



# Caversham Bridge

No 703

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

September 2023

## Restoration Station Holiday Club



Fun in the playground and helpers (right) ...more photos on p11

All photos courtesy of the CTC Holiday Club

## Run by Churches Together in Caversham *by Anna Clarke*



**A** LOT of fun was had at the Churches Together in Caversham Holiday Club at the end of July. In the afternoons we enjoyed a wide variety of activities including circus skills, chess, dancing, archery and crafts. In the mornings we explored stories from the gospel of St. John which revealed Jesus to be healer, life-giver and miracle worker. On the final day we considered how Jesus had done not just amazing things for other people, but how He has also done something amazing for us too by restoring our relationship with God.

Working with the theme for the week (Restoration Station), each year group was allocated a trade. We had gardeners, mechanics, roofers, electricians, bricklayers, carpenters, and decorators. The above conversation began between members of two Year Groups, each advocating that their year group/trade was better than the other. We do enjoy some healthy competition at Holiday Club with

*"Bricklayers are the best!"*  
*"No, Electricians are! Without us, you wouldn't have any electricity..."*  
*"But without us you wouldn't even have the building to put the electricity in..."*  
*The conversation continued.*  
*A third voice: "Perhaps we all need each other..."*  
*Silence.*

teams collecting points throughout the week (well done Drills for their victory!), but as Holiday Club has drawn to a close for another year and the team who run it has come together to celebrate another successful year, this third voice, "Perhaps we all need each other" has stuck with me.

The Bible talks about how the body is made up of many parts – each with an important and specific function (1 Corinthians Chapter 12, verses 12-31). In the same way,

Christians form the body of Christ – each of us having an individual role but remaining a part of that one united body. This is exactly what I see when I step back and consider the differently gifted individuals involved in making Holiday Club come to life: the kitchen team, security team, storytellers, room leaders and helpers, drama team, AV team, admin support, activity leaders, etc. How brilliant it is to draw together people from across the churches in Caversham and live out what it means to be the body of Christ! As the third voice observed, perhaps we do all need each other...

The team has been phenomenal, but an enormous thank you must go to Richard and Tamsyn Wilson for leading us and the Club so successfully this year.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Churches Together in Caversham Holiday Club returns next year (with a different theme!) from **Monday 29th July 2024 – Friday 2nd August 2024.**

## To Autumn

*Season of mists and  
mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of  
the maturing sun*

*John Keats, September 1819*

AFTER THE WET weather we have had in recent months, it feels as if we are living out the Carol King song 'It might as well rain until September'. Let's hope the weather improves this month.

Our September edition has been increased to 20 pages to make space for extra articles, news and photographs. For example, our report on the Swan Upping ceremony contains several colourful photographs (p10), as does the Reading Guild of Artists annual exhibition item (p8).

The Churches Together in Caversham Summer Holiday Club was enjoyed by all involved (this page, additional photos p11), although the volunteers were exhausted by the end of the week! Our Local Scene painting this month features St Anne's School, which hosted the Holiday Club (p17). We look forward to several local events in the coming months, including the Reading Cycle Festival (p9), and the Autumn Festival of Music and Art (p13). We have the first of a new feature series,

Meet the Maker (p15), which spotlights local crafter, Michelle Edmunds. This coincides with the return of the regular Artists' and Makers' Fairs at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church (p13).

The Happy Wanderer ponders the Caversham Flash Lock and its operation (p7), whilst our regular gardening page includes a reflection on careless gardeners and suggestions for springtime bulbs (p12). Laura Harmsworth provides tips for decluttering your CV and kitchen (p18)!

The Caversham Bridge is your community newspaper, produced by and for local people. If you enjoy the paper, please recommend it to friends and neighbours, and encourage them to subscribe (details p3).

**Phil Chatfield**

Contact us with your news and stories at

[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or by post to Caversham Bridge, Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX.

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# What makes a community?



## Talking Point

by Rev David Jenkins

ONE OF the main aims of 'Caversham Bridge', and one of the things it does so well, is to promote a sense of community in Caversham and Emmer Green.

It has started me thinking about what makes a community. We are distinct individuals – some living alone and some in families. What is it that prompts a sense of belonging to, and identifying with, a particular neighbourhood?

It may be that the people we relate to most closely outside our immediate family are our closer neighbours; and the quality of that relationship, or its lack, can strongly affect how we feel about where we live.

But beyond that, what makes a community seems to be affected by where people meet. A community like Caversham may have a whole series of mini-communities within it.

Each school, each pub, each church, each workplace, our shops and restaurants, and the library, may all have their regulars who feel a sense of belonging to that localised community – a community within the Community of Caversham.

Beyond that are other groupings specifically designed to promote the community's health: local councillors, the Caversham and District Residents Association, Caversham Good Neighbours, Gossip Girls, and GP surgeries, among others.

Before lockdown, a number of churches had been discussing the needs of people in Caversham, and one conclusion reached was that there could be a dominant need of companionship to counteract the loneliness felt by people of any age living on their own. Solitude and personal space can be desirable, but only up to a point. We all need other people. And lockdown may have underlined just how deep this need is!

'Caversham Bridge' highlights how major events can bring us together, how common interest groups can do that, and of the significant part played by local shops,

eating places, schools and churches alongside other groupings, in drawing us out of isolation into some form of significant meeting and relating.

One of the sections in 'Caversham Bridge' is headed 'Building our community' and that may well be an aim with which each reader of this paper will want to identify.

It may begin in small ways from befriending neighbours, to engaging with strangers. The desire to build community here may well arise from the thought – how can I or any group to which I belong help to combat loneliness for someone else?

*Rev. David Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Team Ministry.*



## Local clergy and church services

### ANGLICAN

#### Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

St Peter, St Margaret, St John  
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Rd  
Caversham RG4 7AD  
Tel: 0118 947 9505 [rector@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@ctmparish.org.uk)  
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810  
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905  
Contact: [admin@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@ctmparish.org.uk) or 0118 996 8836  
Correspondence address: Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

#### Current services

##### St Peter's Church –

1st Sunday of the month:  
8:00 BCP Holy Communion  
9:30 Service of the Word with junior choir and potential for baptism  
2nd and 4th Sundays 9:30  
Holy Communion using existing service booklets, with adult and junior choir and Sunday Club  
3rd Sunday: 9:30 Holy Communion in a new, shorter format with junior choir  
18:30 Sung Choral Evensong.  
Wednesday – 09:30 – Zoom morning Prayer –  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/786384026>

##### St John's Church Gosbrook Road Sunday services

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

##### St Margaret's Church Mapledurham –

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

##### St Andrew's

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

#### Current services

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

### St Barnabas Emmer Green

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

#### Current Services

Sunday – 9:30 Parish Communion (except 3rd Sunday of the month: Service of the Word)  
1st Sunday of the month – 11:30 All Age Worship  
3rd Sunday of the month – 11:30 Family Communion  
Every Wednesday – 10:30 Midweek Communion  
Full details on our website: [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk)

### CAVERSHAM PARK UNITED REFORM CHURCH

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston  
Tel: 0118 947 5152 [www.cavershamparkchurch.com](http://www.cavershamparkchurch.com)

#### Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube  
Details on their web site at:  
<https://cpvc.org.uk:5152/live-stream>

### METHODIST CHURCH CAVERSHAM

Rev'd Jeongsook Kim  
Tel: 0118 947 2223  
Rev'd David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

#### Current services

Sunday – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road – 10:30 – (also available on YouTube)  
Sunday – Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road – 10:30

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker  
Church office Tel: 0118 954 5353  
Email: [secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

#### Current services

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

### GRACE CHURCH (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

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

### Current services

See their web site for details:  
[www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

### RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

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

### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev'd Dr Garrick Wilson  
Tel: 0118 946 3009

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Fr Joe McLoughlin, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue  
Tel: 0118 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)  
**Current services**  
See their web site for services at:  
[www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

### St Michael Sonning Common

(including Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village)  
Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michael's, Sonning Common  
Tel: 0118 972 3418  
<http://saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk>

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

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

#### Future editions:

Contributions for the October 2023 issue should be submitted by 1 September and for the November 2023 edition by 1 October These should be e-mailed to:

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

Dates for advertising copy are 1 September for the October 2023 issue and 1 October for the November issue. These should be e-mailed to:

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



# IN THE NEWS



Caversham Court Garden

photo F Smith

## Garden Awards



NCE AGAIN, Caversham Court Gardens has achieved recognition as one of the best parks and open spaces in the country by receiving both a Green Flag award and Green Heritage Accreditation for 2023.

The Green Flag award recognises high-quality maintenance and excellent wildlife and climate-friendly practices, with winners having to demonstrate that standards are maintained and continuous improvements are being achieved.

The Green Heritage Accreditation is for parks which have conserved their historical features to a high standard and maintained their historic character and appearance. Green Heritage Accreditation is made to sites with particular local or national historic interest, and only 17 were awarded in the South-East this year.

Karen Rowland, Reading's Lead Councillor for Environmental Services and Community Safety, said, "I am thrilled that Caversham Court Gardens has again been recognised for its excellence. It is testimony to the work of our Parks team who keep it, and all of Reading's parks, in such good condition".

Congratulations to all the staff and volunteers whose work ensures we can all enjoy the gardens.

Based on a press release from Reading Borough Council



## Caversham Bridge News from the editors

### Volunteer Advertising Manager

Our Advertising Manager recently retired after an enjoyable 17 years in the post. We are looking for someone to take on this role. The work is part-time and flexible and does not require previous experience in advertising. It provides a great opportunity to meet local businesspeople and to work with the Caversham Bridge team. A job description is available if you are interested. You can contact us at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or leave a message on our answerphone, 0118 328 2754, and we will call you back.

### August Edition Correction

When we sent the paper to print, we did not have a date for the postcard of Prospect Street featured on the front page. Chris Walton has since told us it dates from about 1910.

### Going the extra mile

Help us to celebrate and share those occasions when someone goes beyond your expectations in what they are doing. It could be a neighbour who has helped you or outstanding service from a local business. If someone has made your day by going 'the extra mile', do tell us, so we can share it with our readers. Write to [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or by post to Caversham Bridge, Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX.

### Subscribe

The annual subscription for 2023 is £5. For new subscribers, the charge is £2.50 to the end of the year. You can pay by direct transfer from your bank account, using our bank account details: Caversham Christian News  
Sort Code: 30-67-99 • Account Number: 72808960, and please include your postcode and house number or house name as a reference!

## SECOND-HAND SEPTEMBER

SECOND-HAND September is a campaign to encourage people to buy only second-hand items for the 30 days of September. And with the range of charity shops and other stores in our area, there is plenty of choice.

The campaign highlights the environmental impact of the fashion industry and offers an alternative. By recirculating our clothes – buying, wearing and donating second-hand – we can help reduce the demand for new clothes. This could, in turn, help to reduce the damage to our planet. For example, in making a new pair of jeans, an estimated 16.2kg of CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted – the equivalent of driving over 58 miles in a car.

With fires sweeping Mediterranean countries and floods elsewhere, climate change is impossible to ignore. So, it's more important than ever to act now, to prevent this global crisis from becoming a global catastrophe.

Anyone can take part. You can find inspiration by searching [#SecondHandSeptember](https://www.instagram.com/secondhandseptember) on Instagram, which is full of photos of people sharing the second-hand gems they've found. You can also find some great tips on the Oxfam website.

Visit the Sue Ryder shop in Emmer Green, and, in Caversham, the Thames Hospice, AgeUK and Oxfam charity shops, as well as Carousel Clothing, for your second-hand inspiration.

Based on information from the Oxfam website

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Martin Beukes

photo P Chatfield

# Martin's Farewell

by Margaret Ellison

On Sunday 23 July, the congregations of both Methodist chapels gathered at Caversham Heights, for a service led by Revd David Jenkins with Revd Martin Beukes preaching the sermon. To mark the occasion, a very generous lunch was shared by all, as we looked back over the last 4 short years to our first contact when the two Senior stewards and Revd. David Shaw met Martin on Skype from South Africa.

Four years is a short tenure for a Methodist minister, and it has come round all too quickly, marked by the Covid-19 Pandemic and lockdown. We survived both and thank God for the technical skills that Martin brought, with twice weekly mailings and services accessible on Zoom, not to mention all the Risk Assessments that allowed us to reopen gradually.

We have seen less of Martin since he had to take on responsibility for the vacant Circuit Superintendent, but he will be remembered as a great cook,

testified by those who enjoyed the Christmas meal. He is also a dab hand at coffee making, when he used it to talk to many of the 30 or so parents or grandparents at the Toddler Group. If he is ever out of a job, he could be an effective and speedy furniture mover.

He leaves behind him a united church, ready to take on new challenges together. As Circuit Superintendent, we will see him at circuit services and meetings, so it is really 'Au revoir', and with a big thank you to both Martin and his wife, Nicole.



Caversham Baptist Church

photo P Chatfield

## Warm Welcome Hub at Caversham Baptist Church

IN SEPTEMBER Caversham Baptist Church re-opens its Warm Welcome Hub. The hub is part of the national Warm Welcome Space initiative, and is supported by Churches Together in Caversham and Queen Anne's School. Originally set up to support people struggling to heat their homes, the Baptist Church hub now provides an all-seasons welcome to anyone who would like friendly company in a relaxed environment with refreshments provided. There are board games for anyone who would like to play, and a quiet space to contemplate or pray. Everything is free of charge, including food to take away (subject to availability) provided by the Co-op Foodshare scheme.

**The times** – just drop in (no booking needed)

September: Mondays 13:30 to 15:30

October onwards: Mondays 13:30 to 15:30, Fridays 09:30 to 11:30

**The place** – Caversham Baptist Church, South Street RG4 8HY

**Contact** - Colin Baker 07305 163838

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For more details, contact:  
[anna@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:anna@ctmparish.org.uk)

## Parish Youth Worker Vacancy

*Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish*

We're seeking a dynamic and enthusiastic youth worker to help us develop and implement a cohesive youth work strategy across our diverse parish, that nurtures the faith of those currently within our church family and reaches out to those beyond our doors.

### Could that be you?

- Are you passionate about seeing young people coming to faith in Jesus Christ and growing as disciples?
- Can you inspire faith in those around you, and build and train teams?
- Can you work among people from different Christian traditions, and alongside secular partners, to provide safe spaces and engaging activities for young people?

For an informal chat, phone

**Revd Penny Cuthbert on 07825331810**

Full job description, person specification, parish information and application pack available at

[www.ctmparish.org.uk](http://www.ctmparish.org.uk) or from [admin@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@ctmparish.org.uk)

Closing date: 12 noon 4th September 2023

Interviews: Saturday 16th September 2023

For details see

[www.bit.ly/ctmparish-youthworker](http://www.bit.ly/ctmparish-youthworker)

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## For your bookshelf....



Welcome to 'Fourbears Reviews' where we briefly review a couple of titles chosen from our book shop 'Fourbears Books' in Caversham.

by Alex Forbes

**T**HE FIRST book this month, Blob Fish, is a children's picture book by Olaf Falafel. It's a fun story about a 'Blob' fish trying to find a friend. Although you feel sorry for the fish, it works out okay in the end, and there are a couple of jokes that made me laugh out loud. This book has won all sorts of awards and it's easy to see why. Although quite simple and straightforward, it's a good little read.

The selection for adults is the first book in a new series by Simon Toyne. It is called Dark Objects, and is a modern-day thriller. A body is found in the fortress of a London apartment, surrounded by four objects. These include a book written by Dr Laughton Rees, who is now responsible for investigating the murder and finding the killer. As with Toyne's previous series, which started with Sanctus, he has a real ability to create mystery and intrigue with his settings and scenarios, then adding compelling characters which, as a reader, you're invested in. This had me page turning



Two bears make the choices this month

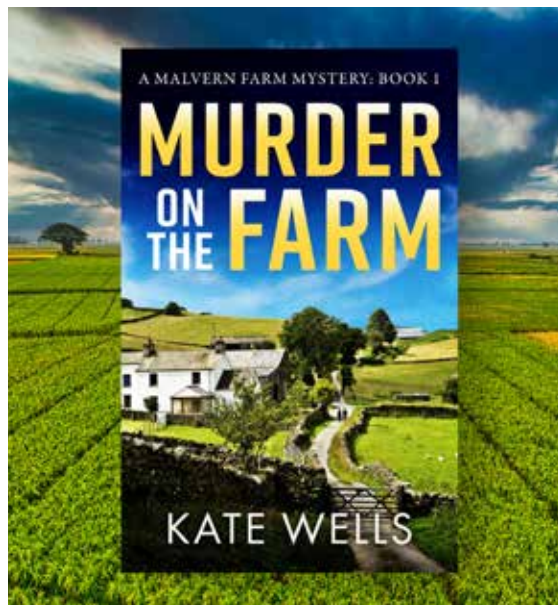
photo A Forbes

until the end. I've just read an advanced copy of the second book in the series, and it's even better, so I think this series could do well.

**Book Fact:** I recently did a stock check, which is the most painful part of the job. There are just

short of 8,000 books in the shop. To put this in perspective, the primary wholesaler currently has 9.5 million paperbacks available. We are always happy to order in whatever we don't have, and mostly they arrive in 24-48 hours.

*Happy reading, whatever you pick up, and hope to see you in the shop soon.*



## Childrens' Writer Turns to Murder

by Adrian Raffill, Group Organiser

Our creative writing group was delighted to welcome local author Kate Poels to an event in Caversham's independent bookshop Fourbears on Wednesday 5 July.

**K**ATE GAVE us a reading from her new novel, Murder on the Farm, before answering questions from the group about her writing process and journey.

Kate's path to publication was not a straight line from writing a book to getting published. Best known so far for her children's books, she tried her hand at many other genres first, including romantic comedy and young adult fiction. Not many publishers accept manuscripts directly, so getting representation by an agent was essential. A journey of submissions and rejections ensued, from which Kate learned all there is to know about the process.

Persistence was key. "It might not be your first, second or third book which gets accepted. Keep trying", Kate told us. In fact, it was her eighteenth book that finally did it for her. She spoke about two crucial factors that helped her get there. First was finding her niche in children's books. As a teacher at Caversham Primary School and a mother of young children herself, Kate realised she knew a lot about children's books and enjoyed writing them.

Second was having a community of writers and

getting feedback. Kate started a critique group to help each other learn and develop. "The writing community is really supportive and finding your tribe is so important," she said.

Kate's most recent book for children, On Wings to the Stars, was published last year. It is aimed at a slightly older age group (11+) than her earlier books. The story was inspired by a photo of her grandmother and her great uncle, who died in his Wellington bomber over Malta during the Second World War.

Since then, Kate has moved on to writing for an even older age group. Her debut adult crime novel is the first in a new five book deal, the Malvern Farm Mystery series, to be published under the name Kate Wells. Described as 'Agatha Christie meets This Farming Life', the series is inspired by Kate's upbringing on a farm in the Malvern Hills. We wish Kate all the best as her writing takes off in this new direction.

**Murder on the Farm by Kate Wells is published on Monday 4 September.**



Kate Poels at the reading

photo Fiona Barker



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# WHAT'S ON in SEPTEMBER

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to [whatson@cavershambridge.org](mailto:whatson@cavershambridge.org)

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

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

**Rhymetimes** for the little ones - popular, so please book first! Every Tuesday at 10:15 and 11:15.

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

**Sit and Stitch** 17:30 – 19:45, on 2nd and 4th Thursdays every month. Refreshments – come and be inspired.

Tel. 0118 9375103 or see [reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library](http://reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library)

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

**Mondays** – **Caversham Park Bridge Club** – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 0118 3348195 for further information. [bridgewebs.com/cavershampark](http://bridgewebs.com/cavershampark)

**Tuesdays** – **Babies and Toddlers** – Gosbrook Road Methodist Church. Term time 10:00 – 11:30. All welcome.

**Tuesdays** – **St. John's Baby and Toddler Group** – Caversham Hall, St. John's Road. Term time 9:30 – 11:00. All welcome.

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

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

**Wednesdays** – **The Waltham St. Lawrence Silver Band** – Neville Hall in Waltham St. Lawrence RG10 0JJ 20:00 – 22:00. Free and friendly club for brass instrumentalists. Specific vacancies for 1st Tenor Horn, Solo and 2nd Cornet, Solo Trombone or Euphonium, Bass Trombone and Percussion. Email: [waltham.band@gmail.com](mailto:waltham.band@gmail.com)

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

**Sundays** – **Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair** – Caversham Precinct. 10:00 – 15:00. See [www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](https://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

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

**Friday 1 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 9478772

**Saturday 2 September** – **Caversham Horticultural Society** – Autumn Show – 14.00 – 16:30 at Emmer Green Primary School. For details, see [www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/events.htm](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/events.htm)

**Saturday 2 September** – **Rock'n' Ale Festival** – 18:30 – 23:00 at Our Lady and St Anne's School playing fields, Caversham. This family friendly music event benefits the Motor Neuron Disease Association. £13 for adults, £5 for under 16's and under 5's are free. Purchase at [facebook.com/rocknale](https://facebook.com/rocknale)

**Wednesday 6 September** – **Caversham Heights Society** – 20:00 at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall. See [www.cavershamheights.org](http://www.cavershamheights.org) for details

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

**Wednesday 13 September** – **Caversham Horticultural Society** – 19:30 at Caversham Baptist Church Hall.

**Thursday 14 September** – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk) or Tel. 0118 9475176

**Sunday 17 September** – **Hymn Café** – 15:00 – 16:00 at Caversham Baptist Church. Relaxed café style setting with hymns, prayers, testimony and cake.

**Wednesday 20 September** – **Light on the Hill Cafe** – 19:30 – 21:30 at Grace Church, 119 Peppard Road, RG4 8TR. A wellbeing cafe for adults 18+. Come as you are for tea and a chat. [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

**Friday 22 September** – **Le Cercle Français** – 19:30 – 21:30 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. Email: [readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com](mailto:readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com)

## Building our community

**Planning update from Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA), bringing you a summary of planning and transport matters affecting the RG4 area**

WORK CONTINUES to satisfy the detailed conditions for construction on **Reading Golf Course**. This includes aspects on Ecology, Habitat Enhancement, timing and location of the required off-site biodiversity net gain, and hard and soft landscaping on the site. Arrangements for construction traffic are progressing slowly. Once the new bell mouth entrance is complete, it will be possible for construction traffic to exit left out of the site, thus avoiding two-way construction traffic on this narrow road.

**Appeals** still in progress include:- The Moorings Mill Green; Caversham Lakes; the Piggery Gravel Hill. **Applications still open for comments** include: the new plans for Caversham Park (220409); changes to the petrol station on Henley Road (230023); changes to service station on George Street (230603) to include provision of electric charging but removal of trees.

**New applications** include a retrospective application for the new shopfront and signs for the newly opened Chillis on Church Street (230932 and 230933) and an application from Great Brighams Mead on Vastern Road for an extension to a third and fourth floor to accommodate 100 apart-hotel rooms (230745)

Reading Council is seeking comments on the draft **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy** up to 18 September.

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/evcistrategy/>

An exciting local programme of events for **Heritage Open Days** from 8-17 September is available at

[https://www.visit-reading.com/dbimgs/HOD%202023%20brochure%20\\_final.pdf](https://www.visit-reading.com/dbimgs/HOD%202023%20brochure%20_final.pdf)

Would you like to **sponsor a tree** for your street? <https://media.reading.gov.uk/news/help-make-reading-greener-sponsor-a-new-tree>

**STOP PRESS:** Changes from 4 September. to bus routes 23/24 and 25 will affect parts of Emmer Green. See [www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk)



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**B**ACK IN May I gave a talk to the Caversham and District Residents' Association. My subject was: Crossing the Thames between Reading and Caversham over the centuries. In preparing it, I could find lots written about bridges, but not much about the Clappers footpath, which crosses the river over the weir, and the flash lock in the middle of it. This preceded the present-day pound lock. Realising that I'd written something about The Clappers in 2016, I took down the file and found to my surprise that the picture I'd chosen to illustrate it showed not just The Clappers, but the flash lock itself.

So here's the picture again, courtesy of Reading Borough Libraries. It was taken by Henry Taunt of Oxford, probably in the 1870s, long after the flash lock had gone out of use. Behind the bridge over the lock, you can see the series of vertical poles which lifted the paddles when the navigation channel was opened. For boats going downstream, the force of water would have propelled them, but they would have needed to be carefully guided. For boats needing to be hauled upstream against the current, records show that a winch was used, from 1641, if not before. The whole process of removing the paddles, getting the barges safely through, and then putting back the paddles, must have been incredibly strenuous and dangerous.

No-one seems to have written much about the practicalities. How long was it possible or desirable to keep the lock open – and how many barges could be got through in that time? While the lock was open, could people still walk over the Clappers? And presumably, as the water-level in the upper pound was lowered, the flow down the mill stream would decrease or stop, and Caversham Mill would have to cease work. Then, once the lock had been closed again, how long would it have taken the water to reach its usual level?

A book by Fred S Thacker, 'The Thames Highway', published

in two volumes in 1920, says that around 1700, the Thames Commissioners had a timetable in place to regulate when the flash locks could be opened, from Lechlade down to Teddington. The top lock was opened twice a week, on Sundays at 2 pm, and on Wednesdays at 5 pm. The surge of water was presumably timed so that it would re-fill the pounds just after they had been lowered. It took this surge 68 hours and 30 minutes to reach Caversham, so that on Wednesdays, Goring Lock was opened

at 3.30 am, Whitchurch Lock at 5.30 am, Mapledurham at 7.30 am, Caversham at 10.30 am, and Sonning at noon.

I can't help wondering if this was actually done and, if so, whether or not it worked. Were there really queues of barges waiting to go through a lock in the early hours of the morning, and having to be steered and hauled in the dark? Mercifully, this would have come to an end with the opening of Caversham pound lock in 1778.



Caversham Flash Lock

courtesy of Reading Borough Libraries

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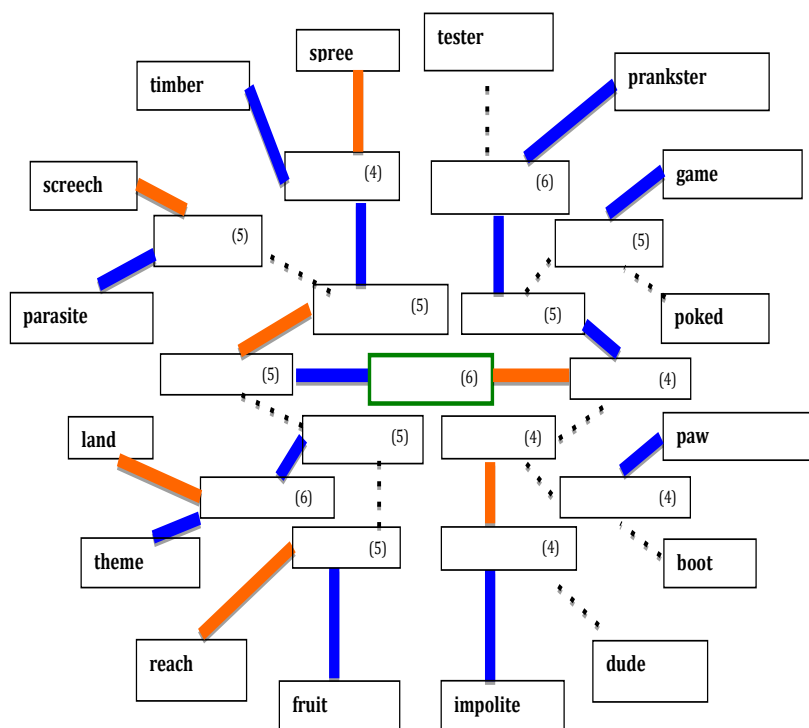
## Puzzle Corner

### 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 19

### THE GREAT COMPOSERS

Can you find 22 classical composers in the grid?

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

Bach  
Beethoven  
Berlioz  
Brahms  
Chopin  
Delius  
Elgar  
Grieg  
Handel  
Haydn  
Holst

Liszt  
Mendelssohn  
Mozart  
Purcell  
Ravel  
Scarlatti  
Schubert  
Schuman  
Vivaldi  
Wagner  
Williams



# PACKED PREVIEW LAUNCHES RGA'S SUMMER EXHIBITION

by Elestr Lee

**A**N EXTRAORDINARY array of local artistic talent was well represented at the launch of this summer's 92nd Reading Guild of Artists' exhibition, which took place in Henley's Old Fire Station from July until early August.

A large crowd attended the private preview held on the eve of the public opening, and it was quite hard to take in the vast display of paintings, sketches and 3D artworks which adorned the walls of the gallery.

Special guest of the evening was Dr Hannah Lyons, recently appointed Curator of Art Collections at the University of Reading, who had the unenviable job of choosing winners of the two annual prizes. Dr Lyons announced that the Marie Dyson Award would this year be given to Jenny Halstead for

her stunning painting, *Savaged Olive Grove: Sicily*. The Pauline Mercier Award for 3D art went to Shirley Smith for her ceramic work, *Scoria Oranje and Turkoois* – her witty piece *Pecking Order* was also prominently displayed at the exhibition. Dr Lyons made several additional commendations, including Caversham's Roger Smalley for his work in Caen stone, *Progressive Rocks (Tracks 1 – 8)*.

As well as Roger's work, artists from Caversham and Emmer Green whose work was on display included Nina O'Connell, Philip Alexander, Lou Jessop, Michael Norcross, Liz Real, and this month's Creative Caversham subject, Marion Vaughan. The first 'red dot' of the exhibition must have been awarded to our very own Janina Maher – whose pen and watercolour painting of Henley Town Hall was swiftly snapped up by Henley's Mayor, Councillor Sarah Miller, one of the guests at the event!



Local artists represented included Nina O'Connell (above)



Plenty of talent on display **all photos: Phil Chatfield**



Roger Smalley's work (above) received a special commendation

## TAKING THE LEAD by Jane Pares

THE SOUTH Chiltern Choral Society (SCCS), which is based at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School, Sonning Common, has a new Musical Director, Helen Bilkey.

Helen has taken over from Paul Burke, who has led the choir for the last nine years. Born into a Cornish family with a strong singing tradition, Helen has spent her life involved in music, both in schools and in the wider community. She pursued her passion for choral direction through the completion of an MA in Choral Education, working with the BBC Singers, amongst others. She has

set up and directed many community choirs and choruses, with a particular focus on bringing together all age ranges and musical experiences, something which has been shown to have emotional and physical benefits. Helen has directed a wide range of choral performances, including the Mozart Requiem, Vivaldi Gloria, Jenkins Armed Man, and the Rutter Magnificat. As Director of Music at The Abbey, Reading, she oversees an extensive programme of concerts and performances, as well as over 30 vocal and instrumental ensembles. She conducts the Abbey

Symphony Orchestra, Senior Choir, Concert Band, Upper Three Choir and Staff Singers, and has just returned from a music tour of Paris, where the 60-strong choir and orchestra gave performances in the majestic surroundings of Saint Sulpice and La Madeleine.

The Society's new term starts 11 September. If you love singing in harmony and are passionate about music, SCCS would be pleased to see you! All voices welcome: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass. We rehearse on Monday evenings at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School, Sonning Common.

For more information, please see our website: [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk).

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# Reading Cycle Festival returns to Caversham

by Hilary Smart

**R**EADING CYCLE Festival will return to Caversham on Sunday, 10 September, from 11:00 to 16:00. This free and fun event is family-friendly and will offer bike ramps for teens to try out and obstacle courses for young riders.

We took our two young children to last year's event and particularly enjoyed the live music and stunt bike displays. We were amazed by the height and precision of the jumps the stunt team performed on and off ramps, obstacles and even their van. The commentary was lively and engaging for both children and adults. My two-year-old was so entranced that I was able to sit down for the full length of time it took to drink a hot coffee from one of the food vans.

Avanti Cycling (who deliver the bikeability training in schools) had brought a range of interesting bikes to be tried. My five-year-old was very excited to get on a unicycle, though he didn't stay on it for long. If you are an adult who would like to ride a bike but need more than a standard bicycle, this is a great place to come and explore your options. It was on the AW Cycles stand at Reading Cycle Festival a few years ago that I first tried out a cargo e-bike, which was a slippery slope, as I now use one instead of a car for the school run.

Many local cycling groups are represented, so if you aren't sure how to get cycling more and need route advice or training, or if you want to join some group rides, come and have a chat, as everyone will be delighted to help. The group I'm part of (I fell DEEP down the rabbit hole) is Kidical Mass Reading. We organise family-friendly bike rides, and we will be running a marshalled circular ride from the cycle festival at 12:00, suitable for young riders with their families.

*I hope we see you there!*



## Please be kind to your Tethered Caps

*Reduce litter from discarded caps* by Tricia Marcouse

'TETHERED' CAPS on single-use plastic bottles are mandatory across the EU from July 2024 and expected to be part of Extended Producer Responsibility legislation in the UK. Many manufacturers have made the switch already. Please treat these bottles gently when opening them and don't use excess force, which breaks the tether.

The idea is to have a sealed bottle to prevent

contamination during transport and storage, but, when breaking the seal and unscrewing the cap, a small plastic hinge is left to keep cap and bottle together. This should reduce some litter from discarded caps and ensure more caps go for recycling. There is a slight problem when drinking from these bottles, because the cap attacks your nose or cheek!

During this transitional period, when each manufacturer may have a different production method, you need to treat plastic bottles in two separate ways. Before putting the rinsed bottles into the door-to-door recycling system:

### FOR BOTTLES WITH TETHERED CAPS

just put the bottle in without screwing the cap back on

### FOR BOTTLES WITHOUT TETHERED CAPS

put the cap back on and cut the bottle with a knife or scissors so the air can be squeezed out by machinery and increase the payload for collection vehicles.

If you don't want to cut the bottle, then please discard the cap into your general waste.



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Swan Upping, Caversham 2023

all photos H Lambert



# Scarlet and Gold

by Helen Lambert and Phil Chatfield

**T**HE THAMES in Caversham was the scene of a colourful ceremony dating from the 12th Century, when the King's Swan Uppers passed through on 20 July.

Each year, this census of swans on the river between West London and Abingdon is overseen by the Royal Swan Marker. This year was the first under King Charles III. The ceremony originated at a time when the Crown claimed ownership of all mute swans, which were considered a delicacy at medieval banquets.

Ownership of the swans is shared between the Crown and the Vintners and Dyers Livery Companies, and boats from the two livery companies also take part in the proceedings. The flotilla of small boats provides a colourful spectacle, with the flags of the King and the Livery Companies, and the scarlet shirts with the royal cipher worn by the King's Swan Uppers. The King's Swan Marker, David Barber, wears a distinctive scarlet jacket and has a swan's feather in his cap.

These days, the ceremony is very much about understanding the health of the swan population, with the boats stopping to count, weigh, measure, and check the well-being of the swans. This year, the impact of avian flu has become very apparent. Mr Barber said the effect of the disease had been "horrendous, terrible to see" at the end of last year, with hundreds of swans lost to the disease. The results of the census this year show a 40% drop in the number of cygnets, with only 94 found, the lowest number in seven years. However, he said those found were "in good condition".

Disease is not the only problem for our swans, with reports of swans being shot with air rifles, eggs and nests vandalised, and swans being harmed by dogs off leads.

Because of concerns about avian flu, we are advised to stay away from dying or dead birds, and to contact Swan Support on 01628 876336 immediately.

To learn more, see their web site  
[www.swansupport.org.uk](http://www.swansupport.org.uk)





# SCOUTING IN GREAT SHAPE

by Robin Kent



Camp fire fun

photo 89th Reading Scouts

WAS RECENTLY asked if Scouting was still popular. It certainly is! Scouting has grown continuously for the last 13 years, and currently over 180 young people enjoy Scouting activities at the 89th Reading Scout Group every week. A team of adult volunteers deliver a great Scouting experience, making it as easy and safe as possible for our young people to push the boundaries of their experience and enjoy challenging adventures.

With an international membership of approximately 25 million and growing, the Scout Movement is the world's largest voluntary organisation for boys and girls. Scouting is about meeting new friends, sharing adventures, and making the most of life's opportunities. This is true

for both the young people and the adult volunteers, making it a great family activity for all ages. We act with care, respect, integrity and cooperation, exploring our own and others' beliefs, and engaging with the community.

With this growth, we have over 150 young people on our waiting list at 89th Reading. All our activities are managed and delivered by volunteers, using a team-based approach to allow for flexibility. This has been so successful it is now being rolled out nationally by The Scout Association.

To give more young people skills for life and join in the fun, find out about this new flexible approach to volunteering by emailing Robin at [gsl@89th.org.uk](mailto:gsl@89th.org.uk) or visiting [www.89th.org.uk](http://www.89th.org.uk)

Our single biggest act of community engagement is our highly valued Christmas Post service for the delivery of Christmas Cards to Caversham, Caversham Heights, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. We have been running it for over 35 years and raising funds for the Group in the process.

In 2021, we delivered nearly 2,500 Christmas cards, raising enough money to buy a defibrillator which is sited outside the 89th Scout HQ and accessible for the community.

After a break in 2022, the Scout Christmas Post service will be returning from 25 November 2023. Full details of the posting sites will be published in the December edition of the Caversham Bridge.

*Robin Kent is Group Scout Leader (GSL) of the Emmer Green-based 89th Reading (Milestone Wood) Scout Group.*

## Restoration Station Holiday Club – more photos



Restoration Station photos

photos courtesy of the CTC Holiday Club



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costs lives'*



*Euphorbia characias 'Tasmanian Tiger'*

**D**O YOU sometimes moan to yourself 'Why did I do that?' or, more likely, 'Why didn't I do that?' Recently I purchased a Euphorbia plant Tasmanian Tiger. I am not sure why? A spur of the moment idea, I presume now. At first it was happy in its pot (I hadn't decided where to position it), then the leaves began to droop and I watered and watered it. It became sadder with every splash. Belatedly, I decided to find out more. As perhaps you've guessed, when I looked into its requirements, it wanted dry conditions - not my soakings.

Even my specialities suffer from my casual approach to gardening. In the spring, I decided to grow a few delphiniums from seed. I obtained three packets of hand-pollinated seeds and a packet of lupin seeds. To ensure germination, I let the lupin seeds soak in water for a few hours and then sowed them all into pots of seed compost.

*...I should have known better...*

Placing the pots on the greenhouse bench, I felt proud knowing I had done a good job, particularly when a number of lupin seedlings came up a few days later. As it does these days, the weather changed from being rather wet and cold to being sunny and very hot. Foolishly I left my pots with the delphinium seed to bask in the heat. After all these years playing around with delphiniums I should have known better.

Eventually only two feeble seedlings bothered to germinate, and one of these decided life wasn't worth living. I have lectured fellow gardeners many times on how easy delphiniums are to grow from seed, and now I had failed. The fact was, I had been too idle and careless. I merely needed to move the pots out of the baking heat and the seeds might have stood a chance.

*...chitting the seed first...*

I am determined to make amends for my foolishness, and I am having another shot, but this time I am chitting the seed first. What you do is to take a small plastic container (perhaps an ice cream container). Place a wet paper towel in the bottom and sprinkle the seed, gently making sure each one is in contact with the damp paper. Spread another piece of wet paper towel over the top and close the lid. Keep the container in a cool position in the house and make sure the paper towel retains its dampness. In a few days the seeds will sprout tiny white roots and, when petite leaves appear, carefully lift the miniscule plants by the leaf and plant them in a pot of compost.

I hope I have not made the method seem too difficult, because it isn't, and you can get a number of plants using it. Incidentally, chitting can be used for the seeds of other plants when you want to ensure near perfect germination, those F1 cucumbers for example.



## Planting For Joy

by Louise Hampden

**A**S GARDEN centres start clearing and selling off their summer stock to make way for Christmas knick-knacks, they are also making space for spring bulbs – a timely reminder to start planning for next year. In my own garden I tend to forget to plant enough to give joy after the months of gloom. We all look forward to those early nodding yellow daffodils to remind us that winter is over. So now is the time to get the best of what's on offer.

The great thing about bulbs is that you can delay planting almost indefinitely, or at least for a few weeks, and flowering is practically guaranteed. This is because within each bulb, if it is a good size, the flower and leaves are already developed

and are just waiting for a few weeks of darkness in the soil, a bit of moisture, and the trigger of warmth, to pop out of the soil and open their flowers.

One variety I have my eye on for pots this year is a lovely miniature daffodil called 'Arctic Bells', which only grows up to 8 inches or 20 cm tall and has pale yellow and very fragrant flowers shaped like a hooped petticoat. I will plant this in a shallow pot and place it by the back door. I do love the early varieties, and you can't go wrong with 'February Gold', which does what it says, flowers towards the end of February and is not too tall or floppy like some other types. Its bright yolk-yellow flowers have swept-back petals, and will naturalise really well in grass if you plant them under trees.

Along with the late summer display of yuletide goods in garden centres comes a timely reminder that you could have flowering bulbs to bring into the house for Christmas if you 'cheat' the seasons a little. It will take 10 to 12 weeks to 'force' all sorts of bulbs into flower. The variety of daffodil called 'Paper-White' is ideal for this. All you need to do is to plant them in a shallow pot with drainage holes and filled with damp potting compost. They don't need to be planted deeply, and you can put them close together. Keep the pot in a cold and dark place so that the bulbs think they are in the ground and, after 10 to 12 weeks, bring the pot into the warmth – they will think it's Spring and start to flower. It's worth a try!



*Narcissus Bulbocodium 'Arctic Bells'*



*Narcissus 'February Gold'*



Paper-White Daffodil

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## Celtic treat coming to Caversham

Capturing the flavour of the changing seasons – Clare Williams (above)

*I paint in the hills to capture the energy and dynamism of water, wind and sea. I interpret the landscape through the prism of slate greys, violets and pinks*

by Elestr Lee

THE FORTHCOMING Autumn Festival of Music and Art which will be taking place in Caversham next month organised by Adrienne Black will have something of a 'Celtic touch'. Two of the evenings showcase musicians from Ireland and Wales, while the festival is also featuring a special exhibition by Welsh artist Clare Williams.

Clare has had a long career in the creative arts in Wales and, four years ago, gave up her work running theatres, and now paints from her studio based in Snowdonia.

"Here I look out over Lake Trwsfynydd and the Rhinog mountains. My paintings reflect the changing weather and the wildness of this corner of Wales," she said.



Delicate colouring captures the Celtic landscape

Clare is inspired by the landscape of the area where she lives, and this is reflected in her work. "I paint in the hills to capture the energy and dynamism of water, wind and sea. I interpret the landscape through the prism of slate greys, violets and pinks."

During the festival concert goers will have a chance to view around 30 of Clare's oil paintings which capture Wales during different months of the year – lending an artist's eye of the seasonal changing landscape which will complement the theme of the final concert of the series on Monday 30 October, when both Vivaldi and Piazzolla's *Four Seasons* will be performed at Queen Anne's School.

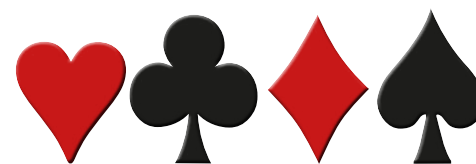
The festival opens with an evening of solo guitar performed by Brecon-born Gerard Cousins. Meanwhile, on Saturday 28 October, Irish-born violinist Aoife Ni Bhriain and Welsh-born harpist Catrin Finch (who served as Royal Harpist to Charles III, when he was Prince of Wales) will be appearing at St Andrew's Church for an evening of music with strong Celtic associations by two outstanding virtuoso performers.

For details of the festival, and to buy tickets:  
[www.concertsincaversham.co.uk](http://www.concertsincaversham.co.uk)



The Rhinogs

all photos: Clare Williams



# BRIDGE

## NEW CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS BRIDGE CLUB

IT MAY be that people who don't play bridge think those who do should get a life, while those who do play bridge may feel a little bit sorry for all the others who are missing out on one of life's great diversions.

At the New Caversham Heights Bridge Club we certainly regard the game as a pleasure and currently we have space for a few new members. If you know how to play bridge then you may like to get in touch. It may be that you have not had a game for a while and are thinking that it's time to pick it up again; or maybe you want to gain more experience than just playing with friends; or perhaps you would just like to be able to play in an afternoon club. If so, we may well have something for you.

We meet at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church in Highmoor Road, Caversham at 14.00 every Thursday. Although we love the game, we are an easy-going club and do not take things too seriously. The room we use is airy in the summer and cosy in the winter, and you are welcome to come to a session and try things out for free with no obligation to join. You do not need a partner to apply, but please note our one dogged rule: members must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Duncan Knight on 0118 9475544 or email [Duncan.knight@googlemail.com](mailto:Duncan.knight@googlemail.com)



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## A Garden to Delight

text and photo George Grubb

OVER THE last 18 months, the border beside Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Highmoor Road has been transformed. The garden had been planted with shrubs, but these had become overgrown, and non-native bluebells had moved in.

Clearing the border and preparing the soil for replanting took nearly a year. Volunteers from the church worked with local gardener Will Alliston to remove stumps, roots, and buckets of bulbs! Hugh Netley, of Hugh Netley Landscapes (see page 20), was kind enough to provide a design for a border filled with pollinator friendly flowers. He also sourced the plants, which were donated by a church member. More than 100 were planted on a very frosty day in December last year. Despite the unpromising start, the plants have flourished, providing colour, scent and plenty of interest for insects.

The grounds of the church are open for all to enjoy so, if you are passing, do take a few minutes to have a look at the border while it is still full of colour.

## Roger Ford – 1949-2023



### An apprentice compositor in the far-off age of hot metal typesetting

**R**OGER FORD, whilst not a resident of Caversham, has played an important part in our community as the designer of the Caversham Bridge for more than 25 years.

Roger grew up in Crowthorne with his twin, Helen, brother Owen and sister Wendy. He loved sports, playing football when young and golf latterly. When he met Penny, it was love at first sight, and they were married for nearly 50 years. They had two daughters, Joanna and Nichola, who have happy memories of Roger caring for them when his shift work at the paper gave him time at home during the day.

He started work as an apprentice compositor in the newspaper business at a time when the so-called hot metal typesetting process was still in use at the Wokingham Times. This process was soon replaced by electronic typesetting, which Roger mastered when he transferred to the Reading Evening Post. It was here he first encountered the Caversham Bridge, at a

time when it was typeset and printed in Reading by the company. With the demise of the Evening Post, Roger set up in business with a colleague as a freelance designer, and continued to design the Caversham Bridge, then printed by the Newbury Weekly News.

### ...remained positive...

After his retirement, Roger fitted in work on the Caversham Bridge with his many other interests and family commitments, as he and Penny became grandparents. He was diagnosed with Myeloma in 2020 and subsequently underwent extensive treatment. Throughout this time, he continued his work on the Caversham Bridge, with support from a former colleague. He remained positive throughout his treatment and was always cheerful. Although he appeared to make good progress, the disease returned at the end of 2022, when he was readmitted to Frimley Park Hospital. He worked on the Caversham Bridge when he could, up until the March 2023 edition, after which he became too ill.

Roger was quick-witted and amiable, with a love of music and a wide circle of friends. But most of all, he was a family man, a loving husband to Penny, a supportive father and an involved grandfather who will be missed by all who knew him.

## ReadiFood

Reading's Food Bank

## Readifood Foodbank Shortages

EARLY IN the summer, Readifood, our local food bank charity, put out an appeal for support over the holiday period. It is not too late to help out. They are currently giving out around 200 food parcels a week of various sizes. This equates to about 300 tins of tomatoes, 400 tins of vegetables, and 300 tins of fruit every week.

Many people generously give food to Readifood on a regular basis, for which they are very grateful. Some people and organisations donate to the foodbank at special times of year, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest.

However, they struggle with food stocks in the summer. They had run out of tinned vegetables and tinned tomatoes at the start of the holiday season.

If you are able to make a donation to ReadiFood, you can do so by either placing some tins in the donation box in church or your local supermarket. If you have sufficient means, you could place an online shopping order for delivery to them (address below) Any support would really be appreciated.

Readifood address: 33 Boulton Road, Reading RG2 0NH. If placing an online shopping order, please email [admin@readifood.org.uk](mailto:admin@readifood.org.uk) or call 0118 987 2672 to let them know when to expect it.

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# Community Connections

by Fynn Sturk

This month we meet  
Kate Fox of  
Fox-Beckett  
Estate Agents



Kate Fox

photo J Fox

IT HAD ALWAYS been a dream of Kate Fox to set up her own business. After being made redundant and when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, she had the perfect opportunity to start. That's when Fox-Beckett estate agents was born.

She was first exposed to estate agents when studying in London. She had a weekend job working for an estate agent doing viewings. She really enjoyed it, as she loved properties and liked meeting new people. Later in life, when she was raising a family, she experimented with working from home, but decided to try to find a job with an estate agent. Kate wanted to understand the business properly and not just work weekends for them. She worked for a few different firms, online and in person. She used the skills from working at all these different estate agents to help create her own business. She has also used social media very effectively to advertise her business, which

combined with her customer oriented, friendly approach, makes her different from other agencies.

## How long have you lived in RG4?

We moved here 23 years ago and stayed! I am originally from London, and we lived in Cirencester in the Cotswolds for two years before moving to Caversham.

## Where are your favourite places to eat, drink and shop in Caversham?

My favourite place to eat is The Collective. They create amazing brunches and, amongst other things, make the best sourdough cheese toastie I have ever had! I really enjoyed a recent meal at Clays, which was delicious, and there were plenty of vegetarian options. For drinks, I like the Fox and Hounds and The Last Crumb, where there is always a great atmosphere. The Angel Bar serves great cocktails! For shopping, Nood Stores has a variety

of lovely things to buy - from candles and gorgeous plants to bee-reviving kits on a keyring!

## How do you think we can all be eco-friendlier in RG4?

As previous interviewees have said, by walking. We are lucky to be close to so many local amenities in Caversham. I also love the Facebook groups we have in Caversham for recycling things you no longer need.

## Being part of a community reaps a wealth of benefits, how would you strengthen our sense of community in Caversham?

I think we should have a big Caversham choir where we could sing all styles of music. Singing makes us happy and it would be a lovely bonding experience for our community and fun for everyone.

## If you could bring anything to Caversham, an event, an experience, a shop, what would it be?

I would love us to have a dance and music studio in Caversham, so anyone of any age could go along and practice singing, have band rehearsals, put on their dancing shoes, or learn a new style of dance. So much can be gained from singing and dancing together, both physically and mentally. When you get to a certain age there aren't many places to go and have a boogie, but we still want to! It would enrich people's lives and benefit our community so much. It would also be a great collaborative space for people to meet and get creative.

## Meet the Maker

Pam Chatfield chats  
with local crafter, **Michelle Edmunds**,  
about her unusual creations



Michelle Edmunds

"NATURE IS so beautiful" says Michelle Edmunds. She grew up in rural Herefordshire and has childhood memories of playing outside and being thrilled discovering wildlife. Michelle tells me she has always 'made stuff' (she sews, paints, and makes lino cuts), and now has combined these two passions to create her business, Evangeline's Emporium.

Michelle describes herself as part of the Steampunk community, whose roots are in the sci-fi writings of H G Wells and Jules Verne, and the Victorian aesthetic. The Victorians loved to preserve and memorialise once living things. Many of us will have been fascinated by taxidermy specimens when visiting preserved Victorian houses. Michelle has developed her own take on this tradition, by framing items such as butterflies and some of the tiniest animal skulls.

Michelle's love of wildlife and nature influences where she sources her items. Her suppliers are often small family businesses, and can be as far afield as Indonesia and South America. They are often in conservation areas, and deal only in specimens



Michelle's stall, Evangeline's Emporium

all photos: M Edmunds

of animals who have died a natural death. In a small space in her home in Caversham, Michelle skilfully mounts these fragile items and places them into frames to show them off at their best. The results are exquisite and highly collectable, and Michelle sells many at specialist fairs.

While Michelle does not sell on-line, you can catch up with her at the Caversham Artists and Makers Fairs at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, where she regularly has a stall. You can pop along to admire her work and chat about her passion on the 2nd Saturday of the Month (Sept - Dec). And, if you have any younger family members, do bring them as well. Michelle finds children are especially fascinated by her work and, with a background in education herself, loves to enthuse with them.

You can contact Michelle by email at [michelledmunds@gmail.com](mailto:michelledmunds@gmail.com)

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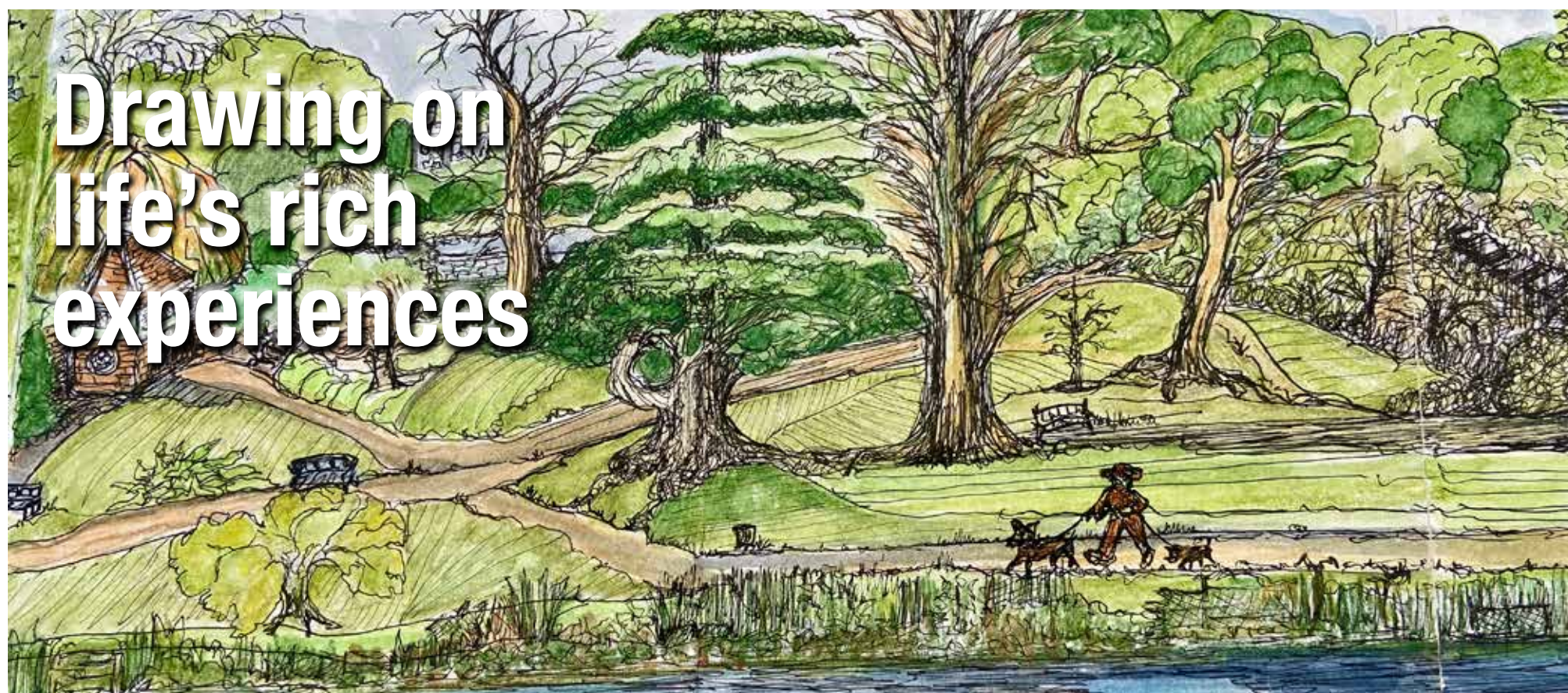
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# Drawing on life's rich experiences



**Nowadays Marion Vaughan is rarely seen without her sketchbook. But, as she told Elestr Lee, her work as an artist is just the latest chapter in a life which has followed the most extraordinary twists and turns...**

**T**HERE WILL be few who have enjoyed as varied and diverse a life as this month's artist. A coloratura soprano who sang with the Royal Opera House Covent Garden for five years in the 60s, Marion was encouraged to become a Relate marriage counsellor. She subsequently studied in Oxford, training as a psychiatric social worker and working in this field for 20 years. Ordained in 2010, she became Reverend Marion Pyke, and looked after St Peter's Church in Caversham for two years before Reverend Mike Smith was appointed. Bereaved in the year she was ordained, Marion has since married veteran rower Roger Vaughan. Marion Vaughan now has a busy life as an artist, painting as well as sketching.

Throughout her life, Marion has always enjoyed drawing. "Even as a child!" she reminisced. "I grew up in Swallowfield, but my father was born in Caversham. When I was five I travelled to Caversham and made a sketch of Caversham Bridge, which won first prize in the Swallowfield Agricultural Show."

Marion and her first husband moved to Caversham in the early 60s, where he taught for many years at Highdown School. It was only during lockdown, when Marion had just retired from the Church, that she really started drawing seriously. "I enjoy sketching, indoors or outside. I draw trees, buildings, animals,



Marion depicts anything that takes her interest: Caversham Court (top), a forest scene (above), or varying styles of houses (below left and right) **all photos Roger and Marion Vaughan**

portraits. When I get up in the morning, I just get on with whatever inspires me. I draw whatever I want to do – I couldn't do the same thing every day!"

Marion has been inspired by joining the local Urban Sketchers group. "When I started drawing, I didn't really know anyone else, but I spotted Urban Sketchers online, so I turned up, and joined in," she said. "What happens is that we all meet at an agreed location – there may be up to 20 or 25 of us – at a certain street, or maybe in Caversham Court. We all sketch whatever interests us. Then, when we have finished, we have the 'throwdown' when we compare what we have drawn. We learn from each other.

"We sometimes meet outside the Town Hall. The council employs a professional artist, and he taught me how to sketch. I was outside the Town Hall, and he advised me to sketch the people coming towards me in 10 seconds. At first, I didn't get it – but then I realised you concentrate on the detail that most catches your eye; everything else can be added in later. So now I carry my sketchbook everywhere! I sketch all the time, and it always attracts people who want to see what I am doing. I try to encourage them to have a go too!"

Marion goes to Reading's Biscuit Factory in the Broad Street Mall every Monday where she meets with fellow artists, who encouraged her to apply to join the Reading Guild of Artists. She

was delighted to be accepted two years ago and has enjoyed seeing her works exhibited in the Royal Berks Hospital corridors. "I just sold one to someone whose wife had been regularly visiting her mother and mentioned my painting of a cat. He bought it secretly and asked me to remove the painting. She noticed it was missing from the corridor display, so then he revealed he'd bought it for her!"

Her work was on show at the RGA summer show at the Old Fire Station in Henley last summer and again this July. During the first weekend of September, she will be joining six artists whose work will be displayed at the Herb Farm in Sonning Common. Later this month she will be exhibiting at the RGA Small Works 23 exhibition at the Turbine House in Reading.

While Marion continues to sketch and paint, she has also found time to return to her first love – singing, and in a strange turn of events, her life has turned full circle. "My husband Roger wanted to sing in a choir, so we both joined. We sing with Riverate, which rehearses at the Methodist church in Highmoor Road.

"Later this year we are going to the Albert Hall in London to sing in a 'scratch' Handel's *Messiah*. This is going to feel very strange, because my final professional job as a singer all those years ago was the soprano part in the *Messiah* – in the Albert Hall!"



Find out more:  
**Reading Guild of Artists Small Works 23 Exhibition,  
The Turbine House, Friday 22 Sept – Sunday 1 Oct.**





Drawing by Janina Maher

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

**E**VERYONE WALKING through the alleyway connecting South View Avenue with Cromwell Road will have heard the joyful sound of children at play in the extensive grounds of St Anne's Catholic Primary School. Janina Maher's drawing shows the main entrance to the school on Washington Road.

The history of the school is extensively covered on their excellent website. The foundation stone was laid in 1899, and a report on the ceremony in the Berkshire Chronicle stated that 'a miraculous medal, a pair of rosary beads, an engraving of St Anne, and a badge of the Sacred Heart' had been placed in the foundations. The official opening was on 11 September 1899, and initially there was only one teacher and 32 children. In 1902 an order of Belgian nuns took over the running

of the school and pupil numbers increased. In 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, Belgian refugees joined the school, increasing numbers to 150 children. At the end of that year the St Anne's Hall was opened and soon became used by a Red Cross Medical detachment. By May 1915, the hall was designated a convalescent hospital for the military. At the end of the war in 1919, all the children were taken by tram to Palmer Park for the Peace Celebrations.

In June 1940, in the early days of the Second World War, a school in London was evacuated to Caversham with 220 children and staff. A part-time arrangement was organised at St Anne's, with the evacuated pupils being taught from 8:50 to 13:00 and St Anne's children from 13:30 to 17:00. The school remained open during the summer to look after children while their mothers were involved in war work.

St Anne's officially became a Primary School in 1958 under the Education Act of 1944 and much development took place – toilets were installed for the Infants, a kitchen was built, and a new playground was created at the back of the school hall for the older children.

There have been many more changes since then, and today St Anne's continues to flourish. Currently there are about 185 pupils across 7 year groups and a 21 place Nursery. When I spoke to the headmistress, Sarah Bernito, she was keen to emphasise that faith was still at the heart of life at the school. Although a Catholic school, the pupils come from wide and diverse backgrounds; at the moment at least 19 languages are spoken by the children, and those of any faith or no faith are welcome. The school strives to be inclusive and to create a happy and supportive environment and a place where every child can achieve his or her potential. St Anne's has a catch phrase – 'The school that's known by love'.

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## First Impressions Matter

# Decluttering

by Laura Harmsworth



I OFTEN return from our summer holiday full of ideas and renewed energy. An article I read recently inspired me to start decluttering, which made me think of parallels with CV writing. So here are my top tips for decluttering your CV (and kitchen!).

### CHIPPED, BROKEN OR DAMAGED ITEMS

Remove outdated or irrelevant information from your CV, such as expired certifications. Ensure that links, such as your portfolio or LinkedIn URL, are still functional.

### EXPIRED FOOD

Check your CV for outdated or irrelevant achievements. Focus on highlighting recent and impactful achievements relevant to the role you're applying for.

### TATTY DISHCLOTHS

Content is king, but the format and presentation of your CV are also important. A well-formatted and visually appealing CV will make a positive

first impression. Use a font like Calibri, break up text with bullet points, and leave plenty of white space by selecting an appropriate margin.

### ITEMS THAT DON'T FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE

What do you want from your career and job? When job searching, ensure that the roles you consider align with your goals. Tailor your CV accordingly, by including relevant skills and achievements.

### FRIDGE MAGNETS

I love a magnet, but they can be distracting when cleaning. Similarly, declutter your CV by removing unnecessary information e.g., photo, full address, marital status, date of birth, references, or the title 'CV' are not required, and some of these pose a risk of identity fraud.

### SINGLE-USE GADGETS

Waffle maker, air fryer, egg poacher, smoothie maker, popcorn machine - we have them all and some sit in cupboards taking up space. Can you see a common theme here?

Only include information on your CV that is relevant to the job you are applying for. You might have an achievement you are super proud of and rightfully so but, if it doesn't help showcase how you're a great match for the job, take it out.

### CUTLERY

Do you have separate sets of everyday and fancy cutlery? Both serve the same purpose. When writing your CV, avoid using jargon and overly complicated words and phrases. Reflect the language used in the job advertisement and sound like yourself. Your CV should be easy to read and understand.

### OLD PANS

Just as with previous points, discard anything old that no longer serves a purpose for your current career goals. Make space for relevant information. However, if an older job has some relevance to your application, keep it in.

### DUPLICATES

Duplicate skills or experiences on your CV create unnecessary clutter. Consolidate similar skills under a Key Skills section instead of repeating them under each job role. Focus on highlighting your achievements.

### CLEANING PRODUCTS UNDER THE SINK

The things that lurk behind closed cabinet doors! What are you hiding? In terms of your CV, don't lie! It's as simple as that - it's unethical and won't do you any favours in the long run. You could get fired, you'll live in fear of being found out, and you won't be able to fulfil the requirements of the job.

### Happy decluttering

You can follow Laura on:

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## Go organic this September

by Tayma Cannon

TRUE FOOD CO-OP is embracing the Soil Association's Organic September initiative with events, offers and product sampling in-store.

This campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits organic farming can bring for nature, our climate and our health. Organic farming works with nature, rather than against it, by using no artificial pesticides or fertilisers.



Inside True Food Co-op

photo F Smith

### Organic means:

- Fewer pesticides
- No artificial fertilisers
- Higher animal welfare standards
- No routine use of antibiotics
- No artificial colours or preservatives

There are lots of ways you can get involved in Organic September, including:

- Supporting the organic community by trying organic, local produce from True Food.
- Making small changes to your weekly shop, such as committing to buying organic milk, choosing a box of organic eggs, or perhaps looking at refilling with organic toiletries or household cleaning products.

- Try to regularly make a meal entirely organic. For inspiration check out the recipes on True Food's website or in our monthly newsletter.
- Attend one of True Food's Organic September in-store product sampling events.

For more information about these events, please see [www.truefood.coop](https://www.truefood.coop) and follow True Food Co-op on social media.

True Food Co-op in Emmer Green is a local organic, independent grocery shop with integrated zero-waste shopping.

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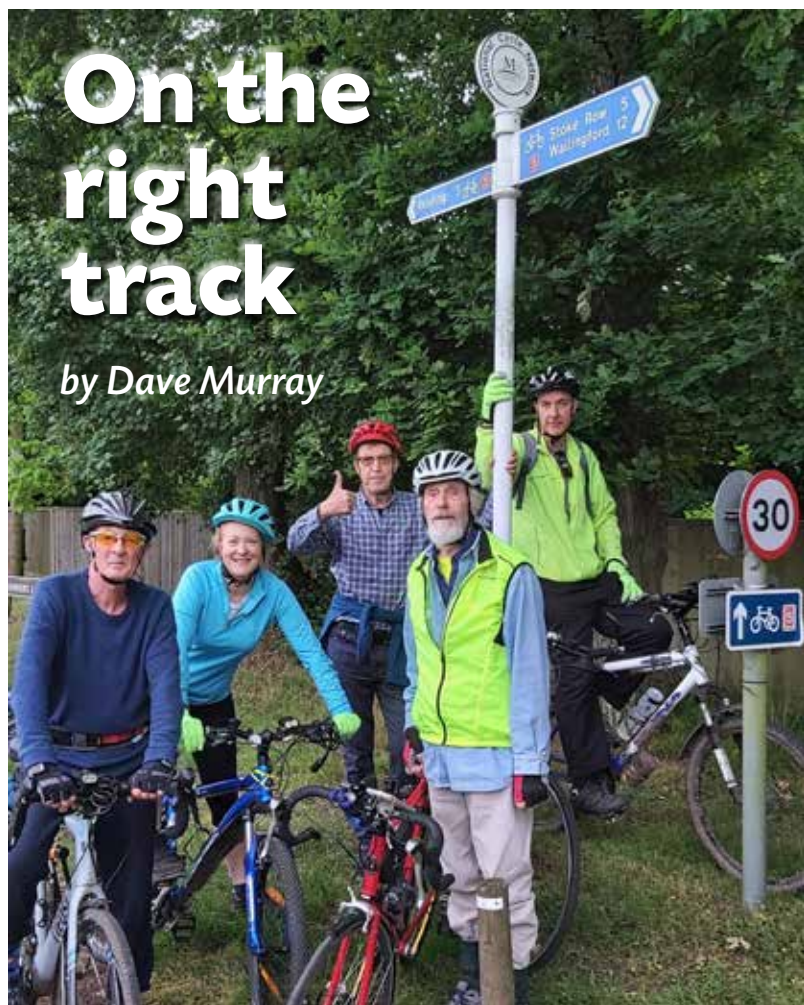
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# On the right track

by Dave Murray



IN OUR April edition, we reported on a consultation about a proposed safe cycling and walking route to link Sonning Common and Emmer Green.

The results of the consultation by the Cycleway Working Party, set up by Sonning Common Parish Council, have now been published. More than 1200 responses were received, with 98% positive in their support for the proposed cycleway. More than half (53%) of the written comments cited safety issues deterring the use of the busy B481 by cyclists.

Of those responding, 57% said they would use a cycleway regularly, and 90% said it would encourage them to switch from car travel for some journeys. These responses indicate that a cycleway has a significant potential to impact green and sustainable transport on this route connecting communities.

Given the level of public support, the working group is now exploring funding for the proposed scheme, including contributions from local councils, businesses, charitable funding, and individual donations.

The Working Party welcome feedback, ideas and new members. You can contact them via the Parish Office or at <https://sonningcommonparishcouncil.gov.uk/contact.php>

Based on a press release by Dave Murray, on behalf of the Cycleway Working Party.

Dave Murray • 07855684037 • [davemurraymail@gmail.com](mailto:davemurraymail@gmail.com)



Working party take a breather

photos Jim Warren



## (When) The heat is on!

ONE OF THE many reasons why summer heat can feel so draining is because our bodies are working harder to maintain a stable temperature, allowing our internal organs to function properly.

This constant internal environment is called homeostasis – something our bodies are constantly trying to keep stable. The body works hard to regulate its base temperature, and in more extreme conditions like a hot day, it takes more energy to maintain a consistent body temperature. So we may feel more sluggish or have less energy when it's hot and it can be difficult to get a good night's sleep when the mercury rises.

Because body temperature fluctuations can impact the quality and duration of our sleep, they indirectly influence our energy, mood and cognitive functioning during the day. Studies show the benefits of short daytime naps on the warmest summer days.

**...create a daily schedule...**

Human beings are creatures of habit, and even the smallest change to our routines can throw us off balance. Extreme hot and cold temperature fluctuations can make us feel grumpy, lethargic and generally out of sorts, so it can be helpful to create a daily schedule and stick to it.

According to the NHS, feeling tired is a classic symptom of dehydration. We all know we should drink more when the weather is hot, but when temperatures really soar it can be tricky to take on enough fluid.

Even mild dehydration can cause problems. Studies show that when we lose just 2% of our total body weight due to water depletion, we might notice that we're feeling irritable, lethargic, and unable to concentrate.

The good news is that topping up your water bottle regularly

and eating plenty of hydrating, juicy fruits and vegetables like watermelon, strawberries and cucumber should help restore fluid balance.

Bees are buzzing, lawnmowers are whirring, and the scent of summer is in the air; high temperatures also have an effect on our minds. Of the many aspects of weather, sunshine is the most intimately tied to mood and so affects our behaviour.

Sunny days can invoke a relaxed, vacation-like, mindset which encourages us to slow down and unwind, potentially contributing to the sensation of lethargy. It can become a vicious cycle: the less we do, the less we feel like doing. It can be difficult to focus on work when the weather is balmy and we're just waiting for 5pm to roll around. This can manifest itself as a lack of motivation (the so-called summer slump), causing us to feel we're not achieving much. We could try breaking our day into smaller, more achievable, chunks to help productivity on the hottest days.

And lastly, the more serious risks of heat stroke and heat exhaustion may need medical care, which we should seek at the earliest signs of any serious heat-related exhaustion/collapse.

We are having to adapt to a rapidly changing global climate, and while we must look after our bodies first, we must also look after our precious planet.

**The heat is on!**

### THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right from the top)

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