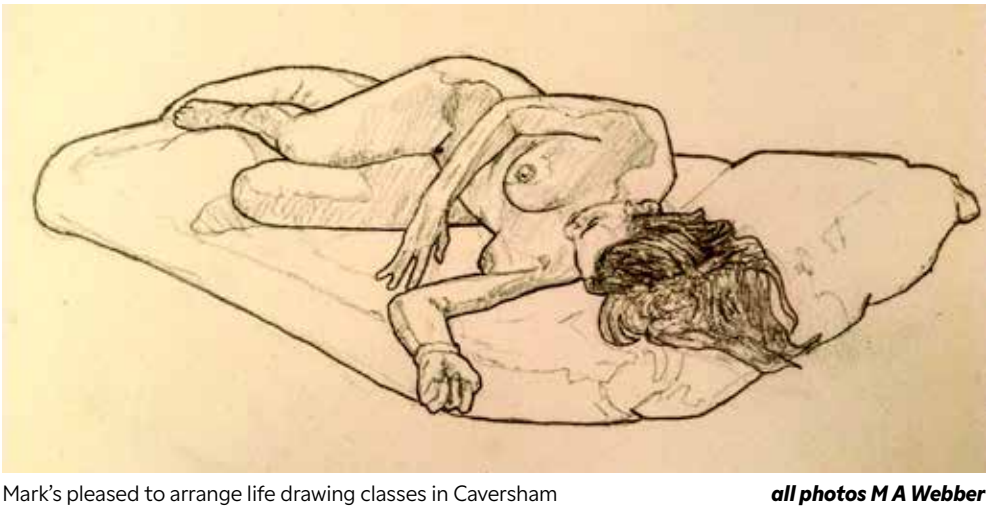
Find out more:

Informal life drawing workshops
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Modern Forms
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Digital art (above) is one of Mark's interests



Mark's pleased to arrange life drawing classes in Caversham

all photos M A Webber



Fearless *photo courtesy Junior Jam*

Fearless Young Musicians

by Edward Sanderson

AS A YOUNG musician and performer living in Caversham, I am eager to discover new local opportunities to develop both my confidence as a performer and my connections with other musicians in the Reading area. In September 2025, I became House Band Keyboardist at the Music Made Fearless Junior Jam, a monthly youth music event hosted at Reading's legendary Purple Turtle and organised by Sabrina Findlay.

Even though a majority of attendees and performers are from the Caversham area, the Jam still seems unknown to many who could benefit. So I decided to approach Sabrina herself to find out more about her business, Music Made Fearless, and how it is helping young Caversham performers grow into the next generation of professional musicians and entertainers...

Who are you? Introduce yourself! What inspired you to take up music both personally and professionally, and did you pursue another career before joining the music industry?

My name is Sabrina Findlay, but most people call me Brie. Music has always been a passion of mine, alongside my obsession with not only voices, but the people they belong to. I worked three part-time jobs before becoming a full-time musician at the age of 22. My parents have always supported my career decisions, and that has driven my motivation to do what I love and 'live the dream'.

'Made Fearless is about having a fearless approach, not only to music but to life as a whole...

What is Made Fearless all about?

Made Fearless is about having a fearless approach, not only to music but to life as a whole. I don't claim to have any qualifications apart from a keen curiosity, which has allowed me to say 'yes' to the challenges, to learn on the job, and make plenty of mistakes along the way.

Where does the Junior Jam come in?

The Junior Jam was born out of Covid, inspired by the sheer lack of music we experienced during the lockdown. Young musicians were playing at home, unable to show off their skills. So when the opportunity came, we cultivated a safe space for young people to jam together, just like big musicians do.

What is unique about the experiences you provide for young people?

The Junior Jam is unique because it is totally live and unrehearsed, challenging musicians to be fearless on stage and embrace mistakes. Stagecraft can only be honed authentically while doing 'the thing'. We have a house band, mostly young musicians who are role models to the other young performers. They are the kids who have repeatedly shown up, practiced and are confident team players.

When and where is the Jam?

The Junior Jam is held monthly at the Purple Turtle in Reading, with the occasional month off!

Who can access the Jam? What are the entry requirements and, most importantly, where can we sign up?

The stage is open to competent musicians aged 6-16 who are ready to gain confidence performing live. The sign-up is available via our Instagram and by email to those on our mailing list.

Find out more here at
https://madefearless.co.uk/junior-jam
Or on the Music Made Fearless Instagram page
@juniorjam.fearless

Our Kind Community

text and photo Caroline Gratrix



Kindness through music

WE'RE DELIGHTED to welcome a truly kind soul into our community this month. PDM Studios, a brand new music studio at Southview Business Park, Marsack Street, Caversham, has officially opened its doors, giving Pride of Reading Award winning musician, composer and guitar teacher Peter Doyle a dedicated creative home.

Peter will be using the studio to write and produce his brand-new original album, alongside offering one to one guitar lessons for children and adults, from complete beginners to experienced players. The space will also become the rehearsal home for his community initiative, The Guitar Orchestra of Reading, and will host music industry networking events where songwriters, composers and music professionals can connect and collaborate.

...meet and create...

Drawing on his memberships of the Musicians' Union, The Ivors Academy, PRS for Music and the Royal Society of Musicians, Peter hopes to help put Reading firmly on the map as a place where music industry professionals want to meet and create.

But what really makes Peter special is his generosity. He founded Reading Rock Academy to give young people a creative outlet, co-wrote a charity single for Priors Court in West Berkshire, a school for autistic children, and has worked with the homeless in Reading. He's always looking for ways to give back and help others.

"Opening PDM Studios is an exciting new chapter," said Peter. "It's a place where I can write my own music, help people learn guitar, bring the Guitar Orchestra of Reading together, and create opportunities for musicians to meet and inspire one another."

For more information about guitar lessons, the Guitar Orchestra of Reading, networking events or Peter's music projects, visit
www.peterdoylemusic.com



Pete Doyle Orchestra *photo M Lloyd*







Les Cooper



Natural... wild... wilderness...

SURPRISE, SURPRISE, I am not getting any younger, and alas this year I discovered age had really caught up with me. I blame the weather!

At the start of 2026, in an attempt to keep up to date, I realised the contemporary gardening 'fashion' of the moment was the 'natural' garden and that it was for me. Natural gardening is where nature is allowed to play its part, where dandelions and buttercups are given room to show off. Where there are curves and not straight lines, narrow paths and not huge lawns. A simple woodland effect with a lovely range of plants. All this was going to be my aim, a natural garden. Utopia!



Osteospurnum *photo www.flickr.com*

And guess what happened. My crab apples and cherry tree flowered beautifully, the tulips and daffodils were good, and I felt proud of my lack of effort.

The year moved on and so did things in the garden as it became wilder. I had a lovely group of Leucojum (Snowflake) and a cluster of Erythronium 'Pagoda' that brightened things up, but weeds were flourishing too. I wasn't worried because, with assistance from my two-hour-a-week helper, Rob, I thought I could cope

The temperatures began to rise, as did the weeds, particularly the long grasses, and my heat tolerance as a senior dropped further. I hovered indoors as the temperatures intensified and the drought continued, all making life more difficult. Did things get out of hand when the garden became a wilderness? Actually, not quite, but certainly not far off.

As always, one or two things flourished, especially when a can of water came their way. There were the Osteospurnum which are ideal to brighten any border and always enjoy the sun. I raised some Thunbergia climbing annuals and have rather fallen for them because they are so easy to grow. They grow tall in a single season, with vibrant bright coloured flowers to enliven your garden in the summer and autumn months.

After such a dry period that has to be good.



Martyn Allies *photo courtesy C Underhill*

50th anniversary of the Caversham Heights Society

by Christine Bradbury

SOME 50 YEARS ago, local resident Martyn Allies had the idea of creating a group called the Caversham Heights Society, with the aim of promoting educational, cultural and scientific topics without political or religious bias for local people. The Society hires the hall at Caversham Heights Methodist Church for its meetings, where the facilities offer a large screen, and a sound system along with technical equipment.

...lecture programme...

The Society provides a lecture programme during the winter months and organises visits to museums, stately homes, gardens and theatres. In addition, it organises a short holiday to an area too distant for day visits. This year we visited Shrewsbury and a timetable was arranged to places of interest in the district. Preparations are now in hand for a holiday in May 2027, staying at a quality hotel in Newport with visits in Wales, including the Royal Mint.

The lectures have covered a wide range of subjects, including many explaining the mysteries of AI, which have covered driverless cars, the use of AI in the treatment of strokes, and a variety of other subjects scientific, historical and artistic.

To celebrate this special 50th anniversary, on 23 September Martyn's daughter, Cheryl, will tell us about her father in his earlier days and tell us how his idea came to fruition to form the Caversham Heights Society. We will cut and share a slice of celebratory cake, along with a glass of our special fruit punch. Following on from this special introductory talk, an interesting series of lectures have been booked throughout the year to include advice about increasing protein in our diet, the Bayeux Tapestry and Agatha Christie, to name but a few.

Special events include visits to the Mill at Sonning, for their Christmas Show, to the London Courts of Justice and to a stately home.

To find out more about the Caversham Heights Society, which welcomes members from the whole district, pop into the library towards the end of August or early September, contact us on email: contact@cavershamheights.org, or phone on 07739 701616.

Details of the 23 September meeting can be found in the What's On entries on page 6.

Special events include visits to the Mill at Sonning, for their Christmas Show, to the London Courts of Justice and to a stately home...

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From the Past to the Present

Horticultural Shows in Caversham

text and photos Ian Noble

CAVERSHAM HAS a long history of shows organised by different incarnations of the Caversham Horticultural Society. Between 1861 and 1885, Caversham Cottagers Horticultural Shows were organised annually to encourage agricultural workers in Caversham to pursue gardening. The show classes were vegetables, flowers, and honey, as well as best-cultivated garden. Initially held in the grounds of larger houses on Caversham Hill and Caversham Rise, the shows found a permanent home at Caversham Park, owned by William Crawshay. They were grand Victorian affairs with a band, speeches, prizes, 'three-cheers' for the organisers, and ending with the national anthem. They stopped after Isabella Crawshay, President of the Society, died in 1885.



Balmore House today

When Caversham Horticultural Society was re-formed in 1897, shows started again at Balmore House. As Caversham had grown, the show was divided into Cottagers, Amateurs, and Assistant Gardeners, with classes for vegetables, flowers and fruit.

These popular shows became annual events at Balmore House, and later in Queen Anne's School meadow, featuring bands and toasts to the Queen.

By the 1900s, handicraft classes and races for children and other games were introduced. The shows continued until the outbreak of World War 1, when the society was wound-up.

...Dig for Victory...

During World War 2 Caversham gardeners rallied to the Dig for Victory cry with vegetables and fruit grown in their own gardens and allotments. The new Caversham Horticultural Society organised a show in October 1942 in the West Memorial Hall (now the Waterhouse) on Gosbrook Road. Classes included vegetables, fruit, flowers and preserves.

These Autumn Shows have continued at various places around Caversham with just one gap in 2020 due to Covid-19.

Between 1953 and 2000, a June Summer Flower Show was held, with classes for roses, sweet peas and other flowers, initially at Church House in Caversham, then at other locations.



The Waterhouse

It attracted gardeners from as far away as Bracknell and Newbury and, in 1997, local MP Tony Durrant displayed his cactus which had flowered for the first time in eight years.

By 2000, it was decided for financial reasons to hold one annual Autumn Show in August or September.

A Spring Show was held in March 2024, at Caversham Baptist Church, and is now held annually.

All are welcome to the 2026 Caversham Horticultural Society Autumn Show on Saturday 5 September at Emmer Green Primary School between 14:00 and 16:00, including refreshments. Full details at www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk



Frank Skinner *photo Kenton Theatre*

Frank Skinner – *Work in Progress*

Kenton Theatre – Thursday 30 July 2026

by Richard Wells

FRANK SKINNER HAS long been a household name in the world of comedy and radio. From his pairing with David Baddiel in the 90s, including the iconic Three Lions World Cup song, to his tenure at Absolute Radio and subsequent podcast, Frank has had a long and varied career.

We were delighted to see such a well-known star visiting the Kenton Theatre to do a Work in Progress show, testing some new material for upcoming performances, which included headlining a star-studded comedy evening at Camden's iconic Roundhouse.

The show at The Kenton was fairly relaxed, with no support and, when Frank takes to the stage, it's clear he is very much at ease. He has a fun and affable rapport with the audience and quickly begins chatting and joking with those sat in the first few rows. Frank, who is now somewhat unbelievably, 69 years of age, still maintains a cheeky youthfulness whilst also blending in some funny anecdotes and stories about growing older into this intimate show.

Frank's humour ranges from stories about day-to-day life to some quite surreal musings! Those due to see him at any upcoming shows are in for a treat, as what we experienced was great fun and didn't need much polish, even though this was a Work in Progress show.

I accompanied my Dad on this trip to The Kenton. He has recently become a Friend of The Kenton whereby, from just £40 a year, you get early access to ticket availability, which is useful for popular shows like Frank Skinner, along with numerous other benefits. Check out their website for further information. An easy way to support your local independent theatre, whilst getting a little something in return.

There are lots of familiar faces from the world of comedy coming up at The Kenton and, in my opinion, this relatively intimate venue is the best kind of place to see comedy.

Keep an eye on The Kenton website, https://thekenton.org.uk or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kentontheatre

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Rotherfield Walking Football Club

by Ian Beale

Last month we carried a short report about the success of Rotherfield United Walking Football Club (RUWFC) in a local football tournament. This month Ian Beale from the club tells us more about the club and its charitable activities.



Boot Boys in action

photo P Buckley

ROTHERFIELD UNITED Walking Football Club is based in and around Sonning Common, drawing several members from the Caversham and Emmer Green area. It is affiliated with Rotherfield United FC and is a member of the Football Association. During the winter some meetings are held at Highdown School, Emmer Green. We are a thriving club, founded in 2016, providing exercise and social activities for over 90 members aged between 58 and 82.

...raise money...

In addition to activities on the pitch, the club choose two charities each year which have helped our members or are close to our hearts. We raise money through our match fees and our numerous social events, and the raffle and auction on our annual Charity Fundraising Music Night. The latter are our biggest single fundraisers. This year we are supporting Blood Cancer UK, in honour of one of our legendary members, Dave Robinson, who passed away in 2025 from this awful disease. We are also supporting Greenshoots, a local charity based in Peppard Common providing care and employment for adults with disabilities and special needs.

Our biggest single money raising event is our Music Night in November, which this year is at the Bottle and Glass, Binfield Heath, with food, music and dancing – and our 2026 raffle and silent auction. We expect about 100 attendees this year.

Last year we raised over £7,700, which was donated to Prostate Cancer UK and FISH, a Sonning Common based charity providing essential transport to elderly and disabled local people.

This year we are inviting local businesses to contribute prizes for the raffle and auction. All prizes will be publicised in our club updates and on flyers on the night, so every member and their guests know who has donated a prize.

If you would like to support our charities and benefit from the local publicity by donating a prize, please contact me at ian99beale@yahoo.co.uk

For more information about the club, see **rotherfieldfc.com/team/walking-football**

> ***Our biggest single money raising event is our Music Night in November, which this year is at the Bottle and Glass, Binfield Heath, with food, music and dancing and our 2026 raffle and silent auction...***

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What's On Weekly

A roundup of events, clubs and other meetings which happen every week

Contact whatson@cavershambridge.org to add your meeting or correct an entry

Caversham Library – 09:00-17:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00-19:00 Thursday and 10:00-15:00 Saturday. Regular events include:

Rhymetime for the little ones – Every Tuesday at 10:15 and 11:15. Popular, so please book first! **www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/rhymetimes**

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

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

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 – *Ted Burnell Community Art Centre for budding artists* – 10:00-12:00 and 14:00-16:00 Church House, Prospect Street. New members are very welcome. Contact Jean Jackson 0118 947 6221 or email **gj@grahamjackson.f2s.com**

Mondays – *Caversham Park Bridge Club* – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 07464 995963 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**

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

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

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

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

Thursdays – *Weller Voices Community Choir* – 19:30-20:30. in St John's Church, St John's Rd, Caversham, Reading RG4 5A from 10 September. Term time only. Singing is fun, free and for all. Join any of our sessions. For details, contact **wellervoices@gmail.com**

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

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

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

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

Sundays – *Readifolk Song and Music Club* – 20:00-22:30 in the Community Hall, Watlington House, RG1 4RA. £10 admission for performances, £3 on singing nights. See **www.readifolk.co.uk**

Anthony Edward "Tony" Champion

Founder of Caversham Tiles – A Tribute

TONY, WHO died peacefully on 26 July 2026, aged 88, founded Caversham Tiles in 1980 with a vision built on hard work, integrity, quality, and outstanding customer service.

Tony's journey to founding Caversham Tiles was shaped by a lifetime of dedication and achievement. Beginning his career as a Pattern Maker at Robert Corts, Reading, he developed the craftsmanship, precision and attention to detail that became hallmarks of his professional life. His talent and determination led him into senior management, eventually becoming Sales Manager for a fibreglass fabrication company, a role that took him throughout the UK and to the United Arab Emirates during a period of significant development in the region.

...mattered most...

Despite his professional success, Tony never lost sight of the values which mattered most to him. He believed business was about more than products and sales; it was about trust, relationships, and treating people with honesty and respect. Those principles became the foundation of Caversham Tiles and remain at the heart of the company today.

Outside of business, Tony devoted much of his life to serving others. A lifelong member of Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, his Christian faith guided his actions and influenced the values he lived by. He was widely respected as Captain of the 1st Caversham Boys' Brigade Company, and later President of the Reading Battalion, helping generations of young people to develop confidence, discipline, character, and faith.

Tony was also a proud Freemason and member of Tylehurst Lodge, where he valued friendship, charity, and service to the community.

Above all, Tony was a devoted family man. He shared a long and loving marriage with his late wife, Lilian, and was a proud and supportive father to Paul and David. His family remained the centre of his life.

Tony will be remembered not only as the founder of Caversham Tiles, but as a man of faith, integrity, generosity, and quiet determination. His influence can be seen in the company he built, the community he served, and the many lives he touched over the years.

> ***He believed business was about more than products and sales; it was about trust, relationships, and treating people with honesty and respect...***



The Property Market



Selling your home – fixtures and fittings

by ***Kate Fox***

Owner and Director of Fox-Beckett Independent Estate Agents

WHEN YOU come to sell your property, you will have a lot of questions from your solicitor, estate agent and potential buyers. One extra thing to think about is what might be included with the sale of your home. Generally, the rule of thumb regarding fixtures and fittings is that fixed items, such as fitted kitchens, integrated kitchen appliances and built-in wardrobes are staying, while fittings such as curtain poles, curtains and blinds, free-standing white goods like fridge/freezers are considered not to be included in the house sale price. However, not in all cases - so it is best to be very clear on your intentions when you go on the market.

Sometimes, sellers aren't sure, as they may not have found the property they want to move to, so they won't know until further down the line what they might need to take. Your solicitor will ask you to fill in a TA10 form, which is an extensive fixtures and fittings form, and it is useful if a copy is provided or the items are noted by your estate agent.

...let them know...

Sellers may decide to leave things at the property which they don't want, for example a chest of drawers, a chest freezer in the garage or a garden bench. Your agent does have to check with the purchasers if they are agreeable to them being left, so it is good to let them know as soon as possible, so you can arrange the removal if they don't want them.

There are times when items such as free-standing appliances can be negotiated once the sellers have found a property, for a fee agreed by both parties. This can save the purchasers' effort. For example, they can buy the washing machine that is already working and plumbed in. However, sellers need to know that, if the washing machine were to break down prior to completion, the onus is on them to leave one which works! It is always best to talk through your fixture and fittings queries with your solicitor, just to be certain and to help aid a smooth transaction.



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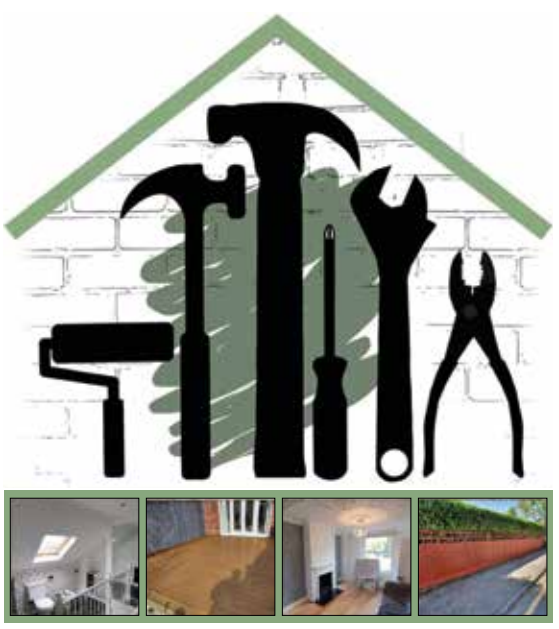
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First Impressions Matter *by Laura Harmsworth*

Getting Back into the Job Hunt this Autumn

BEEN PUTTING your job search on hold over summer? Now's a good time to pick it back up. Things often pick up pace after the holidays, and some employers like to get new hires settled before the year winds down for Christmas. So it's worth getting back into the swing of things while there's momentum.

...small tweaks...

Start with your CV. Add anything you've achieved recently, tidy up the layout, and make sure it reads well at a glance. Small tweaks can go a long way.

After that, it's about keeping at it. Set aside a bit of time each week for browsing listings, chasing up applications, and staying in touch with your contacts.

Your network matters more than people think. A local networking event, a chat at a business group, or even meeting an old colleague for coffee can surface opportunities long before they're advertised.

Don't overlook LinkedIn either. A quick profile update, a post about what you're looking for, or even just leaving a thoughtful comment on someone else's post can keep you on people's radar.

If you fancy putting a date in the diary, the Reading Careers Fair is back at the Penta Hotel on Friday 2 October, 10:00 to 14:00. It's open to everyone, whatever your background or experience, with employers from various sectors attending. A good chance to meet people face to face and pick up some CV advice while you're there. No ticket needed, though registering ahead means you'll get event updates.

Details at **ukcareersfair.com/event/reading-careers-fair**

Good luck with the job hunt this autumn!

> ***A local networking event, a chat at a business group, or even meeting an old colleague for coffee can surface opportunities long before they're advertised...***

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. 08:45-10:00. 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. 09:30-11:00. All are welcome, refreshments available. **www.facebook.com/groups/209815529592564**

Fridays – *Baby and Toddler Group* – Church House, Church Road, Caversham, RG4 8AX. 09:30-11:00. Step-free access at the back. See **www.ctmparish.org.uk/stpeter** for details

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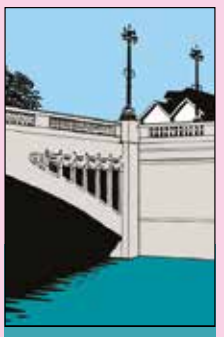
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07803 507234
or email
bowenje52@gmail.com

THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right from the top)

goal, group, pit, see, hole, set, dent, **debt**, bet, lent, wager, went, lager, loaned, gamble



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

Future editions:

Contributions for the October issue
should be submitted by 1 September and for the November edition by 1 October. These should be emailed to:
editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy
are 1 September for the October issue and 1 October for the November issue. These should be emailed to:
advertising@cavershambridge.org



Wellbeing with Ami Roy

Longevity

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, people have sought to extend life. There is huge public interest in centenarians and long living populations, including *blue zones* around the world where a higher proportion of people live beyond 100, such as the inhabitants of Okinawa, Japan. These communities report that healthy habits – including physical activity, simple nutrition, social connection, and a sense of purpose – contribute to their long lives.

For many sectors of society, death and illness come far too soon. A Health Foundation report in April warned life expectancy in the UK had declined, especially in adults of working age living in areas of socio-economic deprivation, where unemployment and austerity have worsened health. People in the most deprived areas die nine years sooner than those in the least deprived, and their shorter lives are marred by 20 more years of ill health. In England, 21% of deaths are avoidable. The actions which reduce avoidable deaths would also increase years of healthy life.

A new report from the parliamentary Health and Social Care Committee, *Healthy Ageing: Physical Activity in an Ageing Society*, suggests how to do this. It says physical activity can be more effective than drugs in preventing, treating, and managing many long term conditions. It builds on the chief medical officer for England's concept of 'compressing the years of ill health' by delaying its onset, so that disease occurs only shortly before death or not at all.

Given the report comes from a cross-party committee of MPs, there is some hope policies and plans will follow. Improving health is often portrayed as an individual's responsibility, yet change is far more likely when our environment facilitates this. A broad approach requires initiatives which focus on creating environments to enable physical activity, social connection, and good nutrition. The report's introduction labels exercise as a 'miracle cure'.

The report recommends clinicians and other NHS staff should discuss physical activity with individual patients. Exercise and healthy lifestyle factors should be embedded in care pathways. This approach can halve the complications of surgery. Similarly, Macmillan Cancer Support has guides for activity to help improve cancer outcomes, because living with cancer and other chronic diseases is now about quality of life rather than simply surviving. Promoting longevity by helping everyone to remain active would massively improve health and reduce the pressure on the NHS, social care, and the economy.

At a personal and community level, we can each foster a healthier, more active lifestyle. This little wellbeing column can act as a gentle and consistent reminder that the quality of our lives and the 'life in our years' are influenced by choices we make daily in the here and now.



Image by magnific.com

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: 09:30 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: 08:00 said BCP Holy Communion
09:30 Holy Communion with choir and activities for young people, primary and secondary age
3rd Sunday: 09:30 All Age Holy Communion in a shorter format, with choir – 18:30 Choral Evensong
Wednesday: 09:30 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
09:30 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 08:00 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*
09:00-09:20 Daily except Sunday:
Silent Prayer/Meditation/Mindfulness

St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, *vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk*
Church Office Tel: 0118 947 5214

Current Services

Sundays: 08:00 BCP Holy Communion (1st Sunday only)
09:30 Parish Communion
11:15 All Age Worship (Café Church or Family Communion)
Wednesdays: 10:30 Midweek Communion
Morning Prayer: Tuesdays 08:30 in church; Mon/Weds/Thurs 08:00. 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
Deacon Sarah Wickett
www.cavershammethodist.org.uk

Current services

Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road

Sunday: 10:30 – Also on YouTube

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

1st and 3rd Sundays: 10:30
Worship on Wednesday: 10:00-10:30
Third Thursday - Thursday Night Live: 19:30

New Testament Church of God

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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 website 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 website 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

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